

August 23, 2011

A special meeting of the Scandia City Council was held on the above date for the purpose of discussing the draft 2012 budget. Mayor Randall Simonson called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. The following were present: Council members Connie Amos, Sally Swanson, Chris Ness, and Jim Schneider, and Mayor Randall Simonson. Staff: Administrator Anne Hurlburt, Colleen Firkus, City Attorney David Hebert, Fire Chief Jim Finnegan and Assistant Fire Chiefs Mike Hinze and Bill Havener.

Fire Department Budget Review

Administrator Hurlburt noted a change in the Fire Department Budget; the 2012 required municipal PERA contribution was reduced to \$18,258. The change is likely due to investment returns, but staff will check the number with PERA.

Mayor Simonson asked some questions of the Chief Finnegan on several topics. Regarding the CAD system, Finnegan indicated that they will delay some equipment purchases to meet the cost of the CAD system early next year. Finnegan indicated that they try to get their equipment on a rotation schedule to spread out the replacement costs. However, since turnout gear is not on a replacement schedule, they will be applying for a SAFER grant to replace the turnout gear. In the meantime, they have some old gear in storage they can use if necessary. Regarding any recruitment problems, Finnegan indicated they had a couple guys pondering retirement and that they would probably start recruiting again next year. Swanson asked about using an Explorer program to get additional help. Finnegan stated that kind of program took a lot of management and the managers already have a lot on their plates. Also, there are too many things competing for kids' time, so it is hard to get a commitment. Schneider asked about the line item for Fire Protection Services. Finnegan indicated it was the city's contract with May Twsp. which will be renegotiated for next year. Budget assumes a 3% increase.

Property Tax Impact Worksheets

Hurlburt presented some preliminary data on 2012 taxable property values and tax rates. The worksheets estimate the impact of the 2012 proposed local levy on residential homestead taxes. These are only estimates and the actual values will be different. The State has implemented a Market Value Exclusion to replace the Homestead Credit. The result is the local tax rate will increase even if the levy stays the same, and individual property taxes are estimated to increase.

Building Official/Maintenance Supervisor Position

Simonson reviewed the bullet points of Hurlburt's report. Discussion ensued as to how Steve does his job. Simonson suggested he could take calls during set times of the day, like the electrical inspector, or have set times to meet with the public. Swanson likes good customer service, but it appears other work is not getting done as he is always being interrupted, and there has to be a balance. Hurlburt agreed that Steve is spread a little thin as he has been doing stuff he could delegate to a maintenance person, if there were a maintenance person available. Additional maintenance staff was in the 2011 budget, but was cut by the council early in the year as not being necessary. Instead a seasonal person was hired to cut grass. Swanson stated she can't see how two different jobs can be filled by one person. Hurlburt responded that the previous council used current staff to economically fill a staffing need. Simonson thought it seemed an injustice to

expect Steve to fill both roles without the training and experience required to do the new job effectively. Hurlburt said Steve has built a good team over the past year with the Public Works staff and he has gained a lot of experience. Simonson asked if Hurlburt would object to the Full-time Maintenance Supervisor position and could the city afford such a position. Hurlburt responded she would not object to more maintenance staff and the city has the taxing authority to levy what they need to meet expenses.

Swanson asked where staff was at with the sign reflectivity project, the sewer project and the new street policy. Hurlburt indicated they are on target with the sign project. The sewer work has been started with the completed engineering report and the budget numbers. She will be working with Hebert on the new Uptown Sewer ordinance and with Steve on the new road policy. Simonson asked how much of Hurlburt's time the EIS is taking. Hurlburt indicated it is a significant project and has recently taken up to 20% of her time, but all her time, and anything she delegates to the city's consultant, is being billed back to Tiller.

The discussion changed to ask to whether or not a Maintenance Supervisor position should be part-time or full-time. Simonson suggested the city see if there are any takers for a part-time position, and if not, go with a full-time position. Schneider and Amos thought part-time would be sufficient for the position. Ness and Swanson thought full-time was needed. Hurlburt indicated there is enough work to keep a full-time person busy, and to get a qualified person the position should be full-time with benefits. Hurlburt suggested keeping Steve as the part-time supervisor and hiring another full-time maintenance person. Swanson suggested Steve stay on as part-time building official with a pay cut. Simonson said they would have to educate the community that levels of service will change and that the Council will have to support/defend staff if they have to limit their time with the public to accomplish their work. Hebert asked if the Council was not exacerbating the problem by requesting more work with less staff and no pay increases. Schneider suggested the city take over permitting Individual Septic Treatment Systems (ISTS) from the county to help pay for staffing.

Council requested staff to prepare a full-time Maintenance Supervisor job description to include sewer maintenance abilities, and a part-time Building Official position to include zoning and code enforcement. Hurlburt asked Council if they had a time-line in mind as she will have to find contractual help to cover Steve's duties if he decides to leave. Council said the new positions would be effective the first of the year.

ADJOURNMENT

Swanson, seconded by Amos, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Firkus
Treasurer