

DeFuniak Springs City Council

Budget Workshop

August 25, 2009

The DeFuniak Springs City Council met in Budget Session at 5:15 PM with the following members present: Mayor C. Harold Carpenter; City Council Members: Don Harrison, James Coffield, Henry Ennis, Wayne Graham; City Manager Kim Kirby, City Attorney Clayton Adkinson, Finance Director Sara Bowers, and City Clerk Susie Campbell-Work. Mayor Pro-Tem James Huffman was absent.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Carpenter called the meeting to order. The item for discussion was to finalize the budget.

OPERATING BUDGET, CITY MANAGER KIM KIRBY:

Kim Kirby directed the Council to the papers in front of them. Packet A that was before them was the proposed budget with the operating budgets for each department reduced, which had been done to fund the purchasing agent. Packet B, the Council had in front of them, showed the operating budget taken back to their original level before the reduction. She said that they reduced revenue to be able to fund the position. She thought it was only fair to have both of these presented to the Council. Mrs. Kirby asked the Council if they wanted to keep the operating budget percentages the same, as reflected in Packet A, or change them back to their original levels before the reduction, as reflected in Packet B.

Mayor Carpenter asked Mrs. Kirby to clarify where they are getting the operating funds from. Mrs. Kirby stated that the operating budget was for supplies, anything that is to operate a department. Mayor Carpenter said that he understands that. To further explain, Mrs. Kirby also discussed what happened at the last Budget Meeting. She said the Council, at the last meeting, removed four items from the budget. She said she wanted them to be aware of the change in the operating budget prior to their decision. She explained how they reduced the operating budgets for each department by varying percentages to fund the Purchasing Agent Position. She asked the Council if they were going to keep the operating budgets for various departments reduced (Packet A) or return them to their original levels since they were not going to fund a Purchasing Agent Position (Packet B).

Don Harrison said that the spirit of discussion at the last meeting was cost cutting. He said last night they discussed cutting the budget. He said that if they were going to cut the budget, then the costs and percentage level cuts needed to stay where they are currently. Mr. Ennis agreed. Don Harrison said the feeling he got at the last meeting was that items needed to be cut. Mr. Harrison added that if they were cutting the positions and items in other areas, then they don't need to add the money that would have been spent back to other areas. Mrs. Kirby said what they wanted was fine, she needed clarification. She asked if the consensus was for Packet A. Consensus was to leave the budget as presented in Packet A.

Mr. Harrison said that they only question was with Chief Brian Coley about the new phone system.

NEW PHONE SYSTEM, FIRE CHIEF BRIAN COLEY:

Chief Coley said there were several reasons in asking for a new system. He said the first reason was that the current system was over 15 years old. He said that they are having problems with lightning strikes. He said last time they were struck by lightning, the phones were down for 12 hours. Chief Coley said the other reason for needing a new system was that the intercom doesn't work on some of them. He added that sometimes certain phones work and certain phones do not. He has to wiggle them at times to get people to hear him. He said that his work load has increased dramatically and it is not a bad thing. Chief Coley said that 10 years ago you could call and get someone at any time.

Nowadays that cannot happen. He was recommending a phone system with an answering machine. He gave an example that if someone in the City wanted to call for a fire alarm, they could leave a message and the Fire Department would get back to them. He said the way it is now, if the phone call is missed, they have no way of knowing what that person wanted. He said that they don't need people in the public without smoke alarms and without their fire extinguishers being checked. Chief Coley said that the machine would also inform the public that if it was an emergency to dial 911. He said that there are people who still think the fire emergency number is 892-8515. He said that he does not want something to happen to a citizen because there was no one there to answer the phone.

Chief Coley said that he talked with New-Tel Communications and they quoted him \$5,000. He said that Michelle Schack got him in touch with Telecom. The Telecom quote was for \$3,729.00, which did not include the ply wood backboard or the station cabling. He said that there is a possibility that the station cabling is part of their problem with not being able to hear. He said that if it were up to him his recommendation would be to replace the whole phone system. He said that if it was not possible, they would struggle another year.

Don Harrison brought up the conversation that he and Chief Coley had in the hallway. He said that they could go to Wal-Mart and buy an answering machine and 3 phones for \$80.00. He wanted to know why the new phone system would be so expensive. Chief Coley said that he did not have any idea. He said that you would think it would be simple to put a few phone lines in, but it's not.

Don Harrison pointed out that the quote was close to the \$3,500.00 that was allotted and talked about at the prior meeting. Sara Bowers added that the quote did not include the cabling and a place to put the system. Chief Coley said that it would be their responsibility. He felt confident that they could construct something to house the system, but would need someone to install the cable.

Wayne Graham said that what they were talking about public safety and that he would not want someone to call the Fire Department and not get anyone.

Recommendation made by Wayne Graham to approve the request for \$5,000.00.

Consensus was given from the Council to approve the request.

FURTHER DISCUSSION:

Mayor Carpenter asked what the extra Verizon bill is every month that comes to City Hall. Kim Kirby said that it was for her phone and for Bill Holloway's phone. She said that it allows her to be reached 24/7 and also when she is out of town.

Don Harrison asked Sara Bowers that out of the reserve money coming out, are they putting more in than that which is coming out. Sara Bowers said that the only thing that is budgeted to go into reserves is interest. She said that she does not foresee needing to touch that money. Mr. Harrison asked about Enterprise Funds. Mrs. Bowers said that it is going to support the City. Mr. Harrison said that it's not like the City is going into debt. Mrs. Bowers said that is correct. Mr. Harrison said that it is not an overly concerning problem right now, but the Council and Staff need to watch it carefully.

Mayor Carpenter asked if small items are still in the budget like computers and printers. Mrs. Bowers said that they were. He brought the Council's attention to the Kitchen Renovations that were listed in the budget. He said that he has a problem with patio doors being installed for City Hall. Kim Kirby informed him that the kitchen renovations had already been removed from the budget. She said the computers were being bought with the current year's budget. Sara Bowers said that modifications to the kitchen were still in the budget. She said that it is included in R & M of the building itself. Mayor Carpenter said that when the City gets into R & M, he believes that the Council should be notified to determine if it's affordable. Mr. Harrison said that more things should come to

Council, not for approval, but for notification and information. He said that he would be better informed to answer the public's questions, if any. Mr. Ennis agreed.

Mayor Carpenter asked if there were any more questions and if the Mrs. Kirby or Mrs. Bowers had any more information for the Council.

There being no further business, Mayor C. Harold Carpenter adjourned the meeting.

ADOPTED this 26th day of October, 2009

C. Harold Carpenter

C. Harold Carpenter, Mayor

ATTEST:

Elizabeth S. Campbell-Work

Elizabeth S. Campbell-Work, City Clerk