

**CITY OF PROSSER, WASHINGTON
601 7TH STREET
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Warden called the Work Session of the Prosser City Council to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Council Members Chambers, Everett, Poteet, Rainer, Taylor, and Troemel were present. Council Member Becken arrived at 8:33 p.m.

TASER PRESENTATION

Deputy Scott Hutson, Benton County Sheriff's Office, provided the Council Members with literature on the Taser X26 devices, which the Prosser Police Department recommends purchasing with Criminal Justice Funds. Deputy Hutson explained that each device has a data port which records the date, time, duration and number of times the taser was fired. The devices are another option for officers to use, offering protection to both the officers and the suspects.

DISCUSSION ON EXTENDING THE FRANCHISE AGREEMENT WITH CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS TO DECEMBER 31, 2009

City Administrator Charlie Bush explained the original franchise agreement expired in 2007. Mr. Bush wished to extend the existing agreement to the end of 2009 while continuing to work on a new franchise agreement. The process for franchise agreements is dictated by RCW 35A.47.040 and requires introduction of the ordinance, with action at the following meeting. This ordinance will be introduced at the December 9, 2008 meeting and scheduled for final action by the Council on December 16, 2008. Council Member Taylor requested the ordinance be placed on the consent agenda at the December 16, 2008 meeting. There was no objection voiced by the other members of the Council.

DISCUSSION ON GRANDVIEW, PROSSER, AND SUNNYSIDE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

City Administrator Bush said the three city administrators had completed a joint 2009 State Legislative Agenda. Grandview's Council recently approved the agenda. Council Members expressed their satisfaction with both the collaborative process and the projects as listed. It was suggested to present the agenda when the legislative delegation held their annual open house. Council Member Taylor also requested the final approval of the legislative agenda be listed as a consent agenda item at the next meeting.

DISCUSSION ON WALTER CLORE CENTER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA) GRANT PROPOSAL

City Administrator Bush said he recently joined the Clore Center Board of Directors. The project and design had been downsized but still required major funding. The City of

Prosser was suggested to be the applicant for an EDA grant, with no financial obligation by the City. Mr. Bush is scheduled to travel to Olympia on December 17, 2008 for a meeting with the Economic Development Administration.

FISCAL YEAR 2009 BUDGET DISCUSSION

At 7:52 p.m., Mayor Warden recessed the Work Session and continued the Public Hearing from the November 18, 2008 Regular Council Meeting. Mayor Warden called for public comment on the FY2009 Budget.

Larry O'Brien spoke in favor of initiating Local Transportation Benefit District Fees. Mr. O'Brien said this was an opportunity for the community to have funding for local road work. He felt a small amount could be paid by all citizens. Mr. O'Brien said if road repair or chip sealing was put on hold, problems multiplied and the repairs were much more costly.

There being no one else who wished to comment, Mayor Warden closed the Public Hearing at 7:56 p.m. and reconvened the Work Session.

Finance Director Cathleen Koch was in attendance to discuss the FY 2009 Budget. Ms. Koch noted with the sales tax figures available through November 2008, the estimated sales tax revenue for 2009 at \$975,000 was a good figure. With the planned transfer of \$400,000 from the General Fund Reserve, Ms. Koch said the remaining reserve balance would be \$86,000.

Council Member Rainer suggested splitting the transfer between several different funds--not all from the General Fund Reserve. Mr. Rainer was uncomfortable with the City having "no safety net."

Council Member Everett said the Sewer Reserve Fund was available as an interfund loan if needed. Mr. Everett encouraged his fellow Council Members to consider funding \$15,000 toward animal control. City Administrator Bush said partnering with Grandview and Sunnyside would allow a dedicated patrol one day per week in Prosser, with possible assistance on nights and weekends. Animal control issues have continued to take up a majority of the Code Compliance Officer's time.

Finance Director Koch said Council Member Becken was out to town, but had phoned in his comments to be read into the record. Mr. Becken opposed the Recreation Department staffing options as presented and the proposed Day Camp. Council Member Becken wanted chip sealing in the FY09 Budget, but not with funding from vehicle tab fees.

Council Member Rainer asked about the process to establish a Local Transportation Benefit District. City Attorney Howard Saxton estimated it could take three months. Mr. Bush noted Grandview was considering implementing vehicle tab fees in 2009 and the City Council of Olympia was scheduled to vote on the issue on December 9, 2008.

Mr. Saxton said a portion of the vehicle tab fees could be dedicated for chip sealing, with the remainder used for other street work, such as sidewalks, curbs, gutters, pothole repair, and local improvement districts.

Council Member Taylor asked if the proposed FY2009 budget included a garbage utility tax. Finance Director Koch said it was not listed, but was recommended by staff.

Council Member Chambers did not want to increase all the possible taxes and expressed his reservations with the Recreation Department funding.

Council Member Everett was not in favor of garbage utility taxes and suggested allocating \$50,000 for the General Fund Reserve.

Council Member Rainer reiterated his concern with nearly depleting the General Fund Reserve.

[Clerk's Note: Council Member Becken arrived at 8:33 p.m.]

Finance Director Koch explained the proposed staffing changes within the Recreation Department. Council Member Everett was pleased to see the cost recovery breakdown and liked that new programs were being added in a tight budget year.

Council Members Taylor, Rainer, and Poteet agreed.

Larry O'Brien asked about the elimination of two life guard positions and said local teens should have access to summer jobs. Finance Director Koch said prior pool salaries had been over-budgeted. This was a correction, not an impact to pool operations.

Ms. Koch said the Hotel/Motel Committee would be seeking an overall budget of \$90,000, with \$72,000 for the tourism contract and the remaining balance to be used for discretionary tourism purposes. Ms. Koch reminded the Council that all spending issues still required Council approval.

Council Member Becken did not care for the \$90,000 request. Finance Director Koch said the Committee felt the Chamber of Commerce was performing well and a direct correlation could be noted with extra visitors in town.

Council Member Rainer said since all actions required Council approval, the \$90,000 figure should be budgeted.

Council Members Taylor and Chambers said the proposed funding, above the contract amount, represented a philosophy change by the Council.

Council Member Becken did not want to provide an additional \$18,000 for the Hotel/Motel Committee and said more details were needed.

Finance Director Koch said \$72,000 for Hotel/Motel expenditures would be placed in the FY2009 Budget for the Council's approval. Ms. Koch hoped to have the Final Budget available on December 5, 2008.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the City Council at this time, the Work Session of the Prosser City Council was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Mayor Paul Warden

Attest:

City Clerk Sherry Biggs