

CLARKSTON CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
August 22, 2016

ROLL CALL: Terry Beadles, Skate Pierce, Belinda Campbell, Monika Beauchamp, John Murray, Brian Kolstad; Kelly Blackmon excused

STAFF:

Chief Cooper, Chief Hastings, PWD Martin, City Attorney Richardson, Clerk Storey

AGENDA CHANGES: Councilmember Beadles added approval to surplus a fire dept. utility truck to New Business.

APPROVAL OF: Minutes of the August 8, 2016, Regular Meeting were approved as presented.

COMMUNICATIONS:

A. From the Public:

Jim Whaley, 1264 12th Street.

Tom Martin, 421 11th Street.

Melyssa Andrews, 721 11th Street.

James Evans, 1115 Highland Ave.

Alan Lutes, 1797 4th Ave.

B. From Mayor:

Mayor Lawrence said that WCIA, our insurer, has mandated that the City develop an employee handbook. The City Clerk is currently working on the policy book, which needs to be in place by late October.

Mayor Lawrence reminded council that the MOU that allows use of Reserves to fill the two vacant firefighter positions expires at 8 a.m. on 8/23.

Mayor Lawrence said she and staff members are working to update the capital facilities plan.

Mayor Lawrence reported that the auditors are basically finished with the audit. They will schedule an exit conference in the near future.

From Staff:

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance: Councilmember Murray reported the bills were reviewed and approved for payment. Total expenditures for August 22, 2016 of \$200,395.61. MOTION BY KOLSTAD/PIERCE to approve the bills. Motion carried.

Public Safety: Councilmember Beadles reported on the August 9 meeting. Chief Hastings is developing a door hanger to use for animal control. The police department has initiated the Positive Youth Program. The law enforcement mutual aid agreement with Lewiston is under review.

Committee recommends the City surplus an old utility truck and take sealed bids.

Committee recommends approval of the Traffic Safety Grant.

Committee discussed some pedestrian crossing safety concerns.

Chief Cooper is recruiting for volunteers.

Public Works: Councilmember Pierce reported on the August 16 meeting. The City is soliciting bids for the Sunrise lift station. Bid opening will be on September 13.

Committee discussed recycling and possibly using a consultant for a feasibility and rate study.

PWD Martin is researching whether the city can enforce sidewalk repairs and file liens against the property. Discussed food vending units and itinerant merchants with plans to combine the two uses in the licensing regulations.

Committee is working to revise the noise ordinance in relation to utility work.

Committee is looking at options to improve access from the bike path to the west end of the blue bridge. Committee received advice from WCIA on holding farmer's market at a city park.

Admin Committee: Councilmember Murray reported on the August 22 meeting. Committee discussed the employee handbook that is being developed.

Community Development: Councilmember Campbell reported on the August 16 meeting. Discussed moving the farmer's market to Vernon Park and adding restrooms to the park.

Outside Organizations: Councilmember Beauchamp reported on the Health District meeting. WIC numbers are up a bit.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. Ordinance No. 1572, Amend CMC 17.100 Shoreline Management Plan – 2nd Reading

Ordinance No. 1572 was read by title. MOTION BY KOLSTAD/BEAUCHAMP to adopt Ordinance No. 1572. Motion carried.

B. Public Safety Committee Report

Councilmember Pierce outlined the options previously agreed upon for staffing and/or operating a fire/EMS department. His report will list pros and cons of each option and known costs or those that can be reasonably approximated. He reminded everyone that the committee was not tasked with negotiating so complete costs or even rough estimates for some services are unknown.

Option 1- 12 Full-time staff – 2016 budget for operating costs is \$1.08 million for fire and d\$1.03 million for EMS. Pros – top option for full coverage and fast response. Cons – Likely unsustainable without significant improvements in financial resources. Adding extra staff has not decreased overtime as expected, but it has increased since 2012. Costs will continue to grow.

Option 2 – 10 Full-time staff. Saves approximately \$100,000 - \$125,000 compared to 12 full-time staff. Pros – 10 man staffing has been used in recent past. Offers some savings to city. Cons – Reduced ability to respond rapidly. Doesn't change the way we do business. Provides some savings that will eventually be used with increased expenses. A temporary fix.

Option 3 - 10 full-time staff with reserves to fill in for 4 person staffing. Saves the City \$75,000 - \$100,000 compared to 12 full-time staff. This is our current situation. Unworkable as a long term solution. Too taxing on our limited reserves.

Option 4 – Obtain ambulance contract from Asotin County and contract for fire services with Asotin County Fire. Asotin County currently pays \$390,000 to Lewiston for ambulance plus any transport fees collected. That amount is unknown. The cost of contracting for fire is unknown. Pros - Using volunteer fire services will offer the largest savings. Servicing the EMS contract will likely allow us to maintain or increase staffing levels. Emergency response will remain outstanding. ACFD has a well-structured and committed group of volunteers. Cons – Least expensive is necessarily the best. Volunteer system will result in longer response times. Requires double mobilization for emergency responders. Could severely damage future relationship with LFD. Reluctant to recommend a course of action that counters recent gains in cooperation.

Option 5 - 2/10 percent sales tax increase. Would raise appx. \$450,000. Would not be dedicated to fire department. Pros - Fairly quick to increase revenue. More than needed, allowing the city to move some expenses from the fire department back into the general fund. Would allow 12 man staffing. Cons - Would cap sales tax and eliminate any possibility to raise revenue in the future. Doesn't change anything. If the system is unsustainable more money won't solve that problem.

Option 6 – Contract EMS and Fire with Lewiston Fire Department. Creates a valley wide EMS service. Costs for EMS service would be similar to what Asotin County pays for EMS, \$400,000 plus transport fees. Cost of fire service is unknown. Pros – Valley wide ALS trauma certification. Good option for providing employment for all current CFD personnel. Could provide a fully staffed department in Clarkston station backed by LFD. Ideally this would bear little difference to our current situation, but with hopefully, lower cost. Cons – Mostly dealing with personnel contracts and retirement plans. Important to ensure that our personnel find job placement in a new structure. Lateral transfers must be negotiated.

Long time employees would need to have Washington retirement addressed. Cost of fire service could take a long time to negotiate. Disposition of equipment and infrastructure.

Option 7 – Valley wide fire service. Not a realistic option due to make-up of County fire district.

Pierce said the committee would like to have discussion and if the council wants to look at specific options, the committee would like direction.

City Attorney Richardson said this is the time to direct the committee or Chief Cooper to further investigate specific options, but not to make any decisions. He said certain decisions will require further notifications. Pierce said Options 1 and 2 have budget numbers available. He said options 4, 5 and 6 are the other possibly viable options.

Councilmember Beauchamp suggested that Option 6 should be investigated. Councilmember Murray said he would like to see some of the numbers fleshed out. He specifically asked what Lewiston receives in transport fees. Councilmember Campbell said Option 6 and Option 4 seems feasible to investigate further. Richardson suggested that Chief Cooper be directed to work with Lewiston and/or Asotin County to obtain budget information.

Murray asked what is involved in raising sales tax. Clerk Storey explained that council would pass an ordinance imposing the tax. If there is no referendum petition within 30 days, the city would notify Department of Revenue. Timing issues would mean the earliest the City would see revenue would be the end of June. If there is a referendum, an election would be scheduled.

Murray asked about the MOU and whether it could be extended. Pierce said the City could ask the union to extend it. Pierce said he would like to ask the union to extend the MOU. Pierce said it could be a year or more to negotiate agreement once an option is chosen. Pierce said there could be a contingency hire. Chief Cooper suggested asking to extend the MOU for up to six months. It would give the city time to study the options and begin negotiations if a change is desired. MOTION BY PIERCE/CAMPBELL to ask the union to extend the MOU for up to six months. Motion carried.

Council directed Chief Cooper to further investigate Option 4 and Option 6. Mayor Lawrence and Councilmember Pierce will also participate.

Murray asked for an explanation of how it was that adding staff did not reduce overtime. Pierce said that reserves and volunteers are dwindling, so full-time staff is working hours that they are not available for. Murray asked what it would take to have a full-time staff without overtime. Chief Cooper said that he could not hazard a guess.

Councilmember Kolstad commended Councilmember Pierce for his efforts to mitigate the uncertainty for staff during these discussions. He said he thinks there is a solution that can work for all parties. Pierce said he appreciates all the assistance and information he has received from firefighters, other departments, staff and council.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Resolution No. 2016-08, Surplus Utility Truck

MOTION BY BEADLES/PIERCE to approve Resolution No. 2016-08. Motion carried.

B. Agreement with WA State Traffic Safety Commission, Traffic Emphasis Grant

Chief Hastings said the grant will provide \$3,425 to focus on impaired driving and flexible funding so the department can concentrate efforts in specific problem areas. MOTION BY BEADLES/BEAUCHAMP to authorize the grant application. Motion carried.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilmember Beadles agreed that there are many properties that are in need of care. Chief Cooper said the fire department works with properties that have weeds over 8 inches tall. He said it is difficult to enforce on properties that are in foreclosure. He said while the ordinance allows the City to clean the property, it is quite expensive. PWD Martin said he invites people to contact him with addresses that need attention. City Attorney Richardson said the City does prosecute, but we try to resolve the cases without going to court.

Councilmember Kolstad commented that the police department has been very responsive when he reports an issue with vehicles.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Council adjourned to executive session at 8:05 p.m. for union negotiations. Anticipated length is 20 minutes with possible action after the session. Council returned to open session at 8:27 p.m.

No action was taken as a result of the session.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Vickie Storey, City Clerk

Monika Lawrence, Mayor

Total Fund Expenditures, 8/22/16	Ck #62265-67, 62290-62327, Excise7/2016	\$74,590.33
Payroll, 8/15/16	Ck #62268-89	\$125,805.28