

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING/BUDGET WORKSHOP OF THE ZION CITY COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2013, AT 3:34 P.M. IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, ZION, ILLINOIS

.....

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Taylor called the meeting to order at 3:34 p.m.

On call of the roll the following answered present: Commissioners Flammini, DeTienne, Shantal Taylor, and Mayor Pro Tem Jim Taylor. Mayor Harrison was absent.

Mayor Harrison arrived at 3:37 p.m.

2013/2014 BUDGET

Finance Director David Knabel stated that over the past three weeks, he has met with all department heads to review their department budgets, line by line, to track current and historic figures.

Revenue

Mr. Knabel stated that the City was facing a large deficit at the start of the process, however, all departments have been proactive throughout the year to offset the lost revenue and the one-time revenue earned in 2012/2013. An increase in ambulance fees has resulted in \$200,000 in increased revenue. An increase in Building Department permit fees has resulted in \$150,000 to \$175,000 in increased revenue. An increase in the volume at the landfill has resulted in \$500,000 in increased revenue. These increases have nearly plugged the deficit gap. Commissioner Jim Taylor asked about the Sale of City Property line item. Mr. Knabel stated this item does not include real estate, but it is \$20,000 received from Zion Township and the sale of surplus property, etc. Mr. Knabel stated that the levy was restructured to maintain the cap but he was still able to increase the levy for Social Security and IMRF funds to avoid having to make up the shortfall through the General Fund. Mr. Knabel stated that the last payment for power plant revenue will be reflected in the 2014/2015 budget. Mr. Knabel stated that \$375,000 in Calpine host fees are revenues pledged for bond service, but once met, the funds remaining are unrestricted.

Expenses

Mr. Knabel stated that all union negotiated salary increases, and those expected to be agreed upon in negotiations, have been built into the proposed budget. These salary increases will not increase the numbers. He stated this budget reflects a significant decrease in legal fees (\$625,000 to \$350,000). In order to reflect the proper accounting and costs, the budget shows a significant increase in insurance premiums. In the past, expected claims were budgeted with much fluctuation. A separate self-insured insurance fund was created to pay claims and premiums are now budgeted in the General Fund, which caused an increase in the budget, but it is an accurate reflection of funds spent. Salaries and insurance were the major changes in the budget. Mr. Knabel stated that a \$68,000 savings has been realized as a result of the telecommunications audit. Commissioner DeTienne asked what amount is due the City from the State of Illinois. Mr. Knabel stated that the State is four or five months behind and owes the City approximately \$800,000. Mr. Knabel stated that a Capital Projects Fund has been created and all capital items should come from this account. He recommended that the City prepare a capital outlay plan and transfer funds annually into this account to support the plan. \$354,000 was transferred from the General Fund to the Capital Replacement Fund and \$395,000 was budgeted for capital projects. Commissioner Shantal Taylor asked if funds could be budgeted for sidewalk snow removal. Mr. Colangelo stated that it would take more equipment and manpower than the budget could allow. The downtown sidewalks are cleared by the City as a courtesy to the business owners and is uncommon in other municipalities. Mr. Colangelo stated that the Public Works Department is operating with 50% less personnel, and with the addition of seven new subdivisions, as compared to twelve years ago. Commissioner Jim Taylor stated that clearing the walk would create a liability. Mayor Harrison stated that sidewalk snow removal in residential areas is the responsibility of the homeowner. Mr. Knabel stated that the

budget presented reflects a \$130,910 surplus, minus a \$38,000 mowing expense, for a total surplus of \$92,910. Commissioner Shantal Taylor asked about the \$34,000 budgeted for a generator at Fire Station No. 2. Chief Lewis stated that during a recent storm, the current generator, which was installed in 1968, failed leaving the station with no electrical backup. Commissioner Shantal Taylor asked about the \$9,000 budgeted for a Nexus Event Controller. It was determined this was a necessary IT expense. Commissioner Jim Taylor asked why tree removal was included on the list of capital projects. Mr. Knabel stated this item was removed from the Public Works budget as tree removal is considered a property improvement. The same is true for the Demolitions line item. Commissioner Shantal Taylor asked about the \$2,500 for a floor at Fire Station No. 2. Chief Lewis stated that the floor is one of several chronic problems that exist at Station No. 2 and a new station will be needed in the next few years. Mr. Knabel stated that this type of expansion should be funded through a capital outlay reserve fund. Commissioner Shantal Taylor asked if Public Works needed three new trucks instead of two. Mr. Colangelo stated that Water funds can be used to purchase a third truck to replace the vehicle that is currently shared by the Water and Street Divisions, leaving that truck available to the Street Division. Chief Lewis stated that the purchase of a Fire Administration vehicle can be removed from the capital projects list as a vehicle has been purchased. Commissioner Shantal Taylor asked the purpose of the Stadium Temporary line item in the Economic Development budget. Mr. Knabel stated that this item is required as described in the stadium real estate tax agreement.

VEHICLE IMMOBILIZATION PROGRAM

A memo (13-DOC-19) was received from Chief Brooks stating that the current immobilization (boot/tow) program ordinance has been modified to include an immediate tow/impound element. This change would give the Police Department the authority to either boot or tow any vehicle found to be in violation. Municipal Collections of America (MCA), the City's collection agency, would provide the City with one vehicle immobilization device, commonly known as a boot. The City is currently owed more than \$1 million of unpaid vehicle parking and compliance violations, mostly from offenders ignoring citations for vehicle sticker and 2:00 to 6:00 a.m. parking tickets. The program can be run at little to no cost to the City. MCA has seen up to a 40% collection compliance in other communities who have implemented a like program. Compliance would be sought first through an aggressive announcement through the media of the City's intent to implement this program. Boot/tow would only apply to violators with (3) or more violations for which they are found liable. Warning letters/notices would be sent to those offenders informing them that they are now eligible to be booted or towed and they have 21 days to remedy. Vehicles would be eligible for boot or tow anywhere in the City limits. Once booted or towed, the owner must satisfy the initial citations violation to the City, collection agency fees, and tow operator's fees before their vehicle would be released. Chief Brooks stated that the responsibility lies with the individual/violator not the vehicle. He recommended the Code Administrator be designated as a panel comprised of the Administrative Adjudication recording secretary, an Accounts/Finance representative, and a Police Department representative. Commissioner Jim Taylor stated that he could not support Accounts/Finance representative involvement as it is not a financial issue and the department currently does not have the time to invest. Chief Brooks stated that the time commitment will be unknown until the program is implemented. Mayor Harrison asked if an amnesty period would be offered. Mr. Knabel stated that the collection agency did not recommend offering an amnesty period, but instead, recommended putting some "teeth" into the ordinance. Mr. Knabel stated that February and March are the best months for collections. Mayor Harrison stated that he did not feel that Police Department personnel should serve as the Code Administrator. Commissioner DeTienne suggested naming Attorney Tim Evans as Code Administrator.

It was the consensus of the Council to conceptually support implementation of the immobilization program and that Chief Brooks should proceed with the process and preparing the letters, with consideration of approval of the ordinance to be placed on the March 19, 2013 Council meeting agenda. The Council further agreed that, prior to approval, Chief Brooks must identify the Code Administrator and supply a copy of the proposed violator letter/notice for their review.

CLOSED SESSION

It was moved by Commissioner Flammini, seconded by Commissioner DeTienne that the Council recess to Closed Session at 5:00 p.m. to discuss personnel. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Jim, aye; Flammini, aye; DeTienne, aye; Shantal Taylor, aye; and Mayor Harrison, aye. Motion carried.

It was moved by Commissioner Flammini, seconded by Commissioner DeTienne to reconvene the Regular Council meeting at 5:24 p.m. with all members present. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Jim, aye; Flammini, aye; DeTienne, aye; Shantal Taylor, aye; and Mayor Harrison, aye. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, it was moved by Commissioner Shantal Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Jim Taylor and unanimously approved the meeting be adjourned at 5:25 p.m. Motion carried.

City Clerk

Approved March 19, 2013