

Minutes of Budget Workshop held on August 19, 2019

Budget workshop held with the following present: Mayor Mark Bowen; Aldermen Jerry Stone, Laura Reyna, Sam Cortez, Ruben Gonzalez; City Secretary Josie Campa; Director of Public Works James McGrath; Police Chief Richard Priest; Fire Marshal Matt Dear; Library Director Cassandra Cortez. Alderman Farmer was absent.

Visitors: Christopher Cox, from Waste Management, Kristi Ann Brown from Tiger Sanitation.

Mayor Bowen opened the budget workshop and asked the City Secretary to review the proposed budgets with Council.

City Secretary Josie Campa told Council that for the proposed budget she had used salary increases of 3% for all employees except two (2) police officers being phased in. She also told Council that the group insurance had gone up slightly and it would cost the city about \$7,000.00 a year for each employee. She also said the new retirement rate is 10.43%. The City Secretary told Council she had not proposed any increases in utility rate due to the substantial increase in the garage rates. She asked Council their thoughts on increasing utility rates. Alderman Gonzalez told Council that maybe the water tiers can be looked at for the budget. The City Secretary said she would work up some numbers on the water tiers over 10,000 gallons for the next workshop. Alderman Gonzalez asked about pricing for out-of-town customers and the City Secretary said she would talk to the City Attorney.

The City Secretary then reviewed the debt service fund with Council, and told of the bond payments that are due in the next fiscal year.

The City Secretary then reviewed the proposed budget for the library. Alderman Gonzalez asked Library Director Cassandra Cortez to tell Council about her requests for this budget. The Library Director reviewed the list she had given the City Secretary for budgeting purposes. The City Secretary told Council she had incorporated all the requested items into the budget other than the ones the Library Director is purchasing from this year's budget.

Council discussed items the Public Works' Director has not purchased from this year's budget. Public Works Director James McGrath told Council he is waiting to see what is going to happen with the water well before getting another truck. Alderman Gonzalez asked if Mr. McGrath had a tractor and Mr. McGrath said he has the Ford New Holland tractor and that he purchased a new shredder. He said he has not ordered the dump trailer yet and that possibly in the future an excavator would be needed. He also said he could see some new trucks in the near future.

The City Secretary then reviewed the budgets for the sewer, gas and water funds. She agreed to work on numbers for increasing water rate tiers for next week's workshop and would add this increase to the proposed budget along with the added engineering costs for acidizing the new well.

Mayor Bowen closed the workshop at 9:12 p.m.