

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING
HELD, MAY 18, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in the Vernal City Planning conference room, 374
East Main, Vernal, Utah 84078.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Nicholas Porter, Robin O’Driscoll, Ted Munford, Dave Everett, Corey Foley and Mayor Doug Hammond.

WELCOME: Mayor Doug Hammond welcomed everyone to the meeting.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT & APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING: *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to acknowledge and approve this special meeting. Councilmember Nick Porter seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.*

FY2023 BUDGET:

INNOVATION HUB: Quinn Bennion reported that this budget was initially part of the administration budget and has now been moved to its own department after being operational for a year. The revenue has exceeded expectations with the office rentals and memberships. Carl Morton stated the revenue is \$130,000. Strata and Uintah County also puts money into this program. Councilmember Corey Foley asked if the City pays the utilities for the entire building. Carl Morton stated White House Academy pays a portion. Councilmember Nick Porter asked how the speed pitch competition is funded. Lori Haslem replied that a grant through economic development is utilized along with County and outside sponsorship funds. Carl Morton stated the revenue received is listed under intergovernmental revenue.

MOTORPOOL: Quinn Bennion explained this budget completes work for vehicles across all departments. Shawn Rasmussen stated the overtime has increased in part to one person retiring and being a one-man show. The travel and training budget is needed for more training on repairing the sweepers, vactor and airport vehicles. Keith Despain stated the funds are needed for a specific two-day training along with a few smaller ones. Quinn Bennion stated more small tools are also needed as he is still using his own tools. Councilmember Corey Foley questions if the City had tools already. Shawn Rasmussen stated not the variety he has. Quinn Bennion stated new software was purchased last year to track maintenance and costs for each vehicle so a vehicle replacement schedule could be determined. The schedule includes almost all equipment owned by the City including loaders and backhoes. Keith Despain stated it is anticipated to look at a recurring lease similar to the police vehicles for vehicles that are driven a lot. There are lease companies that offer a government group rate and in many cases the vehicles are sold a few years after the initial lease for the original price. Quinn Bennion stated there are cities that do the reselling on their own and have a rotating truck fleet. This year, the recommendation is to keep nine of the leased police vehicles. These are two year old vehicles with 24000 miles or less. Two of them will be kept on the police lease for one more year for the new officers. Carl Morton stated the yearly lease is \$11,000 and the value is \$25,000. The last Durangos in the police fleet will replace the victim advocate vehicles along with the assistant manager Buick to replace the 99 Bonneville. The public works director will also get a Durango and his vehicle will go to the facilities department. One F150 will go to the water department and the red vehicle that was taken from planning will go back for the new building inspector. Councilmember Corey Foley

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asked if there was any other equipment that was a high priority. Shawn Rasmussen stated the priorities are already in this budget cycle, and there will be more next year. Quinn Bennion stated the dump trucks will need to be placed on the replacement cycle. The consensus of the Council was to approve the staff recommendation.

PERSONNEL: Quinn Bennion explained that he has looked at a few options for a salary increase with the help of Carl Morton and Roxanne Behunin. Last year the salary ranges were moved 1.5% and the employees received a cost of living in the amount of 2%. Because the ranges were stagnant for so long and cost-of-living amounts today, the first recommendation is to move the ranges 5%. Changing the range itself does not translate to a salary increase unless that employee falls below their range. The range can be moved before or after a cost-of-living increase. Several employees are at the top of their range and moving the range will allow them to get a raise. Moving the range does create issues when hiring new employees. The next recommendation is to give each employee a specific raise. That amount could be fifty-cents to one-dollar. Quinn explained that a study was conducted by Roxanne on what other cities were doing and the proposed raises range from specific dollar amounts to high percentages. The next option is to give a merit increase based on their performance review. The performance review is based on rates from one to five on a variety of characteristics with the average rating being 3.78. The increase can be based on a percentage of the review score for each employee. Councilmember Ted Munford stated he liked having the percentage be 50% of their score. Councilmember Corey Foley stated the supervisors have to be willing to tell employees their performance is not up to par when money is involved. Ken Campbell stated if they can't do that they should not be supervisors as that is what they were hired for. Keith Despain stated he prefers a less formal evaluation process to give the employees feedback sooner. Dylan Rooks stated his department does quarterly reviews to document issues or address attitude problems. At the end of the day the employee gets over it or doesn't. Ken Campbell agreed that quarterly works at the department level and annually at a higher level. Quinn Bennion indicated he likes the review to be tied to salary. A salary survey was conducted by Roxanne Behunin using sixteen entities that are either similar in size, or in a more rural area. Not all the cities have the same positions and departments such as the airport had to use different cities to get the data. What was discovered was if the salary scale is compared with the 5% increase it is very competitive except for 14 positions. Most of those are in the police department along with the evidence technician, utility supervisor and building official. He recommended those positions be moved up one grade. Those employees will receive a 5% increase as required by policy. The salaried positions are also low when compared with like cities although there is no policy to increase the wages. Councilmember Corey Foley stated something should be done every year to help with inflation. There was some discussion regarding a maximum adjustment. Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll suggested the lower the G-scale, the higher the adjustment. Councilmember Corey Foley asked what the cost will be in the budget. Quinn Bennion stated the staff can make a rough calculation.

RECESS OF THE MEETING: *Councilmember Corey Foley moved to recess this meeting to*

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attend the regularly scheduled meeting. Councilmember Nick Porter seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and Mayor Doug Hammond declared the meeting recessed.

RECONVENE: *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to reconvene this special budget workshop meeting. Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.*

FY2023 BUDGET – PERSONNEL:

Councilmember Ted Munford stated he likes the idea of a \$1 cost-of-living and 50% merit based on the employees evaluation rating. Those fourteen positions that are low compared to the market study also need to be adjusted including the salaried positions. Quinn Bennion questioned if the salaried employees should get the 5% increase if their grade is increased when it is not defined by policy. Councilmember Ted Munford agreed they need to be moved as they are way below market. Councilmember Nick Porter stated it would be an easier decision if he had any sense of the dollar amount to the budget.

Quinn Bennion explained that another issue is the building official position. Those employees are in high demand throughout the State and country and they are being sought by other entities. Councilmember Ted Munford stated it is also tough to find police officers. Carl Morton questioned if the Council would prefer a maximum adjustment such as 12%, 10%, 8% etc. based on grade. Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll liked that approach. Roxanne Behunin stated there may be a few employees that hit the top of their range and cannot exceed it. Chief Dylan Rooks expressed his appreciation of the Council doing something quickly with all the other needs of the City. Councilmember Ted Munford asked the Chief how he felt about his position getting less of a raise. Dylan Rooks stated it is frustrating as he has not had a significant raise since 2009. Ken Campbell stated he felt the same, although he does not live here because of the salary. Councilmember Ted Munford asked the Council to look at the titles of the salaried employees and pointed out they are important positions. After further discussion, the consensus of the Council was to look at a salary increase of 12% for low grades, 10% for the next grades, 8% for the highest grades and 6% for salaried positions. Councilmember Ted Munford asked if the Council salaries for any other cities was based on years of service. Roxanne Behunin answered no, however, some are benefited or receive a computer or cell phone stipend. Quinn Bennion suggested the Mayor and Council wage be the same as the average of the other cities. The Council discussed a stipend for the Planning Commission and settled on \$75 per meeting be added to the salary schedule. The Council agreed to meet again on June 1st to finalize the salary adjustment after the staff computes the budget impact.

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ADJOURN: There being no further business; *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to adjourn. Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was declared adjourned.*

Mayor Doug Hammond

ATTEST:

Roxanne Behunin, City Recorder

(S E A L)