

Councilmembers

Position No.

1. Tod Gunther
2. John Kelly
3. Tony Belot
4. John Williams
5. Gregg Bradshaw
6. Greg Hogan
7. Scott Drennen



Orting City Council
Special Meeting Minutes
Budget Workshop
September 25TH, 2021
9:00am -1:00pm
104 Bridge St. S.
Virtual

Mayor Joshua Penner, Chair

1. CALL SPECIAL MEETING TO ORDER, PLEDGE, ROLL CALL

Mayor Penner called the meeting to order at 9:12am. Deputy Mayor Hogan led the pledge of allegiance, and then roll call was taken.

Councilmembers present: Deputy Mayor Greg Hogan, Councilmembers John Kelly, John Williams, Scott Drennen, Tod Gunther, and Gregg Bradshaw. Virtual – Tony Belot.

Staff present: Mayor Josh Penner, City Administrator Scott Larson, City Engineer Maryanne Zukowski, Finance Director Gretchen Russo, City Clerk Kim Agfalvi, Public Works Director Greg Reed, Police Chief Chris Gard.

Mayor Penner read the following announcements:

You may attend this meeting virtually via the platform Blue Jeans by clicking on the link on the City's website, by telephone via the number available on the City's website, or in person at the Orting station. Per directives from the Governor and the State Secretary of Health, all in person attendees shall comply with social distancing and are encouraged to wear a face covering if distancing is not feasible.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

A. Discussion – 2021 Preliminary Budget.

Budget Introduction and Vision - Mayor/City Administrator

Mayor Penner began the budget session by thanking the City Council. He briefed on the budget process, and emphasized that the Mayor does not pass a budget, and that this budget draft represents an immense effort across all our team leaders to identify, quantify, and schedule the collective vision of our Council, Mayor, Citizens, and staff. He said he believed the draft budget presented is the best budget draft that we've produced. Mayor Penner stated the budget cycle begins in early Spring, and briefed on the timeline the City staff utilized in the budget process. He stated areas he asked the City Council to consider:

- Increase staff costs that have predictable and unpredictable elements.
- Addressing/revising the City grant funding policy.
- Legacy property is a problematic cost center.
- Using debt when it's cheaper than cash.

He also briefed, that with this balanced budget, the City will do the following:

- Construct the SR 162 footbridge.
- Begin the Water Resource Recovery Facility Upgrade,
- Acquire \$2,000,000.00 in right of way necessary for transportation upgrades.
- Lobby for additional transportation funding.
- Employ 48 direct and contracted staff.

- Conduct 34 council meetings
- Conduct 48 council committee meetings.
- Engage the public in a Touch a Truck event, Farmer's Market, Home for the Holidays, and other festivals.
- Support the Council..

City Administrator Larson also briefed on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds that the City will be receiving, and what those ARPA funds can be used for. He briefed on projects the City has in the works, and that ARPA funds can be used on those projects. He reiterated that the budget presented is balanced.

B. General Fund - Finance Director

Finance Director Gretchen Russo briefed on the general fund. She thanked Mayor Penner and City Administrator Larson for their help in the budget process. She pointed out that salary and benefit costs continue to go up. She stated that City Engineer Maryanne Zukowski is working on finding grants and grant opportunities for the City. She stated that discretionary funds and grant funds are not included in this preliminary budget and that the general fund is pending due to negotiations with the Police Union on a new contract. She also stated that the City of Orting general fund is supported by property taxes levied on the assessed value of real estate, and estimated property tax is limited to a proportion of what was previously levied. She stated current property taxes will increase the general fund by \$26,000.00, which is not calculated in the budget presented.

Mayor Penner asked for questions on the general fund. No questions were presented.

General Fund – Police

Police Chief Chris Gard thanked the Council for the approval for upgrading the taser and for providing the department with body worn cameras. He stated that the Police department asked for two items in the budget presented.

- Commander position – this will allow the department to build out organizational structure. Chief Gard stated that this will not require a new officer, but will restructure the current officers on staff. The reorganization was recommended in the LEMAP study that the department completed. This restructure will allow the Chief to delegate responsibilities to the commander, which would include accreditation management, training, equipment, emergency management, working through evidence and reports, and to be a liaison with other agencies and departments within the City.
- Planned annual replacement – Chief Gard also stated that the department has set a goal of predictable budgeting by replacing a portion of worn equipment through planned annual replacement.

Finance Director Gretchen Russo briefed on the police budget, the costs for body worn cameras and tasers, and planned annual replacement of equipment and vehicles.

General Fund – Other – City Administrator and Finance Director

Finance Director Gretchen Russo briefed on the following topics for the general fund:

- Legislative – discretionary funds are being pulled and costs have been reduced for communication devices.
- Municipal Court – changes in salaries and benefits will increase by \$13,000.00
- Executive – small increase in wages and benefits.
- Finance – small increase in wages and benefits
- Legal – reduction in legal expenditures.

- Planning – increase in costs as the position is a contracted position.
- Building/Code Enforcement – possible reduction of costs and code enforcement may be a civilian and not a police officer.

Council discussion followed. Topics discussed were:

- Hiring of new employees.
- Structure of other police departments with city size similar to Orting.
- Code enforcement position, and whether it will be a police officer or civilian position.
- Hierarchy of the department.

Parks and Recreation Department

Finance Director Gretchen Russo briefed on the Parks and Recreation Department, and that the City will be hiring an Activities and Events Coordinator. She stated the City should have more activities next year and that the Activities and Events Coordinator position has the potential to turn into full time employment to generate programs and revenue.

Council discussion followed. Topics discussed were:

- Creating a commission of citizens to help advise on potential activities and recreation opportunities.
- Possibility of using the tourism fund to help with offsetting costs for events.
- Possibility of Activities and Events Coordinator position expanding to include economic development.

Mayor Penner recessed the meeting at 10:19am.

Mayor Penner resumed the meeting at 10:35am.

Parks

City Administrator Larson briefed on Parks, and the Gratzer Park expansion. He stated City staff is researching and will be presenting swing set pricing to the Community and Government Affairs Committee at their October meeting. He stated staff is presenting ADA friendly options.

Cemetery

Finance Director Gretchen Russo briefed on the Orting Cemetery. She stated the City had to transfer funds from the general fund to support the cemetery. She stated projection for next year is that \$28,000.00 will have to be transferred to maintain the entity. She stated the City is working to upgrade the wellhouse that is located at the cemetery, and that the City had received \$97,000.00 from the sale of property that will be used to put in a sprinkler system to help shrink staff time needed to water and maintain the property.

Council discussion followed. Topics discussed were:

- Investing in the cemetery by purchasing a new columbarium.

Engineering

City Engineer Maryanne Zukowski briefed on the following topics:

- Orting Emergency Evacuation Bridge System
- Southwest Connector (Whitehawk Blvd.).
- Stormwater Management Action Plan.
- Onsite chlorination system – the ability to make chlorine from salt.
- Ongoing multi-year projects.

- Design for Kansas Street reconstruction.
- Kansas outfall and Calistoga stormwater improvements.
- Village Green outfall.

Council discussion followed. Topics discussed were:

- Location of chlorination system.
- Timeline for completion of the Southwest Connector (Whitehawk Blvd.).
- Increased costs in the Orting Emergency Evacuation Bridge System.

Deputy Mayor Hogan excused himself from the meeting at 11:14am.

Public Works

Public Works Director Greg Reed briefed on the following topics:

- Tow behind knuckle boom that will replace the City lift truck.
- Two or four crane and light bar installations for two service trucks.
- Ford F-750 dump truck with attachments.
- Staffing requests: Storm Drainage worker, Utility Technician with Water Certification, Maintenance Worker 1, and Water Resource Recovery Facility Operator 1 or Operator in Training.

Council discussion followed. Topics discussed were:

- Expanding the treatment facility and the need for increased staffing.
- Special skills that will be needed.

Mayor Penner recessed the meeting at 11:24am.

Mayor Penner resumed the meeting at 11:34am.

Mayor Penner opened the meeting for council discussion and to go through the budget and select items for discussion.

Council discussion followed. Topics discussed were:

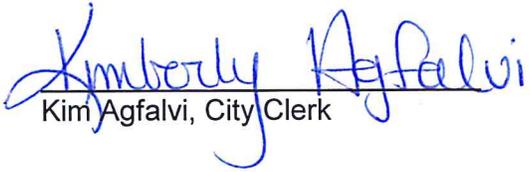
- Legacy funding (old City Hall).
- Parks fund.
- Grant funding.
- ARPA funds.
- Skate park – need for fencing around the park to help keep out bicycles.
- Electronic reader board.
- Paving of main City park parking lots.
- Timeline of police negotiations with the Police Guild on new contract.
- Community engagement and the need to reinstate events and activities.
- Beautification program.
- Building up the Chamber of Commerce.

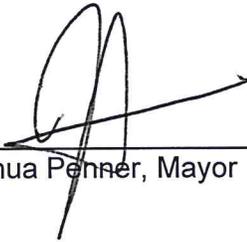
3. ADJOURN

Councilmember Williams made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Councilmember Gunther. Motion passed (6-0).

Mayor Penner recessed the meeting at 12:42pm.

ATTEST:


Kim Agfalvi, City Clerk


Joshua Penner, Mayor