

City of Winsted
City Council Work Session
Lewis Room
October 4, 2011
5:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Steve Stotko
Council Member Tom Ollig
Council Member Bonnie Quast
Council Member Dave Mochinski
Council Member George Schulenberg

Staff Present: Brad Martens, City Administrator
Deb Boelter, City Clerk-Treasurer
Chad Engel, Winsted Volunteer Fire Department Chief

I. Call to Order

Mayor Stotko called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. 2012 General Fund Budget Update

Martens presented some updates on the 2012 General Fund Budget.

Martens stated that he is waiting for some comparison information that will clarify exactly what amount property owners will be paying for residential, commercial and industrial property taxes. Martens stated that once he receives the information, he will present it to the City Council at a future meeting.

Mayor Stotko stated that if Martens is unable to obtain the information from the McLeod County Auditor before the October 18, 2011 City Council Work Session, a Special Work Session may have to be scheduled at the end of October, 2011.

Martens presented some examples of services that the City Council and staff could reduce and/or eliminate to assist in decreasing the 2012 preliminary General Fund Expenditure Budget. Martens also presented services that the City currently provides for free, that could have a fee in the future, to increase revenues in the 2012 General Fund's Revenue Budget.

Council Member Ollig stated that the City still has the option to establish franchise fees for the electrical and gas companies that provide these utilities in the City of Winsted. He also stated that the City could consider a monthly administrative fee on garbage billing.

Council Member Ollig stated that the City Council should wait to discuss and/or make any decisions on the 2012 General Fund Budget until all necessary information is received and presented at a future meeting.

Council Member Ollig stated that it is important that the City take steps to inform residential, commercial and industrial property owners of the Town Hall meeting scheduled for November 3, 2011 in the Council Chambers at City Hall so they can discuss with Representative Shimanski and Senator Newman the new property tax formula that the Minnesota State Legislature established.

Martens stated that other Minnesota communities are doing public relations campaigns to inform property owners of the possible increase in residential, commercial and industrial property taxes. The City Council recommended that the City of Winsted also take steps to inform its property owners. They stated that information detailing the possible increase in residential, commercial and industrial property taxes should be sent in the monthly utility bill.

III. Review First Draft of 2012 Water, Sewer, Cable and Airport Budgets

Martens stated that he did not receive the information he needed to prepare the draft 2012 Water, Sewer and Cable Fund Budgets. He will present the proposed budgets at a future City Council Work Session.

Martens presented the draft 2012 Airport Fund Budget.

Mochinski stated that the employee wages and salaries are no longer expensed from the Airport Fund and he believes that they should be budgeted and expensed from the Airport Fund so the City has a realistic picture of how the Winsted Municipal Airport is operating.

Mayor Stotko asked Boelter why the wages and salaries were removed from the Airport Fund. Boelter stated that when the wages and salaries were recorded in the Airport Fund, the Fund operated in a large deficit each year. This deficit is detailed in the City's annual audit and when a deficit is recorded in the audit each year, it can result in an audit from the State of Minnesota. Boelter stated that a former City Administrator made the decision to record the wages and salaries for the Airport in the General Fund because the personal property taxes paid by the hangar owners are deposited into the General Fund. Boelter stated that the amount paid in personal property taxes from the hangar owners is approximately \$12,000 per year.

Boelter stated that staff could determine what amount of employee wages and salaries are paid for work that is done for the Airport by determining the percentage of time certain employees spend working on and/or at the Airport and taking that percentage from the General Fund wages and salaries in the affected departments.

Mayor Stotko directed staff to check with the City's auditor on what problems may arise if the employee wages and salaries are recorded in the Airport Fund and the annual audit shows a deficit.

Mochinski stated that he believes that the City Council should have a more realistic picture of what is being spent in the Airport Fund.

IV. 2012 Winsted Volunteer Fire Department Budget

Martens presented the Winsted Volunteer Fire Department's 2012 budget and gave a brief overview of the revenues and expenditures.

Martens stated that the number of fire protection units for the City of Winsted were re-evaluated and increased. As a result, the City of Winsted budgeted for the increased fire protection in the 2012 General Fund Budget.

Martens stated that the Winsted Volunteer Fire Department's Capital Equipment Plan (CEP) currently does not have the funding needed to purchase future fire equipment. The 2012 Expenditure Budget does include a transfer to the CEP. Engel stated that the Winsted Volunteer Fire Department's Relief Association has agreed to donate \$15,000 from their gambling proceeds to the CEP.

Boelter stated that the Relief Association has submitted the required gambling form to the City of Winsted committing to a \$15,000 contribution to the CEP in 2011. A resolution accepting the donation will be on the October 18, 2011 City Council Regular Meeting 's Consent Agenda.

Engel stated that there may be a change in the unit numbers for Victor Township.

Council Member Ollig asked if the Fire Board approved the proposed 2012 Fire Department Budget at the August 31, 2011 Annual Fire Board meeting. Engel stated yes.

V. Feral Cat Update

Martens stated that he conducted research on what other cities do with feral cats. Martens presented his findings.

Martens stated that the City may want to work with the Herald Journal to prepare information for the public on what to do with feral cats.

Council Member Ollig stated that the City of Alexandria, Minnesota received some type of grant that paid to spade and neuter feral and stray cats captured in their City.

VI. Winsted Volunteer Fire Department Purchase Request – Rescue Boat

Martens gave a brief overview of the rescue boat that the Winsted Volunteer Fire Department is proposing to purchase.

Engel gave the details and specifications of the rescue boat. Engel presented what types of rescues the boat will be used for.

Council Member Mochinski stated that a twenty-five (25) horsepower (hp) motor may be difficult for rescuers to carry. He continued by stating that he believes that a fifteen (15) hp motor would be sufficient. He stated that if the City of Winsted had bigger bodies of water he can see purchasing a bigger motor; but, they do not. Engel stated that he checked with the Hutchinson, Minnesota Fire Department and Watertown, Minnesota Fire Department and they both have twenty-five (25) hp motors on their rescue boats.

Council Member Mochinski asked Engel if the Winsted Volunteer Fire Department needs to have a ladder truck. Engel stated yes and gave a brief overview of the types of emergency calls in which they have used the ladder truck.

Mayor Stotko asked Engel how the Fire Department will haul the rescue boat. Engel stated that they would pull it with the Fire Department's pick-up truck.

Martens asked the City Council if he should bring the rescue boat request to the October 18, 2011 Regular City Council meeting. The City Council discussed and stated yes.

Council Member Mochinski asked if Engel obtained other bids. Engel stated no because this particular dealer indicated that he can obtain grant funding for a portion of the rescue boat purchase.

Council Member Schulenberg stated that it should have a manual starter and not an automatic starter. He continued by stating that an automatic starter would require that the Fire Department carry a battery with them and connect it quickly before a rescue.

Council Member Mochinski stated that for reliability during emergency water rescues, he would recommend purchasing a Honda motor for the proposed boat.

VII. Other

a) Animal Control Ordinance Amendment

Martens stated that the City's existing Animal Control Ordinance does not indicate the correct number of dogs that a resident is allowed to have. He continued by stating that the Ordinance will have to be amended in the future.

b) Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances Amendment

Martens stated that the City has received a request to allow street level apartments in the downtown area. Martens stated that it would help with the cash flow for the property owners who are struggling to keep their buildings downtown.

Martens stated that he would like to prepare an amendment to the City's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances that would allow for street level apartments in the downtown area and detail the City's specifications and requirements for this type of housing. He would present it to the Planning Commission for consideration and then to the City Council for consideration and approval.

c) Vollmer Room Use Policy Amendment

Martens stated that the City's *Vollmer Room Use Policy* does not list the Winsted Boy Scouts and the Winsted Lions Club as groups that may use the Vollmer Room for meetings without paying a fee and they are using it. He stated that the City has received a request from the Winsted Girl Scouts to also use the room.

Martens asked the City Council if he can amend the existing *Vollmer Room Use Policy* to include these groups and bring the amended Policy to the City Council for consideration at a future meeting. The City Council discussed and stated yes.

d) Downtown Revitalization Task Force

Mayor Stotko and Martens stated that they have received several requests about revitalizing the downtown area. They stated that they would like to establish a "Downtown Revitalization Task Force" to address the revitalization of the City's downtown.

Council Member Ollig recommended that a member from the Winsted Area Chamber of Commerce Board be on the Task Force.

VIII. Adjourn

Council Member Ollig motioned to adjourn. Council Member Schulenberg seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Steve Stotko

Steve Stotko
Mayor
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Deborah R. Boelter

Deborah R. Boelter, MCMC
City Clerk-Treasurer
City of Winsted