



NORTH BONNEVILLE CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Don Stevens
Councilmember Charles Pace
Councilmember Michael Hamilton

Councilmember Bob Bianchi
Councilmember Mike Baker
Councilmember Craig Forster

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday, September 23, 2014 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Call to Order 6:02 PM

Roll Call Finance Committee members Mike Baker; Bob Bianchi, Craig Forster and Don Stevens
Note: Charles Pace showed up later and Mike Hamilton was excused due to a personal matter.

Unfinished Business – Continuation of budget discussion

Steve noted that a number of budgetary options were provided to Council for their consideration. Based on the feedback John Spencer had reduced the 32 budget options that had been proposed. Four [4] of the items were scheduled for action or discussion at this evening's Council meeting under new business. The action items for consideration include deferral of the general fund interfund loan repayments for a one year period and negotiating a new agreement with the Fort Vancouver Regional Library District for use of City Hall. The two discussion items were increasing the utility taxes from 10% to 15% on water and sewer and possible reduction of the Sheriff's monthly contract.

John handed out two budget documents. The first document addressed revenue projections for each of the nine City funds. John said the numbers will continue to fluctuate as we gain more knowledge of the budget. The second document was a streamlining of the 32 budget items provided at the last Council meeting. Among the items that were determined not to be viable solutions to the City's woes included the following: selling of the fire truck, merging of the fire districts, furloughing staff, the ability to impose another real estate tax, use of PDA funds for public safety purposes, implementation of a B&O Tax, revenue expectations from the Day's facility and creating a tiered business license fee. Among the items generally agreed to were: reduction in time expended for mowing purposes, amount of overtime allocation, one percent increase in sales tax, increase in library lease, reduction in building code fees, reduction or elimination of EDC contract, and deferral of interfund loans. Among the items discussed and still on the plate: reduction in Sheriff operation fees, utility tax, and reduction in lighting costs. It was observed that construction of a new lift station should reduce public works overtime costs as well as the need to replace aging utility equipment. Additionally, staff will be able to allocate certain expenses to the accompanying CDBG grant award and that should help relieve stress on the general fund.

New Business

Discussion on changing Council meetings to 1 regular meeting per month and 1 workshop meeting per month

- The intent of this action is twofold: first, to provide an informal setting during the month where Council can focus on issues and have frank discussions and second, to reduce attorney costs. The committee thought this was a good idea that should be implemented.

Discussion about how Sheriff Dispatch calls for North Bonneville related Medical and Fire events are attended.

Steve advised the committee that the Skamania Fire Department was responding to more fire and medical related events in North Bonneville this year than our own fire department and that was problematic. Bob Bianchi expressed concerns about the North Bonneville Fire Department not meeting all of its reporting obligations and not having updated by laws. Don Stevens agreed to meet with the Fire Chief J.B Tension and report back the conversation at the next committee meeting.

Fire Hydrant attention

Steve advised that public works was evaluating each of the City's 56 fire hydrants and has found that several of them are not operable because they have not been subject to annual inspections. The City staff is repairing all of them to make them operable and intends to keep them all functioning from this moment forward but has expressed some concern that the fire department also has a duty to help keep them operational.

Adjourned at 6:56 PM



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City Council Meeting Minutes Tuesday, September 23, 2014 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Call to Order 7:04 PM

Roll Call: Mayor Don Stevens, Councilors Mike Baker; Bob Bianchi; Charles Pace, and Craig Forster were present

Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Changes & Additions

Excusing Councilor Mike Hamilton under new business

Bob Bianchi requested the opportunity to discuss fire department issues under new business

Public Hearings

A public hearing to consider revenue sources and Ad Valorem Tax

Steve said that the City is very interested in hearing its citizens thoughts on balancing the budget and noting there are a number of proposals that have been offered to cut expenditures or raise revenues. With that introductory comment, Mayor Stevens opened the meeting for public comment.

Cheryl Jermann offered opinions on several of the budget proposals stating that she supported EDC and the Chamber, supported the Ad Valorem Tax, but was against a park district, a levy lid lift, instituting a B&O tax, creating a tiered business license, eliminating or consolidating of the fire district and/ or reducing expenditure to the Sherriff's operation.

Irene Bitikofer expressed concern that notices of the budget hearings were not reaching the constituency.

Mayor Stevens noted the City advertised the budget for three weeks in the Skamania Pioneer and that there were statutory requirements that directed where and how the budget meetings are advertised.

Consent Agenda

Approval of September 9 Council Minutes and September 23 Invoices

Councilor Baker moved to approve the minutes and invoices and seconded by Councilor Bianchi

Councilor Bianchi requested that invoice 22689 [that provides payment to the Fireman's' Association for CPR training and sponsorship of the Gorge Day's car show] be removed from approval consideration and seconded by Councilor Forster.

Councilor Bianchi was concerned that payment was being made to what is portrayed as a non-profit organization without Council's knowledge of its bylaws, articles, charter or other documents required

of a bona fide 501 C3 or C6. Accordingly, he questioned whether or not the City should be providing payment of public revenues to this association without assuring its legitimacy?
Attorney Woodrich said staff should assure that the expenses are valid prior to payment. He also suggested that instead of withholding car show payment, the Council should assure that any future tourism funding requests be predicated on the association producing valid documents demonstrating they are a valid Washington State organization. Council agreed with that strategy. Attorney Woodrich also suggested the motion be withdraw and offered a substitute motion.

Councilor Bianchi withdrew his motion and seconded by Councilor Forster

Councilor Bianchi made a new motion and seconded by Councilor Baker.
Motion to approve the Gorge Day payment and the CPR expenditure, provided it could be demonstrated the training benefited the North Bonneville Fire Department

Yes Councilors Baker; Bianchi, Pace, and Forster
No
Abstain
Passed 4-0-0

Motion to approve the consent agenda as amended

Yes Councilors Baker; Bianchi, Pace, and Forster
No
Abstain
Passed 4-0-0

Guest Presentations

No presentations

Public Comment

Cheryl Jermann felt it was wrong for employees to pay for City expenditures out of their pockets and then seek City reimbursement.

Councilmember Comments

Councilor Forster thought Richard Lafayette should have his own City credit card with a credit limit approved by Council. Mayor Stevens said he would look into that proposal.

Councilor Bianchi requested the opportunity under new business to address components of Title 2 that speak to fire department issues.

Councilor Pace said it was his belief that a consent item did not need a motion for a council member to request its exclusion.

Attorney Woodrich said that Councilor Pace was likely correct in his assessment but none-the-less a motion was required for invoice items because they were fund related and a motion for approved was required by the State Auditor for funding items.

Councilor Pace expressed some level of concern with John Spencer's September 9th document that provides many funding options including a suggestion for reduction in the Sherriff funding while looking for the PDA to perhaps compensate the law enforcement shortfall. He noted that Mr. Spencer represents both agencies and that request may pose a conflict of interest and breach the firewall that is in place between the City and the PDA.

Councilor Baker noted that among the budget items set aside in the latest budget document include reliance on the PDA to compensate law enforcement.

Councilor Pace noted that one of the budget proposals is limiting the number of Council meetings as a means in part to reduce attorney fees. Councilor Pace also called attention to the use of the B&O tax as a possible funding strategy but does not necessarily support that action. Finally, he

distinguished that the EDC provided two types of services to the City and he was looking at the capacity to provide the City grant assistance aspect of the operation for possible funding reduction. Mayor Stevens responded to Cheryl Jermann's support for the EDC based on the fact they provide small business loans by noting the loans were dispensed on the basis of need not zip code.

Administrator's Report
None

City Attorney's Report

Attorney Woodrich responded to Councilor Pace's comments by noting the City is not required to have an attorney present at every meeting, however you need to have one present if you are going into executive session and you might want to discuss reduction of attorney services with MRSC. Attorney Woodrich commented that he would not mind a bit not having one more evening meeting to attend. He said - if you treat one of your meetings as a workshop there is less need for an attorney's presence; you could just defer action items to one meeting a month and have me present then.

Unfinished Business
None

New Business

Excusing Councilor Hamilton under new business

Councilor Pace made a motion to excuse Councilor Hamilton and seconded by Councilor Baker

Yes Councilors Baker; Bianchi, Pace, and Forster
No
Abstain
Passed 4-0-0

Resolution 478: Deferring interfund loan repayments from the general fund for a one year period and paying interest on payments deferred

Yes Councilors Baker; Bianchi, Pace, and Forster
No
Abstain
Passed 4-0-0

Increase Utility Taxes from 10% to 15% on water and sewer – this action would generate \$24,000 per year in revenue [this is a discussion item]

Councilor's expressed concerns about the present utility cost impact on our citizens but understood that the City's utility system was in disrepair and there was a need to play catch up as well as build a fund reserve. Council expressed the view there may need to increase the tax but a 5 percent across the board seemed steep. Mr. Spencer advised that a tax increase, whose revenues would support the general fund need to be complemented with a water or sewer increase, otherwise the tax increase would impair sewer and water fees.

Enter negotiations with the Fort Vancouver Regional Library District for purposes of updating an interlocal agreement for use of the North Bonneville City Hall for library functions [this is an action item]

Council agreed by way of consensus there was a need for an increase, but not to the extent it chased away the library services as that was an important public function.

Reduce Sheriff’s monthly contract for the year 2015 [this is a discussion item]

Mayor Stevens said that the City staff would be meeting with the Sherriff in the near future to discuss the possibility of reducing law enforcement services due to lack of general fund revenue. Councilor Forster said it was important to know what a reduction in revenues would do to public safety prior to establishing a financial course of action.

Discussion about the Fire Department Operation

Councilor Bianchi expressed a concern that certain fire department functions were not being properly attended and particularly reporting requirements. His overriding concern was the potential for legal action should the City, and particularly the Fire Chief, not follow through with State Statutes. The Mayor said he needed to sit down with the Chief and discuss these and other matters and report back his findings. Attorney Woodrich noted the fire operation was subject to auditing requirements so it was important not only from a safety perspective the Chief follow through with compliance procedures but also from a reporting standpoint. He noted that other small fire departments he represents complain about the reporting requirements but none-the-less comply - so it is important we do as well.

Closing Public Comments

Cheryl Jermann said the City should tread lightly with respect to the fire department and keep in mind they are volunteers. She also restated her position regarding the EDC noting their many contributions.

Closing Council Comments

Councilor Pace said he was pleased by the Attorney General's opinion about the City Council not being subject to background checks as part of the PDA's efforts to secure a retail marijuana license. He noted his attendance at the last PDA meeting. He shared with the members his perspectives on their relationship with other government agencies. He said the City should seek a Department of Justice waiver to minimize the legal risks associated with the dispensing of marijuana. Councilor Bianchi said he had attended the last NB planning commission meeting where they discussed City’s parking issues. He noted that they had determined not to seek tourism monies this year to support their trails ventures.

Adjournment

Councilor Forster moved to adjourn and seconded by Councilor Bianchi

Yes Councilors Baker; Bianchi, Pace, and Forster

No

Abstain

Passed 4-0-0

Adjourned approximately 8.13 PM

Mayor

City Clerk