

TOPPENISH CITY COUNCIL

Study Session Minutes

June 2, 2008

CALL TO ORDER

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

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

Absent: None.

Staff Present: City Manager William C. Murphy, Finance Director Linda B. Mead, and Executive Assistant/Deputy City Clerk Heidi Riojas.

DISCUSS COUNCIL/STAFF RETREAT OBJECTIVES AND SCHEDULE

Mayor Belton reported that he and City Manager Murphy have discussed scheduling the retreat as an informal meeting for the Council and City staff. He stated that they felt that it would be a better way for the new Councilmen and new City staff to get together to set goals and expectations. Mayor Belton said that later on the Council could decide to schedule a retreat with a facilitator. The Council discussed having City staff provide a brief presentation regarding their objectives for their department. City Manager Murphy stated that the City would provide lunch for the participants. It was the consensus of the Council to schedule the meeting for Saturday, June 21, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Benton Rural and Electric Association building and that Mayor Belton and City Manager Murphy would plan the agenda for the meeting. Councilman Hubert presented the Council with his list of topics of discussion at the meeting.

DISCUSS CREATING FINANCE COMMITTEE

City Manager Murphy reported that he had been meeting with Finance Director Mead about the Council forming a finance committee. He stated that he preferred to deal with the full Council during a public meeting rather than a portion of the Council through a committee. Mayor Belton expressed his views on the issue of forming a finance committee. Finance Director Mead stated that the State Auditor's Office would be contacting each Councilman to find out how much participation and review they had of the annual report. She said that she had a checklist ready to use for the review of the annual report; however, the annual report was not yet ready for their review. Councilman Pacheco requested more background information to have a better understanding of the budget. Finance Director Mead offered to schedule informal budget workshops for the new Councilmen, and stated that she was always available to answer budget questions. City Manager Murphy stated that he would forward the email regarding the AWC Budget Workshops to the Councilmen. It was the consensus of the Council not to schedule a finance committee and that the full Council would review the annual report and complete the checklist during a regular meeting.

Councilman Pacheco requested City Manager Murphy's opinion about the Council not using a facilitator for the Council/Staff planning session. City Manager Murphy clarified that for the first planning session they would not have a facilitator; however, a facilitator could be scheduled for the second planning

session. He mentioned that he found facilitated meetings to be too rigid and structured, which he found not conducive for open discussion. City Manager Murphy stated that he is hoping that the planning session would be more relaxed for staff and Council. Councilman Pacheco expressed his concerns about the public perception of the Council using the term retreat to describe the meeting. The Council decided to call the gathering a joint planning session between the Council and City staff.

Councilman Ortloff asked about the status of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. City Manager Murphy stated that City Engineer Michael Rohrich has agreed to provide the Council with monthly reports. Councilman Thorington inquired about the due date on the utility bill. He was told that there was a misprint on the bill. Councilman Thorington asked about the status on updating the Toppenish Municipal Code. City Manager Murphy responded that the code rewrite was copied from the Walla Walla Municipal Code and that there were a number of sections of the original Code that were omitted from the update, which are unique for the City; and that the experience of city staff with the new code has led to recognition that some improvements should be made to the update. He stated that City staff is currently reviewing the code to improve what was adopted. City Manager Murphy mentioned that it is common for Cities to copy work adopted by other Cities.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

LOREN O. BELTON, MAYOR

HEIDI RIOJAS, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT/DEPUTY CITY CLERK