

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Iola was held on August 12, 2019, at 6:00 p.m., at the Park Community Building, 510 Park Avenue, Iola, Kansas.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Wells called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Wells and Council Members Ballard, Peterson, Franklin, Ford, Mathew, Myrick, and Martin were present. Also present were Administrator Fleming, Assistant Administrator Schinstock, and City Clerk Hutton. Absent was Council Member Franklin.

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Council Member Ballard and seconded by Council Member Martin to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Wells read the following statement:

Persons who wish to address the City Council regarding items on the agenda may do so as that agenda item is called. Persons who wish to address the City Council regarding items not on the agenda and that are under the jurisdiction of the City Council may do so at this time when called upon by the Mayor. Comments on personnel matters and matters pending in court or with other outside tribunals are not permitted. Speakers are limited to three minutes. Any presentation is for information purposes only. No action will be taken.

Following Mayor Wells reading of the aforementioned statement, he asked members of the audience if they wished to address the Council.

Josiah D'Albini wanted to remind everyone to be careful on the streets of Iola. College students are back for class and several of them are riding bicycles.

Josiah D'Albini stated that he thought the Council should have a Code of Conduct. Council Members should be held to a standard acceptable by the community.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes Approval**
 - July 17, 2019
 - July 22, 2019
- B. Appropriations Approval**

C. Iola Fire Department - Boot Block

Motion made by Council Member Martin to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Council Member Peters. All in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 2020 Budget Public Hearing & Adoption - Mayor Wells opened the public hearing at 6:02 p.m. Hearing no comments from the public Mayor Wells closed the public hearing at 6:03 p.m.

Administrator Fleming reviewed the overview of the budget, the worksheets, and the state budget, which is presented for adoption.

Council Member Peters asked for clarification on the Merit Raise increase.

Administrator Fleming reviewed the merit increase informing the City Council that the 2020 Budget has a 2.5% COLA increase built-in for all City Employees. For those employees who are not topped-out on their pay scale their performance will be evaluated, if they are completing their tasks efficiently then they will receive the increase step in the payplan. After approximately 12 years in the same position an employee tops out at the top of the pay scale and no longer receives a merit increase.

Administrator Fleming noted that a 12.5% increase for Health Insurance is reflected in the 2020 budget; however, the Health Insurance Representative informed staff late today that the increase may be as high as a 30% increase. Mr. Fleming noted that the difference between the 12.5% and 30% would equal roughly \$152,000. At the time of the insurance renewal staff will look into options including having employees paying for part of the insurance premium.

Administrator Fleming noted that with the current plan the City is grandfathered-in and is a non-Affordable Care Act plan which limits the Employer from increasing the Employee's share of the premium to 5% at the time ACA was initiated.

Mayor Wells asked what it would cost if the city funded the plan at 100% versus the recommended 125%.

Administrator Fleming did not have that number available.

Council Member Myrick asked if staff knew what the COLA for 2020 is.

Administrator Fleming stated that the COLA is set by the Social Security Administration and is not released until October or November.

Council Member Peterson questioned whether Gates and Russell Stover received these merit raises.

Administrator Fleming noted that they have some sort of step program at Russell Stover. He is unsure about Gates. However, the merit increase is common for cities. The current plan in place was implemented following the 2015 wage study. Council implemented a three-year phase-in period so more than likely it is outdated already.

Administrator Fleming noted that the article in the paper that stated the city was \$1.8 million out of balance does not paint a true picture.

The City has been saving up funds for bigger projects for the last few years. This year projects are scheduled and reserve funding is being spent to support the projects and the 2020 budget.

He noted that over the past few years the City has relied on reserves to fund the budget. The actual cash balance has increased over the last few years. This supports funding budget items and capital improvement projects with money that is in reserves and has been saved for these projects.

Mayor Wells stated that the CIP projects make the budget larger; however, as a city we have saved up for these projects. We don't want to put them on the back burner and have problems down the road.

Council Member Ballard stated that no cuts had been done.

Administrator Fleming stated that \$120,000 had been cut from the General Fund as a result of the Budget Meetings.

Council member Peters stated that cutting the merit increase would save money.

Administrator Fleming stated that staff had run the numbers and cutting the merit from the General Fund would save \$33,000 and \$48,000 from all funds. Cutting the COLA would save \$116,000 from the General Fund and \$168,000 from all funds.

It was discussed to begin charging the customer for credit card fees as a way to cut spending.

Council Member Ballard stated that a vehicle purchasing policy was supposed to have been put in place.

Council Member Ford stated that the SEMS software was supposed to show us a vehicle maintenance and replacement schedule. Why haven't we seen numbers yet?

Administrator Fleming noted that data from all of the assets are being entered into the database. The GIS information is being entered as well as the fleet information and all the property.

Council Member Martin asked what would be a reasonable time frame for the SEMS program to be launched.

Administrator Fleming stated probably by October. Then data has to be entered each day so to get qualified information it will more than likely be a year away.

Council wanted to know when the Wichita State Staffing Report would be available.

Administrator Fleming noted that they are finalizing the core task assessments for each department. They will present an oral report at the August 26th meeting as well as a written report.

Council Member Ballard stated that things have been brought up by the Council and they have been left undone.

Council Member Martin stated that things have been left undone because of the Council. Things are brought to the Council. Everyone talks about the item. Council never makes a decision. This is the reason we are in the situation we are in now with the water rates. The council's before us could not make a decision. A decision may not be good for a small group of people but it is good for the city as a whole and this Council just can't find a middle ground.

Council Member Ford stated that one thing that could be cut is the City providing a stipend for cell phones and city provided cell phones. We need to start with the little things.

Council Member Myrick stated that the public he has spoken with would like the city to cut the hospital funding. We could use the \$300,000 elsewhere.

Mayor Wells stated that the mill and overlay project for State Street will cost approximately \$500,000. The water line and the wastewater line will need to be replaced at the same time to alleviate the road being torn up after it has been milled and overlaid.

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Administrator Fleming stated that he needs guidance from the Council. Where do you want the General Fund to be. There is no firm understanding of what the Council wants to cut.

The CIP projects that are planned have been in the planning stages for a long time. Money has been set aside to complete them.

Mayor Wells stated that Council will have a discussion at a later time on the hospital. This meeting should include the county, the hospital, and the citizens.

Council Member Ballard stated that the draft budget doesn't even include the pay increases that electrical staff is asking for.

Administrator Fleming stated that staff will have to look at that in the future and making accommodations for it within the current budget.

Council Member Ballard stated that cutting the transfers to Equipment Reserve from the General Fund would save approximately \$175,000. He stated no spending cuts were made.

Council Member Martin stated that these things were discussed at the budget meetings.

Council Member Ballard asked about the Economic Development. They aren't providing anything to the City why are we still supporting it.

Council Member Ford stated that maybe a hiring freeze should be done for all non-emergency departments until the staff study is done.

Administrator Fleming noted that the 2020 Draft Budget did not include a mill increase. It actually reflects a slight decrease. The sales tax is set. Cash reserves are being used for projects.

Council Member Ford stated that employees might have to make some sacrifices. Cutting the cell phone stipend, uniforms etc.

Council Member Ballard stated that maybe the City should look at having the County run EMS. This is the largest expense in the General Fund with over \$350,000 in overtime.

The consensus of the Council was to not show any loss in the General Fund reducing spending by approximately \$400,000.

A special meeting will be held on Monday, August 19th to review the changes and approve the budget.

COUNCIL & ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

A. Council Member Franklin –

- Absent

B. Council Member Myrick–

- None

C. Council Member Mathew –

- None

D. Mayor Wells–

- Reminded everyone that school is back in session.
- The college has some international students. Remember they are used to cars driving on the other side of the road. Assist them if they look lost.

E. Council Member Ballard –

- None

F. Council Member Peterson–

- None

G. Council Member Ford–

- Reminded everyone to be on the lookout for school children.

H. Council Member Peters–

- None

I. Council Member Martin -

- Watch out for the school children.

J. Administrator Fleming–

- None


DATE / TIME OF NEXT MEETING

City Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. on Monday, August 26, 2019


City Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. on Monday, September 9, 2019

7:11 pm. Motion made by Council Member Martin and seconded by Council Member Myrick to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. Motion carried.

Approved by the City Council of the City of Iola, Kansas this 26th day of August 2019.



Mayor Wells



City Clerk, Roxanne Hutton

