

MINUTES
EMPORIA CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF EMPORIA MUNICIPAL BUILDING
BUDGET WORK SESSION
May 1, 2013

Note to Reader: Although the printed agenda document for this City Council meeting is not part of these minutes, the agenda document provides background information on the items discussed by City Council during the meeting. A copy of the agenda document for this meeting may be obtained by contacting the Office of the City Clerk.

The following City Council members were present:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris
Councilman James E. Ewing
Councilwoman Doris T. White
Councilwoman Deborah D. Lynch
Councilwoman L. Dale Temple
Councilwoman Carol Mercer
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey

Others present:

Mary L. Person, Mayor
Brian S. Thrower, City Manger
Tessie S. Wilkins, City Clerk
Sheila Cutrell, Finance Director
Royal Jones, Public Works Director
Linwood Pope, Director of Utilities
Don Wyatt, Chief of Police

General Fund Budget

Mr. Thrower reported that the proposed FY13 General Fund budget was \$20,206,841.00. He stated that the departmental requests totaled \$20,085,465.00. He also stated that the primary impact to the City's FY14 budget is Greenville County School System (GCSS) funding. He further stated that the GCSS requested an increase of \$1,390,310.00 in local funding. He stated that the City of Emporia and Greenville County Administration have tentatively agreed to a joint funding increase figure of \$232,704.00, for a total of City contribution of \$3,414,919.00. He also stated that this increase was equivalent to approximately 6.5 cents on the real property tax rate using a 98% collection rate (1 penny @ a 98% collection rate = \$35,625 in revenue).

Mr. Thrower stated that in order to balance the proposed FY14 budget, he was proposing a ten cent increase in the real property tax rate. He also stated that this would increase Emporia's real property tax rate to \$0.93 per \$100.00 valuation. He further stated that approximately 6.5 cents of this increase are attributed to GCSS funding. He reported that the other 3.5 cent was attributed to the City operations, initiatives, and projects. He also reported that the existing City initiatives, including the S. Main Street project, W. Atlantic Street Neighborhood Improvement project, Farmers Market Trailhead project, Citizens National Bank Building project and E. Atlantic

project were all included in the proposed budget. He further reported that the new initiatives to support economic development related activities include acquisition of property, as well as implementation of Façade Improvement Grant and Business Incubation Grant programs. He stated that according to the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, the mean (average) real property tax rate for Virginia's cities is 96 cents. He also stated that the median was 97 cents. He further stated that even with a 10 cent increase Emporia will still be lower than the mean and median for Virginia's cities.

Mr. Thrower reported that the proposed FY14 Utility Fund Budget stood at \$15,256,892.00. He also reported that the departmental requests totaled \$15,198,045.00. He stated per USDA Rural Development funding guidelines associated with the Water Treatment Plant and Distribution System Upgrade project to re-coup the declines in water revenue, water rates will need to be significantly increased in FY14. He also stated that there is no proposal to increase sewer rates.

Mr. Thrower stated that the proposed FY14 water rates were as follows:

Minimum 2,000 gallons -	\$17.66
Next 48,000/1,000 -	\$ 7.90
Over 50,000/1,000 -	\$ 4.98

Mr. Thrower stated that in terms of the major initiatives, the City would continue to move forward with the Water Treatment Plant and Distribution System Upgrade project. He also stated that the City Administration also proposed to make necessary improvements to the City Wastewater Treatment Plant (\$1,333,167.00 – Engineering and Construction) and replace the W. Atlantic Street sewer main (\$307,919.00 – Engineering and Construction).

Councilman Harris moved to approve \$3,372,513.00 in local funds for Greensville County Public Schools for the City of Emporia share, seconded by Councilwoman Temple, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	aye
Councilman James E. Ewing	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye
Councilwoman Deborah D. Lynch	aye
Councilwoman Carol Mercer	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye
Councilwoman L. Dale Temple	aye

It was the consensus of Council to decrease the Improvement Association Headstart line to \$15,794.00.

It was the consensus of Council to decrease the Police communications equipment line to \$150,000.00.

It was the consensus of Council to decrease the School Resource Office line item.

Clint Slate, 103 Beech Tree Lane, addressed Council with concerns about the sanitations billing for commercial and resident customers.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to be presented before City Council members, the budget work session was adjourned.

Mary L. Person, Mayor

Tessie S. Wilkins, City Clerk