

The Washington City Council met in a continued session on Monday, May 26, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Building. Present were: Judy Jennette, Mayor; Doug Mercer, Mayor Pro tem; Richard Brooks, Councilman; Archie Jennings, Councilman; Gil Davis, Councilman; Jim Smith, City Manager; and Cynthia Bennett, City Clerk.

Councilman Darwin Woolard entered the meeting at 4:40pm and was made part of the minutes.

Also present were: Matt Rauschenbach, Chief Financial Officer, Anita Radcliffe, Accounting Manager; Mick Reed, Police Chief; Jimmy Davis, Fire Chief; Keith Hardt, Electric Director; and Mike Voss, of the Washington Daily News.

Mayor Jennette called the meeting to order and Councilman Brooks delivered the invocation.

APPROVAL/AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

Mayor Jennette explained Rev. David Moore has requested that Council endorse a grant application for an assisted living facility he is proposing to build. The urgency for this item is due to the grant submission deadline of June 1, 2009.

By motion of Councilman Jennings, seconded by Mayor Pro tem Mercer, Council approved the agenda as amended.

REVEREND DAVID MOORE – ENDORSE GRANT APPLICATION

Reverend David Moore came forward and explained his request to Council. Rev. Moore explained this will not cost the City any money; he just has to partner with the City to receive the funding. Rev. Moore is proposing a partnership with the City of Washington, Metropolitan Housing and Community Development Corporation, Inc is seeking \$420,000 for the construction of a 50 bed and 50 bathroom Assisted Living Facility that will house up to 50 low-income residents of the Medicaid and Medicare population. Once operational and fully staffed the facility will employ 35 new full-time employees to work three shifts. They are seeking the \$420,000 from the Rural Health Care Initiative to pay for the construction cost. Metropolitan has a valid Certificate of Need from the State Facilities Services that was granted in 2005 and must now begin to deliver on the promises of the Certificate. He is also applying for a \$250,000 CDBG grant for this project as well. If any of the 35 jobs are not created, Metropolitan will be responsible for paying back the approximately \$12,000 per job. The City will not be responsible for paying back any of the jobs that are not created. Jim Smith, City Manager explained this is similar to the grant funding for Pacific Seacraft and Carver Machine Works.

DISCUSSION REGARDING CAR ALLOWANCE

Mayor Pro tem Mercer requested discussing the travel allowance/car allowance. Mayor Pro tem Mercer is recommending that Council leave the travel policy exactly as it is today and not change it at all, as recommended at the last budget meeting. The reasoning behind not changing is due to the fact it would cost additional time and effort of the Finance Department. We would also have to adopt an additional travel policy (one for exempt and one for non-exempt employees). Council agreed by consensus to leave the policy unchanged and not as recommended at the prior budget meeting.

E-911

Mayor Pro tem Mercer inquired as to why there was an increase in the salaries line item. Anita Radcliffe stated this is for job maturity, merit and/or probationary raises as with each departmental budget. Ms. Radcliffe stated that job maturity is 2.5%, while merit can be up to 2.5% with the average being approximately 1%. The job maturity is budgeted in each department, while merit is budgeted in a lump sum in the Non-departmental Miscellaneous -General Fund at approximately \$30,000. Councilman Jennings stated this number was presented earlier in the budget process.

Mayor Pro tem Mercer discussed the County answering our 911 calls for the upcoming year and inquired why the \$48,000 for the console and \$40,000 for an additional Telecommunicator was not in the budget. Jim Smith, City Manager stated we are still waiting on an updated written proposal from the County. Chief Mick Reid continued the discussion regarding the cost associated with having the County answering the City's 911 calls and the City having to continue to dispatch those calls.

By motion of Mayor Pro tem Mercer, seconded by Councilman Jennings, Council agreed to place \$88,000 in the budget for Beaufort County answering the City's 911 calls - pending receiving the Counties written proposal. Voting for the motion: Mayor Pro tem Mercer, Councilman Jennings and Councilman Davis. Voting against the motion: Councilman Brooks and Councilman Woolard.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chief Jimmy Davis stated the 29 ½ employees should reflect 26 ½ employees due to the fact the Inspections Department budget was separated from the Fire Department Budget. Chief Davis stated he doesn't think we have any existing debt service at this moment and that line item should be \$0. **Installment Purchases** of \$30,000 is replacing vehicle #248 not adding an additional vehicle. Mayor Pro tem Mercer explained this item was not in the CIP. This vehicle would replace a Jeep and act as a command vehicle and would thus replace two vehicles. Councilman Brooks felt the Fire Department needs this command vehicle. Mayor Pro tem Mercer, Councilman Davis and Councilman Jennings voted to remove the \$30,000 for the command vehicle. Councilman Woolard and Councilman Brooks voted to keep this in the budget.

EMS

There were no changes proposed for the EMS budget.

Council convened at 6:00pm for a short break and reconvened at 6:10pm

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

There were no changes proposed for the Public Works Director's Administration budget.

CEMETERY

FEES: Page 554 - Disinterment should be \$675 not \$375. The price of the lot does not include a perpetual care fee. **Page 556** –Mr. Lewis stated we are proposing a \$200 fee for perpetual care for future lots sold. A lot is one \$600 space for one grave and a plot is more than one lot. The price of the lot will go from \$600 to \$800 which will include the \$200 for perpetual care. Jim Smith, City Manager explained that the lots already purchased will be given the chance to add the \$200 perpetual care to their lots.

By motion of Councilman Jennings, seconded by Mayor Pro tem Mercer, Council added a fee for disinterment for urns in the amount of \$200.

6:30 P.M. PUBLIC HEARING ON FY 09-10 BUDGET

Mayor Jennette opened the public hearing.

Gary Tomasulo requested Council to consider adding \$20,000 for the Façade Grant Program. Secondly, Mr. Tomasulo stated he agrees we need a plan for Washington, but only if the plan will be implemented and not just put on a shelf. Finally, he believes angled parking can work in the downtown area and we should do this on a trial basis.

Bob Henkel requested Council approve \$50,000 to provide funds to complete a plan that takes into account what currently exists in our town. Millions of dollars are available through the Federal stimulus programs. This includes Grants, Historic Tax Credits and New Market Tax Credits. Without a plan all of these programs are not available. He requested Council to approve the \$50,000 required to proceed toward a

revitalized community. This is not a large price to pay considering the potential of our historical town and river side community.

There being no further comments, Mayor Jennette closed the public hearing.

MUNICIPAL BUILDING

There were no changes proposed for the Public Works Director's Administration budget. Council requested Mr. Lewis to acquire a quote for painting the interior of the Council Chambers. Mr. Lewis explained that a quote has been received for replacing the roof on the newest section of City Hall that was added to the building in 1935. The quote was for \$19,800 and this is not in the proposed budget. Mr. Lewis noted that funds may be available to fund this with allocated money proposed for the elevator replacement at a price of \$127,000 and he had budgeted \$172,000 in the FY08-09 budget. Council agreed to commit the funds in the FY08-09 budget that were allocated for the elevator repair and use the remaining funds to replace the roof.

EQUIPMENT

Justifications should reflect four employees and not five. There were no other changes proposed for the Equipment budget.

STREET MAINTENANCE

Council agreed to remove the \$25,000 for a ditch bank mower as it was not in the CIP. There were no other changes proposed for the Street Maintenance budget.

POWER BILL FUNDING

No changes were proposed for the Powell Bill Funding budget at this time.

AIRPORT FUND

No changes were proposed for the Airport Fund budget at this time.

CEMETARY FUND

No changes were proposed for the Cemetery Fund budget at this time.

WATER FUND

No changes were proposed for the Water Fund budget at this time.

SEWER FUND

No changes were proposed for the Sewer Fund budget at this time. Jim Smith, City Manager explained the City has received a proposal from Rivers and Associates to do a study to determine our sewer capacity and the amount that we can grow and still stay within our capacity. Adam Waters noted we are currently at 55% capacity at our sewer plant.

STORMWATER FUND

No changes were proposed for the Stormwater Fund budget at this time.

SOLID WASTE FUND

No changes were proposed for the Solid Waste Fund budget at this time.

ADJOURN

By motion of Councilman Woolard, seconded by Councilman Brooks, Council adjourned the meeting, until Monday June 1, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Building.

Cynthia S. Bennett
City Clerk