



BAKER CITY, OREGON CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MAYOR
Kerry McQuisten
COUNCILORS
Shane Alderson
Johnny Waggoner Sr.
Joanna Dixon
Jason Spriet
Kenyon Damschen
Dean Guyer
CITY MANAGER
Jonathan Cannon

CITY COUNCIL MEETING WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2022 CITY-COUNTY WORK SESSION MINUTES

1. Call to Order	The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Commission Chair Bill Harvey.
2. Roll Call	Roll call was answered by Commissioners Bill Harvey, Bruce Nichols and Mark Bennett, Mayor Kerry McQuisten and Councilors Kenyon Damschen, Joanna Dixon, Dean Guyer, Jason Spriet, and Shane Alderson. Also present representing the City, were City Manager Jonathan Cannon, Fire Chief Sean Lee, Administrative Services Manager Jennifer Spencer, and City Recorder Dallas Brockett.
3. Scheduled Business: 2022-23 Ambulance Service Agreement	City Manager Jon Cannon spoke regarding to the ambulance service agreement. Council had previously voted to schedule a joint work session, regarding some of the issues with the ASA plan. Mr. Cannon stated that the city is seeing a large loss every year. Looking at budgets, losing significant money every year, and the city is in a difficult position to continue the Ambulance Service, especially as the call load continues to grow. There was thorough discussion between the commissioners, city staff and city council regarding the ambulance service: Councilor Jason Spriet: I do not have allot to add to that, but with speaking with other representatives, and it seems there is some confusion on the numbers and it would be clear to say that. Councilor Shane Alderson: I called for the joint work session, regarding the issue. Shane stated he would like to be able to speak collectively as a group and go over the sustainability of the ambulance service. Councilor Kenyon Damschen: Questions - what are your plan to move forward, what are your plans in place moving forward. Are there talks about sustainability. Councilor Dean Guyer: One of the things he would like to see, and that we do not go backwards tonight, and bringing up passed issue. He would like to see a resolution from this point forward. We need to work together collectively. I want to make something very clear, that they understand, that the city council voted to have Jon Cannon move forward with this letter. Jon has been acting on behalf of the city council. Folks in the community would like to see something worked out between the county and the city. We need to work toward a common goal. Councilor Joanna Dixon: we do not want to take the ambulance services away - the issue is the city is losing money and as citizens age, the service and calls. I cannot justify bankrupting the city over the ambulance service, we have other

services we need to provide.

Mayor McQuisten: Two things tonight: back through numbers - need to establish what they are. We need to figure out the numbers what they actually are.

Commissioner Bruce Nichols: Declare a conflict of interest, I am the only Commissioner that lives in the City. Wanting to get this done and settled and to benefit us all. Dive into the numbers really quick - looking at the numbers that were reported by the Auditor, fire and ambulance service reported under public service with the police. Charges of service - consist of \$974k - A majority of it ambulance.

Administrative Services Manager Jennifer Spencer: so in the general fund - 8 or more ambulance line items that are for ambulance. A line for Medicare/medicaid payments, SAFE payments, general accident, motor vehicle accident, FIRE MED revenue, Ambulance Standby duty - rodeos, demolition duty, CPR class revenues. GEMT Medicaid cost reimbursements, which is the grants that the city receives. SAFER grant line that we no longer receive. COunty EMS support.

Commissioner Bruce Nichols: 2021 Audit - the numbers

Ms. Spencer: We worked on a calendar year cycle vs a fiscal cycle.

This is last fiscal year. \$34,000 was received last year.

Commissioner Nichols- Had you received this earlier, you would have been over \$1million in revenue. \$974k - \$2,160,000 in expenditures, \$1, 186, 000 remaining expenses. By terminating the ambulance service, the difference between those two numbers, is about \$1.1 and \$1.2 million is needed to run the fire department. This would be a wash - this would not include any inflationary

Councilor Dixon - you are saying that \$150,000 offered is going to offset the \$1million deficit.

Commissioner Bruce Nichols: the projection shortfall is not as big as you are saying. The county cannot fund the fire department.

Ms. Spencer: we are looking at expenses vs expenditures. EMS expenses \$1,785,000 - \$859,000 of a net loss.

Commissioner Bruce Nichols- We are talking about the elephant in the room.

Councilor Dean Guyer: I went through the numbers, actual numbers, that were kicked off the last three years. Based on that 85% allocation, in every year the City has lost \$700,000 every year.

Bruce Nichols: You are proposing to cut half your staff, and you will be unable to be fully staffed.

Jon Cannon: If we run it your way with your numbers Bruce, \$200k loss last year even with county contributions.

Councilor Dean Guyer: Bruce is talking about the hard costs - whether you have an ambulance service or not. Are there any hard costs that are included in the numbers we are using?

Ambulance is in sense an enterprise fund.

Bruce: I am after at least a 1 year fix. We should be working this out and figure this whole problem out.

Mark Bennett: what are you seeing numbers as just running a fire department?

1) what is the whole budget?

Jon: We are unable to meet the demands of service - \$3million for next year.

Without ambulance \$1.1-\$1.2 million to just run a fire department only.

Projecting about \$1million in revenues.

Mark: we are agreeing to go to the top 20%, \$160,000.

Jon Cannon: There has been a solution to in-city and out-city. Baker ASA - is entire Baker ASA this includes city/county. There is a real problem with this as not everyone is getting the same out of their county taxes.

Commissioner Bruce Nichols : Give the county more time, so we can work at this together.

Councilor Guyer: I think it would be beneficial to have a short-term plan, and also look at a detailed long-time term.

City-County does not have the ability to subsidize ambulance service. At some point, we have to compromise. The only way we get past it, and we all agree that this is an issue.

Guyer? What does a private service look like?

Mayor: An RFP process would delay this 3-4 months.

Commissioner Nichols: A district is on the "radar"

Commissioner Bennett: County is obligated to create an ASA, not for paying the service. The only way we can get it done is through an RFP process. There is a large process.

Jon: A district is a good idea. Talk of a district has been going on since 1991. 2017, 2020, 2021, a district has been talked about.

Commissioner Bennett: We are behind and are having issues with the employees salary. \$1 per \$1,000 value would be the cost of a district approximately based on the \$1,000,000 number.

Bruce: Talked to the assessor today and the \$1/1000 was mentioned.

Commissioner Bill Favor: I am in favor of a flat fee per household.

Commissioner Bennett: It makes sense to make it a county wide district.

Baker ASA Discussion:

County Attorney Kim Mosier: There was concern around sanctions for being out of compliance with the ASA plan. (page 17/18) To sum up, if there was a provider who could not follow the ASA, one of the options is to bring in a service provider to cover that ASA, while the other provider gets up to compliance. The county could bill the non-compliance provider. The structure of the ASA plan, is followed under OARs. Under OARs, the county plan has to have sanctions within the ASA plan.

Jon Cannon- there is risk in this, as there is no cap on cost of fines when a provider is in violation of the ASA.

Kim Mosier - you are more than welcome to make suggestions.

Jon Cannon: I have a hard time recommending this to city council.

Commissioner Harvey: The other issue that was brought up, was adding more to the ASA and not being compensated.

Jon Cannon: There is a challenge regarding committees. As a provider, and you change the plan, we want to have some say. A contract would have verbiage regarding that. There is a delicate dance there, and if we are going to be a provider, so things do not change on us without some say.

Pubic Comment:

Dan Garrick - So the city has said atleast 5 years you have lost \$4.5 million dollars. Why has this not been brought up before?

Jon Cannon: General Fund is where we fund public safety, and other items. This has come out of the property taxes.

Dan Garrick: as a taxpayer, has admitted 10 years of losses. I am very frustrated with this.

Councilor Alderson: The problem is that you have looked at previous leadership, city council and city managers.

Cody Justus: The one thing we didn't talk about that is important - and I advocated with the commission to offer the \$150,000. Trying to preserve the city's fire department. The biggest issue is that cutting half of your fire department. Trying to keep the fire department whole. One of the solutions I would like to throw out there - fire/ems district combined. This negotiation between two bodies and it would have its own board of directors.

Tyler Bulling - I want to speak to a permanent rate vs a household fee. Large companies, could pose a big risk and would not contribute their fair share.

Jason Yencopal spoke regarding the online questions posted in Zoom.

Jon Cannon provided a response: Although we have three division chiefs in the station that handle operations, ems, and training. Paper pushing of all that work. They are also in the station for the peak hours to handle calls. Same number of people when we are on different shifts, but this is offer more availability during the day.

Mr. Yencopal mentioned a second question on Zoom: It is my understanding that the county has been working on it for 7 years, why has it taken this long?

Bill Harvey did not provide any further comment on the question asked.

4. Other Business:	There was no other business discussed.
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5. Adjourn	Meeting was adjourned at 8:16pm.
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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.