

# **REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE CITY OF NIXA, MISSOURI**

**NIXA CITY HALL**

**OCTOBER 5, 2016 6:00 P.M.**

The regular monthly meeting of the Nixa City Council was called to order by Mayor Brian Steele. Attending were Council Members Andrea Long, Aron Peterson, Justin Orf and Ryan Keating. Kendal Dingus and Chris Russell were absent.

The pledge of allegiance was given.

Peterson made a motion to amend the agenda by changing the order of the presentations and have Finance Director Donna Swatzell present first. Human Resource Director Sharon Hankison would present the Salary Survey Results later in the agenda. Keating seconded the motion and all Council members voted aye.

## **PRESENTATION:**

Swatzell began the first night's presentation with the proposed 2017 City of Nixa Budget for Governmental Funds and Personnel. This presentation is available at City Hall for review. Swatzell explained the governmental functions and/or activities and provided revenue percentages used to support those functions. These revenues included sales tax, franchise fees, administrative fees, charges for services, property taxes, licenses, permits fines, interest and grants. Swatzell also highlighted the numbers used for revenue forecasting and operational expenses.

Kendal Dingus arrived at 6:11 p.m. to join the meeting.

Swatzell reviewed personnel costs. Swatzell pointed out staff is recommending a one percent (1%) cost of living adjustment (COLA) and a three percent (3%) merit increase for employees. Swatzell stated during the years Nixa experienced decreased revenue that no COLA or merit raise was given. Staff is also proposing to leave employee health insurance contributions as-is due to the small increase in the city's health premiums. Additional personnel recommended for 2017 include: systems network technician, two (2) police officers starting April 1<sup>st</sup> and two (2) officers starting July 1. The Police Department is suggesting a \$1.00 per hour increase for the department to bring the wages up to a more competitive amount.

Police Chief Jimmy Liles addressed Council stating calls for service have climbed 17.8% this year. This increase is much higher than anticipated. Along with higher calls for service, response times have also increased due to the growth in Nixa. During 2016, Liles has seen several new subdivisions and developments approved by Council. Without additional officers, Liles sees a concern with this growth and the department's ability to continue to provide exceptional service to the citizens. Liles explained the increase in the number of officers is a need not a want. Council asked if Liles could reduce any non-essential services or programs. Liles replied at this time he does not want to reduce the high level of service the department currently provides. Council briefly discussed possibilities to cut the budget in other areas to afford funds for additional officers. Council also touched upon the needed equipment if additional officers are hired. Liles next presented a proposal to increase departmental wages by \$1.00 per hour across the board for all positions lower in rank than lieutenant. Liles clarified this increase would help with retention and recruitment for the department. Council asked if salaries statewide were researched or just local salaries. Liles explained police department salaries in cities with populations of 14,000 to 25,000 were used and Nixa's wages fell at the bottom. Liles went on to say the proposed \$1.00

increase would bring that wage up to the bare average. When asked if Liles could choose one, either more money for the department or more officers, Liles reiterated both officers and money are needed. Liles told Council he would not be able to hire officers if he couldn't pay them enough. Liles then introduced a proposal to reorganize the department to add a major and lieutenant position. Liles briefly discussed job duties on the new positions. This reorganization would provide more opportunities in the department for advancement, helping in officer retention. Liles estimates the reorganization would cost from \$6000.00 to \$16,000.00. The department recently lost three (3) long term officers with a lot of experience and training. The officers left for either an increase in pay and/or opportunity for advancement. Liles said a reorganization and increase in pay would aid in retention and recruitment. Next Swatzell introduced the contingent personnel needs for the General Fund. Swatzell reported a building inspector position will be on contingent until the city reaches two hundred (200) new residential permits per year. Planning and Development Director Travis Cossey explained the internal review used to come up with the number of residential permits that would trigger the hiring of an additional inspector. Council voiced concern with hiring a new inspector and then experiencing a drop in building permits. Swatzell then informed Council a building and grounds maintenance coordinator position had been postponed. Swatzell outlined the projected computer needs for the General Fund departments and asked Council to contact her should they have any questions on any line item in the proposed budget.

Chris Russell arrived at 7:01 p.m. to join the meeting.

Swatzell reviewed the 2017 proposed Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs). This list is available for review at City Hall. The General Fund CIPs included building improvements, land improvements, equipment and two (2) vehicle replacements. A 5% increase in sales tax is anticipated in 2017. Swatzell indicated the 2016 budget has improved over the original projected amounts. The beginning 2017 unassigned reserve balance is estimated at \$2,517,533.00 and 2017 restricted reserves at \$3,966,015.00. Swatzell told Council more in-depth budget discussions will take place at the next meeting and she plans to introduce the Street budget as well. Council briefly discussed the proposed budget. Council asked Swatzell what the 3% merit increase would cost the General Fund and Swatzell said she anticipates about \$55,000.00.

### **VISITORS:**

None

### **SERVICE AWARDS:**

No service award recipients were present but Mayor Steele recognized Lisa Brown for her ten (10) years of service with Planning and Development and Wendi Buckmaster for her twenty (20) years of service in the Police Department.

### **PROCLAMATION:**

Mayor Steele presented a proclamation recognizing October 2 through October 8, 2016, as Public Power Week in the city of Nixa.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

City Administrator Brian Bingle introduced a construction change order request for work at Bob E-Z Stop. Bingle said during road improvements on North Main and following the installation of the north curb cut on Bob's E-Z Stop driveway it became obvious the cut would not work. Bingle reported the driveway grade difference from the east and west side of the installed sidewalk was too steep and would cause some vehicles and/or trailers to drag entering or exiting the property. Bingle said Journagan Construction has agreed to take out the driveway and replace it with a gentler slope for \$22,492.14. Gerald and Debbie Quigley have given the city permission to access the property to accommodate the

driveway change. Staff recommends accepting the change order with Journagan. The Quigley's expressed their concern for the potential for loss of revenue/business if the too-steep driveway was not corrected. Keating made a motion to appropriate the monies for Journagan Construction change order to fix both curb cuts. Orf seconded the motion and all Council members voted aye on the motion.

At 7:29 p.m., Mayor Steele called for a short recess.

At 7:45 p.m. the meeting resumed with the previously scheduled presentation. Human Resource Director Sharon Hankison provided Council with the salary survey results and recommendations. Hankison reported the survey was initiated in 2015 and completed in 2016. Hankison explained cities were emailed a salary survey packet and asked for their participation. The list of cities is available to review at City Hall. Hankison said of the cities that responded, the highest and lowest wages were thrown out and the rest of the figures were averaged. Hankison provided the proposed 2017 pay scale along with the recommendation to move three (3) positions to a higher pay grade. The three (3) positions were assistant electric superintendent, human resource director and water quality superintendent with the water quality superintendent the only one recommended for a pay increase. Hankison presented the benefit information update and reported the benefit package was very competitive. Hankison said the benefit package is used in recruitment of new employees. Council asked how the pay grades for positions were assigned. Bingle explained the pay grades were set by market rates. He explained new employees can be brought in to a position at a higher rate, based on qualifications, as long as the pay remains within the pay grade. Bingle said the salary survey is done every five (5) years and the past couple of times has been done in-house. Bingle stressed the next salary survey should be done by a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) party, with estimated costs around \$15,000.00 to \$20,000.00. Bingle emphasized the electric and police department wages should be revisited. The salary survey has always used like-municipalities for the electric department but Bingle said private company wages may need to be taken into account. Nixa is finding it difficult to hire and retain linemen when the co-ops are paying higher wages. Council next asked Liles to provide more information on the police salary survey completed within the department. Liles said the salary survey utilized pay scales from cities across the state with populations from 14,000 to 25,000. Those cities were then reduced down to only include towns with similar budgets and similar cost of living. After averaging those cities wages, Liles discovered Nixa's officer wages were almost \$1.00 per hour less than average. Council briefly discussed the results and expressed their concern with recruitment and retention for the police department. Liles said the proposed wage increase of \$1.00 per hour is a start in the right direction for the current officers. Liles also plans to concentrate more focus on active recruitment for the department. Springfield actively recruits from Nixa and their beginning pay is \$16.93 per hour. Council discussed the possibility and potential of increasing park revenues. Council debated whether an increase in park revenues would reduce the park's General Fund offset and allow more funds to be utilized by police.

### **INFORMATION:**

City Clerk Cindy Robbins notified Council she will present an ordinance for Council consideration at the October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. The ordinance would authorize a lease renewal for the City Hall and Police Facilities.

### **MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS:**

Mayor Steele apprised Council of a vacancy on the Industrial Development Authority (IDA). Mayor Steele nominated Darlene Graham for the position. Russell made a motion to appoint Darlene Graham to the IDA with Long seconding and all Council members voting aye.

Dingus updated Council on the recent NixaFest. Both he and Keating felt the event was a huge success.

Mayor Steele reminded everyone the Backyard Brawl will be held this Friday.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

At 8:17 p.m., Long made a motion to move to executive session pursuant to RSMo 610.021.03-Personnel with Keating seconding and Long, Russell, Peterson, Orf, Keating and Dingus voting aye on roll call vote.

Council returned to regular session at 8:35 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Orf made a motion to adjourn at 8:36 p.m. with Peterson seconding and all voting aye.

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Mayor

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City Clerk

# **REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE CITY OF NIXA, MISSOURI**

**NIXA CITY HALL**

**October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016 6:30 P.M.**

A special reception was held from 6:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. honoring retiring City Attorney Pat Sweeney. Mayor Brian Steele presented Mr. Sweeney with a gift from the city and thanked him for his years of service.

At 7:00 p.m. the regular monthly meeting of the Nixa City Council was called to order by Mayor Brian Steele. Attending were Council Members Kendal Dingus, Chris Russell, Aron Peterson, Justin Orf and Ryan Keating. Andrea Long was absent.

The pledge of allegiance was given.

Mayor Steele called for a moment of silence in honor of long-time Nixa resident Bob Massengale. Mr. Massengale passed away earlier in the week. Mayor Steele recognized Mr. Massengale's service to the city, serving on the Board of Economic Development, Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustments.

## **CONSENT AGENDA:**

Mayor Steele called for a motion on the Consent Agenda. Russell made a motion to accept and approve the Consent Agenda as presented, items a through d, with Dingus seconding and Russell, Peterson, Orf, Keating and Dingus voting aye on roll call vote.

## **VISITORS:**

None.

## **PRESENTATIONS:**

Finance Director Donna Swatzell provided a presentation for the proposed 2017 City of Nixa Park and Street Budget. This presentation is available at City Hall for review. Swatzell reviewed the 2017 Park Budget Summary with an estimated operating revenue at \$874,125.00 and expenses at \$1,284,435.00, requiring \$410,310.00 to balance the budget and a \$419,000.00 General Fund transfer. Swatzell reported the 2016 General Fund transfer was projected at \$408,000.00 but increased revenues and decreased expenses point toward a transfer of \$290,000.00. Swatzell gave a park program analysis providing revenues, expenses and the profit or loss of each program. Swatzell explained community events do not have revenues but only expenses in operations and personnel costs. Council asked about location of sponsorship revenue.

Park Director Matt Crouse clarified the money received in sponsorships were placed into one (1) line item rather than breaking each community event down. Crouse also stated some of the community event expenses came from sending staff to special events other than park programs like NixaQue, NixPO, and providing services like inflatables at those events. Council had questions regarding profitability of programs. Crouse reported seeing a growth in the youth sport programs. Council stated potential population growth is expected and profitability should follow. Crouse went through his plans to promote growth in the programs. Rate increases may need to be considered for some of the programs. Crouse reported some of the programs are limited by field space and various methods are being used to use fields for different sports. Basketball is limited by gym space and costs associated to utilize those other gyms. Crouse said additional park space will be needed to grow some of the programs so the ability to grow will

fall within the capacity of the facilities we have. Volleyball is currently the area with the greatest room for participation growth.

Council briefly discussed the fitness center, its space limits and the rates for the program. Council asked if surveys had been used recently and reviewed some of the results of those surveys. Council expressed their concern with the budget numbers being flat and said they would like to see Crouse provide a specific plan of action to improve those projected numbers. Council would like to have the department looking for alternative options to increase revenues, events, facilities, space and parking. Swatzell provided current membership numbers and highlighted the Park Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs) including building improvements, equipment, transportation and aquatics.

Discussion was held on ways to improve the ratio of operations and maintenance within the General Fund. Increasing park revenues, decreasing the proposed merit raise from 3% to 2% and placing the last two (2) officer positions on contingency was suggested.

Police Lieutenant Chad Tennis expressed his concern with the officer contingency proposal and asked the discussion be delayed until Chief Liles was present. Tennis stated the city's growth is behind the need for additional officers. Response times have increase from three (3) minutes to eight (8) minutes and the department is seeing a 20% increase in calls for service. City Administrator Brian Bingle voiced his worry with cuts to improve the operations ratio and still provide the level of service the community needs and demands. Council deliberated on the needed officer positions. Some Council stressed that police protection, electric, water and sewer services are all necessities. Public safety is a necessity rather than a luxury. Cuts are needed but not in police officers. Tennis interjected the 2011-2013 strategic plan called for two (2) additional officer per year but only two (2) of the six (6) were in place. Tennis stated department applicant have decrease greatly causing greater difficulty in filling vacancies. Bingle reminded Council retirement of the park bond in three (3) years will increase revenues. Bingle believes the proposed 87% ratio is acceptable. Bingle also voiced his concern with the Police Department being understaffed and burnt out.

Swatzell reviewed the Street Department operational and capital improvement revenue. The 2017 Street Maintenance Mill and Overlay Projects were presented along with preventative street projects and sidewalk projects. CIPs were reviewed including building improvements, equipment needs, system improvements, transportation and projects. Public Works Director Doug Colvin clarified some of the projects and the related costs. A possible partnership with the school trades class for sidewalk installation was mentioned. Swatzell reviewed restricted and unrestricted balance amounts and Colvin answered questions on some of the CIPs.

Swatzell wrapped up her presentation with suggested personnel wages and benefits. A cost of living adjustment of 1% and 3% merit raise are being recommended for 2017. Insurance will remain the same with open enrollment opening on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Human Resource Director Sharon Hankison was asked to bring back numbers of employees that did not receive the full 3%<sup>^</sup> merit in 2016. Council gave Swatzell direction to bring back numbers for the budget based on reducing the merit raise to 2% and placing the last police officer positions, slated for July, on contingency.

## **ORDINANCES:**

Bill #2016-101 Approving the Renewal of a Lease for Facilities Financed Through the Public Building Corporation of Nixa, Missouri was presented. Peterson made a motion to approve Bill #2016-101 on first reading and pass to second with Dingus seconding. City Clerk Cindy Robbins explained this is an annual ordinance required to appropriate the funds to extend the lease on the City Hall and Police Department Facilities. Mayor Steele opened the public hearing for comments, no comments were made and the hearing was closed. Steele called for a vote on the motion and all Council members voted aye.

Bill # 2016-101 was presented for final reading. Russell made a motion to approve Bill #2016-101 on final reading and pass into law with Orf seconding and Peterson, Orf, Keating, Dingus and Russell voting aye on roll call vote.

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS:**

The prescription drug take-back program will be held this Saturday.

Spooktacular will be held October 28<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Steele announced he will be presenting the Ozark City Council with a strawberry cake due to Nixa's recent loss in the Backyard Brawl.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Peterson made a motion to adjourn at 9:22 p.m. with Russell seconding and all voting aye.

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Mayor

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City Clerk