

Fairfax Town Council Minutes
Special Meeting
Fairfax Women's Club
Saturday, June 20, 2009

Call to Order/Roll Call:

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Larry Bragman
Susan Brandborg
Mary Ann Maggiore
Lew Tremaine
David Weinsoff

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Rock, Town Manager
Jim Moore, Planning Director
Ken Hughes, Police Chief
Laurie Ireland-Ashley, Finance
Mark Lockaby, Building Official
Judy Anderson, Town Clerk

Mayor Weinsoff called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

Approval of Agenda and Affidavit of Posting

M/S, Maggiore/Tremaine, Motion to approve the agenda and the affidavit of posting.

AYES: All

Appointment of Council representative and alternate to TAM (Transportation Authority of Marin

M/S, Bragman/Tremaine, Motion to appoint Vice Mayor Tremaine as the representative to TAM and Councilmember Bragman as the Alternate.

AYES: All

Open Time for Public Expression

Sue Peterson, Forrest Avenue, asked about the times for selling beer and wine at the Fairfax Festival and stated that the sales continued after the close of the Festival.

Chief of Police Hughes stated that the hours were different for alcohol sales at the EcoFest and the main Festival; that there had been some confusion caused by the variance in hours; and that the issue would be revisited for the next Festival.

Introduction and Overview of Proposed 2009-2010 Budget – Town Manager

Town Manager Rock presented the staff report. He stated that the proposed budget assumed State take-aways; that the State's possible taking of the gas tax would be worse than the taking of property tax, because the former would not have to be repaid; that 8% had been cut from the budget across the board, 4% from the operating budget and 4% from the reserve; and he described

some of the Town's efforts to reduce costs that included looking at alternative health plans and the use of a two-tiered retirement system.

INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENT PRESENTATIONS:

Town Manager Budget

Town Manager Rock reviewed the 2008-09 Accomplishments of his department and presented his budget message.

Councilmember Brandborg noted that the listed Town Manager salary in the draft budget didn't match the actual salary.

Town Clerk/Elections

Town Clerk Anderson presented the budget overview for the Town Clerk and Election Departments. She noted that the only item added to the budget for this year was for the purchase of a records management computer program that would enable staff to scan and save documents as part of a "green" program to save staff time, paper, storage space and money. The purchase, she explained, would cost less than \$700/month and would include the necessary software and hardware, including a new main copier/scanner, for implementation of the program. She also stated that the cost of the election in November was estimated to be \$2.50 per registered voter, an increase from the previous year, partially due to the inclusion of a tax measure.

Finance Department

Finance Officer Ireland-Ashley presented the budget overview for the Finance Department. She reported that she had used the GASB 45 retiree healthcare cost study to determine the future liability costs for the Town and to determine the amount to set aside in the draft budget; that she had completed the 2007-08 Audit; and that she had started on budget modification and restructuring. She noted that pension costs were up 17%/year and that medical costs were up 11%/year.

Building and Planning

Planning and Building Services Director Moore presented an overview of the activities of the department. He stated that it was a lean department with limited staff. He reported that the department was working on revisions to the tree ordinance and the 50% remodel ordinance; that there were two non-motorized transportation projects in the works; that he was working with the Public Works Department on the Bolinas Road improvement project; that he was working with the Affordable Housing Taskforce on potential sites for affordable housing in town; that the administrative citations program developed by Building Official Lockaby was going through the process; and that the General Plan Elements were moving forward. He stated that the department goals for the coming year were to complete the update of the General Plan, to present a green building ordinance for the Council to adopt, to complete a site specific plan for the Fair-Anselm property, and to complete site capacity studies for the creation of affordable housing.

Police Department

Chief of Police Hughes presented an overview of his department's activities. He stated that there were 16.25 people in his department, 19 if you counted the reserves. He listed the department's

accomplishments including handling 12,500 incidents in the year with 6200 calls for service. He stated that staffing had been from 20 to 40% below the normal level and that arrests were down but that the number of crimes had gone up. He reported that 2431 tickets had been issued, 1075 crime reports file, 300 abandoned vehicles tagged and 100 Tree applications processed. He described the difficulty of reducing the police budget by 4%, or \$105,000, and stated that the reduction wasn't sustainable. He noted that 62% of the budget pie chart represented public safety expense, and that 2/3 of that expense was for police with 1/3 representing the fire safety costs. He further stated that the COPS grant money of \$100,000 was not included in the budget in case the funding was not restored for the coming year.

Councilmember Bragman asked about the taking of Fairfax revenues for parking citations and suggested that staff should check to be certain that the Town still needed to pay the County back some of the fees. He also asked if it would be possible to replace the Crown Victoria police cars with more fuel efficient vehicles.

Chief Hughes responded that the possibility of replacing the cars had been explored but that there weren't cars on the market that would work for them and still be more fuel efficient.

Councilmember Bragman noted that the potential for a merger of police departments wasn't in the budget report and that it should be because the Town had been through the process and had determined that it wouldn't be feasible and wouldn't save money.

Chief Hughes stated that the topic kept coming up and that it had been looked at since 1978, more intensely in the last 3.5 years.

There was a consensus of the Council to have the consolidation efforts included in the budget.

Councilmember Brandborg stated that the consolidation discussions had started with the POST study and had been followed up by a report prepared by a consultant hired by the two towns, and that San Anselmo hadn't used the report, but had come back with a contract proposal of their own.

Councilmember Bragman asked that any report include the reduction of service that would go along with any reduction in costs.

Mayor Weinsoff stated that there should be an extensive discussion of the attempts at consolidation that would include any potential decrease of services.

Vice Mayor Tremaine stated that consolidation of police services would mean the elimination of dispatch in Fairfax and a reduction in service levels and to say that there wouldn't be a reduction in services was not true.

Mayor Weinsoff stated that the consolidation issue should be open to analysis and study and then put to a vote of the people.

Councilmember Brandborg stated that the Police Chief shouldn't have to prepare an analysis of the consolidation efforts.

Councilmember Bragman suggested that the report just be a paragraph or two to say it was explored and that it wasn't pursued.

Department of Public Works

Public Works Director Wilkie presented her department budget. She stated that funding had been added for Center Blvd. landscape maintenance and that funding had been added to the budget for tree maintenance as a result of the tree inventory that had been conducted. The possibility of the Town taking over the maintenance of Deer Park was discussed. Director Wilkie stated that it would add another \$18,000 to \$24,000 to the budget.

Councilmember Brandborg asked why we would assume responsibility for the park when the Town was down a maintenance person in public works and the police department was experiencing staffing issues, and the park was already available to our citizens.

Director Wilkie stated that the cost for maintenance of the Women's Club had been reduced because so much had been done on the building the previous year. In answer to a question from Vice Mayor Tremaine, Director Wilkie reported that the bridge at the tennis court would be replaced with a \$120,000 grant received to complete the project.

Councilmember Brandborg suggested that application for a Community Development Block grant might be successful to help with the funding of the project.

In response to a question from Councilmember Brandborg, Director Wilkie reported that \$52,000/year was the cost of the street sweeping project.

Councilmember Bragman asked about the completion of the Pastori drain project and whether or not the Town was pursuing efforts to have San Anselmo contribute financially since the project carried Hawthorne Canyon drainage.

Director Wilkie described the pipe replacement proposed for the other portion of Pastori that would alleviate flooding in the neighborhood.

Director Wilkie clarified that the plans for the Pavilion included the installation of a DSL line but not a kitchen at the back.

Vice Mayor Tremaine stated that the draft budget had included a 5% increase to the Fairfax contribution to Ross Valley Fire; that the firefighters had agreed to forestall a 4% increase until January of 2010 to cut in half the proposed increase which decreased the Fairfax annual contribution by \$22,000.

Councilmember Brandborg noted that the County was increasing the cost for dispatch services provided to Ross Valley Fire.

Barbara Petty, Town Treasurer, stated that Finance Officer Ireland-Ashley deserved special recognition for all her hard work on the budget and noted that the proposed budget was conservative on the revenue side.

Ms. Ireland-Ashley explained that the budget was conservative on the income side because of potential State take-aways that were still unknown.

Town Manager Rock stated that the staff would return to the Council in January with a mid-year budget review to allow for adjustments; that the proposed budget borrowed from the reserve; and that the budget had to be balanced and that it would be.

Laine Sprague, Belle Avenue, asked if the Town still planned to proceed with the outfall project on Pastori because she lived in the neighborhood that flooded.

Director Wilkie stated that the Town didn't yet have the environmental clearance for the outfall.

Michael Mackintosh, Pastori Ave., stated that he had asked the Town for streambed alterations; that he was glad to hear that San Anselmo had been asked to contribute to the drainage project; that he had been asking for the Town's assistance since 2005; and that he wanted insurance for his bridge and CEQA compliance before any work was done. Mr. Mackintosh ascertained from Town Manager Rock that police overtime was not part of the pension cost to the Town. Mr. Mackintosh offered to work with the Town to have his property developed.

Mayor Weinsoff adjourned the meeting for a break from 11:20 to 11:35 a.m.

Presentation of Measure "F" Impacts on the Budget – Town Manager

Town Manager Rock presented an overview of the potential impacts of the loss of Measure "F" funding and the need to request that the measure be placed on the ballot for renewal in November.

Councilmember Maggiore stated that she would like to raise the amount of the tax to \$150/year.

Councilmember Bragman stated that if the worst case scenario happened and the Fairfax fire station was closed, that fire insurance rates would go up for residents and that a healthy public economy contributed to the quality of life of a community.

Mayor Weinsoff reported that Community Action Marin was looking to discontinue providing youth services after the summer and suggested using the budgeted amount to fund youth services through the Police Department.

Mayor Weinsoff opened the discussion to the public.

Steve Warner, a representative of the firefighters' union, stated that the Fire Department needed some direction, that they were available to support a renewal of Measure "F" but that the Town needed to be honest with the voters, and that they shouldn't threaten to close the fire station.

Sue Peterson, Forrest Avenue, stated that the Town needed to get the measure passed but that it was a mistake to threaten to close a fire station. She stated that she was proud that the citizens passed Measure "F" but that the Town needed to be honest with the voters.

Ted Bright, Woodland Road, stated that Fairfax was passing up an opportunity to consolidate police departments.

Discussion/Consideration of Proposed Ballot Language for renewal of Measure "F" - Town Manager

Town Manager Rock presented the staff report with the proposed language.

Vice Mayor Tremaine stated that he was ready to vote for the wording as presented.

Councilmember Maggiore stated that she thought the amount should be raised to \$150.

Councilmember Bragman urged the Council to continue to include youth services in the ballot language.

Councilmember Brandborg stated that providing youth services wasn't a basic charge for the Town, that there were other services that should take precedence.

There was a consensus of the Council to continue the consideration of the ballot language to the July 1, 2009 regular meeting.

Adoption of Resolution No. 09-48, A Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Fairfax Approving an Agreement and Election to Prefund Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) through CalPERS; Authorizing the Mayor to Execute the Agreement; Delegation of Authority to Request Disbursements; and Certification of OPEB Funding Policy & GASB 43/45 Reporting Compliance

Finance Officer Ireland-Ashley presented the staff report and explained that the Town was mandated by the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB 43/45) to recognize the Town's future unfunded liabilities and to set aside funds to meet those obligations, a total of \$77,000 for the upcoming fiscal year.

M/S, Brandborg/Tremaine, Motion to adopt Resolution No. 09-48, A Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Fairfax Approving an Agreement and Election to Prefund Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) through CalPERS; Authorizing the Mayor to Execute the Agreement; Delegation of Authority to Request Disbursements; and Certification of OPEB Funding Policy & GASB 43/45 Reporting Compliance.

AYES: All

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Anderson, Town Clerk