

CITY OF COSMOPOLIS
Workshop Meeting Minutes
December 18, 2019

Mayor Frank Chestnut presiding.

Councilmembers present: Debbi Moran, Dale Andrews Kyle Pauley, Carl Sperring and Jim Ancich

Staff present: City-Administrator Darrin Raines, Clerk-Treasurer Julie Pope, City Attorney Steve Johnson, and Fire Chief Cody Bridges

Mayor Chestnut called the workshop to order to discuss the firetruck.

Mayor Chestnut asked if Chief Bridges had come up with some figures that the Council had requested. He had some available but did not have time to print out copies for the Council. He also stated that he had some figures for how much it would to have repairs done to the existing fire truck. Mayor Chestnut then asked City-Administrator Darrin Raines and Clerk-Treasurer Julie pope if they had had a chance to come up with any new figures regarding what the cost would be to our citizens. City-Administration Raines said that our water rates will be going up substantially in the next 5 years. He gave figures for a 17.7 % utility increase and a 16 % utility increase. Councilmember Pauley asked about a tier system for water billing. Clerk-Treasurer Pope stated right now we average the cost out to all the citizens, if we went to a tier system the water bills would cost more be for larger families and businesses. City-Administrator also said the City of Aberdeen would undoubtedly be raising our sewer rates too. He stated this is the worst possible timing as we needed to work on water and sewer which will now have to be put on hold again.

Mayor Chestnut said we need a fire truck. We are looking at a half of million dollars for a new truck. He called on Chief Bridges to present to the Council the figures for a new truck. Chief Bridges presented a 15 year payment plan which would lower the payment to \$3575.00 monthly. Equipment failure is a reality. None of our current trucks will pass inspection. Chief Bridges stated if we don't get a new truck our home owners and renters insurance rates will go up exponentially. Fireman Steve Davis said they will still work on grants for helping pay for the trucks. Councilman Andrews said we need to have a couple a town meetings where the Fire Department presents their needs to the citizens and discuss putting forth a bond issue where they can get the equipment they need so they can do their work safely but let the citizens help decide.. He also said the council gets the information in a belated fashion to where the fire department has to come to the Council and present a doomsday scenario. We need to have more conversations about this issue. Councilmember Pauley asked if we put out a request for a bond in April and it passed when would the monies be available. City-Administrator Raines said not until 2021. He stated that if we go to a bond issue, we can ask for more money so we may be able to pay for a couple of more pieces of equipment in one bond issue. Council member Moran said we could have a Townhall meeting in January to explain to the citizens why we need this. Councilmember Sperring said he spoke with an insurance agent and if the insurance went up it would go up by 6% to 10%. Chief Bridges said we could raise the utility tax to help pay for the new truck and then we could go to bond and if the bond passed we would then lower our utility tax when the bond took over. Councilmember Moran said that if we kept the utility hike on the water bills to help pay for the truck and not pass a bond there would probably be citizens that would have to go without paying for food or their medications. City Administrator Raines asked Clerk-Treasurer Pope if there was a fund we could borrow from that we could pay back if we get the bond passed. Chief Bridges asked if there was enough money in the equipment reserve fund but Clerk-Treasurer said there was not enough since the fire department had budgeted about \$30,000.00 for some new equipment you want this year. She told Chief Bridges that he could use part of the office and operating cost for the fire department because they never use half of what was budgeted.

Councilmember Jim Ancich asked if we could ask the public in the audience had any comments. Robin Capps said for us to raise our utility tax and then go for a bond issue. City-Administrator Raines stated that was what we were looking at. Ben King said he felt we should go out and purchase the truck that is already available.

Mayor Chestnut adjourned the meeting.

Clerk-Treasurer

Attest:

Mayor