

CITY OF GREEN RIVER
CITY COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS
May 20, 2010

The Governing Body of the City of Green River met in workshop session at 6:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. Mayor Castillon called the meeting to order. The following Council Members were present: Pete Rust, Carl Morck, Ted York, Tom McCullough, Jim Boan, and Lisa Maes. The following were present representing the City: City Administrator Barry Cook, Director of Public Works Mike Nelson, Director of Human Resources Debbie Klein Robertson, Accounting Supervisor Chris Meats, Director of Community Development Laura Hansen, Fire Chief/Emergency Services Mike Kennedy, City Planner John Dahlgren, Zoning/Building Tech I Ladale Brinton, GIS Specialist Jason Brown, Parks and Recreation Supervisor Kevin Sadler, and Public Information Coordinator Stephen Pyles.

Mayor and City Administrator Comments

Mayor Castillon stated he didn't take public comments at the first workshop to make sure all the presentations were taken care of first. He would like all comments held until after the departmental presentations and will do the same at the May 28th workshop, so the public can present their concerns or comments regarding the FYE2011 budget at the next three budget meetings.

Mr. Cook noted the city has lost approximately \$7 million or 38.5% in revenues over the last two years. In order to present a balanced budget, expenses or service levels have to be cut. He reminded the governing body it was necessary to use one-time funding (revenue sharing dollars from the state) for day-to-day operations in order to balance the budget, this has never been done before.

He presented a balanced budget to the governing body after analyzing programs and outcomes within each department. Programs that weren't working or providing for themselves were eliminated.

Mr. Cook also noted the City of Green River, as a government has not grown. It has been very frugal. In 2000 there were 112 employees for a population of 11,808 or one employee per every 105 citizens. In 2010, the city has 126 employees for an estimated 13,166 citizens or one employee for every 104 citizens. He reminded the governing body salaries have been frozen, no new position requests were approved, asset acquisitions were denied, and operations were cut by an average of 11%.

Responding to a question from Council Member York, Mr. Cook stated the state legislators had passed a retirement fund increase of 2.83%. The city has to pay the 1.44%, and in order to balance the budget, he has recommended the employees pay the remaining 1.43% (\$60,000).

Department Submissions

Public Works – General Fund Accounts

Mr. Nelson explained the budget cuts from the FYE10 budget amounts to the FYE11 with division totals as follows:

- 510 – Administration: decrease of \$27,748 or 9.6%
- 515 – Engineering: decrease of \$21,945 or 5.9%
- 520 – Street & Alley Maintenance: decrease of \$161,762 or 14%
- 521 – Snow Removal: decrease of \$16,572 or 20%
- 550 – Drainage Maintenance: decrease of \$19,642 or 13%
- 580 – Vehicle Maintenance (Fleet): decrease of \$66,033 or 9%

The overtime has been cut in half or been eliminated from all six accounts. Part-time hours have been reduced in 510 and 580, and seasonal hours have been reduced in Engineering, Streets, Drainage, and Fleet. (Total \$161,761)

Total budget reduction from FYE10: \$313,702 or 11.4%

Mr. Nelson noted the reductions in Snow Removal and Streets and Alleys are best guess estimates based on the actual budget amounts over the last two years since the last two winters have been mild. If we have a normal winter in FYE11 there will have to be a budget adjustment to increase the budget for O&M and natural gas.

The following asset acquisitions requests were denied:

Streets - water tank replacement (\$5,000), Streets - asphalt roller (\$83,000), Streets - 2 pickup trucks (\$50,000), Streets - asphalt paver (\$140,000), Streets - asphalt zipper (\$115,000), Snow Removal – 12 ft. snow plow (\$11,000), Snow Removal - V-box spreader/sander (\$20,000), Snow Removal - snow blower (\$231,000), Vehicle Maintenance - rolling work platforms (\$2,200)

Responding to a question from Council Member Boan, Mr. Nelson stated the Fleet Maintenance crew is given a \$400 tool allowance per employee.

Community Development

Ms. Hansen stated she had two parts to her department's budget presentation.

She explained the budget cuts from the FYE10 budget amounts to the FYE11 with division totals as follows:

- 410 – Administration: decrease of \$27,585 or 5.6%
- 420 – Building Inspection: decrease of \$17,321 or 13.2%
- 440 – Community Revitalization/Main Street Program: decrease of \$77,814 or 34.95%

The major cut in Department 440 was due to the completion of the branding study (\$33,000). She noted the budget is still larger than what the city committed to spend on their application for Main Street to the state, including salaries. In 2005, the first year, the city committed \$108,905 and \$126,773 the third year including salaries. She also contacted the department of public services in Rock Springs on where their budget is sitting for their Main Street program. Rock Springs has no funds set aside specifically for Main Street improvements. Their other line items are close to what is proposed for Green River's program. Their items are included under their URA program which is very active and strong.

Total budget reduction from FYE10: \$122,720 or 14.5%

Ms. Hansen stated the second portion of her presentation was the most difficult she has ever had in her career. Therefore, she read a memo (attached) for the second portion of her presentation. In summary, she would like to reorganize her department with the elimination of the Main Street manager. She proposed the current manager could be given the position of grant writer for the city under the Finance Department for the best use of Ms. Adams skills.

Ms. Hansen proposed the following restructured positions:

- Director of Community Development
- Senior Building Inspector
- GIS Specialist
- Planner (focus on Land Use Planning/Permitting)
- URA/Main Street Administrator (focus on economic and revitalization planning and serve as the manager for Main Street and URA boards and liaison for all other economic boards/agencies)
- Administrative Assistant
- Part Time Administrative Assistant for the whole department

Addressing questions from Council Member Boan, Ms. Hansen stated:

- John Dahlgren would be the new Main Street Administrator, since he has experience in the URA, Main Street, historic preservation, and is a certified planner. The office on

Flaming Gorge Way will be closed, and moved to the Community Development Department at City Hall.

- The URA and Main Street boards will remain separate, the only difference is the city will only have one person overseeing both rather than having two staff people.
- If the Main Street program continues to decline over the next six months, the city will still have URA which she hopes will be much stronger than it is now. Ms. Hansen stated the goal is to be more like Rock Springs.
- In regards to the other economic development entities, they all have an idea of what they want for their programs. She doesn't want to be involved with decisions regarding them as far as budgeting. She has talked with them about her proposal, and they would like to see some improvements in communications between Main Street and their organizations (i.e. Green River Chamber of Commerce and Green River Futures).

Council Member York stated there were some discrepancies from the report they received on Tuesday from Green River Main Street and what was just presented. He understood the return on investment is important to this council. According to the Finance report the city has lost over \$140,000 when you consider the Main Street budget versus the revenue they have received from the program.

He questioned how the state program was dealing with what appears to be Green River's failure. Ms. Hansen stated the state will be coming for their yearly review of Green River and they will make a decision on whether they are meeting the contract requirements. The local board has not been meeting their by-law requirements since October 2009.

It is true that Ms. Adams helped prepare for an energy grant for Parks and Recreation, but the \$50,000 is not a Main Street grant. While the state may have money (\$37,000) set aside for the Green River Main Street program, the city hasn't received it. So until the city receives it, it is not the city's money.

Council Member York asked why Main Street was failing. Ms. Hansen stated she was at the meeting to present her budget, and didn't want to go into detail on anything else at this time.

Responding to questions from Council Member Maes, Mr. Cook would recommend the grant writer position, if approved, be under the Finance Department. The governing body has discussed it. It is listed on their strategic plan. This is an option for the governing body to consider. He is not recommending a new position. It is the governing body's call to make. His budget recommendation was to continue with the organization as is.

Council Member Rust stated he didn't want them to lose sight of the fact that the Main Street Program has done some good things for the community in terms of beautification and façade plans. A grants writer has been discussed since he has been on council. He can't imagine the city won't see a return on investment on the position. He believes it is critical, as a manager, to reorganize and put people into the right positions.

Council Member York felt it would be interesting to see how many grants have been written by other staff members in other departments. He questioned whether hiring a grant writer right now, when they have seen great success with the departments writing their own grants was really necessary.

Council Member Boan stated the way he sees it, the city gains a grant writer, and the cost of the Main Street program is reduced. So even though they are creating a new position, they are saving money and getting a new position. He doesn't see how they can beat that.

Council Member Morck noted the grant writer position at the county has worked very well for them.

Responding to the governing body's comments about her memo being a lot of information to "digest" at the meeting, Ms. Hansen apologized stating a lot of the information hadn't been received until earlier in the day. She has been working on her proposal for the last four to six months trying to figure out what to do.

Ms. Hansen stated to be completely blunt, the current department structure was created under a previous department head in 2007, and she would have structured it differently. To be honest, she believes there is more staff in the department than there is work for them to do. Therefore, she believes it is more beneficial to have a position like a grant writer that could bring money into the city.

She noted grant writing takes up a lot of time, time staff could be using to do other things. Just the energy grant, which isn't even going to benefit her department, cost more in staff time than the grant will actually bring in. Even the record keeping after a grant is issued is very time consuming. She feels it would be nice to have a position where all the grants could be consolidated under one position.

Responding to questions from Council Member Boan, Mr. Cook stated Ms. Hansen's proposed changes and the new grant writer position have dollar amounts attached to them. The final decision would have to be made on June 15th when they pass their budget resolution for FYE2011.

Ms. Robertson noted if the governing body decided to add the grant writer position, and follow Ms. Hansen's proposal for restructuring, she would need to prepare job descriptions for approval by resolution, and add the positions to the wages and salaries range table which is also part of the salary resolution they will be approving for the FYE2011 budget. She has started working with Ms. Hansen to prepare the job descriptions as proposed so they are ready at the same time the governing body approves the budget.

Responding to questions from the Mayor, Ms. Hansen stated Green River had submitted an application for the Main Street program in 2005, and it was included in the 2005 budget with operations and maintenance line items, in the amount of approximately \$32,680. In 2009 O&M went up to \$109,068. She has proposed a budget back down to the 2005-2006 amount or \$38,000 for O&M.

The first year they pledged \$120,905 total including salaries, the second year they pledged \$123,725, and the third year \$126,773 as stated in their state application to the program.

The governing body made comments about needing more time to consider Ms. Hansen's proposal, they felt it was a lot to consider on such short notice.

Mayor Castillion noted there could also be comments regarding the Main Street Program from the public they would need to consider.

Council Member McCullough stated he expects to hear from the Main Street board members, and the citizens. He feels the program is for the people, and he wants to listen to their ideas.

Council Member York expressed concern on what the employees were going to think about the city hiring someone as a grant writer at the same time they have been asked to cover portions of the retirement program and other benefits without any kind of raise in salary. Ms. Robertson stated it was her understanding the money to cover the grant writer position would be transferred from the Main Street manager's position into the grant writer position in lieu of a layoff.

Fire Department

Chief Kennedy explained the budget cuts from the FYE10 budget amounts to the FYE11 with division totals as follows:

- 310 – Administration: decrease of \$48,123 or 11%
- 320 – Fire Suppression: decrease of \$24,891 or 8%
- 330 – Fire Prevention: decrease of \$6 or 0.04%

Total budget reduction from FYE10: \$73,008 or 9.7%

He noted the budget for the Fire Department has remained flat over the last few years. The cuts in seasonal and part-time hours will be absorbed by the paid personnel and the volunteers. Chief

Kennedy stated even with the cuts, the Fire Department is committed to, and will continue to provide, the same level of service for the community and the surrounding areas.

He will be increasing the amount of training for their response capabilities to enable them to respond to new potential hazards and changing response needs.

Council Member Boan stated while he believes the city budgets too much for travel and training in the other departments, he wants to insure all the volunteers receive the training they require. Chief Kennedy felt the proposed budget amount would be adequate for the next year.

Mayor Castillion also stated he wanted to make sure the Fire Department had the adequate training dollars in the budget to keep up the caliber of services they have been providing for the community. He feels the training is an insurance policy.

Chief Kennedy stated the commitment by the volunteers is better than he could ever hope for. The amount of training hours has doubled over the last two years. Volunteers rarely miss the training unless they are working.

Addressing questions from Council Member Rust regarding the incentive program, Chief Kennedy stated they had tied the program to staff and volunteers coming to training meetings. There were a lot of people who didn't make the required number of training meetings. The program was used very little. Speaking for his department only, it was more of nuisance than a benefit.

Chief Kennedy noted the biggest thing he can see coming down the road is asset acquisitions. A lot of their equipment has a specified service life. The equipment items that will need to be replaced are big dollar items. The city has always been able to come up with the equipment replacement funding when it was needed. As long as the equipment keeps running good, they are in good shape.

The following asset acquisition request was denied: River Rescue Program \$25,000

Municipal Court

Judge Jason Petri explained the budget cuts from the FYE10 budget amounts to the FYE11:

- 120 – Municipal Court: decrease of \$13,768 or 7%

He suggested the following line items could be reduced even further.

- They really don't have a need for the advertising line item in their budget (\$2,250) it wouldn't cause him any heartburn at all if the line item was eliminated.
- The travel and training line item could be reduced to zero, since they don't plan on attending any training sessions this coming budget year (\$2,750).
- Depending on the number of jury trials that are scheduled, there is the potential they could need more money in their budget for postage. Since they have to mail out notices to over six hundred people each time (\$200 - \$300 each mailing).

He asked for his part-time hours to remain the same rather than be cut so he could continue with the archiving of documents. The information is important and he would like to continue the program.

Council Members McCullough and Boan suggested the additional reductions Judge Petri had proposed be transferred to his part-time hours so he could continue with his archiving project.

Legal Services

Mr. Cook explained the budget cuts from the FYE10 budget amounts to the FYE11:

- 170 – Legal Services: decrease of \$24,015 or 21.2%

He noted they had done a historic review on budget actuals over the last few years, and therefore the professional service line item was reduced from \$32,936 to \$10,000. Their technical supplies were also reduced based on the historical review.

City Prosecutor

Mr. Cook noted based on historical reviews his recommendation of budget cuts from the FYE10 budget amounts to the FYE11. He noted Ms. Botham has presented a separate proposed budget to the governing body. He hadn't seen it so he didn't know if her proposal was the same, more or less than his.

- 175 – City Prosecutor: decrease of 2,794 or 3.3%

Legislative Body

Mr. Cook explained the budget cuts from the FYE10 budget amounts to the FYE11:

- 110 – Legislative Body: decrease of \$273,494 or 30%

The majority of the cut was to Special Projects & Programs (\$253,092).

He gave the governing body detailed reports on expenditures for the Advertising (public notices/legal publications) and Council Special Projects (FYE10 \$51,000, FYE11 recommendation \$20,000)

Council Member McCullough stated he hopes they will continue to purchase tickets for the Riverfest Cajun Shrimp Boil for the boards and commissions volunteers out of their special projects account.

Responding to questions from Council Member Boan, there was a discussion on the required public notice/legal publications that continue to increase in cost and what the Wyoming Association of Municipalities has done to try to reduce the required amount of publications in the local newspapers, i.e. the publication of minutes. Mr. Cook noted without a united effort from the county commissioners, the schools boards, and the municipalities, the legislation will never be passed. The cities have tried to do it on their own without success.

Mr. Cook explained the “membership/dues” line item is basically for memberships to organizations like WAM, *and the National League of Cities*. He will run an expenditure detail for them so they can see exactly where the funding goes.

City Administration

Mr. Cook explained the budget cuts from the FYE10 budget amounts to the FYE11:

- 130 – Administration: decrease of \$55,527 or 16.8%

The majority of his cut was the specialized training line-item (\$45,981) used to send staff members to required specialized training that was over their allotted training formula amounts, for example: IT Technicians, GIS training, and computer training for the Utility Division.

Other Comments

Council Member Maes noted she had been reviewing the financial reports and noted there was approximately \$51,000 in the Buildings and Structures asset acquisitions account. Mr. Bratton had stated nothing was being budgeted for FYE11. Therefore, she would like to have the \$51,000 remaining in the FYE10 account carried forward so there will be something in FYE11 in the event an emergency repair or replacement is needed.

She also mentioned travel and training for all the departments minus the Fire Department, the Police Department, and HR totaled \$153,000.

Council Member McCullough stated he had talked with Commissioner Wonnacott and the Memorandum of Understanding for the service road to Rock Springs is scheduled for the county commissioner's consideration next week. He believes they are going to approve it. If they don't he will back over there to talk to them again about it.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

H. Castillon, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jeffrey V. Nieters, City Clerk