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Warrenton City Commission
Work Session – December 17, 2019
5:15 p.m.
Warrenton City Hall - Commission Chambers
225 S. Main
Warrenton, OR 97146

Mayor Balensifer called the work session to order at 5:16 p.m.

City Commissioners Present: Mayor Balensifer, Rick Newton, Mark Baldwin, and Tom Dyer
Excused: Pam Ackley

Staff Present: City Manager Linda Engbretson, Finance Director April Clark, Community Development Director Kevin Cronin, Public Works Director Collin Stelzig, Public Works Operations Manager Kyle Sharpsteen, Police Chief Mathew Workman, Police Detective Tyler Johnston, and City Recorder Dawne Shaw

City Manager, Linda Engbretson, noted the purpose of the work session. She gave an opening statement and noted that the current fiscal policies were created in 2002; it is time to look at them as well. She continued to note her main goals for the work session.

Community Development Director, Kevin Cronin, discussed the Planning Department budget. He reviewed his power point presentation outlining the Economic Development Strategy. He noted the DLCDC Grant that was recently awarded in the amount of \$70,000.00. He explained some of the strategies he will be developing over the next six months to a year to create a 5 year action plan. Mayor Balensifer asked if Mr. Cronin anticipated that some of the funding would come out of Urban Renewal funds. Mr. Cronin stated in the future absolutely. Conversation continued. Mr. Cronin went on to explain that as part of the proposal to continue effectively maintaining the current work load, he would like to hire a half time permit tech. This Position would prepare all the applications, send out notices, issue type I permits (lot line adjustments, checking setbacks, etc.) intake paperwork, and be the immediate customer service. In order to offset the cost of this position Mr. Cronin suggested a surcharge on all planning applications; either a flat fee or a graduating percentage based off the planning fee. Commissioner Baldwin noted his concerns on adding another fee. Discussion continued.

Police Chief, Matthew Workman, presented his power point. He discussed the growth of the community vs. the lack of growth in public safety. He noted the current issues in the police department and the challenges the department is up against. He stated he would like to increase by 1 FTE position. Discussion followed on the current department demands. Chief Workman continued noting the need for new vehicles; 3 vehicles are in need of replacement for various reasons. He explained the ideal vehicle replacement cycle. Ms. Engbretson noted 2 new vehicles were cut from the FY19/20 budget. Discussion continued on police vehicles. Mayor Balensifer asked for clarification on how many vehicles are needed right now. Chief Workman stated there

are 3 vehicles that are out of service and if we follow the recommended replacement schedule we would be due for an additional 3 vehicles; a minimum of 3 new vehicles are needed. Chief Workman continued on to discuss the condition of the Police Department; the lack of space and the need for a remodel. Discussion followed on funding and the police levy. Chief Workman continued noting the need for an evidence software program and the process involved. Mayor Balensifer asked if it's possible to "piggyback" the software license off of another City such as Astoria. Chief Workman stated he believes it would have to be a standalone, but he can look into it. He explained it is not just the system we need, but also the time and money for someone to go through the entire inventory. Chief Workman explained the need for a part time position to do evidence, and the process needed to effectively maintain the chain of custody. Discussion continued. Chief Workman also noted in the future he believes the department will need a second Sergeant. Mayor Balensifer asked for clarification on whether the evidence tech position and the archivist position are included in the 1 FTE additional position. Chief stated the evidence technician would not be part of the 1 FTE. Mayor Balensifer continued to clarify the Police Department request; 2 police vehicles immediately (3-4 if they can be penciled out), 1.5 FTE, another FTE for the admin clerk side, additional facility space, and an evidence software system with an additional technician; we would go from 1.5 FTE to 3 FTE. Conversation continued.

Public Works Director, Collin Stelzig, noted his department needs; a half time parks employee and a half time facility employee. He noted the tasks being pushed aside in the absence of a designated staff member. Commissioner Newton noted his concerns about facility maintenance. Ms. Engbretson noted that in the City of Warrenton fiscal policies there is a list of general fund priorities that the city follows. Mr. Stelzig noted all the properties the city is responsible for; 27 buildings, 11 parks, 6 leases, and miscellaneous properties. He noted we should be maintaining and looking after all of them accordingly.

Ms. Engbretson noted that the Fire Department is also a general fund department, but is not included in this presentation due to the Fire Chief transition.

Finance Director, April Clark, noted her wish is to build up the General Fund Reserves for unexpected emergencies and future facilities maintenance. She continued to note that the GFOA best practices recommends budgeting for an ending fund balance of no less than two months of general fund operating revenues or expenses. She continued to review the current financial situation. A brief conversation continued. Ms. Clark noted building the General Fund would be her department's first priority. She would also like the current part time account clerk to be full time. She explained the full time position and how it would benefit the department. Additional department needs would be a new phone system (last replaced in 2006), new flooring throughout city hall, and painting the inside of the entire city hall building. She reviewed the rough estimates outlining the department requests. Conversation continued on the projected estimates. Ms. Clark noted the estimated additional revenue in the general fund without considering overhead or beginning fund balance is an additional \$81,000.00 so we are \$448,829.00 short.

Ms. Engbretson noted a discussion at staff level; she summarized the fiscal policy priorities. She stated the only significant impact we can make to the general fund is to increase franchise fees for sewer and water by 2% which would bring in a little over \$100,000.00. Ms. Engbretson

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stated she would like Commission's direction on which of the department needs should be priority. Conversation continued on different budget cuts and overall internal changes that can be made. Discussion ensued on the CEDR dues and how much Transient Room Tax (TRT) goes to the Hammond Marina. Ms. Clark noted the amount that has to go to tourism per state law; we cannot put anymore in the general fund. Discussion continued. Ms. Engbretson again suggested raising the franchise fees. She asked if the commission is open to increasing the fee in lieu of, or what they see as a priority. Mayor Balensifer noted the planning tech position is feasible, by charging a fee for service. He also stated the franchise fee is a solution for something. He discussed TRT funds and the potential for the Port to set up a camping site on the Skipinon Peninsula. He suggested looking into the city creating a stream lining process or a special zoning overlay to make sure both the Port and the City would benefit. Brief discussion continued. Ms. Engbretson noted the Parks Board suggested a prepared food tax to pay for a parks position. Discussion continued on funding the parks and building maintenance.

Chief Workman discussed ways to raise revenue: increase police officer training fees that are charged as part of fines- commission was supportive. He continued to put forth his suggestions for increasing revenue. He suggested a public safety fee on payroll tax, additional public safety levy, an increase to the current levy, or an increase of admin fees for towed vehicles. Chief Workman noted his concern with implementing a public safety fee. He explained the fee would have to be consistent and applied in an equitable manner that will not hurt small businesses. Discussion continued. Chief Workman discussed the permanent tax rate.

Ms. Engbretson asked if the commission is interested in having the Parks Board come and pitch their proposal for a prepared food tax. Mayor Balensifer said he would like to see recommendations in writing and for a member of the board to then pitch the idea. He also stated we need to look at the short-term and long-term fixes and gave examples. Conversation continued. Commission is in agreement on increasing the admin fees on towed vehicles and increasing the police training fees on court fines. Discussion followed on the municipal court judge and his contract.

Ms. Engbretson discussed the issues the city experiences due to not enough staff or money. Discussion continued. Mayor Balensifer suggested ideas to increase revenue on lands the city already owns. Discussion continued. Mayor Balensifer asked if there was consensus without actually making a decision on directing the Parks Board to monetize park spaces as business opportunities and to have the board bring back a comprehensive recommendation. Mr. Stelzig noted it might be a tough ask for the Parks Board at the current time. The Mayor stated he will expect that if the board chair feels the Parks Advisory Board can't take on the task that he can submit in writing to him, stating the board can't – the commission can be duly notified of such. Commissioner Baldwin suggested generating a list of city lease properties that are taking up a lot of administration time; make a list, obtain a vote, and sell them. Ms. Engbretson noted she will be bringing one property to the commission for consideration. Conversation continued. Mayor Balensifer noted that topics in this meeting are those that need to be acted upon before next budget cycle. Ms. Engbretson asked for clarification. Mayor Balensifer responded, stating by June when that ends and we start a new budget season that we can have plans in place so we can start building these things up. Ms. Engbretson explained all the up and coming tasks that city

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staff are up against and she noted the objective of this meeting was to hear the commission's priorities for the upcoming budget season.

Mayor Balensifer summarized; by February Chief Workman will get the fee schedules to commission. The percentage increase in franchise fees is something that has already been presented, but there are some avenues to discuss and some numbers and such to show the commission. The public safety fee is of interest and should be back to commission before the next budget season in June. The planning Department needs to figure out the funding scheme to get another half time person in the office. The fee schedule should look into the future and entirely pay for the Planning Technician position. With this said, the planning department is taken care of, and the Police department is essentially "under construction". Parks Department is under consideration. Conversation continued. Mayor asked the record to reflect that there was a consensus on Police providing the training fee and the admin fee for vehicle towing and a shell scheme for public safety fee. The Public safety fee will not be expected in January, but will be worked on. The planning department needs to pay for itself with a long term goal in range. We will be hearing from the Parks Board. Ms. Engbretson noted she will bring back the water franchise fees, including different scenarios of 5% and 7%. The rest of department needs are still under consideration but not on the priorities list. Mayor Balensifer stated the Police Department is hurting the most. Commissioner Baldwin stated his priorities are 70% police, 30% admin for phones and building maintenance. Commissioner Dyer stated his priority is the police and agreed with Commissioner Baldwin on the phone and building maintenance. Commissioner Newton noted he doesn't want to walk away from facility maintenance because it will come back to bite us in the end. Mayor Balensifer noted his priorities are facility maintenance, and police vehicles stating we need to find a way to get police vehicles first and foremost before other police priorities. Facilities that are in need of maintenance are to be addressed first over the new phones. Conversation continued.

Mayor Balensifer noted he will draft a letter to the Parks Board and circulate the letter to the commission to see if there are any consensus or amendments to it. Ms. Engbretson noted giving the Parks Board a timeline and expectation would be very helpful.

There being no further business, Mayor Balensifer adjourned the work session at 7:42 p.m.

APPROVED:


Henry A. Balensifer III, Mayor

ATTEST:



Dawne Shaw, City Recorder