

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING HELD, MAY 14, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main, Vernal, Utah 84078.

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING:

Councilmember Ted Munford moved to acknowledge and approve this meeting. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Munford, Everett, Scott and Clark voting in favor. Councilmember Cowan was not present for the vote.

FY2016 BUDGET WORKSHOP

GENERAL FUND

Public Works Administration

Ken Bassett explained that this budget has one part-time clerical employee who provides support to the public works offices on 500 East. The largest item is the cost to belong to Blue Stakes.

Streets

Ken Bassett explained that this department is requesting to purchase a wing plow that would be mounted on the loader. This piece of equipment helps take the snow off the road without pushing it onto the sidewalk or into driveways. Glade Allred stated his department has a hand-made wing row that is used, but on Main Street they have to haul the snow off in the middle of the night. They will try to keep the old one together if a new one is not approved. The cost is \$39,000 for a new plow. Ken Bassett stated the Public Works Committee recommended approval to buy a new plow. The consensus was to leave it in the budget. Councilmember Clark asked what the cost is to install an ADA sidewalk at an intersection. Glade Allred responded the cost is approximately \$12,000 for all four corners of an intersection. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan asked if the sidewalk repairs have been prioritized for next year. Glade Allred answered that they do have a list, however it is always flexible to take care of things that come to their attention. Councilmember Cowan indicated that a property owner is willing to partner with the City to install sidewalk in front of his home on 500 East. Glade Allred stated it has always been the policy that the property owner has to install the sidewalk and then the City is responsible to maintain it. There is an asphalt sidewalk on south Vernal Avenue that is not considered a sidewalk that also needs repair. Ken Bassett stated these improvements are usually done through a special assessment area. However, it is now hard to get the banks to do this type of financing. Councilmember Cowan stated that area would be a higher priority especially if the School District builds a new school. She suggested the staff look to see if a grant would be available. Ken Bassett stated that federal funding is used for arterial roads. There was some discussion regarding a crossing guard. Glade Allred stated that originally those property owners were charged for the asphalt sidewalk. Ken Bassett suggest a list be prepared where there is existing asphalt sidewalks for the Council's consideration. Councilmember Munford stated there is no sidewalk on 100 East by Western Park that could be a problem. Ken Bassett stated that the street lighting is included in this budget. Glade Allred stated he tries to inspect the lights and updates the list to Rocky Mountain Power monthly. Ken Bassett explained that Rocky Mountain Power owns the lights

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and are not willing to upgrade to LED lighting. A representative from Rocky Mountain Power will be at the next Council meeting who could explain their position.

City Parks

Ken Bassett explained that one project in this department is to repair the tree boxes and bricks along Main Street where the trees have lifted the grating, creating a hazard. There are three employees in this budget with Glade Allred supervising them. Mayor Norton asked if the staff looked at planting a different tree. Ken Bassett stated the staff did research this and determined that the present tree was the best tree for this purpose. The flowers on Main Street will be set out the first week in June.

Non-Departmental

Councilmember Cowan asked about the travel line item. Roxanne Behunin explained this is her department. Ken Bassett stated that this department is requesting to increase the hours for the part-time clerk by 5 hours per week to help cover the added work for the Holly Days project and work for other departments. The cost is \$5000. The intent was to not include it in the budget until the sales tax information is available, however, it is in this budget. There was some discussion regarding another event sponsored by the radio station that is scheduled the same time as Holly Days.

City Attorney

Ken Bassett explained that this department includes the cost for the prosecuting attorney at \$96,000 a year, the civil attorney at a minimum cost of \$18,000 that covers 45 hours per quarter and the indigent defense attorney. There has been some thought of hiring a full-time attorney to cover the prosecuting and civil attorney work, however, a full-time secretary would also be needed. Councilmember Munford stated that the overage for the civil attorney is expensive. Councilmember Cowan noted that it takes different skill sets to do prosecuting work and civil work, and the way the City is doing it now is working. Councilmember Clark asked when these contracts renew. Ken Bassett answered July.

UTILITY FUNDS

Water:

Mike Davis explained that one budget item the Public Works Committee asked for was more information on the automatic utility reading equipment. Matt McAllister, with Mountain land Supply, explained that they are specialists with automatic meter reading. Mike Davis stated that City has a system now where a wand is used to touch the lid on the water meter to obtain the read. Last year the request was for \$1 million dollars to upgrade the system to a fixed base automatic system for all 3000+ meters. This year, the request is for \$100,000 for radio read with a field meter and starting with only a few meters. Max Long, with Mountain land Supply, stated that Roosevelt City, Ballard, and other agencies have gone to this system. Councilmember Munford asked what the benefit is to not only the City, but the residents. Matt McAllister explained that there are 4 systems to read utility meters:

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- 1 Direct read where you open the lid and write down the numbers;
- 2 Touch read where you touch the lid to obtain the read;
- 3 Hand held radio read where the reader walks or drives around, connects by radio frequency with the meters to obtain the readings;
- 4 A fixed based read system where the readings are downloaded from the office.

Councilmember Bert Clark asked what happens if the meter barrel floods. Matt McCallister stated that the meters are totally submersible. They can be damaged, and most cities have ordinances requiring the person that causes the damage to replace them. One of the features of the fixed radio and fixed base is the reporting system that connects to smart phones to allow the water users to know when and how much water they are using. If they go over the allowed 8,000 gallons, they can be notified. Also, if the user wants the water turned off, the City staff can obtain a reading and turn off the meter from the office. Max Long stated the readings can be obtained even in the winter so leaks are caught quickly. Mike Davis noted that will help with water loss. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan asked what will happen with the meter reader position. Mike Davis stated he would work on maintenance, hanging shut-off notices etc. to free up the water crew to maintain the rest of the system. Matt McCallister stated this system will provide tools to be more proactive and increase the customer's satisfaction. Councilmember Munford asked if going to the Community Impact Board (CIB) for funding to purchase this system was a possibility. Matt McCallister stated that East Carbon City got funding through the CIB. Mike Davis stated this system will also help lower the fire rating. Councilmember Clark asked what the fees are for this system. Matt McCallister stated that with the radio read you pay for the frequency the first year and an annual support of \$2200. Mike Davis stated the annual cost is \$1700 now. There was some discussion regarding the frequencies. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan suggested the City go to the Community Impact Board and ask for enough money to do the entire City with a match of \$100,000. Ken Bassett suggested the request be for ½ loan and ½ grant. *Councilmember JoAnn Cowan moved to submit an application to the CIB for \$522,000 for the radio read. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Cowan, Munford, Scott and Everett voting in favor. Councilmember Clark was not present for the vote.*

Ken Bassett explained that treated water costs will be increasing as the treatment plant is planning on increasing their staff, and that cost will be passed on to the City.

Sewer

Ken Bassett stated there is not a lot of change in this budget. Mike Davis asked permission to have two-year's worth of sewer line cleaning by doing \$70,000 at the end of one fiscal year and \$70,000 the beginning next fiscal year. Ken Bassett explained that the Council cannot obligate the next Council. Mayor Norton suggested asking for \$140,000 every other year.

Airport

Ken Bassett explained that the Interlocal Agreement for the Transportation District to take care of the airport has gone back to the County attorney to be redrafted. The intent is to stop paying any operating costs for the airport as of last December, and begin paying a quarterly payment toward

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the conference center beginning in July.

Fire Department

Mike Davis explained the only item that is not reimbursed in the Fire Department budget is the annual breakfast.

Victim Advocates

Mike Davis explained that this department budget has not changed.

After discussion, the consensus of the Council was to meet next Wednesday beginning at 4:30 pm

ADJOURN: *There being no further business, Councilmember Ted Munford moved to adjourn. Councilmember Samantha Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was declared adjourned.*

Mayor Sonja Norton

ATTEST:

Roxanne Behunin, Deputy Recorder

(S E A L)