

(The following is a synopsis of the minutes of the West Branch City Council meeting. A video recording is available for inspection on the City of West Branch Website at www.westbranchiowa.org/government/council-videos. The minutes are not approved until the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.)

**West Branch, Iowa
Council Chambers**

City Council Work Session

**January 31, 2017
immediately following
City Council meeting**

Mayor Roger Laughlin called the City Council Work Session to order at 7:30 p.m. Roll call: Mayor Roger Laughlin was present. Council members: Colton Miller, Mary Beth Stevenson, Tim Shields, Brian Pierce and Jordan Ellyson were present. Laughlin welcomed the audience and the following City staff: City Administrator Matt Muckler, Deputy City Clerk Leslie Brick, Finance Officer Gordon Edgar, Police Chief Mike Horihan, Library Director Nick Shimmin, Park & Recreation Director Melissa Russel and Public Works Director Matt Goodale.

FY 2017 Budget Session

City Administrator Matt Muckler - Revenue estimates for all funds

Muckler presented FY16 and FY17 general fund revenue estimates comparing the similarities and differences between the two years noting that FY18 has approximately \$30,000 less available in the non-salary general fund expenditures due to the TIF asking.

City Engineer Dave Schechinger – Continued discussion on N. 1st Street Options

Schechinger presented three options with cost estimates for Council consideration. The first estimate received (\$227,500.00) was for the preliminary estimate for the project. Schechinger then said the second estimate (\$300,120.00) includes the relocating of utilities and replacing some areas of concrete in the work site. The third estimate (\$375,710.00) includes a total reconstruction of First Street with all of the needed repairs including a new concrete street and sidewalks on both sides from Main to Green Street.

Councilperson Mary Beth Stevenson - Orange Street (4th to 5th) Street and Stormwater BMP Improvements

Stevenson reported that a meeting was held with Shive Hattery recently regarding storm water issues on West Orange Street. A resident who lives on this street contacted the engineer with concerns on their property with flooding and storm water due to lack of infrastructure along this street. Shive Hattery provided a concept for construction of bio-swales along West Orange to help slow down the water with an estimated cost of \$54,165.00. Stevenson said she supports the concept and would like to see the city use storm water fees for projects like these and that this street would be ideal with its current lack of infrastructure. Stevenson also noted that public works attended this meeting and would be responsible for ongoing maintenance of the bio-swales. Miller asked for a cost comparison for adding standard infrastructure versus the bio-swale option.

Department Director Budget Presentations

Parks and Recreation Director Melissa Russell – Community Events and Economic Development Budget Proposals

Russell reviewed the budget for the Community Events and noted that needed cuts were made to the advertising, community events and miscellaneous supplies lines. Laughlin spoke up and requested that Cedar County Economic Development (CCEDCO) dues be cut. However, Muckler stated that CCEDCO offers an important outreach of expertise and advice on economic development and affordable housing, facilitation of Cedar county clerks meetings, social media training, coordination with the East Central Intergovernmental Association (ECIA) and in particular noted their assistance with the Downtown East Redevelopment Project. Council was not in favor of terminating the City's relationship with CCEDCO. Muckler suggested a member of Council or city staff be considered as the city's representative on the CCEDCO Board.

Public Works Director Matt Goodale - Water, Sewer, and Stormwater Budget Proposals

Goodale highlighted a few areas on the water budget that would include installing an additional radio reading devices on seventy homes, pull and inspecting well #six and do any maintenance needed, inspection and cleaning of storage facilities and create a set aside fund for painting water tower #2. Goodale went onto highlight a few areas in the sewer budget that would allow for replacing blowers at the sewer lagoons, replace a leaking airline and the sewer lagoon and point repairs for a portion of phase 3. Muckler reviewed the storm water budget and

said that is steadily increasing since the program began. He commented on some of the storm water projects that the proceeds were funding and reviewed potential projects for the upcoming fiscal year.

Kevin Rogers, Executive Director with Community Development Group (CDG) interrupted the meeting to voice his dissatisfaction with the city cutting CDG's advertising budget. He said he was encouraged by the Council to itemize their funding request and stated that both he and the board felt penalized for doing so. He also stated that the city did not reach out to CDG for economic development assistance. Rogers further stated that he had to leave the meeting to finish writing a grant.

Finance Director Gordon Edgar – Debt Service Budget Proposal

Edgar stated that the projected debt the city will pay off in FY18 is \$613,403. \$252,000 will come from property taxes and the balance will come from water and sewer revenue. LOST, and TIF.

Library/IT Director Nick Shimmin – Cable Access Budget Proposal

Shimmin stated the budget is closely related to the franchise fees that are received. The funds are used for videography services, utility services, IT services and replacing of old equipment.

Public Works Director Matt Goodale – Street Lighting and Town Hall Budget Proposals

Goodale reviewed the budget for street lighting and said that it used mainly for electricity. He also reviewed the Town Hall budget and noted that this budget will increase slightly for cleaning services and future improvements.

Finance Director Gordon Edgar – Mayor, Clerk & Treasurer, and Legal Services Budget Proposals

Muckler reviewed this budget proposal and noted that this area was cut approximately \$30,000. Areas reduced were in training and travel, office supplies, technology services, building inspector salary, and legal services.

City Administrator Matt Muckler – Revolving Loan Fund and Capital Projects Budget Proposals

Muckler commented that staff was in the process of adding all of the capital projects to the budget worksheets in order to track each project budget and expenditures. Muckler requested consideration to use the revolving loan fund for two projects. The first project for consideration is completing the Heritage Square project and suggested finding a grant to offset the cost of the project. He stated the West Branch Preservation Commission had the design complete and the project is waiting for funds to begin construction. Muckler also said that the Hilltop development is moving forward and noted that it will have a private drive without access for a sidewalk. Muckler said that he had been discussing the possibility of exchanging a sidewalk with the construction of the trail that currently exists on the property.

Council reviews all non-salary expenditures

Muckler reviewed \$98,000 that was cut from the budget by department to balance the budget. Affected general fund non-salary expenditures are: Clerk & Treasurer, Police Department, Community & Cultural, Cemetery, Park & Recreation, Roads & Streets, Legal Services and Mayor and Council. Stevenson expressed concern that vital areas not be cut unnecessarily if others areas or projects could be delayed.

Council Member Input - Questions and Comments for Staff

Ellyson stated that CDG should be writing grants for the downtown projects and noted that she was disappointed in the lack of accomplishments in the past year. Miller also stated his concerns with CDG and suggested that the Council give the group parameters and a list of things to get accomplished. Pierce also asked what the city was getting for the money they give to the organization. Shields also questioned why they were not completing the items on the list previously supplied to them. Muckler reviewed a few items on the list previously given to Main Street (CDG) to accomplish citing wayfinding signage, grant writing for Heritage Square improvements and a business recognition program that the Council had input in.

Miller and Laughlin raised the question if there was a more efficient way to do the budget process. The Council discussed for a few minutes then determined that the current way allows for a dialogue between all parties.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the work session by Shields, second by Ellyson. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council
Work session adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Leslie Brick, Deputy City Clerk