

City of Othello
Council Workshop
November 6, 2000

Mayor E R Kelley called the workshop to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present were Leonard Lyon, Eleanor Brodahl, Les Clemons, Everett Cole, Donald Derifield, Jeannie Ochoa and Kenneth Johnson. Others present were: Debra Travis and Curt Andrews, City Department Heads; William Shaw, City Administrator; Nancy Wanless, Administrative Secretary; and Inez Freeman from the Mid Columbia Library. City Clerk Debbie Kudrna arrived at 7:30 p.m.

2001 Budget Discussion

Council members were asked if they had any questions on the preliminary budget. Council member Lyon asked about salary considerations. Mr. Shaw said union negotiations had begun and city representatives are looking into the union proposals.

Funding of the library was brought up by Council member Lyon. Mr. Shaw reported that there is funding for the library for the year 2001. The outcome of the election will determine how funding will be handled in the future. The Rural Library Board members will be at the November 13th council meeting to discuss budget proposals.

Council member Lyon asked some questions regarding the lights at the ballfield complex. Mr. Shaw said the breaker boxes had been used as the means to turn the lights off and on, causing wear to the boxes, and new light switches have been installed. Also, public works crew checks the poles and light structure every year for repair. Discussion was held on the new PJ Taggares park and maintenance concerns. Mr. Shaw told the council that a new park comprehensive plan for the city should be done. The current one was prepared in 1992 and is obsolete.

Council member Lyon said he would like to wait until the new chief has had a chance to decide what his needs building department needs are. Mr. Shaw said that it would be no problem to delete that item.

Other budget areas discussed were: the GIS budget request – some change will be made to that amount; Planning and Engineering operations budget; well/water debt structure; use of PWTF for drilling of Well #9 in 2003 and sufficient revenue for drilling of Well #8, budgeted in 2001; location for Well #8 is proposed for intersection of 14th and Lee Street; Anderson & Perry had suggested that the transfer pump for Well #3 be delayed until a water comprehensive plan is developed; work on Well #6 is budgeted for 2002 and Mr. Shaw reported that the current water rates may be sufficient for 3-5 years. Mr. Shaw stated that Simplot had experienced a break on of their high pressure waste lines the previous week and will face some major expenses to repair it. The fire rescue support unit is budgeted for 2001. They discussed the utility tax, noting that 60% goes to the General fund, and 40% is appropriated for capital expenditures, as allowed by Council. Some of this is earmarked for the Fire truck and Police vehicles. A discussion was held regarding the Real Property Cumulative Reserve and Special Revenue Funds.

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Debra Travis noted that the water and sewer funds need to be separated by adoption of an ordinance.

Mr. Shaw reported on the Solid Waste fund, noting that the reserve could be used to gravel alleys. He reviewed the Sewer Fund, noting the money borrowed by the Water Department has been replaced; he also stated there may be a need for a rate adjustment in the 2003 – 2005. He reviewed the Water Fund, noting it does include the plan to change out to automatic meter readers over the next 5 years. He stated that staff has been meeting with Avista about the possibilities of them reading the meters and doing the total billing and customer service program for the city. He reviewed the water expenditures and revenues. His projections showed that the industries have implemented some water conservation programs. In the Street Fund, he reviewed the REV Grant for Lee Road and the DOT Grant for the stormwater project. In reviewing the General Fund, he showed projections of revenues and expenditure through 2004; noting that labor accounts for 60% of the expenditures. They did discuss the Utility Tax sunset clause, which expires December 31, 2001; which will impact the General Fund with a decrease of \$370,000.00/annual revenue. There has been some discussion of increase of the sales tax, and they could implement a street light charge. Mr. Shaw recommended removing the sunset clause or find some other substantial revenue sources. It was noted the Public Works records clerk position is budgeted for 2001 and a discussion of tourism requests will be held during the upcoming meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Building Official, Curt Andrews reported on Well #3. He noted the basalt has shifted some, but a 11 ½" pipe does fit. He noted there was a water rights meeting with DOE and stated that we should be approved for Wells 8, 9, and 10. He stated that DOE has reported there will be no more water rights approved out of the Wanapum aquifer. He suggested watching the information regarding the "Pasco Aquifer"; there may be an opportunity to purchase water from the irrigation district from this aquifer. He stated there is some discussion regarding purchasing McCains' excess of water rights. There was further discussion regarding the city's need for additional water rights. He noted there have been several meetings with industries to discuss other water options, i.e. reclaiming our effluent from the lagoons for other uses.

Council member Ochoa reported the recent discussions by the County Commissioners about dissolving the Adams County Health District and creating a Health Department. She noted concerns of this and asked for Council input. Mr. Shaw suggested the Council pass a resolution stating their desire for the continuation of the District, as it is established.

The Council received a letter from Gayle Floyd regarding recent events that she had with the Code Enforcement Officer.

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ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Mayor Kelley adjourned the workshop at 9:13 p.m.

**Debbie Kudrna, CMC
City Clerk**