

TOPIC OF DISCUSSION: 2011 BUDGET WORKSHOP

Mayor Fatcher called the meeting to order.

Councilmembers in attendance were: Fatcher, Roberson, Myers, McDaniel, and Karnofski. Councilmembers Webb and Schimmel were absent.

Fire Chief Dave LaFave, Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue, spoke about a meeting he had with Finance Director Brian Butterfield several days ago concerning the City's budget. Chief LaFave asked Brian how the department heads were being asked to handle the budget issues and was told they were to consider 20 percent cuts in their departments. Cowlitz 2 currently has a service agreement with the City in the amount of \$300,000. A hand-out was given to Councilmembers that shows some of the budget cuts the fire department has already made. Even with those cuts, Cowlitz 2 will cut 20 percent (\$60,000) from their 300,000 contract amount with the City. The City will need to develop a Memo of Understanding outside the terms of the contract. Mayor Fatcher thanked Chief LaFave for the offer. Chief LaFave would like to have a workshop in the future to discuss the services they offer.

Mayor Fatcher reminded Councilmembers and the public that the proposed preliminary 2011 budget deficit amounts to approximately \$1.2 million. The department heads have come up with potential 20 percent cuts in their departments bringing the deficit down to approximately \$300,000. The City will not look the same as it did and the level of service that we will be able to provide the citizens will be impacted. It was the consensus of the Council to allow members of the public to speak about their concerns. The following individuals spoke from the audience:

Library Board Chairman Jack Koelker, 805 N. 8th Avenue, gave a history of the library. He asked Councilmembers to consider moving forward with relocating the library at the Three Rivers Mall.

Rick Von Rock, 400 N. 7th, spoke about the current tough economic times and suggested asking the citizens to pay for the services they want. The citizens need to take on some of the burden.

Mayor Fatcher spoke about some of the options to increase revenue in the future; however, there isn't much that can be done for the 2011 budget. Councilmembers were asked if they had any suggestions as to the approach they would like to take to handle the budget deficit. It was the consensus of the Council to discuss the effects of the proposed cuts for each department. There will still be a deficit of approximately \$240,000 with the offer presented by Cowlitz Two and the following cuts from the various departments:

Community Development

- Lay off 2 FTE
- Elimination of all admin functions and nuisance abatement functions
- Significant reductions in planning services, longer review times and elimination of the comprehensive plan update process

Police Department

- Loss of Captain's position
- Loss of 2 police department positions
- Reduction of jail costs to \$300,000
- Implement booking restrictions program
- No vehicle purchase

Public Works

- 4.5 Reduction in Public Works staff
- No grant preparation or CIP
- No vehicle or computers purchases
- Reduced airport support
- Removes tree trimming, alley & shoulder rocking, pot hole repairs, chip seal and traffic control to name a few

Library

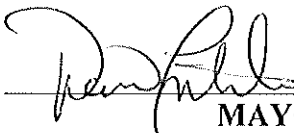
- Eliminate move to the mall
- Eliminate 1 FTE
- Eliminate travel and training
- Eliminate part-time help for Saturday shifts
- Possible timed 2nd floor closures
- An additional adjustment to already limited hours of operation
- Customer service to citizens would suffer due to decreased manpower and hours of operation

Finance and Utility

- Reduction of Finance/Utility employees 2 FTE
- Decreased window hours for receiving payments
- Customer service to citizens would suffer due to decreased manpower and hours of operation.

Lengthy discussion followed concerning each of the proposed cuts in the various departments. It was the consensus of the Council to go ahead with all the proposed cuts, except moving the library to the mall, and to consider raising the business licenses fees from \$25 to \$50 to generate more revenue. Finance Director Butterfield spoke about the possibility of employees agreeing to take other types of cuts to save jobs. It was the consensus of the Council to allow departments to be creative in order to save jobs.

Mayor Fatcher adjourned the special meeting at 6:38 p.m.


MAYOR


CITY CLERK