

AURORA CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

*Aurora City Hall, 2 W. Pleasant, Aurora, MO 65605
Tuesday, November 4, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.*

I. Call to Order: Mayor Marks called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call:

Mayor David L. Marks
Chairman Pro Tem Barton
Councilman Ramirez
Councilwoman Rentfro
Councilwoman Henderson

All council members were noted present.

III. Agenda: Budget Work Session

Council met in a second work session to discuss employee raises. Pros and cons of a merit raise versus across the board raises were discussed in depth between council and department heads.

Councilman Ramirez stated he would like to see a minimum of a 5% raise. He requested council to take back the house the hospital previously asked permission to sell. He felt council could sell the house and use the money to help offset the cost of the employee raises. He stated city employees were anywhere from 10 to 20% behind other comparable cities in wages. In addition, he felt the city should use UDAG funds to assist in offsetting demolition costs. Information obtained through another city proved it would be an acceptable use of UDAG funds.

City Manager Randall stated the money from the house sale would be the cities even though it would be put in the Capital Improvement Fund. The Capital Improvement Fund was set up to assist the city in taking care of the building maintenance when the hospital builds a new facility and the city takes the building over. The city has already dipped into those funds for \$650,000 to be used on the sewer interceptor grant. The money would be best utilized to help with maintaining the building once the city took it back.

UDAG was funded in the 1980's. Restrictions were put on the funding in accordance with Title I. City Manager Randall stated he doubted using the UDAG funds for demolition was an acceptable use of the funding. He felt the money would be best utilized to renovate the Creamery once the city gets control of the facility in 2015.

City Manager Randall reiterated the need for council to approve a wage and salary survey to get its employees' wages back into alignment with comparable cities. There

are many variables when you look at what other cities are paying their employees. The main problem is employees don't have the same job responsibilities as other cities. Many of our employees are wearing numerous hats while others do one part of their job and other employees do other parts. The city needs to determine its relative market value with other cities. He urged council to consider the need to make the plan better than what was put into place in 2004. That plan was intended to be good for five years. It has lasted ten years. If the pay plan was funded he would mandate the usage of new employee data and not shelf data that had previously been retrieved from another plan. He would ask for fresh data from the market place. A pre-conference meeting would be held to state the cities expectations for the plan. Data would be collected from department heads prior to the meeting so job descriptions could adequately be reflected.

Seniority was discussed and whether it should be rewarded over and above a new employee. Increasing retirement benefits was also discussed as a way to retain quality employees. It was stated this would be an excellent time to consider this option as the each department's obligation had decreased this next year. Performance evaluations were discussed and what value they brought to the table. Police Chief Witthuhn stated he had just attended an MPR conference where they advised doing away with merit and performance evaluations as they don't hold up in court.

City Manager Randall stated the City of Aurora will never be able to compete with larger cities or the private sector. Good employees can be retained with a good benefit package. Increasing retirement benefits is a good option. We have lost employees and regained them again because of the benefit package the city offers.

Council discussed pros and cons of different percentage raises while not being able to come to a decision. City Clerk Needham suggested doing the demolition out of fund balance thus creating a surplus of an additional \$40,000 that could be added to the contingency funding the council already had of \$37,597 for a total of \$77,597. By doing this council could fund a 3% raise across the board raise as well as doing a ¼% rate increase in retirement benefits. The estimated cost for both increases could be as much as \$82,000 but could be less because of the offset in the LAGERS contribution this next year.

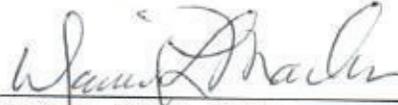
Chairman Pro Tem Barton moved to give a 3% rate increase to all employees and to increase retirement benefits by ¼% up to a L-12 level. Councilwoman Henderson seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-1 with the following council members voting aye:
AYES: Barton, Henderson, Rentfro, Marks
NAYES: Ramirez

City Manager Randall stated he would like to add back to the budget the update for the pay plan, demolition costs, paying the court bailiff, painting police cars to look alike, purchase of video cameras for the council chamber, funding for the economic development documentary and heavy lift bag for the fire department. In addition to the add backs four seasonal employees in the Transportation Department. Council asked for those changes to be implemented into the budget and bring it back to council once the raises and retirement benefit numbers had been received.

IV. Adjourn

Chairman Pro Tem Barton moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Mayor Marks seconded the motion. Motion passed with all members voting aye.

ADJOURNED:



David L. Marks, Mayor

ATTEST:



Kathie Needham, City Clerk, MMC/MPCC

Posted 10-30-2014 by Kathie Needham, City Clerk