

MUSCATINE CITY COUNCIL
BUDGET REVIEW SESSION
FEBRUARY 18, 1991 - CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM

The Muscatine City Council Budget Session was called to order on Monday, February 18, 1991, by Mayor John Keig. Present were: Mayor John Keig; and Council Members Harder, Phillips, Brewer, Freese, Gray, Kemp and York. Also present were City Administrator A.J. Johnson and Finance Director David Casstevens.

I. Water Pollution Control Operations

The first budget review item was that of the Water Pollution Control Operation. Present were Don Freel, Plant Director, and Lavene Payne, Asst. Director. Prior to the overview of the various budgets, comments were made concerning the outstanding safety record at the plant. It was noted that soon one year will have passed where there weren't any reported injuries. Council encouraged management to continue the good work.

Also before proceeding with the review of the department's budget, there was a slight review of the fund balance within the Water Pollution Control Fund. It was noted that a rate study is currently being pursued through a contract with Stanley Consultants. That information should be available soon. Staff noted they anticipated a fairly significant rate increase on the basis of the study; but again, without the material available, discussion was limited. There was also question as to whether or not it would be prudent to have an update of the infrastructure study that was conducted in the 1960s. There was general discussion concerning these matters.

At 9:07 a.m., Kevin Whittaker, Director of Community Development and Planning, along with Mr. Linc Martin and Mr. Ed Carroll, spoke to City Council concerning a development project as proposed by Mr. Craig Drake. The development project would be a housing development off Tipton Road. This project had been reviewed with Council previously by City Engineering staff. There was general discussion as to the cost of the project and the need of the project to spur future development.

Following the discussion on the Tipton Road project, the Council continued its review of the Water Pollution Control Budget. The first item for review was the Administration followed by Sludge Operations, Laboratory, Collection and Drainage, and Building Maintenance. Each one of the reviews also included discussions concerning capital projects. There was discussion concerning the request for a pickup truck which had been taken out by the City Administrator.

II. Parking

The City Administrator reviewed with City Council the Parking budget and its operations for next fiscal year. It was noted that the fund balance in the Parking Fund is becoming more positive based on the fact that no transfers are being made for the Main Street Program and employees have been laid off or positions eliminated from last year's budget. It was also noted there would be a change in personnel inasmuch as an employee would be retiring from this area and we would be elevating the current three-quarters time position to a full-time position, having two full time positions working the meters and doing all the collections. Collections are currently being made by the meter repair person whose time is split between Parking and Water Pollution Control. That now will be a position which is hoped to be eliminated and the overall result will be a cost savings to that department.

III. Wellness

The Wellness Program will be incorporated into the Parks and Recreation area if Council approves the realignment within staff positions which has been requested. It was noted that the Wellness Program is still a very well received program by employees and staff has encouraged Council to continue to support it. Council also voiced their support of the program noting that we have made a positive effect on employee morale by offering a variety of wellness programs.

IV. Health Insurance Trust

The Health Insurance Trust Fund is self-funded and provides for monies to cover the City in the event of catastrophic medical losses. It also helps provide a mechanism by which we underwrite the cost of our health insurance through our standard Blue Cross/Blue Shield coverage provider. Staff noted that this year we will be exploring other alternatives to our traditional Blue Cross/Blue Shield coverage.

V. Refuse Collection

Joining the Council and other staff members for discussion on refuse collection were Public Works Director Randy Hill and Refuse Collection Supervisor Deb Yerington. These individuals gave an update and overview of the Refuse Collection Budget. There was a discussion concerning the Kleen Sweep Operation in which the City participates and opening the Cemetery Farm for individuals to bring out their grass clippings and the need for some type of ordinance or regulation concerning the types of containers which would be most appropriate for use within the City by citizens. Occasionally we (the City) run into trouble with containers which are not approved. There was also general discussion concerning refuse collection, its fees and the future.

VI. Landfill Operation

Joining the Public Works Director for discussions were Mr. Joe McGourty and Mr. Harold Johnson. Aside from the normal discussion concerning operations, there was lengthy discussion concerning the City's participation in the Solid Waste Management Agency. One suggestion that was discussed was that the City continue to be a member of the Landfill organization; but when the Landfill is closed out and the City moves to a transfer station, we incorporate that entire operation under City control. There was a question as to the status of our current landfill agreement and how to proceed with the issue if Council so chooses. Staff is to report back on that. It was noted that the consultant firm selected to do the transfer station project was on line and working with staff members. It is anticipated that the City will be in the "transfer station business" by the fall of 1991.

VII. Equipment Services Fund


Joining the Public Works Director was Mr. Frances Palmer and Gale Fry. It was noted to Council that there was going to be a one-time adjustment in transfers from the various funds to this fund to balance out the activity or to eliminate the deficit projected for 1991. There will still be a small deficit but it should be fairly insignificant concerning the scope of the operations. There was also discussion concerning the value of the equipment services operation inasmuch as our people are trained to work on our equipment and are available 24 hours a day seven days a week. Also, the rates that we charge to the user departments are extremely competitive and at this point below the market rate for mechanical services.

VIII. Equipment Replacement Fund

This fund was established and received General Fund transfer each year for the purchase/replacement of equipment for City departments. Traditionally, \$200,000 had been transferred from the General Fund to this fund to address those needs. Because of budget constraints, staff is recommending that \$160,000 be transferred for 1990. \$40,000 of that would be used to underwrite the cost for Equipment Services Fund activity; therefore, \$120,000 would actually be available for the purchase of equipment. The biggest item under the Equipment Replacement Fund suggested for 1991 is the replacement of a fire truck at the cost of approximately \$170,000. There was general discussion by Council Members concerning the funding amount.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


A.J. Johnson
City Administrator

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