

CITY OF COSMOPOLIS
City Council Meeting
May 20, 2020

Mayor Kyle Pauley presiding

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT

Debbi Moran, Dale Andrews, Candice Makos, Jim Ancich, and Stana Cummings.

STAFF PRESENT

City Administrator Darrin Raines, Fire Chief Cody Bridges, Attorney Steve Johnson, Police Chief Casey Stratton, and Finance Director Julie Pope

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Andrews made a motion to accept the agenda. It was seconded by Councilmember Ancich. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Moran to accept the consent agenda. It was seconded by Councilmember Andrews. Motion carried.

CITY OFFICIAL REPORTS

Finance Director – Finance Director stated that most of her discussion tonight is regarding the 2020 budget. Property Taxes collected this month was approximately \$4500 higher than normal. Most of the County received higher than normal property taxes. Sales tax was down \$5000 from prior year. B&O tax is down \$3000 from prior year. Electric Utility tax is down \$47000 from prior year. We are down roughly \$51,000 in taxes from prior year. She is expecting the big hit to come now. With the mill being closed, sales and fuel taxes declining, so now we will see the crunch. We will not be doing a budget amendment tonight but have put some reductions in place to help the City. We will discuss these reductions in new business.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR – Administrator Raines stated that there have been many calls from citizens regarding the way things are looking within the City. The mill has closed down and revenues are lower plus we have people working from home and through on-call status. We are looking at 40% revenue reductions, so we have had to do drastic cuts. We will probably be mowing only once a month. He thanked the Fire Department for mowing around their station, Shelley Willet for mowing around the Police Department, former Mayor Frank Chestnut and the Lions Club for mowing Lions park, Ed VanSyckle for doing general clean up, and the Friends of Highland Park for helping.

POLICE CHIEF – Chief Stratton stated that there is a continued escalation of mental health and violent crime calls. This is consistent with the rest of the County. So far, no direct exposure to Covid-19. Clerk Willet has been notified of her reduction in hours to take place the beginning of next month.

FIRE CHIEF – Chief Bridges stated that they are similar to the police department as it is mostly business as usual. They one exposure to Covid-19. There were 3 fire department personnel who were exposed. All of the personnel were wearing their PPE and the patient had PPE on. They do not expect it to be an issue. As of now, we have cut approximately \$50,000 from our budget and have taken over maintenance around the building.

ATTORNEY - Attorney Johnson stated that Court will start next month on June 18, 2020. There will be modified rules. The judge will try to allow a maximum of 3 defendants in the court room at one time with the attorneys and court staff. Only 2 people in the waiting room. The bailiff will be patrolling the lobby to control how many will enter. The judge will have everyone wear a mask but will not provide one to non-court personnel. He will also ask that everyone who enters to use hand sanitizer upon entering.

MAYOR

Mayor Pauley stated that he had talked to EOC about the Phase 2 variance. The plan was submitted today to the State Department of Health. We should hear something by the end of day on Friday. If approved, we will be in Phase 2 early next week. As for the current emergency proclamation in the City. It was set to expire in early June. He will extend the emergency out until the end of the year. He hopes it will end sooner. There have many changes to staff and scheduling. The composting program will stay closed for the time being due to budget cuts. We will be looking at the budget every few months. He thanks Chief Stratton and Administrator Raines for taking some cuts on their own. As of now, there are no late fees or shut offs for utilities. We should be coming out of it soon and need to start planning how to do so. We will be getting some funding to offset costs due to Covid-19. Also, the census is still underway.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Resolution 2020-01 (In Support of the Chehalis River Flood Basin Flood Reduction Project)**
– This is for a basin wide project that will benefit everyone per Administrator Raines. This resolution was done a few years ago, but Flood Authority is requesting a new one. Councilmember Moran made a motion to approve the resolution. It was seconded by Councilmember Ancich. Councilmember Andrews asked if there are revenues from us attached to this. Administrator Raines stated that there were none. Funds would come from the State and Federal governments. Motion carried.
- B. Investment Funds (Makarenko Park and Fire Equipment)-** Finance Director Pope stated that the funds invested at Bank of the Pacific were in jeopardy of going negative due to the market. She received an email and phone from the investment manager asking to move them into a regular account until the we could get Council approval on what to do with the funds. She spoke with Administrator Raines and they gave the Bank the go ahead to move them to a regular account. She stated that the funds could either remain in a regular account to reduce our monthly account fees or they could be put into a money market account where they could draw a minimal amount of interest. Councilmember Moran made a motion to leave it as a regular account. It was seconded by Councilmember Andrews. Motion carried.
- C. 2020 Budget** – Finance Director Pope stated that she expected revenues to be reduced by 40% from the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. She gave the Council a list of items where the City had already reduced expenditures. She then went through each fund’s by bars numbers stating how much each expenditure should be reduced based on reduced funding and contractual obligations. She also stated that we would not be doing a budget amendment at this time and would be taking another look at the budget in three months. Councilmember Andrews thanked her for reading it by line item. Councilmember Makos thanked her for the hard work that went into it and for all departments working together. Councilmember Moran made a motion to accept the changes made. Seconded by Councilmember Andrews. Administrator Raines stated that this is a bare bones budget and if there are issues with the utilities, he will have to come back to the Council for approval. As of right now, all projects are on hold. Councilmember Andrews asked about street repairs on 4th street being put on hold and if the prospective property sale had gone through. Administrator Raines stated that the buyers has put the sale on hold. Motion carried. Mayor Pauley stated we would be looking at the numbers on a regular basis. This is preparing for the worst. There are sacrifices in every department.

CARES FUNDING

Attorney Johnson stated that Congress passed the CARES act. This provides funding for Covid-19 related expenses. This is being distributed on a per capita basis to cities. Cosmopolis is eligible to receive \$50,400. This is a federal grant program. We need the Council to authorize the Mayor to sign a contract which hasn’t been drafted yet. It will be drafted by the Department of Commerce. They sent a template that Attorney Johnson has reviewed. All monies spent must be Covid-19 expenses. They will be reviewing expenses. We will be required to send in invoices to receive the monies. It is a grant and will not be paid back. Councilmember Andrews made a motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the contract. Councilmember Moran seconded. Motion carried.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Ancich – He thanked the Fire Department and the Police Department for the parade that they put on. He would like us to communicate more to the citizens about the Compost program being cut. He thinks they would be willing to pay for the program. He asked about the GovDeals auction. Finance Director Pope stated that she was still waiting for pictures to post on the website.

Councilmember Andrews – He thanks everyone for going through the budget in great detail and thanked them for their hard work.

Meeting adjourned.

Finance Director

Attest:

Mayor