



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes - Draft Finance & Administration Council Committee

Monday, December 15, 2014

4:00 PM

Municipal Center

Special Called Meeting

1. Call To Order

Mayor Perrin was also in attendance.

2. Roll Call by City Clerk Donna Jackson

Present 5 - Ann Williams; John Street; Darrel Dover; Charles Coleman and Todd Burton

3. New Business

Ordinances To Be Introduced

[ORD-14:074](#)

AN ORDINANCE FOR THE ADOPTION OF A BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, FOR THE TWELVE (12) MONTHS BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2015, AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2015, APPROPRIATING MONEY FOR EACH ITEM OF EXPENDITURE THEREIN PROVIDED FOR, ADOPTION OF THE EMERGENCY CLAUSE FOR THE EFFICIENT OPERATION OF CITY GOVERNMENT, AND FOR THE FINANCIAL CONTINUITY OF 2015, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Sponsors: Finance

Attachments: [2015 Budget](#)
[Presentation of the 2015 budget](#)

Chairman Dover explained if this ordinance is passed tonight, it will be placed on tomorrow's Council agenda and will be held at one reading. Then a special Council meeting will be called on December 29, 2014, to pass the budget.

Chief Financial Officer Ben Barylske explained the procedures that were used to develop the 2015 Budget. He then noted since the revenue streams have changed the City will allow the citizens to vote which projects are done and how they are paid for.

Councilman Street inquired if the department heads get to prioritize their choices. Mr. Barylske answered yes.

Chairman Dover asked if last year's budget versus the 2015 Budget are the same besides the loss in the Capital Improvement Fund. He then asked if the City is not cutting as much, but also not increasing as much. Mr. Barylske answered yes and the City will use a number of reserves this year and in 2016.

Councilman Burton asked if the budget is a guess compared to a guess. Mr. Barylske answered it is estimate and not a guess.

Councilman Street inquired if the salary increases reflect strictly the COLA. Mr. Barylske answered it includes the COLA and changes to administration or personnel throughout the year. He added it is rare the City goes without having to replace someone throughout the year at either a lower or higher salary. Discussion was held concerning the police department salaries.

Councilman Street asked if the holiday pay issue with the police department had been resolved. Mayor Perrin explained they have meet with the Fraternal Order of Police concerning this issue and also worked on a spreadsheet and the holiday pay is included in it. He added in 1987 a police officer filed suit asking that the holiday pay be included in every pay period instead of at the end of the year and doing so allows the officers to include it in LOPFI. He further explained if any police officer does not feel like the holiday pay is included he would be glad to meet with them to explain it to them. Councilman Street then inquired if Police Chief Rick Elliot is satisfied knowing the holiday pay is included. Police Chief Elliot answered this issue can be resolved with a sit down meeting and he has explained to his officers that the Mayor is willing to meet with the officers so they will understand it better.

Councilman Burton questioned if the E-911 reserve fund is going to go into a deficient this year. Mr. Barylske answered it is not going to go into a deficient, but it is going to go below the required minimum. He added normally he would put money into the fund, but then it restricts it to just that fund. He noted the City might be able to put some sales tax funds into the account in 2016. Mayor Perrin stated the county pays 25% of the total E-911 budget. Councilman Coleman asked if the percentage the county pays will change. Mr. Barylske answered they are currently in negotiations with the county.

Councilman Street asked what the basis is for the jail bill going up. Mr. Barylske answered it goes up every year. Councilman Street then inquired if court cost is less or more for the City. Mr. Barylske answered it is more for the City. Councilman Street then questioned if the City's cost is prorated. Mr. Barylske answered the City's cost is based on the cases that are held here, but the judges and clerks retirements are separate. The city has no say in whether there is an increase since it is a county office, but the City pays 70% of the cost regardless.

Councilman Burton inquired if the insurance cost for the employees was minimal. Mr. Barylske answered the cost increase was approximately \$5.84 per month. Councilman Burton then asked why some department's insurance amounts were different. Mr. Barylske answered it is because some of the employees changed from individual to family coverage. He added after adding the new City Hall, Police Department and Fire Station to the building insurance APERMA was able to increase the premium by only \$3.00 for the year.

Councilman Street asked if the City will use the legal team that was at the Municipal League meeting since they reduced their rates. Mr. Barylske answered it is hard to justify the cost because the City has good attorneys and the City cannot pull out of APERMA.

Discussion was held concerning tipping fees and the old landfill.

Councilwoman Williams asked how far above the minimum requirement for the reserve funds is the City currently at. Mr. Barylske answered the Council requires

15% of the budgeted expenditures, but he does not think that is enough so the Mayor and himself would like to have at least 6 months of what it would cost to operate the City. He added they hope to have approximately \$30 million in reserves by the end of next year because they have numerous capital improvements projects that need to be done.

Councilman Burton inquired why the police pension is \$382,000 less this year. Mr. Barylske answered the City made changes to the old pension fund and it has benefited the City. He also added the way the State and LOPFI recognize their revenues and expenditures after July 1, it caused the City to have a credit and the credit will carry forward into next year. He noted the fire pension fund went up.

Councilman Street asked if growth contributed to the franchise revenue being up \$100,000 this year. Mr. Barylske answered yes and maybe the weather had something to do with it. He added the for a few years it was going down, but in the last two years it has been going up.

Discussion was held concerning growth on Highway 49 North.

Councilwoman Williams questioned how the City budgets for the funds that come from the State Highway Department. Mayor Perrin answered along with the MPO Department they work with the Planning and Engineering Departments to see what projects need to be done. He added AHTD combined some of the grants into one category and the City can only apply to one category. Mr. Barylske explained the City will amend the budget if there are funds available.

Discussion was held concerning the Street Fund.

Mayor Perrin noted the City has been approved for approximately \$250,000 in overlay money. He added he did not include it in the budget because he was unsure if the City would receive it.

Discussion was held concerning restricted and unrestricted funds.

Councilman Street asked if the budget is online in case anyone wants to view it. Mayor Perrin answered yes.

A motion was made by Councilman John Street, seconded by Councilman Charles Coleman, that this matter be Recommended to Council . The motion PASSED with the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Ann Williams; John Street; Charles Coleman and Todd Burton

4. Public Comments

Discussion by Mr. Harold Carter

Harold Carter, Tony Drive, asked what the communications director position will be paid. Mayor Perrin answered he anticipates paying the person who is hired the low amount for that grade. Mr. Carter then questioned how this position relates to the information systems director. Mayor Perrin answered the information systems director is directly responsible for the software and computer systems in the IT Department. He added the digital media specialist position in the IT Department was put in the Mayor's budget because that person is responsible for editing the information that goes on Channel 24 and working on the City's website. He further

explained the digital media specialist will work for the communication director. He then discussed the communications director position.

Mr. Carter inquired who has been doing the job of communications director. Mayor Perrin answered a lot of the job requirements have not been done, but some of the requirements have been done by his office or other department heads.

Discussion by Mr. Phillip Cook

Phillip Cook, 5216 Richardson Drive, discussed the City's 2% COLA for employees. He recommends employees who are making more than \$65,000 a year do not get a COLA and the people who are making less either get a 3% or better COLA. He stated the lower paid individuals do most of the work and some of them put their lives on the line every day.

Special Finance Committee meeting

Chairman Dover asked that a special Finance Committee meeting be held on December 16, 2014, at 5:20 p.m. to consider RES-14:229.

Parks Director Wixson Huffstetler explained the land is in a trust and it has stipulations that require it to have a community garden on the property and the park to be named Bert Cruse Park. Councilman Street motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Williams, to have special Finance Committee meeting on December 16, 2014, at 5:20 p.m. to consider RES-14:229. All voted aye.

5. Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilman Charles Coleman, seconded by Councilwoman Ann Williams, that this meeting be Adjourned . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 4 - Ann Williams; John Street; Charles Coleman and Todd Burton