

A workshop meeting of the City Commission was held on August 11, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Commission Chamber at the Municipal Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Eugene Fultz.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Jonathan Thornhill, Pete Perez, Christopher Lutton, Eugene Fultz, Mayor, Terrye Howell

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

**CITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:** Kenneth Fields, City Manager; Clara VanBlargan, City Clerk; Albert C. Galloway, Jr., City Attorney

**Agenda Item 2.            FY'2015-2016 Draft Budget Discussion**

Kenneth Fields, City Manager, reviewed the budget and changes to the budget since the last workshop. Insurance costs will be slightly lower next year and state revenues are expected to be a bit higher. A few options for these funds were presented to the commission including a 1% COLA increase for all employees. Some smaller possible projects were identified that could be paid for with impact fees.

Dorothy Ecklund, Finance Director, asked for confirmation from the Commission that these Recreation items be put into the budget. Mr. Fields explained that impact fees must be used to expand our facilities not just maintenance. Commissioner Lutton asked about the exercise stations if these are two more of those that are there now. James Slaton, Public/Support Services Director, confirmed that these would be two additional places to the three put in from a recent grant. Mr. Fields reviewed the other recreation projects, signage for all the parks, ADA parking at the Soccer Field and additional electric service for Lake Wailes Park.

Deputy Mayor Thornhill asked about the proposal for live streaming the commission meetings. Mr. Fields described the project and confirmed that it would cost \$7,000 for equipment to live stream the City Commission meetings and there would be an annual operating cost of \$7,000 a year.

Deputy Mayor Thornhill confirmed that we have \$98,000 of available funds and the list includes choices of what to fund. Mr. Fields confirmed this. Deputy Mayor Thornhill said that the Library money and Utilities money goes to them respectively. Ms. Ecklund confirmed this and explained that those departments have no capital projects under those amounts that the money could go towards. The list can only be funded by general fund money. Mr. Fields said that the forthcoming adjustment in our rates will cover the 5 year Utility projects including the Highway 60 expansion. Deputy Mayor Thornhill asked if this should be decided now. Ms. Ecklund suggested they give staff direction as we are getting close to September. They could take it out later if they want.

Commissioner Perez asked about the CRA funds, how is that broken up throughout the budget? Mr. Fields explained that debt service comes out of the revenue first and then there are allocations to the CRA for staff time throughout budget such as his time, the City Attorney's time and Finance's time. These are overhead allocations.

Commissioner Lutton asked if they choose the streaming cost do they need to find operating funds as well. Mr. Fields said they could come up with the money for the operating cost.

Commissioner Howell asked for clarification, do we pick and choose from the list? Mr. Fields said yes. Commissioner Howell asked how much we have. Commissioner Lutton said that we have \$98,000. Commissioner Howell noted that the list of projects is over \$400,000. Mr. Fields explained that the list is all in the CIP for future budgets. Commissioner Howell asked about the item for Roads and Alleys resurfacing for \$40,000. Mr. Fields said this would be additional to what is currently budgeted. Commissioner Howell asked if the mower is for the new cemetery. Mr. Fields said it is just a new mower and can be used for any cemetery. Commissioner Howell asked about the generator at the Police Department. Mr. Fields said there is one there now but is old. It runs now but will need to be replaced soon. Mayor Fultz asked about the

current status of the Police Department's Soffit and Fascia project, if they were experiencing any leaks. Christ Velasquez, Police Chief, said that it is starting to rot and gets weaker every time it rains. It's not a problem now but will be soon. Mayor Fultz said that concerns about streets are brought up often to him by citizens. Mr. Fields said there are two streets being addressed now, and there is some money for next year, but at some point there will need to be some major funding effort for neighborhood streets.

Commissioner Perez asked about the Document Management System can the current computers handle this. Mr. Fields said yes. Commissioner Lutton clarified that we currently don't have a management system, which things are being done manually with hard copy files for information requests? How far back will this go? Or do we start today and go forward. Mr. Slaton said that every department can use it in different ways but the goal is to have everything on there. The \$30,000 is for the software but a lot of staff time is needed to scan and index the documents. Mr. Fields said that this would be nice to have but not needed immediately. Commissioner Perez asked about a recovery system, are our files stored elsewhere. Mr. Slaton confirmed that we do have off-site storage. Commissioner Howell asked about the email archiving system. Mr. Slaton said that this would save a lot of staff time when there are requests for certain emails. Mr. Fields said that we have to save all junk mail as they are all public records. Commissioner Howell asked about the videos from the meetings. Mr. Slaton said that PGTV current archives the videos of the meetings for us. Commissioner Howell asked about the Audio/Visual upgrades. Mr. Fields said this would be similar to what the County Commission has and what is being shown in the meetings will be on the screen for viewers at home.

Commissioner Lutton asked about the Investigative Equipment if it was for the Fire Department. Chief Velasquez explained that the equipment is additional and replacement undercover equipment. They have enough for now but will need to replace and upgrade that soon.

Commissioner Perez asked about the \$73,000 for projects by impact fees which do not impact us at all. Ms. Ecklund confirmed this and said that if the Commission directs her to she can add those items to the budget.

Deputy Mayor Thornhill recommended adding the list of projects to the budget. The Commission consented to this.

Commissioner Lutton recommended moving forward on the COLA increase. Deputy Mayor Thornhill recommended doing the COLA and the \$7000 for the live streaming. Commissioner Lutton agreed but suggested finding the other \$7000 for operating it out of the current budget.

Commissioner Howell suggested that the COLA increase could wait as some things are needed first. Mayor Fultz said that he felt the COLA increase was important as an incentive for the employees.

Commissioner Perez asked about the status of the \$2million loan, if that money has been allocated yet? Ms. Ecklund explained that specific projects were identified for those funds. Half have been completed and most of the rest are underway.

Mr. Fields recommended adding back in the COLA increase as there are some salaries are beginning to lag behind. This would be a gesture of good faith to the employees. He would prefer to start the increase in October but could be deferred to January if necessary to allow for something else. Commissioner Howell asked if there are any other revenues coming in. Ms. Ecklund said there are no other revenues coming in. Commissioner Howell said that if employees can leave if they want to, they should do the job for the amount they are getting now. Mayor Fultz said the employees should get a fair shake and be considered a priority. Mr. Fields said that there is a cost to an organization that there is a cost to high turnover. Commissioner Lutton said that the 1% raise is regressive as it doesn't help the lower paid employees. Mr. Fields said that some positions at the bottom have been adjusted within the existing budget to continue being competitive. Mayor Fultz is in favor of it as it does not affect our balanced budget, if it did he would not be in favor of it. Deputy Mayor Thornhill recommended doing the COLA increase and live streaming. Commissioner Howell agreed. Mayor Fultz asked for an individual vote on this. Everyone consented to this.

Dorothy Ecklund, Finance Director, explained that she will add these to the budget, update the draft, repost it and provide a new booklet to each commissioner. The first budget hearing is Thursday September 3rd. Kenneth Fields, City Manager, pointed out that there was still \$24,000 left.

Sandra Davis, Human Resources Director, asked for confirmation that the COLA increase will start the first pay period in October. The Commission agreed with this.

Commissioner Lutton said that amount of money allows for the mower and the investigative equipment. Everyone agreed to these items.

Deputy Mayor Thornhill asked about possible changes to pension plan from new bills recently passed by the state legislature. Mr. Fields reported that Ms. Davis will soon be attending a seminar to learn about the changes, they will pass on information on those changes. Mr. Fields said that for next year our pension contribution rate will go down significantly because it is healthier and because of changes made to the plan a few years ago which capped future liability.

Mr. Fields asked if they would agree to cancel the workshop tentatively scheduled for the 25th. The commission consented to cancel the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

  
Mayor/Deputy Mayor

ATTEST:

  
City Clerk Clara VanBlargan, MMC