

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Jeannie L. Sanders called the workshop to order at 7:20 p.m.

Present: Mayor Jeannie Sanders, Councilmembers Everett Cole, Eleanor Brodahl, Larry Bray, Marc Spohr, Shannon McKay, Tim Wilson, and Kenneth Johnson

Also Present: Department Heads: Curt Andrews, Debbie Kudrna, Rhonda Miller, Dick Lee, Police Chief Ron Axtman; and Interim City Administrator Bob Noland.

ADAMS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #5 QUARTERLY REPORT

Council received the written year-end report from Fire Chief Clyde Fought.

UPDATE ON 415 E. HAMLET

Police Chief Ron Axtman reported that the property owners of 415 E. Hamlet Street have taken steps to clean up portions of their property, however there is some debris in the yard and several hulk vehicles that still need to be removed. He stated that his department sent a notice to Mr. Michik to move seven hulk vehicles from his property within fifteen days. Chief Axtman explained that if Mr. Michik has not removed them, the Code Enforcement Officer would issue him a citation requiring his appearance on the matter in court.

REVIEW OF PROPOSAL FOR ADAMS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT #1 WATER RATES

Mayor Sanders reported that the City has a water contract with the Adams County Water District #1 (ACWD), and a hearing has to be held when the City proposes adjustment to their water rates. She noted that the block rates have not been imposed on the Water District and explained that we bill for water use that is metered through the 8" meter and they have individual water meters that they read and bill their customers. She noted they contend that there is an inconsistency between the City's monthly reading of water metered and the readings by the District for their individual customers. The Mayor stated that Public Works has counted 220 units that appear to be using City water and the Water District has reported that they bill for less than that number. Staff has also reported that the District's low flow meters may not be registering all water use. She reported that Public Works recommends placing ultra-sonic water meters at the intake and outlet points of the District, which should provide more accurate readings.

Mr. Bob Noland, Interim City Administrator added that staff is proposing the same water rates as was recently adopted by the Council for other water users. He noted that at the same time, this would correct some of the inequities of the current water rate. Mr. Noland reviewed the proposed block rates for 2004, 2005, and 2006. He explained that the average monthly billing has been \$1900, and this new proposal that would increase that monthly rate to approximately \$2800. This equates to an average monthly water usage per residence of 1,500 cubic feet and an average monthly charge per household of \$14. Mr. Noland provided more information regarding the proposed water rates and explained that the Water District has argued that they use irrigation water and they still contend that there is unaccountable water loss. Mr. Lee explained that staff suggests continuing the rate for the minimum monthly service charge of a six-inch meter. He noted that past rational for this was that their water usage could be provided through a six-inch meter and the eight-inch meter is needed for fire flow to the area. Mr. Lee explained his recommendation to place ultra-sonic meters at the intake and outlet points of the District, which will provide accurate readings of all low-flows. He stated that he thought it was agreed when the District was developed that the City would install a meter at the outlet point. Mayor Sanders noted that the contract provides that their rate would be applied in a fair and equitable manner.

ORDINANCE TO AMEND O.M.C. 2.20 ENTITLED "PLANNING COMMISSION"

City Planner, Curt Andrews reported that the proposed ordinance replaces the existing municipal code relating to the Planning Commission's authority and brings their role and function into compliance with current state laws.

VEHICLE IMPOUND ORDINANCE

Police Chief Axtman reported that the proposed ordinance allows the Police Department to tow vehicles when people are cited or arrested under certain criminal traffic violations, such as DUI, DWS, hit and run, negligent driving and other criminal traffic violations. It also establishes a procedure for impounding and releasing vehicles. The Chief stated that he would be releasing a request for proposals for towing services for the City soon. Councilmember Johnson reported that the current impound laws are being reviewed and asked whether the ordinance is in conflict with the current situations. The Chief noted that releasing a vehicle to the rightful owner when all requirements of the law are met is legal. There was further discussion regarding the procedures for towing and seizing vehicles.

ORDINANCE TO AMEND O.M.C. 3.02.080 ENTITLED "USE OF FUNDS"

Mr. Noland reported that Ordinance 1099, adopted on October 2001 eliminated the capital expenditure threshold of \$25,000 for use of utility tax proceeds. He stated that staff was directed to prepare an ordinance to reinstate the \$25,000 threshold and provide for allocating the distribution between the General Fund operating expenditures and capital outlay to 50% for each. Mr. Noland made a recommendation to Council to not impose the capital expenditure limitation of \$25,000, explaining that it is extremely limiting to capital expenditures for the size of the City. Mayor Sanders stated that Council has been provided information regarding the changes of the utility tax distributions and previous ordinances that have been adopted by the Council, and she reviewed those briefly. She noted that 30% had been allocated to the Real Property Fund to build funds towards a swim pool. Ms. Miller stated that portions of those funds were going to be used for other projects, i.e. completion of the firing range; computers for City Hall and Police Department; police vehicle; mobile data system; copy machine, and towards the GIS program. Councilmember Cole explained that originally the Council had appropriated a healthy percentage of the funds for major capital items. There was extensive discussion regarding reinstating the \$25,000 minimum for use of the funds and options for allocating the utility tax funds. Councilmember Brodahl explained that she has done extensive research of the utility tax and stated she found that originally it was used for large capital expenditures. She stated that she felt there was an error when the \$25,000 was eliminated in Ordinance No. 1099 and asked for further documentation from the staff indicating that Council had directed the \$25,000 to be eliminated. She stated that she supports the minimum of \$25,000.

Council's consensus was to reinstate the \$25,000 minimum for use of utility tax funds. Mayor Sanders requested that staff provide scenarios that would indicate allocation of the utility tax funds with a 50/50 split; 60/40 split; and 55/45 split between the General Fund and Capital Expenditures.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:

Mayor Sanders made the following reappointments and new appointments to the various committees:

- Adams County Community Network: Councilmember Eleanor Brodahl
- Adams County Economic Development Council: Councilmember Eleanor Brodahl
- Adams County Fire District #5 Council Committee: Councilmembers Everett Cole, Tim Wilson, and Kenneth Johnson
- Adams County LEOFF Disability Board :Councilmember Larry Bray for a 2-year term which expires 01/2006
- Adams County Mosquito Control Board: reappointed Councilmember Everett Cole for a 2-year term, which expires 04/2006
- Council Audit Committee: Councilmembers Larry Bray, Tim Wilson, Marc Spohr, and Alternate: Eleanor Brodahl
- Engineering Selection Committee: Mayor Sanders, Councilmember Larry Bray and staff Curt Andrews
- Othello Chamber of Commerce Representative: City Administrator
- Ground Water Advisory Committee (GWMA): appointed Donald Derifield as Council liaison
- Heritage Trail Tourism Committee liaison: Les Clemons

**City of Othello
Council Workshop
January 5, 2004**

- Lodging Tax Advisory Committee: Councilmember Tim Wilson; Brian Gentry, Terry Thompson, Kelly Edlin, and Kyle Robnett
- Othello Housing Authority: reappointed Aurora Zavala for a 5-year term, which expires 04/2009
- Othello Planning Commission: reappointed Kim Oord for a 6-year term, which expires 01/1/2010
- QUAD County RTPO: City Planner, Curt Andrews
- Union Negotiating Committee: Mayor Jeannie Sanders; City Administrator; Kevin Wesley of The Wesley Group; Police Chief Ron Axtman (for Teamster negotiations); Public Works Director Dick Lee (for Operating Engineers negotiations); and Councilmember Shannon McKay

NEW BUSINESS

Councilmember Spohr requested an organizational chart and reported that he has received several comments about the signal light functions and will be preparing options for the city's system. It was noted that a traffic light would be installed at Main Street and 14th Avenue with City funds, to be reimbursed by the out lots in front of Wal*Mart when building permits were issued. Mayor Sanders explained that budget requests are submitted by Department Heads and are based upon past expenditure trends and current needs and explained the budget process to the new Councilmembers.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further items to discuss, Mayor Jeannie L. Sanders adjourned the workshop at 8:45 p.m.

By: _____
JEANNIE L. SANDERS, Mayor

ATTEST:

By: _____
DEBBIE L. KUDRNA, City Clerk