

WOODRUFF CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2009
6:00 P.M.

A Special Meeting of the Woodruff City Council to discuss the Budget was held on Tuesday, April 14, 2009 beginning at 6:00 p.m.

Members of Council present were: Mayor Brad Burnett; Mayor Pro-tem Mattie Norman; Council members William Arnold, Kenneth Gist, Toni Sloan and Tony Kennedy. Council member Smith was absent due to a prior scheduled meeting. Also present were: City Manager Stephen Steese and City Clerk Beverley Maddox.

Mayor Burnett called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting agenda was faxed to the local media and posted on the bulletin board at city hall the week prior to the meeting.

First reading of an amendment to the current city budget for the Fire Department and the PRT Committee was first on the agenda.

- (1) \$10,000 Police fine increase
- (2) \$10,000 added to Mike Doles department for expenses
- (3) \$40,000 added to the Fire Department for renovation
- (4) \$40,000 from sale of property
- (5) TIF Revenues has a \$25,000 increase
- (6) \$25,000 Professional Fees expense
- (7) Add \$5,417 Income to PRT Committee from festival

A motion was made by council member Gist to make these changes in an Amendment to the 2009 Budget. A second to the motion was made by Council member Kennedy and the vote was unanimous.

The second reading to the Amendment will be at the regular Council meeting April 27, 2009.

The council then discussed the presentation of a draft 2009-2010 Budget. It is almost identical to last years. Property Tax revenues have been reduced a little with an increase in delinquent taxes.

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Mayor Burnett asked if the point of sale re-assessment would be a good thing for the city? Manager Steese said that it would effect taxes at the coast more than the upstate.

Manager Stephen Steese reported to council that fines and registration for housing have increased. Aid to subdivisions is going to have a 20% cut. Franchise fees have increased a little.

Council member Gist asked if the Charter bankruptcy will have any effect on the city? Manager Steese reported that right now it would have no effect.

Manager Steese reported that the biggest increase in the city budget is police fines. They are averaging about \$20,000 a month. Chief hopes the fraudulent check funds staying in the city will increase this even more.

Mayor Pro-tem Norman asked if the city had seized any property from Landlords? Manager Steese said that he didn't think we had actually seized any property yet. Just because we condemn them doesn't mean we necessarily take ownership. We are currently trying to get a current map of city owned property.

Sewer fund has kept level, even with the 5% increase in fees, the general fund should be about the same. 2.88% general fund increase, and the sewer has a slight decrease. Expenditures for the Building Codes Department have been removed from to the Administration Department this year and are staying pretty constant.

The payment for the Planning Commission has been eliminated in this Budget.

Council member Gist asked if Jeannie was not paid under the Building Codes new Department?

Manager Steese said that since Kay was retiring in December we are going to leave Jeannie in the Administration Department to cover any

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transitional period.

There will be a separate line item for Demolition of houses in the budget.

Council member Sloan asked the cost of removing these properties? Manager Steese said about \$2,400 for the last trailer and \$4,950 for the Harrison Building and about \$2,000 for the last house. Council member Sloan asked if we recoup those funds? Manager Steese said that he work with the county to place a lien on the properties.

Council member Arnold asked if the city could take the property if we paid the taxes on it for 7 years? Manager Steese said that he would check and see.

Mayor Pro-tem Norman asked about the cost of advertising in the budget? Manager Steese reported that was to cover newspaper advertising for meetings, etc.

Mayor Burnett asked if the police department amount covers overtime? Manager Steese said that he thought so but there were no raises in the budget this year.

Mayor Burnett asked about the cost of the roof for the fire department? Manager Steese said that it would be covered in the county bond. Mayor Burnett said that the fire chief said that they needed turn out gear. (4 or 5 sets). Manager Steese said that the cost for protective equipment is included in the GO County Bond and if the Bond goes through, a lot of the fire department issues will be addressed. If not, the fire department has \$15,000 budgeted for protective equipment in the draft budget.

The Street department has \$20,000 for equipment in their budget. We may have to do something about the backhoe and if we do, part of the funds will come out of the street department and part out of the sewer department.

In the sewer department, Kay is retiring in December and the city

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will pay her group health until she is 65. Our insurance is about as low as we can go. We are lucky we have not had any major injuries or claims.

TIF was budgeted \$175,000 and we brought in \$309,000. That new amount is reflected in this new budget.

The parking lot repaving is going forward. Mr. Steese is currently working with CSX Railroad.

Manager Stephen Steese reported that there is a new line item for City Hall which is "renovation". There is also a Grant for Businesses to improve back or front entrance. A dollar for dollar matching grant.

Mayor Burnett requested that the Planning Commission be involved in the color scheme, however the city sets it up for these renovations.

The city will be assuming the responsibility of the city parks beginning in October 2009. Manager Steese reported that he felt the city could make money off the parks, but the city needs to manage them. Council member Arnold said that the Church League sports currently go outside the city and needs to be brought back in. Manager Steese said it would definitely be an asset with the parks coming back to the city.

PRT has additional money in the budget and Manager Steese wanted to talk to them about doing smaller events as well as the others. This budget will include \$5,000 for Stone Soup Story Telling Festival. The Timrod needs the floor replaced and will need heat and air if they are going to put books back into the library. Manager Steese reported that there is \$70,000 for the auditorium that will be carried forward. Mayor Burnett reported that Jody Lamb could probably put a used unit in the Timrod. Manager Steese said that anything in the budget can be changed before the final reading and if council wanted another Workshop before it is presented to the public, we have plenty of time.

Council member Gist asked about pay increases for employees, and Manager Steese said there were no raises in this proposed budget in

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order to balance it. A 1% increase would amount to between \$25,000 and \$26,000.

Mayor Burnett said that everyone across the state is talking about furloughs or decrease in personnel.

Manager Steese reported that if the council wanted to look into that, there was time.

With no further discussion, Council member Sloan made a motion to adjourn with Council member Gist making as second to the motion. The vote was unanimous.