

The first meeting of the City of Astoria 2014-15 Budget Committee was held at the above place at the hour of 7:20 p.m.

Committee Members Present: City Councilors LaMear, Mellin, Warr, and Herzig, Richard Hurley, Loran Mathews, Kera Huber, Kathleen Sullivan, and Laura Leebrick.

Committee Members Excused: Mayor Van Dusen

Staff Present: City Manager Pro Tem Estes, Financial Analyst Snyder, Police Chief Curzon, Fire Chief Ames, Parks and Recreation Director Cosby, Public Works Director Cook, Public Works Shops Superintendent Nelson and Library Director Tucker.

The meeting was called to order by Councilor LaMear.

### **Election of Officers**

Councilor LaMear called for nominations for Chairperson. Motion made by Richard Hurley, seconded by Kera Huber to nominate Laura Leebrick as the 2014-15 Budget Committee Chairperson (Motion carried by unanimous vote.)

Councilor LaMear passed the gavel to newly elected Chair Leebrick.

Chair Leebrick called for nominations for Secretary. Motion made by Richard Hurley, seconded by Loran Mathews to nominate Kera Huber as Secretary of the 2014-15 Budget Committee. (Motion carried by unanimous vote.)

### Budget Committee Review Schedule

The Budget Committee consented to use Staff's suggested meeting schedule of April 23 and 24, 2014 with the meetings starting at 7:00 pm. The Committee would set the date and time for a third meeting, if needed, at the April 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### Review of City of Astoria Departments/Funds for FYE 6/30/15

#### BUDGET MESSAGE

##### a. City Manager Pro Tem Opening Comments and Budget Message

City Manager Pro Tem Estes briefly reviewed his Budget Message as presented in his letter dated April 23, 2014, which was included in the packet. Last year, former City Manager Benoit presented a difficult budget message calling for approximately \$220,000 in cuts to the General Fund alone because expenses were outpacing revenues. This year, due to those prior cost cutting measures and other contingent steps made by Staff to control expenses, he was glad to present a balanced budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15. He cautioned that although the budget was balanced within expected revenues, it was important to be watchful of day-to-day City operations and also to anticipate what might lie ahead. A number of issues could impact the budget, specifically Personnel which could create a \$250,000 increase alone due to PERS and health insurance increases. Fiscal indicators for the City and the State of Oregon have shown a prolonged period of recovery. Resources from State and Federal coffers were waning as the economy was slowly mending. All these factors call for strong fiscal leadership with regard to the City's budget. He presented a brief overview of the proposed 2014-2015 Budget.

City Manager Pro Tem Estes and Financial Analyst Snyder responded to clarifying questions from the Budget Committee regarding the Senior Center Project funding and the Capital Improvement Fund, funding for a new fire truck, and the CSO surcharge

## PUBLIC HEARING ON CITY OF ASTORIA BUDGET AS PROPOSED

Chair Leebrick opened the public hearing on the proposed City of Astoria 2014-2015 Budget and state shared revenues at approximately 7:37 pm and called for public comment. There being none, she closed the public hearing at approximately 7:38 pm.

### INDIVIDUAL BUDGET CONSIDERATION

#### **General Fund:**

##### City Council

City Manager Pro Tem Estes described the purpose for the department and provided a brief overview of the budget, which included supplies, travel, Councilor stipends and dues for the International Sister Cities Program.

**Committee Action:** Motion made by Councilor LaMear, seconded by Councilor Warr to tentatively approve the City Council Budget. (Motion carried.) City Councilors LaMear, Mellin, Warr, and Herzig, Richard Hurley, Loran Mathews, Kera Huber, Kathleen Sullivan, and Laura Leebrick voted yes.

##### City Manager Administration

City Manager Pro Tem Estes described the department's purpose, reminding that the Human Resources Division's budget was removed in fiscal year ending 2013, but was included for prior years. Discussion regarded the fact that the budget did not reflect the proposed salary reduction for the City Manager position.

**Committee Action:** Motion made by Loran Mathews, seconded by Councilor Mellin to tentatively approve the City Manager Administrative Budget. (Motion carried.) City Councilors Mellin, LaMear, Warr and Herzig, Richard Hurley, Loran Mathews, Kera Huber, Kathleen Sullivan, and Laura Leebrick voted yes.

##### Municipal Court

City Manager Pro Tem Estes briefly reviewed the function and budget of the Municipal Court and addressed questions regarding the Professional Services line item.

**Committee Action:** Motion made by Councilor Warr, seconded by Loran Mathews to tentatively approve the Municipal Court Budget. (Motion carried.) City Councilors Mellin, LaMear, Warr and Herzig, Richard Hurley, Loran Mathews, Kera Huber, Kathleen Sullivan, and Laura Leebrick voted yes.

##### Finance

City Manager Pro Tem Estes summarized the Finance Department's responsibilities. He clarified that a new finance director would be hired to do all the work performed by former Finance Director Carlson after the city manager position was filled. In the interim, the finance director's responsibilities have been divided among a variety of Finance Department Staff, Julie Yuill, and himself.

**Committee Action:** Motion made by Loran Mathews, seconded by Councilor LaMear to tentatively approve the Finance Department Budget. (Motion carried.) City Councilors Mellin, LaMear, Warr and Herzig, Richard Hurley, Loran Mathews, Kera Huber, Kathleen Sullivan, and Laura Leebrick voted yes.

##### City Attorney

City Manager Pro Tem Estes described the responsibilities of the city attorney, noting the proposed budget remained at \$84,900.

Shel Cantor, 1189 Jerome, Astoria understood no further costs were expected regarding the matter involving the DUI dispute, which was waiting approval by the Court of Appeals, but was concerned that nothing was budgeted anywhere for continuing the appeal should that be necessary.

Financial Analyst Snyder and City Manager Pro Tem Estes clarified that Professional Legal Services line item in the Non & Interdepartmental Fund would pay for legal counsel above and beyond the city attorney contract, which could involve other attorneys.

**Committee Action:** Motion made by Councilor LaMear, seconded by Richard Hurley to tentatively approve the City Attorney Budget. (Motion carried.) City Councilors Mellin, LaMear, Warr, and Richard Hurley, Loran Mathews, Kera Huber, Kathleen Sullivan, and Laura Leebrick voted yes. Councilor Herzig voted no.

#### Community Development

City Manager Pro Tem Estes reviewed the responsibilities of the department, noting that the Building Inspection had its own fund, but Community Development managed that division. He described the structure of the Building Code Division, its relationship to Community Development, and transfers related to Building Inspection and code enforcement.

**Committee Action:** Motion made by Loran Mathews, seconded by Councilor Warr to tentatively approve the Community Development Budget. (Motion carried.) City Councilors Mellin, LaMear, Warr and Herzig, Richard Hurley, Loran Mathews, Kera Huber, Kathleen Sullivan, and Laura Leebrick voted yes.

#### City Hall

City Manager Pro Tem Estes briefly described the purpose of the fund. He addressed questions from the Committee regarding Interfund Wages, utility costs following the City Hall remodel and energy rebates for replacing the windows in City Hall.

**Committee Action:** Motion made by Councilor Mellin, seconded by Councilor Warr to tentatively approve the City Hall Budget. (Motion carried.) City Councilors Mellin, LaMear, Warr and Herzig, Richard Hurley, Loran Mathews, Kera Huber, Kathleen Sullivan, and Laura Leebrick voted yes.

#### Non and Interdepartmental

City Manager Pro Tem Estes explained the budget's purpose and clarified how transfers worked within the fund. Discussion also included clarifications about repairs and maintenance versus operations expenses and the benefits Astoria received by providing funding to Clatsop Economic Development Resource (CEDR). Loran Mathews confirmed CEDR had a budget and would be willing to make a presentation to City Council about its activities.

**Committee Action:** Motion made by Loran Mathews, seconded by Councilor Mellin to tentatively approve the Non and Interdepartmental Budget. (Motion carried.) City Councilors Mellin, LaMear, Warr and Herzig, Richard Hurley, Loran Mathews, Kera Huber, Kathleen Sullivan, and Laura Leebrick voted yes.

#### Fire

City Manager Pro Tem Estes reviewed the responsibilities of the Fire Department. Fire Chief Ames presented the budget and described the proposed budget changes, which included improved reporting so the department could begin realizing federal grant revenues.

Following discussion about how volunteers are compensated or reimbursed for their expenses, Richard Hurley suggested putting volunteer in quotes because volunteers receive wages and W-2 forms. Further discussion regarded an entry training door and why items are funded through the General Fund versus the Capital Improvement Fund, as well as questions about Supplies, Training, Intern stipends and expenses and the funding potential for a new fire truck.

**Committee Action:** Motion made by Councilor Warr, seconded by Councilor LaMear to tentatively approve the Fire Budget. (Motion carried.) City Councilors Mellin, LaMear, Warr, and Richard Hurley, Loran Mathews, Kera Huber, Kathleen Sullivan, and Laura Leebrick voted yes. Councilor Herzig voted no.

#### Police

City Manager Pro Tem Estes briefly reviewed the proposed budget. Chief Curzon addressed several questions from the Committee which included the JusticeWeb computer program, prisoner lodging, the armory cleaning station, software maintenance and no proposal for a police car, for which a lease payment was proposed in a subsequent budget. Discussion also regarded mental health issues in the city and how the department handles incidences involving those with such issues. Housing, treatment and training specific to helping those with mental health issues was also discussed.

**Committee Action:** Motion made by Councilor LaMear, seconded by Councilor Mellin to tentatively approve the Police Budget. (Motion carried.) City Councilors Mellin, LaMear, Warr and Herzig, Richard Hurley, Loran Mathews, Kera Huber, Kathleen Sullivan, and Laura Leebrick voted yes.

Library

City Manager Pro Tem Estes reviewed the services provided by the library. Director Tucker highlighted the few changes in the budget, noting the modest increase was for operations related to the renovation. She addressed several questions from the Committee about Sanborn maps, grant funding, Seaside Share, the Passport Program and Library To Go. She also described the grant structure and funding related to the library, including the Summer Reading Program and ROCC Program, which provides library cards for all kids in Clatsop County from birth through high school. City Manager Pro Tem Estes clarified the timing of the renovation was contingent upon how quickly the funds are raised.


Shel Cantor inquired about items missing from the library and whether it was a common occurrence. Director Tucker responded that having a security system in the current library was cost prohibitive, but a system would be installed in a renovated library. She had no information about the estimate of assets being stolen until an inventory was done. She clarified the library did not repurchase items that have been stolen, but relied upon donations for replacement. People could contribute by purchasing items from the library's request list or wish list on Amazon. The library tries to purchase as many items as possible from the request list, which could include books requested by the high school.

Cheryl Silverblatt, Astoria, confirmed that the budget had not significantly changed and cautioned that maintaining a static library budget might not be in the best interest of raising money or benefit the citizens of Astoria. People would still want and need to use the library's services through the renovation period. The library's usage has increased and to continue building that momentum and support for the library, the library must continue to build services and programming. With more people using the library and to build that momentum, the Board should add more open hours at the library, which would require more staff time. Philosophically, maintaining the current budget was not the right way to build momentum.

**Committee Action:** Motion made by Loran Mathews, seconded by Councilor Mellin to tentatively approve the Library Budget. (Motion carried.) City Councilors Mellin, LaMear, Warr and Herzig, Richard Hurley, Loran Mathews, Kera Huber, Kathleen Sullivan, and Laura Leebrick voted yes.

Chair Leebrick adjourned the meeting at 9:15 pm.

**ATTEST:**

  
Secretary