

**City of Medical Lake
Special Council Meeting
2011 Budget Workshop**
S. 124 Lefevre Street, 5:30 P.M.
October 5, 2010

Mayor Higgins called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Council present: Brenda Redell Jeff King Shirley Maike
 Howard Jorgenson John Paikuli Art Kulibert

Council Absent: A. J. Burton

Motion was made by Councilmember King, seconded by Paikuli, to excuse Councilmember Burton from this council meeting. Council polled; all ayes.

Executive Session: Mayor Higgins called for an executive session at 5:31 PM. City Attorney read into the record: *The City Council will now go into Executive Session to consider the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee and the City's position with regard to collective bargaining issues. It is anticipated that the executive session will last 30 minutes. After the executive session, the City council will reconvene the Special City Council Meeting. The City Council will take no action on the issues discussed in executive session.* If the session needs to be extended at the end of 30 minutes it will be by majority vote of the City Council.

At 6:01 P.M. Councilmember Jorgenson made a motion seconded by King to extend the executive session for an additional 30 minutes. Council polled; all ayes.

Mayor Higgins reconvened the Special Council Meeting at 6:30 PM.

Staff present: Doug Ross Cindy McMullen Pam McBroom

Arriving at 6:30 PM Jeff Estes Joe Kokinda Ellen Fender

Others present: Cheney Free Press Reporter Ryan Lancaster, Sheriff Deputy Russell and 1 visitor.

MINUTES:

September 21, 2010 Regular Council Meeting

Motion was made by Councilmember Maike, second by King to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2010 Regular Council Meeting. Council polled; all ayes.

MAYORS WELCOME:

Mayor Higgins welcomed everyone to the Budget Workshop. He thanked staff for their hard work and expressed his wishes to set some priorities for the 2011 budget.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S OPENING REMARKS:

Administrator Ross welcomed council and updated them on the following items:

- City is financially stable at this time. The economic slump has not hit us as hard as other cities partially because we do not rely on sales tax revenue as heavily as some do.
- Having said that - he also reminded council that there is not much disposable income to make any substantial changes.
- Future revenue sources are flat and will be under estimated during this budget cycle.
- The agreement with Spokane for the water intertie at Craig Road is moving slowly but still in the works.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ITEMS:

The Mayor, City Administrator and Council discussed the following items:

- **City Staffing** – none expected for 2011. We do have a contracted planner who will submit his proposal for next year. The code enforcement officer has worked out great. Besides code enforcement he's our court security person and is the only person with a limited commission to carry a weapon. Administrator Ross has also adjusted the code enforcement officer's schedule in the summer so he can work evenings to allow him to monitor resident's compliance with the summer yard watering ordinance.

Councilmember Jorgenson also asked Mayor Higgins and staff what the cost savings would be if the court was taken care of by Spokane. Administrator Ross will look into that for council.

- **Fire/EMS Department**

Volunteer Fire Chief Estes talked with council about his 2011 budget requests. There was also much discussion between council, staff and Estes concerning coverage problems within the department. This issue is not a new one and different options/solutions were discussed. The main problem seems to be the inability to cover day shifts. Volunteer firefighters have full time jobs and few have the ability to sign up to be on call during daytime working hours. It was also noted that it is becoming more difficult to recruit new volunteers to the department. Coverage suggestions included premium pay for 2 people for 12 hours each day. Those people would have to be trained EMT's or paramedics and would have to have command and wild land certifications. Council questioned Chief Estes on several different topics including whether an officer is required to be available to go on a call with regular volunteers, the requirements of the department for all volunteers, how many of the current volunteers would qualify and be able to work in the premium level pay slot. Councilmember Jorgenson also questioned whether an officer is required to be with a volunteer firefighter when going on calls to Eastern State Hospital and Lakeland Village since there are already doctors working there. He asked if there had been any staffing recruitment done at the state hospitals because the city has an agreement with the state that would allow people working there to leave if there was a Fire/EMS call and they belonged to the ML Fire Department. Estes was also asked by Councilmember Paikuli what the department is willing to give up to fund premium pay positions. Councilmember Redell asked for input from regular fire department volunteers not just officers. She noted that if the city is going to make changes then everything needs looked at and assessed to see what is working, what needs changed, etc. Administrator Ross will be looking into options to resolve this problem and Estes was asked to come up with some viable solutions. It was noted that the city cannot make this a full time fire department – there is no continuing revenue source at this time to sustain a full time department. Mayor Higgins and council will continue working to find a resolution for this problem.

- **Additional Aerator for the Lake**
Ross reported that one more aerator is needed for the lake. They cost between \$55,000 and \$70,000 so purchasing a new one will depend on revenue for 2011. He also noted that monthly testing is done on the lake to make sure it is viable.
- **Improvement of Existing RV Area**
Staff would like to improve our WFP RV area. The problem is getting water to the existing site. There was discussion and we may try to get the electric and a sanitary dump installed this next year.
- **New City Entrance Signs and additional Solar Powered Crosswalk Signs**
Both topics were discussed. Council agrees that new entrance signs would be great if possible. If not possible repainting of the ones we have. Also if budget allows – a couple of new solar powered crosswalk signs may be purchased for very busy intersections. They cost about \$1,800 each.
- **Grader Replacement**
The city is going to be looking at used graders next year. The money for this type of replacement comes from the equipment reserve funds so it is not a current expense fund item. It was also noted that the Public Works SUV will possibly be replaced and the current one will be used for code enforcement. The vehicle currently being used by the code enforcement officer needs replaced.

COUNCIL COMMENTS/GOALS FOR UPCOMING YEAR

All council members thanked staff for the great job they are doing.

Councilmember Maike asked staff to check into getting the City's Municipal Code on line for public access. She also asked what the possible passage of Initiatives 1100 and 1105 would do to the city. It was noted that there would be a loss of current expense revenue. Some discussion ensued and a Motion was made by Councilmember Jorgenson, seconded by Redell to prepare a resolution opposing the passage of these two initiatives. Council polled; all ayes. A resolution will be prepared and presented at the next council meeting.

Councilmember King stated that he feels there are some definite impacts coming our way. He also noted that he thinks the grants we've gotten for sidewalk improvements are great and wants staff to look into applying for a grant to create designated bike lanes.

Councilmember Kulibert wants to proceed into 2011 with caution. He is appreciative of the fact that the city is in better financial shape than some other municipalities but wants to continue to be cautious of future allocations.

Councilmember Paikuli asked that the city continue to search for a solution to the problems within the Fire/EMS Department.

Councilmember Redell is looking forward to this year's budget and a fix for the Fire/EMS issues.

Administrator Ross reported that he had been notified that the STA is proposing cuts in their budget and that is done largely by discontinuing some of the current STA bus routes. Medical Lake is one of the routes that is on the short list to be cut. There was discussion and council asked Ross to prepare a letter from council to STA opposing the closure of the ML STA route. Also, council asked that STA public hearing times and dates be listed on the City web site. Citizens will have to attend these public hearings and give testimony on how this will negatively affect our community.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Higgins adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Mayor Higgins

City Clerk / Finance Director