CITY OF ELLENSBURG, WASHINGTON

Minutes of Council Meeting, Special Session
Date of Meeting February 9, 2001
Time of Meeting 8:30 a.m.
Place of Meeting CWU Munson Retreat Center, Elaine Wright Room


Others present were City Manager Barkley, Public Works Director Akers, Parks and Recreation Director Archer, Community Development Director Witkowski, Assistant Fire Chief Elliott, Finance Director Carpenter, Police Chief Richey, Library Director Kline, City Attorney Pidduck, City Clerk Reno and one member of the audience - Larry Nickel.

The purpose of the meeting was to hold a retreat to discuss overall priorities and goals for 2001.

Approve schedule as presented. Barry

Affirmed

City Manager Barkley gave an overview of significant events over the last nine months since the least retreat.

Items that will affect policy decision making and the Budget in the coming year are: Medicare reimbursements, sales tax receipts, 2000 Census, Shorelines policy, Government Accounting Standards Board, energy costs, water, Williams property, national economy, city hall, and economic development.

Department directors made presentations regarding issues and priorities.

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Director Akers summarized the major issues facing Public Works as follows:

Water rights: This continues to have significant issues as the legal challenge continues with the Department of Ecology for the City’s 6,000 acre feet of water rights. The legal defense costs for this will be significant. The City has already spent $16,000 to date for legal costs. Public Works will also be working with the Tri-County Water Resource Planning Agency on aquifer recharge.

Endangered Species Act Compliance challenges.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System compliance which is an Environmental Protection Agency regulation.

Groundwater under the influence of surface water update: The City Wells test has shown that it is a
low risk.

Water Street Phase II construction update: The project will be delayed about six months and the bid should be out in the Fall.

Code revisions and the response to the Carol Morris, Association of Washington Cities report: Transportation impact fees may need to be considered.

Customer service and response to the Business Visitation report.

Airport well development construction update.

Raw sewage pump station emerging maintenance issues: The pump station may need to be replaced at a cost of $70,000, which is not in the 2001 Budget.

Project load vs. staffing needs.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Police Chief Richey presented the departmental goals. Several of the goals center on quality of life issues that currently exist, such as weeds, rubbish, abandoned vehicles, and nightlife activity within the downtown. They intend to examine the efficiency of service to the community. The main goal for 2001 will be a smooth transition in the leadership of the department. They will be focusing on professional development of personnel for the newly assigned positions.

They plan to have many community policing events throughout the year. They will have a downtown nightlife forum in March or April to meet with Central Washington University students to share concerns and resolve problems.

In June they will have a downtown footbeat review. Other areas of the City outside the downtown have special needs.

The Police Department is currently researching a traffic violations department to gain revenue that is lost to District Court.

Police Chief Richey recommended the City Council consider a gambling tax.

The K-9 unit for narcotics will finish training next week. The Police Department will propose a K-9 patrol unit in the next year with potential funding from the Law and Justice Council.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Community Development Director Witkowski summarized the main Community Development work elements, including both ongoing permit administration and special projects for the upcoming year as follows:
The first priority is development permit administration and responding to all requests for city and building code interpretations, permit information, and general information in a timely manner. Also processing annual Comprehensive Plan amendments.

Special projects include: amending the Subdivision Ordinance, SEPA Ordinance, and Zoning Ordinance; develop new shorelines regulations with Endangered Species Act (ESA) components; Amend Critical Areas Ordinance with ESA components; complete transportation corridor amendments to Comprehensive Plan; amend Landmarks and Design Review Ordinance; establish Certified Local Government status; establish special historic property taxing district; implement tourism marketing plan and directional signage; develop city hall site and building design options; develop land use options and permit work for Williams property; and obtain Cora Street easement across John Wayne Trail.

Second priority special projects include: public restrooms in Central Business District; new airport zoning regulations with County; UGA development standards with County; and re-master Comprehensive Plan text.

RECREATION

Parks and Recreation Director Archer summarized the following issues:

1) Youth Center Opening: The center is now open. Council may wish to consider a possible fee or donation in the future.

2) Williams Property/Central Washington Parks Foundation Development: There are long-term maintenance issues associated with the development. It is estimated that there will be a need for at least one full-time person plus equipment for maintenance of the facility. In addition, the level of service for the other parks may need to be changed.

3) McElroy Park Phase I Development: This park will be developed with impact fees.

4) John Wayne Trail Reconnection Study: This project is moving forward and the public involvement process will be started.

5) Racquet and Recreation Center Operations Strategy: A business plan will be developed for the next several years to work on recovering 100 percent of expenditures.

6) Update of Comprehensive Parks and Recreation System Plan.

7) North End Park Acquisition.

8) Impact in Pool Operations: The minimum wage has increased 27 percent since the last fee increase at the pool. Council may wish to consider a potential fee and rate increase of 25 percent.
FIRE DEPARTMENT

Assistant Fire Chief Elliott reviewed the current issues of the Fire Department as follows: 1) The Fire Chief will be retiring March 30; 2) Since the transition to 6 person shifts and the hiring of three firefighter EMT’s, overtime has been reduced significantly; 3) They have increased out of City transports for additional revenue; 4) They will be attempting to procure 12 lead defibrillators this year and next year; 5) There is a burn ban in the City this year so no permits will be issued, except for recreational fires; and 6) Calls to Hospital District 2 have increased.

Long range issues include a feasibility and staffing study for a second fire station at the north end of the City; officer development plans; and improving the Insurance Services Organization rating which dropped from four to five.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Larry Nickel commented on water rights and surface water vs. ground water; the need for an elevator at City Hall; bond debt; the need for a plan for the Treatment Water Plant; the John Wayne Trail; and downtown foot patrol.

ENERGY SERVICES

Energy Services Director Titus summarized the current year, future years, and global issues.

The current year issues are Bonneville Power Administration’s projected wholesale electric rate increase of 95 percent for the next two years; energy costs and rate making; I-net construction and operation; vacancies in light operations manager, key accounts representative, two journeyman gas workers, and journeyman lineman positions; gas marketing plan implementation; and conservation and renewables.

In future years issues include deregulation of the electric utility industry; outsourcing, partnerships and alliances; rate structure and risk mitigation; and public/private competition.

Global issues include outdated computer software; City utility service in the UGA; City web presence and e-commerce; citywide mapping and database integration - Geographic Information System (GIS); utility advisory committee; and capital plans - infrastructure and funding.

Council recessed for lunch at 12:30 p.m. and reconvened at 1:30 p.m.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Finance Director Carpenter reviewed the Finance Department issues for this year as follows:

Work on implementation of Government Accounting Standards Board Statement 34 requirements
Revise monthly payroll system to semi-monthly payroll

Complete work on bond sale for Williams property

Completion of citywide network dependent on I-Net installation and employee training on network functions/groupwise after network is complete

Explore computer software for accounting and account billing

Online applications including business licenses and utility service connections

Use of credit cards for payment of utility accounts

Explore use of automated meter reading in coordination with Energy Services and Public Works

Explore options for medical insurance costs including Teamsters and Association of Washington Cities insurance.

**ATTORNEY**

City Attorney Pidduck stated his primary issues are:

Union contract negotiations and grievances

Miscellaneous cost saving issues

Municipal water supply and water law issues

Land use code revisions

Land development issues

Miscellaneous ordinance review and amendments

Management of civil litigation

Enhancement of legal resources.

**LIBRARY**

Library Director Kline summarized the following major issues at the Library:

Complete second year of shelving project

Complete Roslyn database digital initiative project grant

Continue efforts to improve County funding for rural library service
Proceed with Phase 2 of planning for library expansion, developing preferred Option #4 with architect

Develop ideas, materials, designs, specifications for Millennium celebration project with committee and seek grant funding and donations

Submit Library Services and Technology Act grant applications to State Library

Implement K-20 connection to library services management network using City INET infrastructure

Continue to update library policy manual with Library Board

Continue to market and encourage use of Hal Holmes Center to increase revenue.

After department head presentations, Larry Nickel was given a second opportunity to comment, but he declined.

The Council then discussed the following issues:

Water rights and supply

Traffic impact fees

Gambling tax

State mandated regulatory issues such as Endangered Species Act and Shorelines and the cost to citizens

Urban Growth Area and growth issues and coordination with County

Key Annexations west of Ellensburg and East of Ellensburg for utility services

Recreation fees including the pool

Utility rate strategies and a utility advisory committee

Six-year Capital Improvement Plan

Integrated technology proposal.

Council selected the following dates to discuss the above items:

February 26 - Gambling Tax

Traffic impact fees and other revenue sources

March 12 - Water rights issues

March 26 - John Wayne Trail
Recreation fees

April 9 - Williams property project

April 23 - Preliminary feasibility study for city hall site selection April 30 - Community capital planning

Council will discuss forming a committee for utility rate strategies and key annexations at a regular meeting.

Topics to carry forward are:

Urban Growth Area issues and coordinated growth management policy with the County

Capital planning including library, water filtration, Williams property, city hall, fire station, police station, north end park, and gas storage.

**ADJOURN** The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Mayor

ATTEST: City Clerk