

Chaplin Steve White gave the invocation. Mayor David Futcher led the flag salute. The Regular Meeting of the Kelso City Council was called to order by Mayor Futcher. Councilmembers in attendance were: Futcher, Karnofski, Schimmel, Myers, McDaniel, Roberson, and Webb.

Minutes: Upon motion by Councilmember Schimmel, seconded by Councilmember Roberson, 'Approve the Minutes of the 10/5/10 Special Council Workshop and the 10/5/10 Regular Meeting,' motion carried, all voting yes.

PROCLAMATION:

Mayor Futcher read a proclamation declaring October 21, 2010, as "Lights On Afterschool Day" in the City of Kelso. Mayor Futcher presented the proclamation to some of the children in the audience, who spoke about what the program means to them.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Auditing of Accounts: \$1,712,706.73**
2. **Correcting the amount of the S. 13th Overlay Project from \$185,430.47 to \$176,600.45 (Project No. 580904 with TFT Construction, Inc.)**
3. **Approval of Animal Control Contract with Humane Society**
4. **Liquor License Renewal – Border Stop Market, 424 Long Avenue**

Upon motion by Councilmember Roberson, seconded by Councilmember Myers, 'Approve the Consent Agenda and the Auditing of Accounts in the amount of \$1,712,706.73,' motion carried all voting yes.

CITIZEN BUSINESS:

The following people spoke from the audience concerning the potential 2011 Budget cuts:

Thomas W. Walls, a Kelso Reserve Officer, 1005 W. 21st Avenue, spoke in opposition to the proposed police officer cuts. If there are fewer officers, response priorities will have to be made and officers' safety will be jeopardized without adequate backup.

Darrell Frost, 1903 ½ Allen, spoke about the need for an adequate police force to keep citizens safe and the challenge Councilmembers have to prioritize when making budget cuts.

Kirk Wiper, Kelso Police Officers Association President, spoke about how the police department has prided themselves in serving the City and the need to keep the officers and citizens safe. The costs in the long run to relationships that have been created through years of service to the community, officers' safety, and citizens' safety, will far outweigh the short-term reduction you will see if police positions are reduced.

Jo Brewer, 1240 Sycamore Place, Longview, spoke in opposition to the proposed police cuts. During this economic crisis, there is an increase in crime, domestic violence, and drug and alcohol abuse.

Anthony Carrera, 803 S. 6th Avenue, spoke about more people taking the law into their own hands to protect themselves and their property if there is a reduction in the police department.

Merrill Berger, C & C Logging, 2207 Talley Way, spoke about the great job police officers are doing during these economic times when crime is going up. Due to safety issues for citizens, businesses, and the police officers, Councilmembers need to look at other areas to cut rather than the police department.

Rick Von Rock, 400 N. 7th Avenue, spoke about challenging citizens to come up with ways to increase the revenue during these difficult times. What are citizens willing to sacrifice to keep what we have?

Anna Hight, 1803 E. Terrace Way, spoke about the professionalism of the Kelso Police Officers when she had to call 911. Everyone left the incident safely. Having police officers equipped, well trained, well rested, and on the streets where they belong is more important than fixing potholes, getting Christmas decorations, and having to wait in line to pay a water bill.

Chaplain Steve White, Castle Rock, spoke about the welfare of the officers and their families when officers have to work extra hours to keep things covered.

Jason Harris, Castle Rock, Head of Security for Target, spoke about the solid relationship they have with the Kelso Police Department. Violent crimes in the store have increased during these serious economic times and they need the officers to continue protecting their patrons and staff.

Veryl Anderson, 1000 N. 19th, retired City of Kelso Finance Director/City Clerk, spoke about this being a budget for the entire City and not just the police department. She suggested looking at other funds that aren't part of the general fund budget. Councilmembers and staff need to look at the entire City and cut in other places.

Wayne Nelson, former Kelso Chief of Police, 322 Burma Rd., Castle Rock, spoke about the amount of money that has already been invested in each police officer such as the training at the police academy and field training. It takes about a year to get the officer street ready. When officers are cut, the investment is gone. At a later date, if the positions are filled, the City will have to do it all over again.

Mayor Fletcher reiterated that there isn't a single person on the Council who wants to cut anyone in the police department. I think we have the best department in the county and I appreciate the leadership of the past and present police chiefs. Our hands are tied in many ways. We were hoping the development would move forward at the Kelso Wye which would have brought in revenue. The police department is more than half of the City's \$7 million dollar budget, so there needs to be some impact in that department. I appreciate the support Kelso citizens have shown tonight.

Mayor Fletcher called a recess. The meeting was called back to order at 7:58 p.m.

CITIZEN BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

Angela Fowler, 605 N. 5th, spoke about Witches Haven, an event for the kids that will be in downtown Kelso on Halloween from 4:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Several businesses and churches are helping to make this a great event. Councilmember Myers said the depot volunteers may want to be a part of the event and Councilmember Roberson suggested presenting the idea at the KDRA meeting tomorrow night.

COUNCIL BUSINESS:

Retirement Incentive Proposal: City Manager Dennis Richards spoke about the voluntary retirement incentive proposal for employees who are eligible. Employment compensation for layoffs would cost the City approximately \$23,000 for each person who is laid off. There are four employees who have indicated they are interested in taking the retirement offer. City Manager Richards would also like to change the deadline for employees to turn in the applications from October 22nd to November 5th to allow employees more time to consider the proposal. Discussion followed. **Upon motion by Councilmember Schimmel, seconded by Councilmember McDaniel, 'Implement the voluntary incentive program as outlined.'** Further discussion followed. **Motion carried, all voting yes.**

MANAGER'S REPORT:

Dennis Richards: Denny presented Mayor Futcher with a certificate and lapel pin from AWC for his completion of the **Advanced Certificate of Municipal Leadership Program.**

STAFF REPORTS:

Janean Parker: No report

Michael Kerins: No report

Cindy Donaldson: We are having three Halloween Parties at the Kelso Library. Monday night there will be a teen party from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday is the annual family costume party at 7:00 p.m., and Thursday at 10:00 a.m. is the preschool Halloween party. All are welcome.

Andrew Hamilton: As you have seen by the large attendance at tonight's meeting, the budget crisis affects our officers and the department. The public is behind us and supports the police department. We have quality people and no matter what decision the Council makes, those quality people will remain in the same manner and will continue to do their jobs.

Brian Butterfield: The budget is just about ready to present to Council. We are still about \$100,000 out and will probably have to go into reserves. FTE's in all departments are being affected. We are all in this together.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

John Karnofski: No report

Rick Roberson: 1) KDRA will have a meeting tomorrow night here in the Council Chambers. We will have a presentation of the Main Street program. 2) The Town Hall Meeting will be November 17th at Wallace.

Dan Myers: Nobody likes to see layoffs. I have worked for many businesses that closed and have been out of a job many times. I have a great deal of empathy for those who will be affected.

Todd McDaniel: 1) At the last Council Meeting I spoke about the transportation plan Cowlitz Transit Authority (CUBS) is working on. The plan will be discussed at a meeting on November 17th. 2) Kelso's Homecoming is Friday. If Kelso wins, they will have a good chance of making the playoffs. 3) I would like some direction concerning the potential plastic bag ordinance. Discussion followed. Upon motion by Councilmember Myers, seconded by Councilmember McDaniel, '**Request staff to draft an ordinance banning plastic bags.**' Further discussion followed.

Rick Von Rock, 400 N. 7th, spoke from the audience about the elimination of plastic bags in the community being good for the environment and the importance of supporting the local citizens who work in paper and wood products. Mr. Von Rock suggested the issue could be put on the ballot.

Mayor Fatcher spoke about being willing to encourage the use of something that originates in our community, but not wanting to take away a person's right to choose. Councilmember McDaniel voted yes. Councilmembers Roberson, Webb, Schimmel, Myers, Karnofski, and Fatcher voted no. **Motion failed 1 to 6.**

James Webb: I am all for discussing the plastic bag issue at another time. Our focus at this time needs to be on the budget issues.

Gary Schimmel: 1) I am pleased to see that citizens are interested in what's going on with the various departments and how it affects services. 2) Spoke about the possibility of reducing the Council's part of the budget by 20 percent. City Attorney Parker said there is a statutory prohibition against raising or lowering salaries during a Councilmember's term. Any changes would actually take effect after the next election; however, Councilmembers in other cities have addressed this by volunteering to give back a portion of their salary.

David Futcher: Thanked citizens for their participation.

Anthony Currena, 803 S. 6th, spoke from the audience about the possibility of charging a booking fee to increase revenue. Councilmember McDaniel said that is already in place.

Brian Butterfield: The preliminary budget will be available November 1st. The first budget hearing needs to be scheduled. It was the consensus of the Council to set the budget hearing for Thursday, November 4th, at 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business, Mayor Futcher adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.



MAYOR



CITY CLERK