

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS
HELD JULY 17, 2019

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a special meeting of the Board of City Commissioners for the City of Devils Lake, North Dakota was held at the City Offices on Wednesday, July 17, 2017 at 12:00 P.M. with the following members present: Commissioners Jacob Volk, Dale Robbins, Rob Hach, Shane Hamre and President Richard Johnson. Others present were Police Chief, Fire Chief, City Engineer, Public Ways Supervisor, Travis Zahn – representing Lake Region Narcotics Task Force, City Auditor and City Administrator.

President Johnson said that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the 2020 Preliminary City Budget.

The City Administrator reviewed with the Commission a copy of the revenues and expenditures for the General Fund.

1000 – GENERAL FUND

General Fund Revenue – The revenue from state aid was increased slightly. Thirty percent of state aid goes to the Park Board. Interest was decreased.

Transfer ins – Two million is budgeted for projects with 16% used for admin, legal and engineering costs.

The \$60,000.00 is a transfer from the equipment reserve for Fire Department bunker gear.

General Fund Expenditures Non-Departmental – Budgeted is an increase in the cost of equipment insurance and for upgrading computers to Windows 10. Twenty-five hundred dollars are included for the veterans' ride program and one mill for the handicapped ride service. Discussion followed on the handicapped ride service. Lake Region Transit will be contacted to clarify how the money is used – if the money is for people with disabilities or for general operations. The funds for the anglers was increased in 2019 to \$8,000.00, and 1.5 mills is budgeted for the Lake Region Heritage Center. In 2019, the Lake Region Community Shelter received \$10,000.00. A request has been received from the Shelter to increase the amount to \$15,000.00 or \$17,000.00. Consensus of the City Commission was to leave the money for the Shelter at \$10,000.00 since the budget is tight for 2020.

City Commission – Adjusted for COLA.

Municipal Judge – Adjusted for COLA.

Auditing Department – Adjusted for COLA. Money was added for a new folder machine and for training on the new accounting software.

City Attorney – Adjusted for COLA.

Assessing Department – Adjusted for COLA. It was noted the City Assessor plans to retire at the end of April 2020.

Engineering Department – Adjusted for COLA. The budget includes funds for surveying equipment.

City Hall – This fund is for building maintenance.

Police Department – Purchases include one car and computer equipment for the in-car computers. Discussion followed on Jim Shanks installing the software operating systems. Discussion continued on the IT for the Police Department being provided by the Law Enforcement Center.

The Police Chief requested to discuss department salaries since the salary review showed there was some lag. He also indicated a need for another detective. Discussion followed on the caseload of detectives and the school resource officers filling in when the department is short staffed.

Fire Department – The Fire Chief is planning to retire at the end of 2020. Money for personnel protection equipment is included in the budget.

The Fire Chief asked to discuss department salaries. Although the salary review did not indicate a lag, the Fire Chief disputed the cities used for the comparison. The other cities are not regional response teams. He also specified the ISO rating would change to a 3 as of September 1, 2019. Discussion continued on how other cities similar in size staff their departments. The City of Devils Lake has 4 full-time employees covering 24 hours/day. It was debated if the costs for responses to incidents outside of the city limits should be billed out.

Public Buildings – Money is budgeted for insurance and maintenance of city-owned buildings.

Advertising & Promotion – Thirteen thousand dollars was added for fireworks.

Weed Control – Budget was increased for chemical supplies and equipment maintenance.

Planning – This fund includes contract labor for Steve Zimmer and money for mapping.

Shade Tree – Additional funds were added to purchase more trees.

Street Dept – Commissioner Volk requested adding a Grade 7 employee to the Street Department. Discussion followed on the reliance on former city employees' who now work part-time and on the experience needed to operate the blade and sweeper. The Public Ways Supervisor addressed the salary compression issue in the department and would like three of the employees to be moved up another step in addition to the step the three employees received on July 1st. Consensus of the City Commission was to fix the compression issue, but not to hire another employee.

Transfer out - Same as 2019

9500 – LAKE REGION NARCOTICS TASK FORCE – Travis Zahn informed the City Commission on the issue with trying to have an officer transfer from the police department to the task force since patrol officers work about 15 days a month and the task force officer is on call all the time. Discussion followed on moving an employee up a couple of steps if they transfer from the police department. Discussion continued on the training required for a task force officer and how difficult it is to train a newly licensed officer as both a patrol officer and a task force officer. Consensus of the City Commission was to change the grade for the narcotics task force officer to the same grade as a detective based on the type of work being done.

The City Administrator noted the former Library Director had prepared the budget for 2020; however, the Library has requested to change the budget and increase the number of mills to 6 as allowed by city ordinance.

The Library Director indicated the Library would like to make the assistant library director fulltime with a salary of \$38,000.00 and no health insurance. Discussion followed on the City having to offer NDPERS and health insurance to fulltime employees. The Library Director also reviewed increases for technology and janitorial expenses.

The City Commission discussed the Law Enforcement Center budget issues. It was noted SORN would cost about \$350,000.00, but the State is phasing it in. It was questioned if a loan could be obtained to finance SORN, on the current system being critical, and on the new equipment only lasting 5-7 years. Cutting benefits was also discussed.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, President Johnson adjourned the meeting at 3:08 P.M.

LINDA LYBECK
CITY AUDITOR

RICHARD S. JOHNSON
PRESIDENT