

# BUDGET WORK SESSION

August 7, 2019 – 5:30 pm

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In Attendance:

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**Members Present:** Mayor Janet Winkler, **Commissioners:** Larry Chapman, Jonathan Greer, Rick Shew, Ann Smith and Bill Warren

**Members Absent:** Commissioner Barry Mitchell

**Others Present:** Town Manager, Rebecca Bentley, Chief of Police, Richard Blevins, Assistant Finance Officer, Michelle Coffey, Town Clerk, Tammy Swanson, and HUB Station Manager, Janice Woodie

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Call to Order:

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Mayor Janet Winkler called the meeting to order at approximately 5:30 p.m.

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Vehicle Replacement – Budget Revision:

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Chief Blevins discussed the accident involving one of our police vehicles. Officer Wesley Crowe on his way home from picking up his patrol vehicle, was involved in an accident. The accident occurred on Beecher Anderson Road when a driver pulled out in front of Officer Crowe, and his vehicle t-boned the other vehicle. The driver of the other car was bruised and had minor injuries. There were two passengers in the other vehicle, but they were not injured. The other driver was cited by the Highway Patrol as being at fault in the accident.

Chief Blevins stated that our vehicle was towed to Keen's Body Shop, where an insurance adjuster looked at the vehicle and declared it totaled. He added that our vehicle was a 4-year old charger with approximately 53,000 miles. Chief Blevins commented that when the accident happened, every air bag in the vehicle deployed. We were offered \$15,500 for the vehicle by the insurance company. Chief Blevins stated that some of the equipment has been removed from the vehicle and could possibly be used in a replacement vehicle. However, if we purchase a 2020 vehicle, it will be on the road for probably 8 years, but will have equipment that could potentially be 15 to 16 years old when the vehicle is retired.

Chief Blevins stated that the 2019 Dodge Chargers were the last rear wheel drive Charges that can be purchased. Dodge will not take any more orders. The Charges are now all wheel drive, and if we had ordered a car 2 weeks ago, it would be late January before we would get the vehicle.

Michelle stated that the offer of \$15,500 from the other insurance company was declined for the vehicle. Our car had 52, 898 miles on it, but the insurance company was comparing it to vehicles with 76,000 to 106,000 miles. She stated that we asked for \$21,000 - \$18,000 for the car and \$3,000 for equipment. Michelle stated that Granite Insurance is looking into our options.

Rebecca commented that we are being charged storage, etc. for the vehicle while decisions are being made about the vehicle.

Chief Blevins stated that he would prefer to have a new and equipped vehicle. The question is whether or not we can use any of the old equipment. He gave the following cost estimates: vehicle - \$24,511 + equipment \$17,534 = \$42,045 – If the radio from the wrecked vehicle can be used, the equipment cost would be \$14,145, making the replacement cost \$38,656.

Janet asked if there is anywhere we could sell the old equipment.

Chief Blevins stated that the old equipment would be considered scrap.

**Motion: (Larry Chapman/Rick Shew) to approve spending up to \$40,000 for a replacement patrol vehicle and equipment. Unanimously approved.**

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#### HUB Station Tenants:

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Janice Woodie stated that the Focus Group is moving to Gateway School. They have submitted their 60-day notice, and will be leaving in September. Their rent has been paid for July, August, and September. Janice discussed the rent Focus was paying which equated to \$ 0.61 per sq. ft.

Janice stated that Teresa Branch with Smart Start had expressed interest previous in renting the Focus space if it ever became available. Janice asked if we should let Teresa know that Focus is moving. Janice commented that Smart Start is currently renting space in B Building.

Rick asked if Teresa had asked about the space recently.

Janice stated that she had not, but she has indicated that the space Smart Start is currently renting is not large enough.

Ann and Bill shared information with the Board about use of the building without Focus. Ann stated that Smart Start does not fit the criteria of an art center.

Janet stated that we need to discuss this situation. She stated that we know the plan for the building, but we need to recoup the income we will be losing without Focus. Janet commented that whoever is in the space has to pay for the space. We would be doing our residents a disservice if we just give this space away.

Both Ann and Bill agreed that the space cannot be just given away.

Rick stated that he feels there should be no problem renting out the space for maybe even more money.

Janet encouraged the Board to not make a hasty decision. She stated that the entire Board needs to make the decision as to what is moving into the vacated space. She stated that we are not going to fund these two buildings on the back of our residents. Janet commented that we need the revenue.

Janice Woodie asked if we need to start advertising the space for rent.

Janet stated that we need to hold off on advertising the space. She told Janice to let people know that the Board is aware Focus is leaving, but the Board is discussing how the space would be handled in the future. Janet commented that it could take a few months and several meetings to make this decision.

Larry commented that we can't wait too long. We need to be collecting rent for the space.

Bill estimated that it could possibly take until December or January to make decisions and get the space rented.

Ann encouraged the staff to not to get too upset about the loss of rent.

Rick stated that he sees this as an opportunity to make things happen with the art center.

**Naming Rights for Rooms at HUB Station:**

Janice Woodie stated that the HUB Station Steering Committee is in the middle of a fundraiser that involves offering naming rights for the rooms at HUB Station. She stated that she needs Board approval for the requests that have been received for naming rights in Building A.

<b><u>Donation</u></b>	<b><u>Donation Amt.</u></b>	<b><u>Space Requested</u></b>	<b><u>Name Requested for Room</u></b>
1 – Mary Lindsey	\$ 5,000	A-110 Catering Room	The Lindsay-Andrews Hospitality Suite
2 – Jimmy Hemphill	\$ 5,000	A-206 (Upstairs)	Hemphill Family David-Amy-Nancy-Jimmy
3 – Ron & Shirley Kiziah	\$ 5,000	Room 8	The Kiziah Family Ron, Shirley, Jennifer, Aaron
4 – Kathy Carroll	\$ 5,000	Principal's Office A or Office Beside (Office C)	Joel Carroll Family Joel, Kathy, Jody, Ryan

Janice stated that the plan is to display the names of the rooms on the doors with brass plaques.

Rebecca suggested that the names be displayed on the transom.

Rick mentioned that the names of the rooms at the Business Center (B Building) are being displayed on the transoms, and it seems to work well. He stated that he does not want the names to be too small, and he suggested that the names could be done on something other than brass.

**Motion: (Larry Chapman/Bill Warren) to approve the names as requested for the rooms at HUB Station Building A. Unanimously approved.**

Discuss Inmate Labor Contract:

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Rebecca stated that it had been brought to her attention that the Board might want to consider using inmate labor again. Rebecca explained that using inmate labor has changed from when we used it before. First of all, we have to pick up the inmates and monitor them while they are here – no guard. This means our Public Works Dept. is responsible for the men all day, even during their own lunch break. Rebecca commented that because of this, we have some Public Works Staff that are opposed to using the inmates.

Chief Blevins stated that when we had inmate labor before, he saw the inmates just standing and watching our staff do all the work. He commented that with doing the mowing, it is sometimes difficult to realize how far the inmates get away from our staff, which creates an opportunity for someone to drive along and drop off contraband to the inmates. Chief Blevins stated that when we put an orange shirt on the inmates, they look just like our workers, and some people cannot tell the difference which can cause problems. He discussed some of the problems that were experienced in the past with using inmate labor, and he said that he is opposed to using the inmates again.

Larry asked what happened to the vests that signify they are inmates.

Richard stated that the prison keeps up with the vests.

Larry stated that he is the one that is interested in checking on using the inmate labor again. He commented that he feels they have been a big help to the Town in the past, and possibly could be once again.

Rebecca stated that without a guard to watch the inmates, it is a completely different situation. Our staff would be completely responsible for the men. Rick Francum has stated that he would be responsible for these workers the entire time they are here. He would pick them up, and work through his lunchbreak to watch them. Norman Crump who should be the one responsible, would do what he is told, but he is indifferent to using the inmates again. Jimmy Plunk is opposed to using inmates, and Jim Powell would do what he is told to do. Jimmy Plunk believes the inmates are more trouble than they are worth.

Rick commented that he would be interested in finding out how much using the inmates would actually help the Public Works Department.

Chief Blevins commented that we did have an inmate injured by being run over by the chipping machine.

Rebecca stated that it is not uncommon for the inmates to get injured so they can go home. The inmate that was injured while working here tried to sue us. Rebecca commented with that being said, leaf season is so hard on our staff, and we could use the extra help.

Larry stated that he doesn't think we need 10 inmates, but Rebecca needs to have the authority to get a few to help if needed.

Janet stated that she wishes we could get temp employees to help during the busy times, but temp employees cannot work in the Public Works Department due to working around the machinery.

Rick asked if we have to sign a contract and take the inmates even when they are not needed.

Rebecca stated that we have to pay a contract for \$520 and get two inmates. Our staff also has to take training to look after them. She stated that she would have to find out more information about the program if the Board decides to use the inmates again.

Rick stated that sometimes an intern can just slow everything down. He stated that he is really undecided about using the inmates.

Rebecca stated that she had a colleague once who was a former prison warden for Hudson. In his opinion, we should never have inmates around the innocent public. He believed you never really knew what you were dealing with in working with inmates.

Larry stated that he would like to have the option of using the inmates if we need them.

**Motion – (Bill Warren/Larry Chapman) to request that Rebecca find out about negotiating a year-long contract for using inmate labor, and report her findings to Board.**

**The Board voted on the motion as follows:**

**Commissioners Bill Warren, Larry Chapman and Ann Smith voted in favor of the motion.**

**Commissioner Rick Shew voted against the motion.**

**The motion carried 3 to 1.**

**(Commissioner Jonathan Greer entered the meeting.)**

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Public Comment & Informal Discussion:

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**Services Scheduled for Rusty Craig.** Rebecca stated that funeral services for Rusty Craig have been scheduled for Friday, August 9<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. at Greer McElveen Chapel. Receiving of friends will be from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. Rebecca commented that Rusty loved working at the Recreation Center, and was very well known in the community. He will be missed.

Rebecca stated that she would like for us to do something special in memory of Rusty, and she suggested placing a brick in our walkway in Windmill Park.

**Update on Bike and Ped. Grant:** Rebecca gave an update on the status of the Bike and Ped. Grant. To help with finalizing the grant, we are working with Hudson Elementary School to generate interest in the project. On Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, a drop-in event has been scheduled at the School from 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm. to share information about the project. Teresa is working to coordinate this event with the school and with everyone else involved. Rebecca commented that we need to have a good turnout for this event, because we have not had good attendance at our other meetings about this project.

**Discussion of Plans for Festival of the Arts:** Ann briefly discussed the Festival of the Arts that is scheduled for Friday, August 16<sup>th</sup> downtown, and Saturday, August 17<sup>th</sup> at HUB Station. On Friday, there will be 16

businesses that will be involved with an art/scavenger hunt, with chances to win prizes. That evening there will be a cruise-in called "Rolling Art," and there will be a concert in the street.

Janice stated that she has 20 vendors signed up to be in the auditorium on Saturday, and with the Red Awning Gallery, there will be approximately 40 artists available at the event. There will be a blacksmith on the HUB lawn and sculptures. A contra dance is scheduled to take place at the HUB after the festival. Janice commented that the wine cellar would be located in the cafeteria area with food trucks also available outside.

Chief Blevins stated that he will have officers there during the times the alcohol is being served. As far as the parking goes for the event, a lot of cars can be squeezed into the HUB parking area. He stated that he will also check with the adjoining business owners to ask about overflow parking if needed.

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Adjournment:

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**Motion: (Bill Warren/Larry Chapman) to adjourn the meeting. Unanimously approved.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tamra T. Swanson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Tamra T. Swanson, Town Clerk