

# WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL

## Work Session Minutes

June 26, 2012

### 1. CALL TO ORDER



Mayor Barrow called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Councilmembers Conrado Cavazos, Jr., Barbara Clark, Jerry Cummins, Mary Lou Jenkins, Shane Laib, Chris Plucker and Mayor Jim Barrow.

Absent:None

City staff in attendance: City Manager Nabil Shawa, Public Works Director Ki Bealey, Public Library Director Beth Hudson, Finance Manager Jean Teasdale and City Clerk Kammy Hill.

### 2. ACTIVE AGENDA

A.Sudbury landfill property/biosolids application analysis.

City Manager Shawa reported CH2M Hill/OMI performed an analysis of the area necessary for application of biosolids at the Sudbury landfill property. This analysis shows the entire site, with the exception of a small strip along the old Highway 12, is necessary for application of biosolids. The City could attempt to relocate the biosolid sites but this poses problems and costs. The only feasible option would be to upgrade the City's biosolids from a "Class B" to a "Class A." Public access to sites with "Class B" biosolids are restricted for one year from application due to the possibility of viral cysts. "Class A" biosolids are heated which destroy any viral cysts in the biosolids. A

rough estimate for this change in biosolid classification is \$1,500,000. There may be an opportunity to obtain legislative support and funding for this change.

There were comments on establishing the City's legislative priorities before the session starts in January 2013; and appreciation was expressed for staff's review of possible options.

Mayor Barrow invited public input.

Bob Bloch, 220 N. Division, Walla Walla, representing the Walla Walla Gun Club, thanked the City for considering a location at the landfill for the gun club and commented on the recent State trapshooting competition held in Walla Walla. Firearms have a significant economic impact across the state and the gun club continues to be interested in the landfill property if it becomes possible.

#### B. Walla Walla Joint Community Development Agency's budget request for 2013.

City Manager Shawa reported the intent of this item is to discuss the proposed purchase of permitting software by the Joint Community Development Agency. Currently, the staff at the agency are operating on two separate software systems. A consultant was hired and recommends the purchase of the "Track-It" permit tracking software. The agency wanted to purchase and implement this software in 2012 but the unbudgeted cost to the City was about \$95,000. City Manager Shawa indicated he did not feel comfortable supporting or making a recommendation for the purchase at this time because the funds are not available in the City's budget. Agency Director Glover was commended for doing a good job to keep costs under control.

Mayor Barrow commented the Interlocal agreement provides the City and County with a thirty-day comment period after the agency submits its budget for consideration. The agency can choose to take these comments under advisement but is not required to modify their proposed budget.

Joint Community Development Agency Director Glover explained the agency would drop the use of the Eden permit tracking software and use Track-It, the preferred

software program. The City's share of the purchase of this software is \$95,000 but the agency could use its five percent fund balance. This would lower the City's cost to \$68,000. This purchase would also save \$15,000 in maintenance costs for the Eden software. The County Commissioners have reviewed the agency budget and have questions regarding the three percent increase in technology services and the forty-five percent increase in the office space rental fee. These two items are still under review and the budget is still a draft.

There was discussion on:

- Determining the reason for an increase in rental fees.
- Potential savings of \$15,000 in software maintenance costs for the Eden System.
- Procedure for the City to have input on the agency's proposed budget and timing of this input. The deadline for comments is July 9.
- Return of \$45,000 by the agency in 2012 was money over and above their five percent fund balance.
- Benefit to citizens of the new permit tracking software by allowing them to apply for permits online and track the permit status through the system. This works towards the Council's priority to improve communications.
- The agency has been looking at software options for approximately one year.
- The software does not integrate nor have any impact on the City's Eden system and will not affect the processing of payments to or from the agency.
- Viewing a demonstration of the software.
- Staff needs further time to review and respond to the increase in technology service costs and rent.
- Whether the Finance Committee or City Council should meet prior to July 9. Staff indicated the City is facing a very dire financial position for the next biennium and will not have the full budget picture available until later this year. Staff doesn't believe the City Council should be taking budget proposals "piecemeal" due to the precarious financial position.

Mayor Barrow invited public input. No one in the audience chose to address the City Council on this issue.

#### C. City Council's travel budget discussion.

City Manager Shawa reported staff had transferred \$5,000 into the City Council's original \$15,000 travel budget and distributed a summary of expenses through May 21, 2012. Staff would like direction on how the City Council would like their travel budgeted for the upcoming biennium.

There was discussion on:

- Having the City Manager budget incremental increases in the Council travel budget.
- Continuing to allow individual Councilmembers to determine whether the travel/training is in the best interest of the City versus the City Council overseeing and authorizing travel for individual members.
- Council can choose whether to submit a request for reimbursement for travel-related duties.
- Having a transparent process so the public knows how the money is being spent and how the City Council is serving its constituents.

There was no clear consensus on whether to develop a procedure for Council travel.

#### D.Salary Commission.

City Manager Shawa reported two members of the City Council had shown interest in having a salary commission. Staff has provided the City Council with information on salary commissions, how they are formed, and compensation for Councilmembers of comparable cities.

Councilmembers expressed their individual opinions on whether the formation of a salary commission should be pursued or not.

It was the consensus of a majority of the City Council to not pursue formation of a salary commission at this time.

Councilmember Laib was excused from the meeting at 5:36 p.m.

#### E.Review of 2013-2014 budget goals, objectives and assumptions, including library discussion.

Finance Manager Teasdale reported that staff will be looking at the budget based on the City Councils mission, vision and values, and through a priority-based and program budget approach. Staff will look at the services provided; and the priority of those services and benefit to the citizens. Finance Manager Teasdale reviewed the budget assumptions and the City Council priorities. Revenues will be based on those received in 2011. It is staffs goal to create a sustainable budget with a ten percent ending fund balance in the general fund.

Public Library Director Hudson reported the library will lose \$245,000 in funding from the Rural Library District and will be looking at layoffs and collection reduction. Wednesdays and Saturdays are the most popular days for library services according to a recent survey, so it is likely the library will close on Mondays.

There was discussion on:

- Impact on library services by discontinuing access to citizens outside of the City jurisdiction.
- Providing library services to non-city residents without a contract would likely be considered a gifting of public funds.
- Through the priority based budgeting process, the library may not lose the full amount currently provided by the Rural Library District. This will be dependent upon the priorities established by the City Council.
- The initial review of the proposed budget will be done by the City Manager, then the Finance Committee, and then to a Work Session of the City Council.
- Disappointment was expressed in the negotiations with the Rural Library District. City staff attempted to look at annexation into the library district but the decision by the Rural Library District to construct another library led to a financial roadblock making annexation financially impossible.
- The Rural Library District is building another library because they believe the City library is not large enough to accommodate county residents and they have \$3,000,000 that must be spent.
- The budget assumptions provide for inclusion of only essential travel and training. The City Council will need to determine if it applies to the Council travel budget as well.

Mayor Barrow invited public input.

Dorothy Knudson, 1108 Figueroa, Walla Walla, sought clarification on whether it will be legal for County residents to use the City library if no funds are provided. Councilmember Cummins clarified that if the City does not have a contract with the Rural Library District, the City would be using taxpayer dollars to provide services to people outside of the jurisdiction. This is considered a gifting of public funds. The City is not allowed to provide services without a contract. There was discussion on whether the City would allow the Rural Library District to purchase library cards for County residents. Council indicated this is not a decision that has been made.

There were additional comments on how the Board of the Rural Library District is appointed and the legal inability of the County Commissioners to exercise any oversight over this board.

### **3.Other Business**

Council suggested staff look at providing electrical outlets at the dais to recharge their Ipads.

#### **4.ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.