

Heber City Corporation
City Council Meeting
04/01/2011
4:00 p.m.

SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING

The Council of Heber City, Wasatch County, Utah, met in a **Special Budget Meeting** on April 1, 2011, in the City Council Chambers located at 75 North Main Street in Heber City, Utah.

Present:	Mayor	David R. Phillips
	Council Members	Eric Straddeck Robert Patterson Alan McDonald Benny Mergist
Excused:		Nile Horner
Also Present:	City Manager	Mark K. Anderson
	City Recorder	Paulette Thurber
	City PW Director	Steve Tozier

Mayor Phillips expressed appreciation to Anderson and Thurber for coming in to work on a day off.

Mayor Phillips explained the Council did not get to meet with Tozier last meeting because of a funeral Tozier had to attend. Consequently, Tozier had been asked to present his budget information to the Council during this meeting.

Anderson handed out a list of position changes Tozier was proposing. He asked Tozier to talk about the highlights of those things he thought were most important to his Department. Tozier said the problem he had was the grade structure of 13, 14, and 15. He suggested the requirements were extensive--one being the certification requirement in water and sewer. He said sometimes it was hard to meet those certifications because of the math involved. He said he wanted to pull some certification requirement out of the job descriptions so employees could make advancements more easily. Tozier felt some of his crew members were actually doing the work of a grade 17. Councilman Straddeck asked if there would be liability issues if the crew did work without the certifications. Anderson said the City was required to have a person certified in water and sewer within the organization. But as far as duties, he did not think there were liability issues. Councilman Mergist reiterated that someone had to have the certification, and then that

person could delegate. Tozier said again that presently the job descriptions required certifications so some men were not able to advance. He said he relied on Chris Davis more than others and if he couldn't get through the math problems, he would stay in the same grade indefinitely. Councilman Mergist said he thought there was a problem with the starting pay for Public Works' employees. He suggested their responsibilities were different than their fathers and grandfathers because these jobs now were more technical. He said it has been found the certifications were not as important as they used to be. Anderson said the City was getting to the size to where specialization made it not as important. Mayor Phillips asked if the Council wanted to rewrite the job descriptions. Tozier suggested just taking the certification requirements out.

Councilman Straddeck said he had some concerns with taking out the certifications. Councilman Mergist did not have any issue with it--if they could excel in other ways and function under a supervisor that had the certifications, he thought it would be okay. Tozier discussed grade increases and step increases. Councilman Mergist talked about the City paying for a course at UVU to help with the math issues. Councilman Straddeck said it rubbed him wrong to remove requirements from a job description and then pay more. He said he understood the arguments being given. However, he preferred this to not be an isolated departmental matter because he did not know if anyone was being paid for everything they did. He said if the money was not there to look at the City as a whole in terms of what is paid now, he did not want to focus on just one or two departments. Councilman Mergist suggested there was something wrong in the structure of the Public Works' Department. He said when he worked for the City he was hired as a mechanic but was held up for advancement because he did not have those certifications that did not even apply to his position. He said he did not disagree with Councilman Straddeck but felt something needed to change in that department. Councilman Straddeck said he did not want to require people to get a certification that they did not need and suggested to get something in the job description that was relevant. Anderson said maybe we could have additional job descriptions.

Councilman Patterson said he thought the Council was looking at the whole City as far as pay raise. That's what he wanted to do. Councilman McDonald said to look at the employees first and what we can do to help them. Then see what was left and look at equipment.

Tozier talked about team leaders in the Public Works' Department and said his people were partnered in pairs. Mayor Phillips felt one supervisor over 13 people was not enough. Councilman Mergist suggested a dual role of supervisor/lead man. He talked about a foreman and a leadman position. Tozier thought having team leaders was the answer because of the number of departments within the Public Works' Department. He outlined five people he wanted as team leaders and wanted those people to be advanced to a grade 17. He said he had an excellent crew and he was comfortable with them.

Councilman Mergist talked about having people in the field that could make decisions without having to go to the top—have a second level go-to guy. Tozier said a lot of his guys were uncomfortable making decisions without talking to him. Mayor Phillips said he wanted to get away from that very thing. Anderson felt if they had more pay and the title as a supervisor lead man, they would take the lead. Mayor Phillips said when an organizational change was made it had to be done properly. He talked about open positions, interviewing and then choosing the right person. Tozier indicated the people he had listed were already doing the jobs as chosen by him. Again Mayor Phillips said the Personnel Policy had to be followed.

Mayor Phillips reviewed the issues Tozier wanted the Council to discuss—consideration of step changes and taking certifications out of the job descriptions. Discussion about what it would cost to increase five people to lead positions. Additional discussion about the spread sheet Tozier had provided.

Tozier said the second thing he wanted to discuss was going from a one-man weekend duty to a two or three-man weekend duty. He talked about safety issues with just one man being on call. Discussion that this would triple the on-call expense. Anderson said one of their duties was to monitor the well and wondered about having two on-call rates.

Tozier talked about the backhoe. He said it was on duty 24/7 and if he had another one it would also be on duty 24/7. Tozier also said he needed a sewer vacor truck. Mayor Phillips said the last few years the Public Works' Department had been running without a frontend loader. It was indicated it would cost approximately \$15,000 to fix the vacor truck.

At 5:06 the Council excused Tozier and continued their discussion on other budget needs.

The Council indicated they wanted to discuss the needs of the employees first and then address capital needs. Anderson said he had put in his memo the items to be addressed so he could move forward. He indicated the numbers projected in sales tax revenue was conservative. Anderson talked about the reason for additional sales tax this year--population growth and anticipated monies from additional retail stores this summer.

Anderson said the first thing he wanted to talk about was what monies were in what funds and how much. He talked about the departmental position requests under tab 2.

Councilman McDonald indicated he wanted a part time person to clean the building, someone part time to help in the Planning Department for code enforcement and a part-time airport manager. Councilman Mergist thought the school resource officer should be eliminated. He suggested the County provided that service and if there was a communication problem between the County and City in this aspect, it needed to be addressed.

Discussion about the cleaning of the Tabernacle Office Building and getting new carpet. Anderson said some of the roof shingles were starting to pop up and that the exterior wood needed to be painted. Councilman McDonald said he wanted some additional hours spent on the grounds of this building.

Mayor Phillips said Anderson needed direction to proceed and if the Council was looking towards a COLA, what was the percentage. Councilman McDonald said some employees needed more than a COLA and suggested everyone get a certain amount and then something again in the form of a Christmas bonus. Anderson said the challenge with that was the City's compensation system had grades and steps and any increase had to be on one of those steps. Anderson indicated the steps were, on average, an increase of 3.5%. Councilman Mergist discussed lowering the COLA and going with a merit raise with a 4% cap. He said not everyone would necessarily get the 4%--he thought a small COLA for everyone and then work in a merit increase with the understanding the Council had to find a way to pay for it. He said he was willing to find the money. Anderson said one way to do an increase was in a form of a bonus and not tie it into the wage scale. Discussion about a COLA being a gift that keeps on giving where a bonus would only be a one-time thing. Councilman Mergist did not want a one-time bonus. Councilman Patterson was not in favor of one-time bonus. Councilman McDonald suggested a 2% minimum. Councilman Patterson said \$50-\$70 was peanuts and he wanted to see nothing less than \$200 a month. Councilman McDonald wanted to start at 2%. The Council asked Anderson to run numbers on a 2%, 3%, and 4.3% increase so they could see the actual numbers and to also throw in a Christmas bonus. Anderson said he could not recommend the Christmas bonus being handled as in the past and suggested it was creating a tax liability for the City. The Council wanted to give a bonus in the form of money and not certificates this year.

Councilman Patterson said he wanted to give back car allowances to Anderson and Mumford. Councilman Straddeck, Councilman McDonald and Councilman Mergist were okay with that. Mayor Phillips said he thought the City Council needed an increase, as well, and asked the Council if they would be interested in looking at a proposal. They said yes. Mayor Phillips said he would take the lead in any public hearing that was necessary. Councilman Mergist said he was okay with these suggestions but the Council had to find a way to fund it because they had cut to the bare bones already--we can't cut any more. He said that the longer a person sat on the Council, the more a person matures and sees what is necessary. Councilman McDonald said he would like to avoid a tax increase this year but seriously consider it next year. Councilman Mergist said every seminar he had attended they had preached the perils of depending on sales tax. If an increase was explained to the public, he thought it would be understood. He suggested any increase be spread over a 5-year period.

Anderson asked about storm drain fees which had been talked about during the Capital Facilities Master Plan Public Hearings. Anderson referred to the sheet he provided separately from the

binder. He discussed what other cities charged for storm drain fees. Mayor Phillips talked about a study on the appropriate amount of fees. Councilman McDonald said he would rather raise utility fees than property tax. He suggested an increase for maintenance could easily be explained and again said he wanted to hold off on a property tax increase. Mayor Phillips said he and the Council had to have the answers themselves before they could tell the public. He thought a study would do that. Additional discussion about what could bring in more revenue to offset the deficit--storm water fees, property tax and sales tax.

Mayor Phillips polled the Council on how they felt about a property tax increase. Councilman Straddeck said his goal was to get the distribution of the survey completed. His answer, therefore, was he did not know yet because he did not know if the residents wanted the Council to lower services--if they wanted more services cut, he would have to take that into consideration. Councilman McDonald said again to leave property tax alone this year and look at it next year. Councilman Straddeck said if the residents wanted more services and wanted to pay for them, then that should be part of the consideration, as well.

Anderson asked about contributions. The following were approved: Cowboy Poetry \$30,000; CJC \$5,000; Special Olympics \$600; High School Rodeo \$10,000.

Mayor Phillips reviewed other finalizations to the budget: Bring back uniform allowance and fund emergency preparedness. Anderson was asked to get information from Chief Rhoades on his car maintenance including paint and decals. Councilman Straddeck said if it proved to be too costly, then the vehicles should be replaced. Discussion about the Blazer and how long since there had been a tune up on it and if the tires on it were okay.

Anderson discussed Pressurized Irrigation. He said the City had added 53 new customers with 14 being historic Wasatch Irrigation users. Consequently, at this time 39 customers were using the system for free. He stated that a letter had been sent last year to those 53 new customers which explained that the Council would make a determination as to the charge in the spring of 2011. He said in the Capital Facilities Plan a \$16/month fee was proposed. He referred to his staff report which suggested if the City was going to expand the system throughout town, someone had to pay for it. Councilman Mergist said he was okay with a maintenance fee. However, the product inside the line should not have to be paid for by those that had shares. Anderson referred to the information provided under Tab 8. He pointed out that residents in American Fork who had water shares, were charged approximately 50% of what others were charged.

At 6:42 the Special Budget Meeting of the Heber City Council adjourned.

Paulette Thurber, City Recorder