

TOPPENISH CITY COUNCIL

Study Session Minutes

December 1, 2008

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Belton called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Mayor Loren Belton and Councilmen Al Hubert, Derald Ortloff, Ed Pacheco, William Rogers, Randy Taylor, and Blaine Thorington.

Absent: None.

Staff Present: City Manager William C. Murphy (CM Murphy), Interim Public Safety Director Tom Kehm (IPSD Kehm), Public Works Director Lance Hoyt (PWD Hoyt), and Executive Assistant/Deputy City Clerk Heidi Riojas (EA Riojas).

CONTINUE BUDGET REVIEWS WITH DEPARTMENT HEADS

City Manager Murphy (CM Murphy) stated that the budget reviews are completed and that he intends to present the 2009 Budget for adoption during the December 8, 2008 Council meeting. CM Murphy reported that the issue of the \$2.39 garbage rate increase offset by the tax decrease will be a net increase of \$1.75 to the customer. The City Manager stated that if all items presented by staff are incorporated in the 2009 Budget that the net ending fund balance in the General Fund will be over \$1.6 million. CM Murphy informed Council that, he will be presenting for adoption an Ordinance reducing the utility tax rate on water, sewer, and garbage, an Ordinance increasing the rate for garbage collection, an Ordinance adopting the 2009 Budget, an Ordinance to reestablish the Police Chief position and the Fire Chief position and to eliminate the Public Safety Director position on the December 8, 2008 Council meeting agenda. CM Murphy explained in specific detail the \$88,000 savings to the City by promoting Adam Diaz to Police Chief and by promoting Tim Smith to Fire Chief, rather than filling the Public Safety Director position. CM Murphy stated that Tim Smith will be assisting with routine code enforcement issues, and requested that Council notify him of any code enforcement issues or concerns so that he can take action to address the problems. CM Murphy reported that the previous quoted ending fund balance of over \$1.6 million includes the hiring of a new police officer, the hiring of a new fire fighter, a contract providing for a new Special Projects Assistant, the promotions of new Chiefs in the Police and Fire Departments, and includes all the approved enhancements. CM Murphy stated that all City employees are encouraged to take an active approach and report code enforcement violations. The Council proceeded to have a lengthy discussion about the matter of the Fire Chief assisting with code enforcement issues. The City Manager reported on the status of the labor negotiations and the course of action to select a new medical insurance plan because the current plan offered by the Association of Washington Cities is being phased out.

Councilman Taylor mentioned that the Public Safety Committee needs to select an agenda topic for the December 15, 2008 meeting. Councilman Hubert stated that the meeting should be canceled if there is no business to discuss.

Councilman Rogers commented on the potential budget cuts to be made by Governor Gregoire. CM Murphy responded that the aid from the State of Washington during 2009 will be just over \$100,000.

CM Murphy queried Council regarding who will be attending the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments meeting on December 10, 2008 at Mt. Adams Country Club. Council responded that Mayor Belton and guest, Councilman Thorington, Councilman Taylor, Councilman Hubert and guest, and Councilman Ortloff and guest will be attending the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments General Membership meeting on December 10, 2008. CM Murphy announced that the Yakima Valley Visitor & Convention Bureau Silent Auction will be on December 4, 2008.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 5:34 p.m.

LOREN O. BELTON, MAYOR

HEIDI RIOJAS, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT/DEPUTY CITY CLERK