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CITY COMMISSION BUDGET WORKSHOP
MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 1, 2015

Mayor Weller called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Invocation by Commissioner Gloria James.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Mayor Sue Weller – Present
Vice Mayor Scott Jamison – Present
Commissioner Jason Evans – Present
Commissioner Gloria James –Present
Commissioner Byran Williams - Present

Staff Present: Ed Booth, City Manager
Jenny L. Parham, City Clerk
Angela N. Stone, Assistant City Clerk
Jennifer Stull, Finance Director
Courtney Johnson, City Attorney
Antoine Sheppard, Lieutenant Police Department
Amanda Rodriguez, CRA Executive Director
David Benton, Public Works Superintendent
Bruce Gillingham, Fire Chief
Scott Thomason, Building Official

1. REVIEW OF FISCAL YEAR 2015/2016 PROPOSED BUDGET.

Mr. Booth gave an overview of the proposed budget. Gave an overview of the changes made. Advised of this proposed budget having four firefighters per shift, adequate supervisory staff in the Police Department, and grants.

Mrs. Stull stated there are two funds that are not balanced. She spoke the recommendations of staff to increase water rates. She states that if we raised the water rate \$1.00 it would balance the water fund. She spoke of the bonds for the sewer fund and this fund receiving transfers from other funds and the reserve each year. Spoke of staff's recommendation to increase the sewer rate. Advised that it was staff's recommendation to raise the sewer fees by \$3.00. She adds that this increase would not cover all

the costs, but that it would make a good dent into what we need to get this balanced.

Mr. Booth advised that we are doing and have done all we can to reduce the cost of operating the sewer system.

Mrs. Stull stated that the commission salary increase, as well as, the increase in salaries across the board have been taken out.

ATTORNEY

Mrs. Stull stated that non-routine legal has been increased. Vice Mayor Jamison stated that he would like to see more in there; he is concerned with the amount.

Mayor Weller expressed her concern with the contracted services, and the little questions we have.

Mrs. Stull spoke of the City of Newberry's contract with Folds and Walker and the process for non-routine legal services.

Attorney Johnson states the phone conferences and other small issues are covered under their routine legal services.

Mayor Weller stated that if we are going to increase the amount then we could consider the in-house attorney.

Vice Mayor Jamison stated that he would like to see a job description and then put it out there. Let's go through the process and do our due diligence; he states we owe this to the citizens.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Booth stated that the resource officer was added in. Vice Mayor Jamison stated that that is a wash; we receive the funds from the School Board.

Mr. Booth spoke of the debt service and the lease on the radios.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Mrs. Stull spoke of the possibility of another grant of \$50,000.00 that the Recreation Director is working on and we will not know until February. Mr. Booth advised that we may have to do a budget amendment at that time.

ROADS AND STREETS

Mayor Weller questioned the decrease in salaries. Mrs. Stull explained that some of the salary is taken from Solid Waste for staff's duties for that department.

SEWER FUND

Mayor Weller questioned the machinery and equipment, capital outlay. Mr. Booth explained that this was for the roll off container, dewatering box.

WATER FUND

Mr. Booth spoke of the grant and our contribution for the replacement of some lines. He stated that Mittauer and Associates, our Engineer, is getting ready to go out for bid. He stated that there will be some disruption in the project areas.

Mr. Booth stated to make this fund balance, staff is recommending a \$1.00 increase per month.

Commission would like to see at the meeting on September 10, 2015, if we had raised the fees as recommended, what the rates would be for water and sewer.

Discussion on how to notice the public of the possible increase.

SEWER FUND

Mr. Booth states this fund is not balanced, and staff is recommending an increase of \$3.00 per month.

Attorney Johnson states that we have to notice the public through our billing process.

Mayor Weller questioned if we can pass the budget with the increase if we have not noticed the proposed increase or passed a resolution; she has a concern with this.

Mayor Weller asked the attorney's to look into the commission approving the budget without the notice of the possible increase and the notice on the utility bill.

Attorney Johnson stated she will look into this before the meeting on September 10, 2015.

Mrs. Stull stated that, in this proposed budget, \$175,000.00 would go into the fund balance; but it does include the increase in rates.

Mayor Weller questioned if you can only assess citizens that have a grinder pump or can you assess city wide for the grinder pumps and the continuation of the sewer.

Attorney Johnson stated she can look into an assessment for the entire city for the sewer. Vice Mayor Jamison stated that it may also be a bond requirement that the only citizens that could be assessed have to be on the system; suggested that this be looked at.

FIRE

Mr. Booth advised we are applying for grant funds for personnel; we did not qualify in the past due to the funds we had for the renovation. Now that the renovation is complete and paid out we have a possibility of qualifying for the grant funds.

Chief Gillingham states this proposed budget will give us the four fire fighters per shift. He advised that Part-time Firefighters will be utilized and this will save on benefits.

CRA

Mayor Weller questioned the revenue amount and if the extension is approved that the money from the county could drop down. Mrs. Stull advised that the CRA Executive Director had advised that it would not happen until next year. Mr. Booth advised that values could go up.

Mr. Booth gives a review of the commissioner's request of what they wanted to see in the budget.

Mayor Weller asked about a five year plan. Mrs. Stull stated that we do have a ten year plan, wish list.

Mr. Booth advised that a planner position has been put in on a contractual basis; advised of microphones And streaming issues being corrected; customer service training will be this month; the vacant property issue is being addressed; and park improvements will be addressed through grant funding.

Mr. Booth advised that we were unable to fund an Economic Development Fund, but we are moving forward with Economic Development; starting with a website.

Mayor Weller asked about a Recreation Program for Senior Citizens. Mr. Booth advised that he has spoken with the Parks and Recreation Director.

Discussion on noticing of rate increases.

Motion Commissioner Evans to adjourn.

Mayor Weller adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.