

MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL MEETING – CITY COUNCIL
JUNE 23, 2009

The special meeting of the City Council of the City of Benicia was called to order by Mayor Elizabeth Patterson at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 23, 2009, in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 250 East L Street, complete proceedings of which are recorded on tape.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Council Members Campbell, Hughes, Ioakimedes, Schwartzman, and Mayor Patterson

Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Patterson led the pledge to the flag.

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS:

A plaque stating the Fundamental Rights of each member of the public is posted at the entrance to the Council Chambers per Section 4.04.030 of City of Benicia Ordinance No. 05-6 (Open Government Ordinance).

ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

On motion of Council Member Hughes, seconded by Council Member Ioakimedes, the agenda was not adopted as presented, on roll call by the following vote:

Ayes: Council Members Hughes and Ioakimedes

Noes: Council Members Campbell, Schwartzman, and Mayor Patterson

On motion of Vice Mayor Patterson, seconded by Council Member Schwartzman, the agenda was adopted as amended (public comment changed back to 5-minute limit), on roll call by the following vote:

Ayes: Council Members Campbell, Hughes, Ioakimedes, Schwartzman, and Mayor Patterson

Noes: None

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

WRITTEN:

Various items received (copies on file).

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ACTION ITEM:

Adopt the resolution authorizing the City Attorney to cooperate with the League of California Cities, and other cities and counties in litigation challenging the constitutionality of any seizure by state government of the City's street maintenance funds:

Jim Erickson, City Manager, reviewed the staff report.

Public Comment:

None

RESOLUTION 09-60 - A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY ATTORNEY TO COOPERATE WITH THE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES, OTHER CITIES AND COUNTIES IN LITIGATION CHALLENGING THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF ANY SEIZURE BY STATE GOVERNMENT OF THE CITY'S STREET MAINTENANCE FUNDS

On motion of Council Member Schwartzman, seconded by Council Member Hughes, the above Resolution was adopted, on roll call by the following vote:

Ayes: Council Members Campbell, Hughes, Ioakimedes, Schwartzman, and Mayor Patterson

Noes: None

BUDGET WORKSHOP:

Review of Fiscal Year 2010 and 2011 budgets:

Jim Erickson, City Manager, reviewed the staff report. He reviewed the following topics from the PowerPoint presentation titled 'Budget Workshop No. 3':

- ❑ Tier I Projects
Council and Staff discussed the timing for the Community Center Project Phase I, User Utility Tax, and the City's current surplus.
- ❑ Tier II Projects

Anne Cardwell, Administrative Services Director, reviewed the following topics from the PowerPoint presentation titled 'Budget Workshop No. 3':

- ❑ Economic Development
Council and Staff discussed the recommended \$55,000 (tourist marketing).
- ❑ Human Services and Arts Grants
- ❑ Other Community Grants
- ❑ Hiring Freeze

Council and Staff discussed the additional unspecified salary savings listed in the report.

Diane Smikahl, Library Director, reviewed the topics from the PowerPoint presentation titled 'Budget Workshop No. 3':

- ❑ Library Department Organization & Mission

- ❑ Accomplishments – Fiscal Years 2007-09
 - ❑ Major Budget Changes
 - ❑ Priorities
 - ❑ Desired Outcomes and Performance Measures
- Council and Staff discussed the part-time staff, reduced budget for books, how the Library would be able to expand services (Library Basement Project) and reduce staff, and the status of the grant application to the League of California Cities.

Mr. Erickson discussed combining the Community Development and Public Works Departments.

Charlie Knox, Community Development Director, reviewed the following topics from the PowerPoint presentation titled ‘Budget Workshop No. 3’:

- ❑ Community Development and Public Works Department organizational chart
- ❑ Mission
- ❑ Accomplishments
- ❑ Major Budget Changes
- ❑ Priorities
- ❑ Desired Outcomes and Performance Measures
- ❑ CD & PW Expenditures

Council and Staff discussed the status of the BHS Traffic Signal Project (some delays have occurred – approximately one month behind desired schedule.), upcoming special City Council/School Board Liaison meeting, expected efficiencies being reflected in the proposed budget, upcoming City Engineer vacancy, concerns regarding adequate staffing level to handle the upcoming projects (BHS Traffic Light Project, Park Road, State Park Road Bridge Project, and the two Intermodal sites), costs for outside services, Staff’s suggestion to show what percentage of costs are spent on management costs when project progress reports are given to Council, requests for Staff to show how much is spent on engineering, planning, etc, similar to what is done at the State level, Caltrans’ responsibility with the Park Road Project, clarification on how much the Building Department spent on outside contractors last year (\$17,000), when it would make sense to unfreeze an engineering position rather than pay outside contractors, update on State Park Road Bridge Project (anticipated start in September – construction should last approximately one year), pedestrian connection for the bridge, and the need for a single document that provides the status of the State Park Road Bridge Project.

Chief Sandra Spagnoli, reviewed the following topics from the PowerPoint presentation titled ‘Budget Workshop No. 3’:

- ❑ Organizational Chart
- ❑ Mission Statement
- ❑ Accomplishments – Fiscal Years 2007-09
- ❑ Major Budget Changes
- ❑ Strategic Plan Priorities
- ❑ Desired Outcomes and Performance Measures

Council and Staff discussed the departmental budget summary, reduction of volunteer budget (reduction in equipment and supplies), the Grand Jury's recommendation regarding multi-jurisdictional dispatch, possible effects the consolidation of dispatch services could have on response time, and the animal control/DMV fees.

Fire Chief Steve Vucurevich, reviewed the following topics from the PowerPoint presentation titled 'Budget Workshop No. 3':

- ❑ Organizational Chart
- ❑ Accomplishments – Fiscal Years 2007-09
- ❑ Major Budget changes
- ❑ Priorities
- ❑ Desired Outcomes and Performance Measures

Council and Staff discussed Go Kits, increase in salaries, funding for volunteers, reduction in disaster preparedness and BERT expenses, what Benicia should be spending on disaster preparedness, the need for specific performance measures, and current staff vacancies in the department.

Mayor Patterson called for a break at 8:17 p.m.
The meeting resumed at 8:30 p.m.

Mike Alvarez, Parks and Community Services Director, reviewed the following topics from the PowerPoint presentation titled 'Budget Workshop No. 3':

- ❑ Organizational Chart
- ❑ Mission
- ❑ Accomplishments Fiscal Years 2007-09
- ❑ Major Budget Changes
- ❑ Priorities
- ❑ Desired Outcomes and Performance Measures
- ❑ Budget Summary

Council and Staff discussed expenses for Phase I of the Community Center Project, the Von Pfister Adobe property (possibly making it a line item in the budget), status of the Waterfront Park funding in the budget, possible grant fund availability for the Waterfront Park, taking advantage of lower construction costs with regards to moving forward with the Community Center Project, and the realignment of the fields at BHS.

Public Comment:

1. Claire McFadden – Ms. McFadden spoke in support of a comprehensive tourism plan. She requested Council approve the full funding amount requested.

Council and Mr. Duane Oliveira discussed the tourism plan, priorities within the plan, total amount requested (\$195,000 for first year and \$145,000 for the second year), the proposed first year total (\$100,000), and the money spent to get to the current point.

2. Christina Strawbridge – Ms. Strawbridge clarified how the committee came up with the amount requested for the budget.

Council discussed the reserve amounts in the City’s budget and looking into a way to fund the requested funds.

3. Sharon Petrellese – Ms. Petrellese asked if Council would be approving the individual grant amounts requested by the Human Services and Arts Board at the 6/30/09 special Council meeting. She discussed Benicia Community Arts application for funding.
4. Duane Oliveira – Mr. Oliveira delivered a handout to Council titled ‘Raves about Benicia from Yelp Restaurant Reviews’ (copy on file).

Council requested the summary of the adjustments that were in tonight’s budget packet, a more simplified version of total requested amounts this year vs. prior years. Council discussed possible ways to cover items that were cut back (using the surplus previously discussed, the request for expansion of the Mayor’s discussion with Staff on how to phase the budget, funding for volunteers, understanding of the total costs for contracted services and what the threshold was for hiring, budget options for dealing with the Community Center, lack of support for using the City’s reserves to complete the Community Center Project, needs vs. wants regarding the Community Center, and the request for a report how much room the City has to absorb additional debt.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Patterson adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Lisa Wolfe, City Clerk