

WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL
Work Session Minutes
November 3, 2014

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

Present: Councilmembers Jim Barrow, Barbara Clark, Dick Morgan, Chris Plucker, Allen Pomraning and Mayor Jerry Cummins

Absent: Councilmember Mary Lou Jenkins.

City staff in attendance: City Manager Nabel Shawa, Deputy City Manager Tim McCarty, Public Works Director Ki Bealey, Parks & Recreation Director Jim Dumont, Fire Chief Bob Yancey, Public Library Director Beth Hudson, Finance Manager Jean Teasdale, Police Captain Chris Buttice, Communication Coordinator Rosa Jimenez, Human Resource Manager Pam Taylor, and City Clerk Kammy Hill.

2. ACTIVE AGENDA

A. 2015-2016 General Fund budget review.

City Manager Shawa reviewed the proposed 2015-2016 general fund budget:

- General fund supported City services.
- Budget challenges.
- Financial position shortcomings for improving bond rating.
- Citizen survey results.
- Unrestricted general fund revenues and expenses.
- General sales tax trends.
- Business and occupation utility tax trends.
- 2006-2016 general fund unrestricted revenue and expense trends.
- Property taxes.
- General fund unrestricted fund balance for 2015-2016 meets the City's target of fifteen percent.
- Changes from previous biennium:
 - Aviary Expenditures - assumes half of the expenses will be covered by donations/grants/Friends of Pioneer Park Aviary:
 - \$49,240 in 2015
 - \$51,170 in 2016
 - Add a Fire Prevention Officer - this position is offset by new revenue generated by fire inspections.

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- Hire Human Resource Specialist - offset by benefit of being a Well City.
- Reinstate Arborist position in Parks - partially funded by Parks:
 - \$68,790 in 2015
 - \$74,095 in 2016
- Re-establish Development Services - no additional cost to City.
- Add a training captain to the Fire Department:
 - \$109,450 in salary and benefits in 2015
 - \$113,200 in salary and benefits in 2016
- Increase utility excise tax from 10.75 percent to 13 percent.
- Increase funding for Commitment to Community (\$50,000).
- Two new police officers (possible grant).
- Promote Library Associates to Library Technicians to increase open library hours.
- Move fifty percent of Emergency Medical Clerk from Ambulance to the General Fund.
- Move Fire Chief from thirty-three percent to fifty percent in the General Fund.
- Potential bond for facilities.
- Implementation of a fire inspection fee to add fire inspector to meet requirements set forth by the International Fire Code and the Washington State Survey and Rating Bureau for annual fire inspections. Impact on fire insurance premiums if fire standard ratings change for the worse. Calculations for proposed fire inspection fees.
- Number of commissioned police officers; police calls for service; detective case loads; violent crime statistics; number of commissioned police staff eligible for retirement within five years; funding for two proposed patrol officers.
- Walla Walla Public Library Crew Space support; use of promoted staff to enable the library to open an hour earlier Tuesday through Friday.
- Responsibilities of City arborist/horticulturist and need to re-establish the position eliminated in 2010.
- Additional funding for Commitment to Community to expand their healthy neighborhoods program.
- Projected savings through re-creation of the City's Development Services Department is estimated at \$115,746 over City's share of the cost of services for the Joint Community Development Agency.
- Minor fee and rate changes; utility rate increases.

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- Outstanding issues/needs that will not be resolved with the proposed 2015-2016 budget. Total outstanding issues - \$1,900,000. Bond issuance at 4.5% for 20 years would cost approximately \$147,00 per year:
 - Library HVAC replacement (43 years old) - \$750,000.
 - City Hall fire/seismic upgrade - \$550,000?
 - Fire Truck - \$400,000.
 - Public Safety Server associated with need for New World software update - \$200,000.

There were brief comments on lack of funding in the proposed budget for an energy management position; and code enforcement is included in the cost comparison for operation of the Development Services Department. The Code Enforcement program will be run through the Police Department.

Mayor Cummins invited public input.

Nancy Jacobson, Director of Commitment to Community, commented on the importance of their services to neighborhoods. Four other representatives spoke or read letters of support for Commitment to Community.

John "Dick" Swenson, 606 Craig Street, asked the City Council to consider opportunities for additional citizen involvement and input on the budget throughout the year.

There was discussion on:

- Rounding landfill rates so users do not have to search for loose change.
- Budget alignment with the citizen satisfaction survey and additional funding for streets.
- The methodology proposed for the fire inspection fees and potential conflicts.
- Reaching out to the business community to educate on the need for annual fire inspections to maintain City's fire survey rating and to garner support for the proposed fee.
- The City only receives approximately twenty-percent of the total property tax collected on a property.
- Fire inspections are required for all new businesses. The new program will focus on existing businesses and will cover the annual inspection and one re-inspection for any corrections. The fee will

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be charged to all businesses unless they are exempt or inspected by the State. Staff researched other fee schedules implemented by municipalities and the methodology proposed appears to be the most equitable.

- Concerns with use of the cemetery's perpetual care fund for general parks expenses. Council suggested these funds only be used for services directly related to cemetery operations.
- Administrative charge imposed by Blue Mountain Action Council for the Commitment to Community program. Staff indicated the \$50,000 allocation was for direct services and not any administrative overhead.
- Current stormwater programs.
- Addition of a citizen member or members to work with staff and the Finance Committee in developing the City's budgets.

Dick Swenson, 606 Craig Street, Walla Walla, suggested that an income/outcome statement would be beneficial to citizens.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

After discussion, there was a consensus of a majority of Council to change the regular Work Session date from November 10 to November 17 at 4:00 p.m.

There were brief comments on the actual dollar impact of the City's proposed one percent increase in the property tax levy.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:47 p.m.