



BAKER CITY, OREGON CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 22, 2023 - 6:00 PM
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MAYOR:
Matthew Diaz
COUNCILORS
Johnny Waggoner Sr.
Jason Spriet
Dean Guyer
Beverly Calder
Raymond Duman
Nathan Hodgdon
CITY MANAGER
Jonathan Cannon

Call to Order/Introduction

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| 1. Call to Order | The meeting was called to order by Mayor Matthew Diaz at 6:00pm. |
| 2. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation | Mayor Matthew Diaz led the meeting in prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. |
| 3. Roll Call | Roll call was called by the city recorder, Rheann Weitz.
Roll call was answered by Mayor Diaz and Councilors Calder, Spriet, Duman, Waggoner Sr., and Hodgdon. Councilor Guyer arrived late.
Also in attendance were HR manager, Stacy Spriet, Admin. services manager, Jennifer Spencer, public works director, Joyce Bornstedt, building official, Dawn Kitzmiller, police chief, Ty Duby, interim fire chief, Sean Lee, Phoebe Wachtel, and Kent Bailey. |

New Business

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| 4. Public Hearing Budget - 2023-2024
Fiscal Year Approved by Budget Committee | <p>Dan McQuisten, who is a budget board member, showed his support for the approved budget. He also showed his support for the golf course, swimming pool, and parks. He stated that he supported the city council in its need to increase revenue options and said that he hoped they would involve the community in their choices.</p> <p>Jon France, Pro Tem city manager, stated that he was excited to work with the council on the budget issues they are facing. He mentioned that he was dedicated to working together as a team to come up with revenue options as the City was currently on a path that would not lead to succession.</p> <p>Randy Cox stated his support for the budget, council and the citizens of Baker City. He stated that he hoped the council would decide on a budget that worked for all citizens, not just some.</p> <p>Sharina Connor - stated that she was newer to town, so she was also new to the process of the budget. She had requested information on where she could find budget items and information. She also stated that she noticed this winter kids sledding at the golf course, and thought it was an awesome thing for the community, but was also curious how many citizens actually utilize the golf course and thought maybe it would be a good idea to sell the golf course to increase revenue for the City.</p> <p>Bill Tiedeman - he stated that he had 30 years of experience with balancing</p> |
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budgets and realized that cutting expenses was the easiest thing for anyone to do, but without raising revenues at the same time, it doesn't do much in the long run. He stated that without the golf course, property values would plummet in Baker City, which would lose taxes, which would lose revenues. He is in full support of the golf course projects.

Jaclynn Foss - she mentioned that she is a real estate agent in town and sees the golf course as an asset to the City and the community. She stated that she has clients who call about homes in this area because of the golf course.

Fred Warner - He stated that people come to our town to work and stay here for the quality of life, and the pool, golf course, paths, and schools are all part of that. He stated that he thought that the budget board did a good job and an important piece of that was the citizen's involvement. He stated that the golf course members are very passionate about raising money for the golf course and that they have recently raised enough funds to repave their golf cart paths. He stated that he thinks that the City needs to really sit down and consider investing in the golf course.

Jon Woolard - Jon is the president of the golf board and stated that there is a lot of misinformation floating around town in regard to the golf course irrigation project and the City's financial burden.

He said that to date, there have been over 330 non-local golfers in our community so far this year, and the golf course currently has 800 members and 1200 nonmembers who golf regularly. He mentioned that he had talked with a man who stated that he wouldn't ever move to a place that didn't have a golf course, and that led him to feel even more passionate that the golf course is an asset to the City.

Jon stated that there is currently \$975,000 in noncity funds that are ready to move forward but they are all contingent on the council voting to fund the City's portion of the project. Jon stated that the City would ultimately be responsible for 36% of the 1.5 million dollar project and that 36% of the 1.5 million is less than the \$120,000 a year for 6 years that the City already agreed to.

Jon Cannon stated that the numbers that were presented at the budget board meeting are different than what is being presented to the Council now, and that was concerning. He stated that the funds coming in from other sources would be coming in annually, not all at once, so when the contractor was finished with the work, the City wouldn't be able to write the check to pay for it.

Jon Woolard pointed out that all this current budget needs is \$120,000 with the commitment for more. With the commitment, they could move forward with pursuing other fund sources.

Jon Cannon stated that he thought it would be best to not even put an RFP out for bids until all of the money was in possession, so they would be able to write the check to pay a contractor. He stated that the Council needs to decide whether they are in or out, but the money wouldn't be there in 2024 to pay and they would need to come up with revenue to pay itself back.

Councilor Calder mentioned that partnerships with other entities is the easiest way to get money.

There was some more discussion on how much the City would need to contribute, how much other entities would contribute and other sources of revenue to pay back the loan from the Anthony Silvers Fund

5. City Council Budget Discussion

Sean Lee, interim fire chief, started the City Council discussion about the budget. Sean stated that the fire department needs to have a solid foundation. He explained that at most times, there is only 1 person on shift, with a 2nd on overtime, if they are available, and because of this they are often working 96-120 hours straight. He also stated that there are many days when the fire department is closed completely because there is no one there to staff it. He mentioned that there are 2 options; either closing the doors to the fire department or hiring adequate staff. He stated that the City council needs to make public safety a priority and that without it. He stated that there was no hope for qualified candidates without it.

Sean also mentioned that the auto aid agreement with Baker Rural would end on September 20th, which would mean that the City would see longer wait times for the Rural fire department to get to calls and they would also be seeing a bill for all of the callouts they receive.

Sean asked the Council to consider funding 2 more 56-hour positions and increasing 40-hour positions to 56-hour positions as well. He also stated that they were looking to lease a new fire engine because the 2 they have are 20/30 years old and they barely passed their pump test this last time and he didn't think that they would pass next time.

He mentioned that insurance rates were going to "go through the roof" for homeowners and that the cost would be more than a public safety fee. He also mentioned that insurance money goes straight to insurance companies and the City sees none of it.

Councilor Hodgdon asked how much, on average, the City could expect to see from Baker Rural for callouts. Sean stated that on average it would be about \$200/hour.

Councilor Calder said that everyone thinks public safety is important, but there is a budget to pass, and she wished that this conversation happened in May. She stated that it would be reactionary to change it now and mentioned that getting rid of ambulance services was reactionary and it has put the City in a bad spot.

Councilor Waggoner Sr. stated that the Council needs to get its priorities in check. He stated that they are saying they can fund the golf course but they cannot fund the fire department. He mentioned that all citizens are struggling and with a big hit on their homeowners' insurance, they will feel that.

Councilor Calder stated that they needed to bring the community in to make a plan.

More discussion ensued regarding the needs of the fire department.

Councilor Hodgdon and Waggoner Sr. both mentioned selling the ambulance and that the fire department still had to make up some of the money that is needed. Jon Cannon stated that he believed they could get around \$200,000 for the ambulance.

MOTION MADE BY: Jason Spriet

MOTION: Approve budget with the following amendments; reduce golf transfer by \$120,000; increase fire department personnel and materials and services by \$308,000; reduce UEFB by \$188,000; Decrease county support in the golf reserve fund by \$200,000, reduce transfer from the general fund by \$120,000, and reduce contracted services by \$320,000 to offset lost revenues.

SECONDED: Beverly Calder

IN FAVOR: Ray Duman, Nathan Hodgdon, Johnny Waggoner Sr., and Dean Guyer

OPPOSED: Matt Diaz
Motion passes

Jon Cannon mentioned that the city would now need to come up with \$1.5 million for the next budget year.

Councilor Calder requested that a report showing IT costs to date be given to the Council as it had been requested a number of times prior to the meeting. The Council also discussed possibly putting an item on the ballot that would eliminate Council compensation.

Councilor Spriet mentioned that he would be absent for the June 27, 2023 meeting as he will be gone.

Adjourn

6. Adjourn

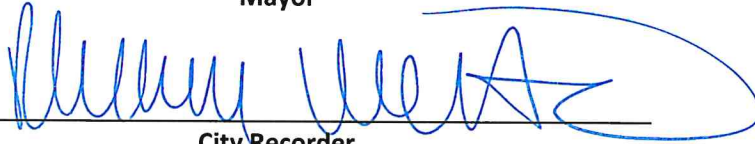
Meeting Adjourned at 8:05 pm

Signed: _____



Mayor

Attest: _____



City Recorder

A link to this City Council meeting can be found www.bakercity.com or upon request to the City Recorder.