

CITY OF PROSSER, WASHINGTON
601 7TH STREET
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2012

CALL TO ORDER

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL

Council Members Rainer, Elder, Everett, Taylor, Troemel, Hamilton, and Becken were present.

Also present were City Clerk Shaw, Interim Finance Director Yost, Interim Police Chief Markus, and City Attorney Saxton.

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL REPORTS AND COMMENTS (None)

PUBLIC HEARING

2013 Final Budget

At 7:02 p.m., Mayor Warden recessed the Work Session of the Prosser City Council to conduct a Public Hearing regarding the 2013 Final Budget. Mayor Warden called for public comment with none being offered. At 7:02 p.m., Mayor Warden closed the Public Hearing and reconvened the Work Session.

Tourism Promotion Area

At 7:03 p.m., Mayor Warden recessed the Work Session of the Prosser City Council to conduct a Public Hearing regarding Tourism Promotion Area (TPA). There was discussion amongst Council regarding how the tax revenues work and how the Hotel/Motel Committee will run the TPA Board. At 7:09 p.m., Mayor Warden closed the Public Hearing and reconvened the Work Session.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Public Records Request Status Briefing

City Clerk Shaw provided Council a status update of public records requests that are currently being processed by the City. Mrs. Shaw reported there are currently four very large requests that involve several departments. Due to the nature of the requests the magnitude of work that is being devoted to filling the requests is tremendous. Council requested monthly briefings during the regularly scheduled Work Session meetings going forward.

Tourist Information and Promotion Services Contract

Interim Finance Director Yost stated at the Hotel/Motel Committee meeting on November 15, 2012, the Committee recommended the City Council approve a contract with the Chamber of Commerce for 2013 in the amount of \$70,000.00 for tourist promotion and visitor's and information center services. The proposed 2013 contract is similar to the 2012 contract with the exception of a change to account for the new Hotel/Motel Tax law. Council directed staff to bring the contract back for consideration at the City Council meeting on December 11, 2012.

DOXO Agreement to Provide for Electronic Utility Billing Services and Electronic Payment of Associated Utility Balances

Interim Finance Director Yost stated DOXO is a company located in Seattle that conducts electronic billing for various agencies and organizations. There was discussion regarding how the service works and the fees associated with a thirty-six month contract including payment options. Council directed staff to bring the agreement back at a future City Council meeting for consideration.

ADD ON ITEMS

Reports of Graffiti on Sheridan Avenue

Interim Chief of Police Markus provided Council with an update on twelve reports of graffiti on Sheridan Avenue.

DISCUSSION ITEMS CONTINUED**2013 Budget – Final Budget Review**

Interim Finance Director Yost provided Council a Projected General Fund Activity report and discussed the anticipated savings from the dispatch transition. In the first year, numerous one-time expenditures are to be expected including purchase of police equipment, software, relocation of radio equipment, and contracted severance payments. Based upon projected costs, the City should collect a savings of approximately \$240,000.00 annually after the first year. While savings will be recognized, the increase in expenses is not matched by the increase in revenues. In the General Fund, annual revenues increase by approximately \$73,000.00; however, annual expenses increases by approximately \$127,000.00. Therefore a gap of nearly \$54,000.00 must be filled by either reducing budget allocations or by identifying new revenues or increasing revenue sources. The anticipated annual increases are those which the City has little to no control over, such as wages, benefits, property insurance, fuel, and utility services. Based upon the anticipated savings and the annual deficit, it is anticipated that the projected dispatch savings will have been reallocated within three to three and one-half years of the transition. During this period, the rising expenses will use the dispatch savings and ultimately only prolong the need to address the annual deficit. To address this issue, staff is investigating alternate revenue sources such as utility tax increases, implementation of utility taxes, annexation of library services, and the annexation of fire services.

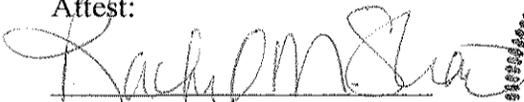
Council concurred the utility tax increase is the last resort and inquired what would not be funded in 2013 if Council did not authorize the utility tax increase. Staff advised the twelfth officer, purchase of the police patrol vehicles, and \$25,000.00 in public restroom facilities would not be funded and staff would need to identify other funding options.

Council advised they would adopt the Budget at the Fund level, however, the details of each Fund, including a breakdown of expenditures would need to be provided prior to adoption.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the City Council at this time, the Work Session of the Prosser City Council was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Attest:


 City Clerk Rachel Shaw




 Mayor Paul Warden