

**City of Medical Lake
Special Council Meeting
2012 Budget Workshop**
S. 124 Lefevre Street, 5:30 P.M.
September 13, 2011

Mayor Higgins called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Council present: Brenda Redell Jeff King Shirley Maike
Howard Jorgenson John Paikuli Art Kulibert A.J. Burton

Council Absent: None.

Executive Session: Mayor Higgins called for an executive session at 5:31 PM. City Attorney McMullen read into the record: *The City Council will now go into Executive Session to consider the minimum price at which real estate will be offered for sale or lease when public knowledge regarding such consideration would cause a likelihood of decreased price. It is anticipated that the executive session will last 10 minutes. After the executive session, the City council will reconvene the Special City Council Meeting. The City Council will take no action on the issues discussed in executive session.* If the session needs to be extended at the end of 10 minutes it will be by majority vote of the City Council.

Mayor Higgins reconvened the Special Council Meeting at 5:41 PM.

Staff present: Doug Ross Cindy McMullen Pam McBroom

Others present: 2 visitors.

MAYORS WELCOME:

Mayor Higgins welcomed everyone to the Budget Workshop. He thanked council and staff for their hard work and expressed his wishes to set some priorities for the 2012 budget.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S OPENING REMARKS:

Administrator Ross welcomed council and gave them an update on a couple of items. He reported that the Conditional Use Permit for the Alternative School Facility in the old medical building came before Hearing Examiner, Stanley Schultz. The permit was approved with a few conditions, one condition is that the facility cannot operate until a final inspection has been completed and approved by the City. Ross was very impressed with Mr. Schultz and hopes to get him on board to hear all land use issues.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ITEMS:

The Mayor, City Administrator, Council and staff discussed the following items:

- **City Staffing** – Retirements and additional part-time employees
There was discussion on individuals that will be retiring over the next couple of years. Finance Director McBroom will be leaving in August of 2012 and Maintenance Supervisor will be leaving in December 2013 and other maintenance individuals are also getting close to retirement.

Council and Staff discussed their thoughts on replacement of these individuals. It was determined that a search would begin in the spring for the Finance Director position. If additional part-time help is needed it will be addressed when necessary.

- **Purchase of new Utility Billing, Budget and Payroll Software**

Finance Director McBroom explained this request. The current software (ASP) is over 16 years old and is a DOS based system. The new software being recommended is a windows based system offered by Vision MS. The following are reasons for this request:

ASP is out of date and is not evolving with the times and a Canadian Company has purchased it - so support is no longer local

- Vision MS is located in Spokane which gives easier access for support
- Vision MS has partnered with Microsoft which makes it very user friendly
- City employees will have a better understanding of the operating system with new installation
- Vision MS also has an employee that used to work as a state auditor – this will give the city access to help with annual reporting as well as audit preparation if needed
- The new programs also offer current updates for government mandated changes (bars numbers, annual report format, etc)
- The only other Washington company with software is BIAS and they are still a DOS based system

The cost for software, conversions, licenses, installations and training will be approximately \$45,000. The fees will be paid from Current Expense, Water, Sewer and Garbage Funds. The conversions would not occur all at once. First the budget and payroll would be done with the utility billing being done last. There was discussion, council were in favor of this change but asked what the annual support fees would run. McBroom will have that information next Tuesday at the regular council meeting.

- **Fire/EMS Department – Retention of Points System Pay**

Administrator Ross talked with council about the success of the points system pay and explained that there will be a request in the proposed budget to continue with this system. The amount will be less than what was in the 2011 budget. Council is in favor of continuing with this program.

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- **Additional Aerator for the Lake**

Ross reported that one more aerator is needed for the lake. The cost is approximately \$50,000. At the present time there are two solar aerators in the lake. The one old aerator has finally quit working. There will be some benefits to replacing the old aerator with the solar one. For one, the city will save around \$1,500 a month (when aerator is running) in electricity and Avista offers a one-time rebate for going solar. Council is in favor of budgeting for this purchase.

- **Utility Rates – Tipping fee increase at Waste to Energy Plant (\$10 per ton) – Curbside Recycling and Water Rates**

- Administrator Ross talked with council about the Waste to Energy Plant increase. This will affect the fees Sunshine Disposal charges for garbage pickup and the estimates given to the city concerning curbside recycling. At this time Ross is waiting for the updated rates prior to polling the city pertaining to possible implementation of curbside recycling. Ross also talked with council about changing the rate the city charges for water usage over 200,000 gallons per month. Currently the tier at that point drops \$.25 per thousand gallons used. Example: 40,001 to 200,000 gallons used per month is charged at \$1.50 per thousand, 201,000 gallons and over are charged at \$1.25 per thousand. To comply with goals set by the water department for conservation purposes – this rate needs increased to encourage less usage. Council agreed and this change will be done by resolution during the budget process.

- **Street Maintenance** – Hiring County for chip sealing and possible hire of part-time employees for crack sealing
- Mayor Higgins and Administrator Ross talked with council about the condition of the city streets as well as the trail around the park. Complete rebuild of streets is cost prohibitive but city could try to set some funds aside to hire the county to do some chip sealing (like what was done on San Salvador). He also discussed possible purchase of a crack sealing machine and maybe some part-time summer help to specifically do this crack sealing. There was discussion.
- **Grader Replacement**
The city will continue to look for a used grader next year. The money for this type of replacement comes from the equipment reserve funds so it is not a current expense fund item.

Additional Items from Council and Mayor

Mayor Higgins updated council on the skate park issues. It is closed now due to vandalism and will remain closed until spring at which time council will decide whether to close it permanently. There was discussion on this topic.

COUNCIL COMMENTS/GOALS FOR UPCOMING YEAR

All council members thanked staff for their hard work. Additional comments were from the following council members:

- Shirley Maike – appreciates being able to discuss issues with each other (council) and working out problems without conflict among each other
- A.J. Burton – would like to have an update from the Sheriff’s office pertaining to gang related issues
- John Paikuli – questioned the backflow notification process – there was discussion
- Jeff King – would like a representative from SCSO to come to committee meetings and he talked about forming some type of joint partnership with organizations and business people to work on beautification of the city and try to find ways to bring in more business to the community
- Howard Jorgenson – has been trying to get more community/business involvement to help get ball teams back in town (like the Cardinal Classic) which opted not to come to ML for training camp this year. He also related how difficult it is to get business involvement. There was discussion. He also brought up the issue of yard sale signs and realtor signs in town.

At 7:30 p.m. Councilmember King made a motion to extend the budget workshop for an additional five minutes. Motion seconded by Councilmember Paikuli. Council polled; all ayes.

- Brenda Redell – would like to see more code enforcement directed at weed cleanup between curbs and streets. She also expressed thoughts pertaining to ML and Cheney recreation programs

After council comments, Paikuli announced that St. Anne’s Cemetery will have a cleanup day this Saturday and anyone interested in helping would be welcome.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Higgins adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Mayor Higgins

City Clerk / Finance Director