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- Mayor Pro tem Peggy Gutjahr called to order the city council workshop at 3:00 pm.
- Present: Mayor Pro tem Peggy Gutjahr, Councilors; Bill Brown, Joshua Ramsell and Jim Winters.  
Present: Manager Dr. Martin Moore and Municipal Clerk Elisabeth “Lisa” Adair.

### **Accounts payable report**

- Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr explained the items over \$500.00: Health insurance for the amounts of \$2,068.57 and \$2,861.07; Amazon for a computer and docking station for the City Manager for \$2,311.68; NM Gas Co for City Hall for \$1,125.85; Wells Fargo Leasing for the leasing of the server for \$2,497.73; Stanley Steamer for Covid Disinfecting of City Hall for \$1,865.07; Waterway of NM for hose and ladder testing for the fire department for \$1,757.46, PNM for the Rio Grande Estates fire station for \$889.45; Kauffman’s West for fire department uniforms for \$1,139.87; EMS eSchedule for subscription for \$2,268.00.
- Councilor Ramsell asked if there was a spike in gas prices and began a discussion.

### **Budget (rough estimate) (Manager/Finance Officer) – Discussion**

- Manager Dr. Moore explained the beginning cash balance is a little lower than last year, which is what you have in your account without reserves, revenues, or transfers. He continued to review revenues and reserves. He then said there is a mystery number for revenue that we don’t have.
- Councilor Ramsell the mystery number will not be the same every month and we would not be able to predict that.
- Manger Dr. Moore said we are going to try to get a better idea of what those numbers might be and possibly ask for an increment increase. He then said we don’t have the offsetting money coming in for NMDOT grants and the negative will be about \$31,000 higher so we left the expenditures flat and so what it means in budgeting terms means we would have to cut \$18,000. He then asked if we want to transfer \$30,000 out of the general fund and began a discussion.
- Manger Dr. Moore said there will be no new positions other than the Fire Chief and we might be able hire one position with the EMS fund. He continued the report.
- Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr said this is still regarding the money we had coming in because the loss of internet sales distribution and then asked if the local GRT revenues and Mil-levy are down.
- Manager Dr. Moore said GRT is down, but Mil-levy is not, you dropped some but not nearly as bad as other areas.
- Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr said we are still filling our other public works part time position.
- Manger Dr. Moore asked if the reserve account is drawing interest.
- Finance Officer Finch said no and explained they were looking into CDs when COVID hit and continued the discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore said we wanted to compare the years side by side, high lighting the difference, which is about \$20,000 difference in revenues or expenses. He explained if we are not seeing an increase in revenue, we are recommending a budget change and continued the presentation.
- Manager Dr. Moore said there has been some interest in having EMTs to go along with response vehicles and there is \$98,000 that comes to us from the County from Emergency Medical Services. He then explained EMS operating expenses which total about \$77,000, which would leave us money to completely pay one position and part of another.

- Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr said she would like to know what the other entities and the County in GRT and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Brown said the if one full time EMT is hire, he/she would not be allowed to respond alone to any call, but if we were able to hire two, then the two of them could respond whether it was a fire of rescue call, but you probably find the chief would be doing more EMT that being the fire chief and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Winters said about 3 years ago we went to 3:12 rather than 1:12.
- Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr said maybe we should go with 1:12 this year then see where we are and was concerned what we would cut.
- Manager Dr. Moore said this is not taking money out of our account.
- Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr said the other issue is we have the data from the number of calls and when they come in, talking to Chief Tabet and Marianne Holmes they have been working on that for a while and continued the discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore said we don't have an exact number, but he has been talking with the Code Enforcer about his budget and began a discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore began a discussion regarding potential backup court clerk and amount set aside for that position.
- Manager Dr. Moore said we need to decide where we are going with the Code Enforcer/Public Works position, they will eventually need split to have proper coverage. He then said we did need to hire the second Public works position because they should not be working alone and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Winters said we will have to raise GRT or something to be able to have more Code Enforcing and Public Works happen, but if people see that something is being done, the City being cleaned up, maybe they would not object and continued the discussion.
- Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr said there are a few items upcoming for Public works including putting up signs, lights, inside the building, potholes etc. and she believes we need the Public Works and Code Enforcement Officer to be two positions.
- Council continued the discussion.
- Council Brown said we need a compelling reason to raise taxes, but there is a cost to not being able to provide things the community needs if we do not raise taxes.
- Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr said if we really want to bring in new development, the City has to look good, we want developers to see a clean community.
- Council continued with the discussion.
- Council began a discussion regarding hiring an assistant to the Clerk for 15 hour per week.
- Council began a discussion regarding hiring a second officer.
- Manager Dr. Moore said at the fire department regarding the budget there are several things we need to look at, such as a mechanic looking at their equipment now and see if it is worth putting money into, and what things they need immediately. He then said we will narrow down the requests to what they really need and whether we need a raise in GRT to help provide them with it and began a discussion.

#### **Public input/questions**

- There was not public comment at this time.

#### **GRT & Mil Levy (property) (Manager/Finance Officer) – Discussion**

- Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr began a discussion on the Mil Levy and GRT to either proceed or decide to wait until next year.

- Council reviewed once again the proposed tax increase data for a GRT: The City is allowed an increase of .826% without referendum, .45% with referendum, a .25% increase would bring about \$40,000 and the discussion continued.
- Council decided to proceed with the ordinance on the GRT for a public review and it is to be on the agenda for March 9, 2021.

**Public input/questions\***

- No comments at this time.

**HDR – Drainage plan update (Manager) – Discussion**

- Manager Dr. Moore explained he had a conversation with HDR, the retention pond is not in the original budget we had with then but there is money in the grant or a supplemental, we have received the information on a proposal for the cost and we will have that to Council on March 9, 2021. He then said we will have an internal review before that meeting.
- Councilor Winter said NMDOT is insisting that we have retention ponds up stream and doesn't believe that it is not in the scope of work and continued the discussion.

**Review of Zoning Ordinance 4-7-6 Building permits review and signatory – Discussion**

- Council began a discussion on the building permit and review and signatory, who would be the Chair of Planning and Zoning, if it more complicated then it is reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr asked if we will need to change the ordinance to add the City Manager to the list of those able to sign and continued the discussion.

**Change of all Future City Council Workshop and Regular Business Meeting – Discussion**

- Council would like the Clerk to check with other municipalities in the County on when they hold their meetings.
- Manager Dr. Moore asked how many times it has come up that the attorney is not able to attend.
- Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr said maybe twice and said the attorney would like a change but will work around it if it is not possible and continued the discussion.

**Discussion on the EDC Branding and Logo (Council) – Discussion**

- Council began a discussion on the branding and logo.
- Manger Dr. Moore said since the Economic Development is a Commission and not apart from the City, they should not have their own logo and continued the discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore said they would reach out to Los Luan's EDC director and see if she could come speak with us and continued the discussion.

**Manager Report**

- Manager Dr. Moore said the security lighting in the back is up and going; the library progress, they are working on the duct work, they have a quote for insulating that room and be up to code, they have 4 hard cable internet drops in the room ready for the computers to be hardwired. He then said we are working on the hot water looping and getting fresh air circulating in the building. He explained we are all working on departmental budgets as well.

**Council General Discussion & future agenda items**

- Councilor Brown said he started looking into the banning and restrictions of fireworks on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, the whole State is in drought conditions and began a discussion.
  - Councilor Brown passed out and explained a preliminary traffic calming plan to Council.
  - Councilor Ramsell said there is work going on with the old State park next to the river, they would like to get that open as soon as possible and the City of Belen is possibly becoming a partner with Whitfield and are looking for another partner to put in equestrian trails and some places for ATVs and they might be asking us in the future and began a discussion.
  - Councilor Winters said the next park meeting is the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of March.
  - Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr said she heard back from Representative McQueen who said he would be inclined to allocate funds for a new program.
  - Manager Dr. Moore said he thinks reading programs and other programs involving the library would be a great idea. He then said there was a youth advisory council comprised of High School students that helped them learn about how government works, wrote proposals, and went to the legislatures.
  - Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr explained how quickly we had to decide how to spend money for the library funds and given weeks to spend all the funds in times. She explained the funds might have to be spent quickly so anything we decide on will have to be ready to implemented quickly.
- The City Council workshop was adjourned at 5:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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 Lisa Adair, Municipal Clerk  
 (Taken and Transcribed by Amy L. Lopez, Deputy Clerk)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved:

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 Mark Gwinn,  
 Mayor

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 Margaret (Peggy) Gutjahr,  
 Mayor Pro-tem/Councilor

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 Bill Brown,  
 Councilor

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 Joshua Ramsell,  
 Councilor

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 Jim Winters,  
 Councilor