

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL BUDGET
WORKSESSION HELD MAY 13, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Conference
room, 374 East Main, Vernal, Utah 84078.

PRESENT: Mayor Gary Showalter and Councilmembers Dave Everett, Bert Clark, Sonja Norton, Ted Munford and JoAnn Cowan.

STAFF PRESENT: Danny Anderson, Roxanne Behunin, Mike Davis, Ken Bassett, Ray Richards and Allen Parker.

FY2014 BUDGET - GENERAL FUND:

Justice Court: Judge Ray Richards stated that the court is running smoothly, and the new metal detectors have been installed. The holding cells will be used for inmates waiting for their court appearance now. Councilmember Bert Clark asked if a full-time bailiff is being used by the Court. Ray answered yes and stated that an additional officer helps with the holding cells. Ken Bassett asked about the intense training scheduled in Reno. Ray stated that the training will be June 2nd to June 14th. Mayor Showalter asked if the case load is increasing. Judge Richards stated that there seems to be a steady increase. Ken Bassett stated that the revenues from the court have not been increased in the FY2014 budget. He stated that the largest increase in the court budget is for officer wages. Off-duty officers will help monitor the holding cells on court days. Councilmember Clark asked about the interpreter expenses. Judge Richards answered that he did not budget any additional cost, and that will fluctuate since interpreters also need to be hired for civil proceedings. Mayor Showalter asked which day is the busiest for the court. Ray Richards stated that pre-trials are held on Thursdays making for a long day. Councilmember Norton noted that the state insurance fund increased. Mike Davis stated that is associated with workers compensation which will be charged to each individual department now.

Motor pool:

Ken Bassett stated that the Public Works Committee determined that the software upgrades were not necessary if a new scanner was purchased. Rick Green agreed and stated that the scanner will have the latest program installed on it. He explained that this scanner will handle different car models allowing them to scan and find out if it is a major problem. Mayor Showalter asked if there was a monthly support charge. Rick Green answered there is a basic charge.

Government Buildings:

Ken Bassett stated that Danny Anderson has been busy covering the community room and janitorial duties as the City has had a hard time retaining a good custodian. The major changes to this budget seem to deal with this large of a City Hall building. The utilities have increased along with operations and maintenance supplies. Also, Danny is requesting, another full-time maintenance employee to help maintain the fire station, animal shelter, public works buildings and City Hall. Councilmember Cowan asked how many employees are in this department now. Danny Anderson answered that he has two full-time employees, including himself, and one season employee on the maintenance side, and one full-time custodian and a part-time custodian. The seasonal employee works April through October each year. The square footage that is being taken care of has increased from 32,000 square feet to 77,000 feet. After further discussion, the

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consensus of the Council was to hire an additional maintenance person. Ken Bassett stated that the supplies and maintenance budget should be at \$37,000. Danny Anderson stated he would like to have the \$6,000 in the budget to cover painting or other maintenance needs that the new employee will be helping with. Councilmember Cowan and Mayor Showalter agreed that the \$6,000 should be put back in the budget. Mike Davis stated that he has set up a line item for the White House Academy lease.

Council:

Councilmember JoAnn Cowan asked why the Utah League of Cities and Towns dues increased. Ken Bassett answered that the dues are based on sales tax and population which changed with the 2010 census data. Councilmember Clark noted that if the City did not contribute to the Chamber of Commerce, they would not have enough money to operate. He stated that a City this size needs a Chamber of Commerce. There was some discussion regarding the duties of the Economic Development Office and the Chamber of Commerce. Councilmember Cowan suggested that the director of the Chamber make a short presentation on their goals and accomplishments. Mayor Showalter stated that a lot of the downtown merchants are not active members. Mayor Showalter asked Councilmember Everett to represent the City at the upcoming rod and gun club event as he will be out of the country.

Planning & Zoning:

Ken Bassett explained that the Administrative Committee reviewed this budget and asked both Allen Parker and Corey Coleman about necessary workshops for certifications and other training that is planned for the upcoming year. Most of the travel budget does deal with certifications for building, infrastructure and fire inspection which is necessary to keep employees trained and up-to-date. Mayor Showalter asked if this department was fully staffed and why phone calls are not being returned. He stated that he receives complaints regularly that items are not being taken care of in a timely manner. Allen Parker disagreed. Councilmember Cowan stated she has received the same complaint from contractors and builders who are frustrated that they cannot get their calls answered which is costing them time. Allen Parker stated he does try to answer his voice mail. Councilmember Clark asked how many inspections are done on a home from start to finish. Corey Coleman stated it is usually 12 – 14 inspections. Councilmember Clark asked if they only look at one item or try to do more each visit, and is there an additional charge if they have to go back. Corey Coleman stated that it depends on what the contractor has ready for the inspector. The basic principle is to look for safety items first, and if there is a consistent problem, the contractor may have to pay for additional inspections. Most contractors understand what the inspectors will be looking for to make a home safe for habitation and comply with those requirements. Councilmember Cowan stated that the Fire District is buying antennas to place on fire hydrants to help find the hydrants when the snow piles up. They approached the City and were told that the City did not have the time to install them. Allen Parker stated he received a message from Jeremy and was trying to decide how to approach it. Mike Davis suggested this be a scout project to put up the flags. Councilmember Cowan asked that the City cooperate with the District on this project. Councilmember Clark stated that he noticed a plastic bag covering a fire hydrant by the pink dinosaur and asked the staff to look into it.

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Victim Advocate:

Alisha Gowan, director of the Victim Advocate program, explained that her department has been providing services for the entire Uintah Basin as the advocate for Duchesne County has not been available. The volunteers working with this program have been helping as there has been a 30% increase in Uintah County of calls for assistance. Councilmember Clark asked if they have been getting reimbursed for their time spent in Duchesne County. Alisha Gowan answered no, that they are trying to only provide crisis intervention until they get someone hired. Ken Bassett asked what part of their program is subsidized by federal grants. Alisha Gowan answered that the VOWA Grant is for \$35,000 and the VOCA Grant is \$10,000. She noted that the VOCA grant is expected to have a 10% reduction this year. Alisha stated that with the increase in services it has been difficult to keep track of clients, and there is software available that will help with that process. Councilmember Cowan asked if this was an industry specific program. Alisha answered yes, that it was developed specifically for shelters and advocacy programs and is called Alice software. Councilmember Ted Munford asked if there was an on-going subscription cost. Alisha replied that there is a \$50 tech support charge each year. Ken Bassett stated that with repeat clients, it is hard not to give up on them. Alisha agreed stating that it takes an average of seven times before a victim will leave the cycle of abuse. The advocate program, for some clients, has to limit services until they come up with a plan to get out of the abusive relationship. Councilmember Norton asked if alcohol and drugs are factors. Alisha stated that very often they do contribute. Most of the time the abuse is dealing with power and control, and the advocates do keep track based on what the client is willing to disclose. Ken Bassett stated that the remainder of the funding needed for this program is the City's responsibility which amounts to around \$90,000. Councilmember Cowan noted that the City agreed to fund the victim advocate program, and the County agreed to fund the homeless shelter. Alisha stated that the County Attorney's office also has a victim coordinator that helps with court cases. The Council and Mayor thanked Alisha for her work.

City Manager:

Ken Bassett stated that his budget does not have a lot of changes. The Council did not have any questions dealing with this budget.

City Attorney:

Ken Bassett explained that the City still has contracts with Dennis Judd, Mike Harrington and Dan Sam for legal services. The one area that is hard to manage is civil litigation. The City currently pays Dennis Judd \$1500 a month which covers 15 hours for a quarter of a year. Any time he spends over the fifteen hours per month he charges the City on an hourly basis. Councilmember Munford asked if he charges for every phone call. Mike Davis replied that he does charge for every 6/10th of an hour. Ken Bassett stated that he did not think the City should hire a full-time attorney yet.

Finance:

Ken Bassett stated that this budget does not have a lot of changes from last year. Councilmember Cowan asked what the jump in hours was for. Mike Davis stated the additional hours are for the accounting for the Districts. There was some discussion regarding employees in this department deciding to retire soon. Councilmember Cowan asked that the City do something nice for these long-time employees upon their retirement.

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Non-Departmental:

Ken Bassett explained that the insurance premiums for liability, property, and auto coverage are in this budget and have increased. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan asked what is paid under uninsured repairs. Ken stated that covers deductibles or minor claims. He stated that the City has been with Utah Local Governments Trust for over 25 years. He noted that it would be hard to find a carrier that understands the municipal market and provides the amount of training as well as the Trust. Mayor Showalter stated that other companies try to entice you to buy their product and then raise the price the next year. He stated that the City has a good relationship with the Trust, and they understand the needs of local government. Councilmember Clark stated that the Special Service Districts use the Trust as well. Councilmember Cowan asked what an envelope stuffer is. Roxanne Behunin answered that it is a machine that will fold and stuff envelopes for large mailings.

City Parks:

Councilmember Cowan asked who is over the parks department. Ken Bassett stated that Glade Allred is the department head. Ted Munford asked about the billboards. Ken stated that the property is leased from McKeachnie's for the City's billboard, and the lease payment is made annually. Councilmember Cowan asked if the building grounds and supplies cover the plants and shrubs around City Hall. Mike Davis stated this is the line item for the Main Street flower project. Councilmember Norton asked about refurbishing the pink dinosaur. Ken Bassett stated that the pink dinosaur is in desperate need of repair. Councilmember Clark stated that several trees have been flagged at the sewer treatment plant for the walking park. The City will have to pay the cost to dig them up. Ken Bassett stated that Ed Zurbuchen is taking care of the walking park, and the City pays \$500 a month to him for his work. Mayor Showalter recommended that amount be increased to \$650. The consensus of the Council was to amend his fee to \$650 a month.

Information Technology:

Councilmember JoAnn Cowan asked if the cell phone problems and this building had been worked out. GJ Searle stated that it has been fixed. Ken Bassett stated that GJ has done a remarkable job outfitting this building and anticipating any IT issues. He stated that GJ is requesting a seasonal intern to help with odd IT jobs that he does not have time to accomplish. Councilmember Cowan asked if he would be using the school-to-career program. Ken Bassett stated that is the idea. GJ stated that he does not have time to wipe data off old equipment before it is destroyed or surplus. Ted Munford stated there is a company that will melt the hard drives. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan mentioned that there is an e-recycle event in Salt Lake City where the computers or other equipment can be taken. The consensus of the Council was to hire a school-to-career employee for the IT department.

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ADJOURN: There being no further business, Mayor Showalter declared the meeting adjourned.

Mayor Gary Showalter

ATTEST:

Roxanne Behunin, Deputy Recorder

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