

**June 20, 2005**

**The Benicia City Council meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Copies of Council Agendas are available in the City Clerk's office on the Friday afternoon before the Council meeting.**

**MINUTES OF THE  
SPECIAL MEETING - CITY COUNCIL  
JUNE 20, 2005**

**The budget workshop was called to order by Mayor Steve Messina at 7:01 p.m. on Monday, June 20, 2005 in the Dona Benicia Room at the Benicia Public Library, 150 East L Street, complete proceedings of which are recorded on tape.**

**ROLL CALL:**

**Present: Council Members Patterson, Whitney, and Mayor Messina**

**Absent: Council Members Campbell (arrived at 7:04 p.m.) and Smith (arrived at 7:03 p.m.)**

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**

**On motion of Vice Mayor Patterson, seconded by Council Member Whitney, the Agenda was adopted as presented, on roll call by the following vote:**

**Ayes: Council Members Patterson, Smith, Whitney, and Mayor Messina**

**Noes: None**

**Absent: Council Member Campbell**

**CLOSED SESSION:**

**Lisa Wolfe, City Clerk, announced the Closed Session item.**

**Conference with Labor Negotiator (Government Code Section 54957.6 (a))**

**Agency negotiator: City Manager, Human Resources Director, Senior Personnel Analyst, and Bill Avery of Avery Associates**

**Employee Organization: BPSEA, BPOA, BFA, BDA**

**Unrepresented employees: Supervisor, Professional/Confidential, Middle Management, Police Management, and Senior Management**

**Public Comment on Closed Session Item:**

**None**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**BUDGET 2005-07 - WORKSHOP #4**

**Welcome:**

**Mayor Messina welcomed Staff and the citizens in attendance.**

**He asked Mr. Erickson to clarify what would need to happen if the budget was not finalized tonight.**

Mr. Erickson stated that if Council did not get through the departmental budgets tonight, another budget workshop might be necessary.

#### **Brief Overview of Workshops:**

##### **1. City Manager's Office:**

Mr. Erickson reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on the budget for the City Manager's office (hard copy on file in agenda packet).

Vice Mayor Patterson asked Mr. Erickson what the status was of revised job descriptions for the positions he suggested changing in the City Manager's office. Mr. Erickson stated that it was not yet ready. Mayor Messina stated that this item could be discussed on a future agenda. Ms. McLaughlin stated that this item should not be discussed further, to prevent a Brown Act violation.

Council Member Smith had a question on page 15 of the line item budget. He had concerns about the fluctuations in the wages/salaries. Mr. Erickson confirmed that the reason for the 2005-06 salary decrease was due to the absence of the Assistant City Manager position. He had a question on deferred compensation. Staff agreed to make the issues with deferred compensation more clear on that page of the budget (something in the form of a footnote). He had concerns with the change in Assistant City Manager/EDB Director position with regards to the Tri-City and County Regional Parks and Open Space.

##### **2. City Attorney's Office:**

Heather McLaughlin, City Attorney, reviewed a PowerPoint Presentation on the budget for the City Attorney's office (hard copy on file in agenda packet).

Council Member Campbell asked Ms. McLaughlin if she had an estimate on Attorney's fees for claims filed against the City. Ms. McLaughlin stated that they have budgeted \$80,000 and hope not to go over that amount. She thinks the budgeted amount will be sufficient.

Vice Mayor Patterson asked for clarification on the Brown Act. When she originally wanted to discuss the revised job descriptions for the City Manager's office, she was simply suggesting that each Council Member submit a comment on this issue, in writing, to the City Manager.

##### **3. Finance Department:**

Rob Sousa, Finance Director, reviewed a PowerPoint Presentation on the budget for the Finance department (hard copy on file in the agenda packet).

Vice Mayor Patterson stated that per the Short Range Transit Plan, it was recommended that the fares and fees be increased, due to the current deficit. She wanted to make sure that was clear.

When Mr. Sousa was discussing the Marina, Vice Mayor Patterson wanted to make it clear that there were actually two losses to consider, not just one, because of the condominium development.

Mayor Messina stated that he could not support inter-fund transfers from the General Fund.

Council Member Whitney discussed the issue of consultants and how we can accurately reflect the usage of consultants in departments. He thinks this is an opportunity for us to address the cost of consultants in the budget.

Mr. Erickson stated that there is an account (8100 account -contract services) in the line-item detail of the budget. It could be used for tracking that type of expenditures. Mr. Sousa stated that it could be used, however it depends on the level of detail that is needed. Mr. Erickson suggested issuing quarterly reports by category (i.e.: contract services). If Council needed more detail past that, Staff could provide more detailed information by exception.

Vice Mayor Patterson stated that she believes the process is there. If there were a way to create a quarterly report, it would make sense. However, she honestly does not understand what it is that we are trying to fix.

Council Member Whitney stated that there is nothing that is broken in regards to contracts. The numbers and data are already there. Lets start thinking of ways of complying with the Sunshine Ordinance and bring the information forward.

Council Member Smith asked Council Member Whitney to clarify what it is that he wants to see. Council Member Whitney stated that he wants to be able to see what was budgeted, what was expended, and what is being asked for when a consultant is brought on board. He does not want a lot of Staff time devoted to this, but it should be a simple process. He is open to discussion on how to handle this issue.

**Public Comment:**

Bob Mutch - Mr. Mutch stated that the subject of consultants come up on occasion. He discussed a recent Public Works project. The subject is transparency. As the need arises, we have to seek consultant services for projects. He suggested keeping a running total on consultant costs. He listed the factors that should be considered before hiring a consultant.

Mr. Erickson stated that the City currently has such an account - Contract Services.

**4. Landscape & Lighting District Assessments:**

Rob Sousa, Finance Director, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on the Landscape & Lighting District Assessments (hard copy on file in the agenda packet).

Vice Mayor Patterson stated that the Mayor has previously expressed not wanting to spend more than we have, and this would allow landscaping to die. It is not fair because we need to reach out to the assessment districts to give them a choice whether or not they want to let things deteriorate and die. She is positive that with a good steering committee, we can help those folks solve that. She did not suggest taking money from the General Fund. The costs should be put on a future ballot.

Council Member Campbell asked what the districts are servicing and what they are doing. Is there something besides lighting and landscaping that they do? Mike Dotson, Parks and Community Services Superintendent, stated that the specific costs were listed on page 66 of the line item budget. Council Member Campbell suggested cutting back on labor. Mr. Dotson stated that losing labor would be losing a lot of the pruning, which is an issue in the Rose Drive area.

Vice Mayor Patterson stated that in the Rose Drive area, it is the park that uses much of the labor. We can't be as efficient, because there is not enough staffing. The message needs to be is that these are serious areas of maintenance.

Mr. Dotson discussed the Fleetside area. It currently takes one full week to prune that area.

Council Member Campbell stated that reducing the labor and the supplies would be one way to go.

Vice Mayor Patterson stated that not taking money out of the General Fund is a worthy goal. She suggested putting together a group that can look into the processes and come up with a way to address this next year.

Mr. Sousa suggested Staff bring Council a plan in a few months that would work with the districts to deliver a level of service that they want. Staff needs time to work with the districts before any decisions are made. Council majority agreed that that would be a good approach to take.

#### 5. Internal Service Funds:

Rob Sousa, Finance Director, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on the Internal Service Funds (hard copy on file in the agenda packet).

Mayor Messina had questions on the set-aside fund sheet that Mr. Sousa presented. Mr. Sousa explained the reasoning for the 'set aside' funds.

#### Public Comment:

1. Alan Schwartzman - Mr. Schwartzman asked if the 'set-aside' numbers were fixed or if they would remain the same. Mr. Sousa stated that they were basically fixed; they may vary slightly, but not much.

#### Wrap-up Discussion:

Continued

#### Action on budget items:

Continued

#### PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Mayor Messina adjourned the meeting at 9:49 p.m.**

**Lisa Wolfe, City Clerk**