

November 20, 2008

A special meeting of the Scandia City Council was held on the above date. Mayor Dennis Seefeldt called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. The following were present: Council Members Mike Harnetty, Donnette Yehle, Dolores Peterson, Pete Crum and Mayor Dennis Seefeldt. Incoming Council Member Connie Amos and City Treasurer Colleen Firkus were also present.

The following potential revenue increases were discussed:

- a) Community Center Rentals increased as follows:

	<u>Resident</u>	<u>Non-Resident</u>
Hall	\$200	\$475
Hall Previous Day Setup	\$100	\$150
Kitchen Use	\$300	\$300
Heritage Room (same)	\$ 75	\$100
Security	\$135	

- b) Minimum Bldg Permit Fee increased to \$100.
c) Utility Permit Fee increased to \$150 – roads to be inspected after completion. Mayor Seefeldt thinks city should have a deposit/letter of credit to see if the road remains in good condition for a period of time after digging or boring.
d) Council Member Yehle suggested we have an Administrative fine on illegal signs. Ordinance would be rewritten when Comp. Plan ordinances are written. Maybe have other Administrative fines written into ordinances at the same time, i.e. snowmobile on sidewalks, and other existing ordinances.
e) Council Member Yehle suggested that city cut professional expenses by not having the engineer at every meeting (\$50 per meeting) if there are no projects or nothing new to discuss. Council agreed. Also, Planner (\$105 per mtg.) may not be necessary at all meetings. Yehle indicated the city has a “very qualified staff in Anne & Steve, who could make that decision as to whether or not the Planner is needed at a meeting.

Increases would be effective January 1, 2009, once passed by the Council.

Uptown Sewer

Council discussed the costs of removing the Rasmussen house, accessory structure, and fuel tank and did not want to pass the costs onto Uptown users, but the ordinance/agreement should be looked at to include future expenses related to the sewer/water system. Denny suggested a meeting with church personnel to discuss the church’s benefit of the water and sewer system and sharing all expenses.

201 Sewer System

Council decided to increase 201 fees by 20%, which will result in a \$110 annual increase. A letter of explanation is to be sent with the February bill explaining the reasons for the increase: 1) Cover a deficit in the 2008 budget that resulted from unexpectedly high pumping costs this year,

2) Increase reserves for future system repairs and pumping that occurs every three years, and 3) Meet State Auditor's expectations of adequate reserves. Staff is working with the County to anticipate actual expenses and budget accordingly

Fire Dept. Budget

Mayor Seefeldt also said the increase in the May Twsp. fire contract will be at a minimum of \$6,000 and would cover the Rev/Exp difference. Council Members Crum and Harnetty suggested that fire contracts could be based on population rather than number of houses as the majority of calls is for medical, not house fire. Maybe data could be obtained from Sheriff's office on number of medical calls to May Twsp. Veteran's Camp must have a lot of calls.

Council Member Crum presented info he gathered on siren effectiveness. Said the trend is to not put in new sirens. He cited several surveys and news reports on sirens. Sirens are expensive, only good for those in range when outside – still need to go inside to listen to radio/TV, wind direction and atmospheric pressure affects range, 1960's technology, need staff to educate population on meaning of siren calls – repeatedly over time, need staff to give direction on how to respond, may give false sense of security (Crum's opinion), people tend to move toward the danger when notified, one survey said 80% people liked having a siren, but not informed of costs. Seefeldt, Crum and Harnetty thought giving away weather radios to residents would be more cost effective and more useful. Seefeldt cited concerns over six firefighters retiring and the Fire Relief fund being bankrupt at end of 2009, and would rather fund firefighters' pension.

Notice of Proposed Total Budget and Property Taxes

Council member Harnetty and Mayor Seefeldt said the major question that will be asked about the public notice is why are taxes going up 9% when expenses are going down 7%? They would like to see this question answered in the presentation prior to it being asked. Otherwise, the Council thought the presentation was great last year and would like to see it again this year with the video about what affects taxes at the beginning.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Firkus
Treasurer