

MINUTES
City of Brookings
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

Brookings City Hall Council Chambers
898 Elk Drive, Brookings, Oregon 97415

Monday, June 29, 2009

Call to Order

Mayor Anderson called the special Council meeting to order at 5:31pm.

Roll Call

Council Present: Mayor Larry Anderson, Councilors Hedenskog, Gordon, Kitchen and Pieper; a quorum present.

Staff Present: City Manager Gary Milliman, Administrative Services Director Janell Howard, Fire Chief Bill Sharp and Chief Water Treatment Plants Operator Ray Page.

Other Present: Curry Coastal Pilot Reporter Scott Graves and approximately 30 public.

Budget Hearings/Resolutions

The public hearing was opened in the matter of Resolution 09-R-918, adopting a supplemental Budget for FY 2008/2009. There were no public comments and the hearing closed.

Director Howard generally stating that the financing of the tower was the major expenditure in the 2008-2009 Supplemental Budget.

Councilor Hedenskog moved, a second followed and Council voted unanimously to adopt Resolution 09-R-918, adopting a Supplemental Budget for FY 2008-2009.

The public hearing was opened in the matter of Resolution 09-R-923, approving appropriations transfers for FY 2008-2009. There were no public comments and the hearing closed.

Director Howard generally stated that appropriations transfers under Resolution 09-R-923, were were housekeeping items from the previous fiscal year budget.

Councilor Pieper moved, a second followed and Council voted unanimously to adopt Resolution 09-R-923, approving appropriation transfers for FY 2008-2009.

The public hearing was opened in the matter of Resolution 09-R-919. There were no public comments and the hearing closed.

Councilor Hedenskog moved, a second followed and Council voted unanimously to adopt Resolution 09-R-919, declaring the City of Brookings' election to receive State revenues for FY 2009-2010.

The public hearing was opened in the matter of Resolution 09-R-920, adopting the City of Brookings Budget, declaring tax levied and making appropriations for the FY 2009/2010, and to categorize the levy.

Public comments were received from the following:

Pat Sherman, PO Box 1140, Brookings, generally commented on the importance of the budget given the current state of the economy and the increases in fees and taxes and City salaries. In particular Sherman remarked that wages could be frozen, Planning Department staffing could be cut and/or consolidated, the City Recorder function could be returned to the Finance Director, the Council could go without laptops and the reserve fund could be reduced to 8% to save money

and suggested that Council take another look at the budget and do more cutting. Sherman also introduced written testimony for the record [on file with the Agenda Packet].

Harold Thiesen, 1223 Barkley Lane, Brookings, stated that he had lived in Brookings for 36 years and served on the Budget Committee for over 20 years. Generally, Thiesen commented that seniors are losing 50-75% of their income and didn't think it was fair that City salaries were being increased. Thiesen suggested that the City cut salaries and use volunteers to do the work if City employees quit due to wages being frozen. Thiesen also commented that the City should have made arrangements to deal with the current economic downturn.

Larry Aslinger, 439 Buena Vista, Brookings, asked if any employee was receiving more than a 20% salary increase and generally remarked that if the City was planning to give any employee a 20% increase, this was extremely excessive, no matter the position, and that increases of even 5% were excessive.

John Johnson, 632 Hassett Street, Brookings, generally urged Council to take a good look at their actions on the budget, specifically as regards increasing taxes and fees while people were scratching to get by in order to retain credibility with the public.

All public comments having been heard, Mayor Anderson closed the hearing.

Generally, Mayor Anderson, stated that the budget process had been a difficult one; Council had "...spent a long time in dealing with how to figure out how to pay our bills," including rate reviews during at least three workshops and three budget meetings; the 3% Cost of Living Increase (COLA) was negotiated last year during Union negotiations in which both general and police unions participated; there had not been a 20% increase in any employee's salary; salaries had been understated in the last budget; and pending development projects will require the expertise of the Planning and Building Departments in the near future. Mayor Anderson further stated that prior to the last Council, water rates had not been raised in 18 years, and when the rates were finally increased, a Consumer Price Index (CPI) annual adjustment was also adopted.

City Manager Milliman generally stated that Council had elected to apply the 3% COLA negotiated for the unions to non-union employees; the budget reflects the 3% COLA and a 5% step increase available to many employees; the City Recorder position was reclassified last year at a rate of around 10%; and the City Manager position was budgeted to receive the same COLA and contracted 5% performance increase that all other employees receive.

Director Howard generally confirmed the Mayor's statement that the total increase in the staff salary line item had indeed been understated in the previous budget as \$127,000 when in fact it was \$145,000.

Councilor Hedenskog generally stated that Council had agreed to the City Manager's proposal to reclassify Joyce Heffington as City Recorder because, while the AS Director held the title of City Recorder, Heffington had been doing the work and should be paid accordingly.

Councilor Gordon generally stated that the topic of consolidating City and County Planning Departments had been discussed in the past, and had been discontinued due to concerns regarding how the County would handle City matters.

Generally, Councilor Pieper stated that his main contention with the budget was the increasing amount of funds being transferred to the General Fund from fees collected under the water and wastewater accounts, particularly the 4% termed as a "franchise fee;" the general disconnect the budget had with Main Street; and non-union employees receiving the 3% COLA increase negotiated for union employees.

Councilor Hedenskog generally stated that he had considered the same issues as Councilor Pieper, but had resolved his issues with this budget, while discussing with Council what could be done prior to the next budget process.

Generally, Councilor Gordon stated that, despite numerous meetings, public participation had been minimal, with no major concerns expressed. He further stated that Council worked hard to make sure that the budget was balanced, and that City employees work hard to provide the public the services they require.

Mayor Anderson generally commented that while he was personally feeling the situation on Main Street as much as anyone, the budget process, with one unfilled position on the committee, had been extensive and difficult, and encouraged those attending to participate in future budget processes prior to the matter coming to a vote before Council.

Councilor Gordon moved, a second followed and Council voted to adopt Resolution 09-R-920, the City of Brookings Budget, declaring tax levied and making appropriations for the FY 2009/2010, and to categorize the levy, with a “No” vote from Councilor Pieper.

Rates, Fees & Charges/Resolutions

Public comments under this item were as follows:

Judy Kaplin, 441 Buena Vista Loop, Brookings, generally commented that she appreciated Councilor Pieper for understanding that residents do not have the income to pay fees that keep getting added on and that it doesn't make sense that City employees are getting 8-10% increases.

Tim Patterson, 621 Chetco, Brookings, generally commented that while he didn't agree with everything in the budget, he was very impressed with the budgeting process that had taken place. Patterson also commented that he hoped Council would work on the Harbor Sanitary issue, increasing the amount they are paying before next year's budget process; look into the “science of the dewatering project,” stating that spending \$2 million on this project seemed unnecessary; look at the increases imposed per EDU for some uses which seem very high, suggesting that the number of classes on the commercial side could be decreased. Patterson also thanked Council for their effort during a difficult process.

Mayor Anderson generally stated that while the practices that led to current Harbor Sanitary District fees are under review, the District is paying the amounts required of them by agreement. Mayor Anderson further stated that since the sewer bond was originally passed, the state legislature changed the rules, not the City; that the City has to comply with these legislative changes while meeting its obligations; and that after reviewing the rate study, Council determined that the increase should be across the board rather than imposed upon any one group.

Director Howard generally stated that the rates in Resolution 09-R-924, adopting water rates, fees and charges for FY 2009-2010, included the 5.2% rate increase as approved by the Budget Committee.

Councilor Kitchen moved, a second followed and Council voted to adopt water rates, [fees and charges] for FY 2009-2010 with a “No” vote from Councilor Pieper.

Director Howard generally stated that the 8.6% increase in sewer rates, fees and charges for FY 2009-2010 under Resolution 09-R-925, were as approved in the budget.

Councilor Kitchen moved, a second followed and Council voted to adopt sewer rates, [fees and charges] for FY 2009-2010, with a “No” vote from Councilor Pieper.

Director Howard generally stated that Resolution 09-R-926, reflected a decrease in System Replacement fees for 2009-2010, based on the CPI-U.

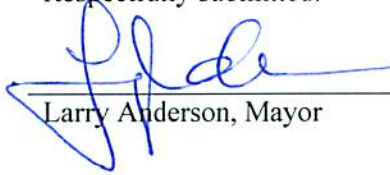
Councilor Kitchen moved, a second followed and Council voted unanimously to adopt Resolution 09-R-926, adopting System Replacement fees for 2009-2010.

Adjournment

Councilor Gordon moved, a second followed and Council voted unanimously by voice vote to adjourn at 6:29pm.

A meeting of the Urban Renewal Agency immediately followed.

Respectfully submitted:



Larry Anderson, Mayor

ATTESTED:
this 28th day of July 2009:



Joyce Heffington, City/Recorder