CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Minutes of Council Meeting, Special Session

Date of Meeting
October 27, 2008

Time of Meeting
7:00 p.m.

Place of Meeting
Council Chambers, 501 North Anderson Street

Councilmembers Present: Bottcher, Elliott, Miller, O’Brien and Mayor Lilquist

Councilmembers Absent: Bassett, Tabb

Others present were City Manager Barkley, City Attorney Pidduck; Public Works Director Akers; Energy Services Director Titus; Finance Director Ariwoola; Deputy Clerk Keno; and one member of the audience.

CONSIDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT - DOLARWAY ROAD BRIDGE – FEMA CONDITIONAL LETTER OF MAP REVISION

A proposed contract has been negotiated with Ed McCarthy to do flood flow modeling and prepare an application to FEMA for map revisions resulting from the City’s Dolarway Road Bridge Project, and Floodplain Restoration Project south of Dolarway.

Authorize the City Manager to execute the Professional Services Contract for the Miller Dolarway Road Bridge. Affirmed

CONSIDERATION OF BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION CONSERVATION ACQUISITION AGREEMENT

Energy Services staff has completed projects that along with planned expansion of the solar project will completely satisfy the City’s obligation under the Bonneville Power Administration’s Conservation Rate Credit program through the current rate period of 2007-2009. Staff has requested an additional $277,000 in funding from BPA under a Conservation Acquisition Agreement to continue providing residential and commercial customers with rebates to help finance energy saving measures.

Authorize the Mayor to sign the Conservation Acquisition Agreement No. 08ES-10827 Miller and Exhibit A, Project 1, MultiSector Offer (MSO). Affirmed

REQUEST TO SET SPECIAL MEETING WITH CWU FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2008 AT 3:00 P.M.

Central Washington University representatives have notified the City of their availability to meet with the City Council on Thursday, November 20, 2008 at 3:00 p.m.

Set a special meeting with CWU at CWU for Thursday, November 20, 2008 at 3:00 p.m. O’Brien
CONTINUED DISCUSSION – PRELIMINARY 2009 BUDGET AND FUNDING SOURCES

City Manager Barkley updated Council on the sales tax revenue report. Sales tax revenue is still trending up over a year ago although some sectors are down. The City has received preliminary health insurance estimates. Teamsters is quoting an 8% increase. Despite the City’s high claim loss, the preliminary signal from Blue Cross is that the rate increase will be 14.9%. The preliminary budget accommodates these levels of premium increases. In terms of shopping with other carriers, staff does not have enough information yet from AWC to make a recommendation on its coverage. At this point, all carriers are on the table. A decision on health insurance benefits may not be able to be made until the December 17 meeting. Whatever the City decides to do with insurance the preliminary budget numbers are sufficient.

Council reviewed the list of projects proposed for a maintenance bond on page 44 of the agenda packet. The projects are divided into Groups A, B and C in order of need. Group A is the immediate need group and includes the HVAC system at the pool ($30,728), public safety building roof ($65,300), Hal Holmes building roof ($22,000), and Library building roof ($5,000.) Once the City issues the bond it has three years to complete the projects. The Group A projects have a life span of at least 20 years. Group B projects are things the City would start on in summer and fall of 2009. This would keep cash in reserve in preparation for an economic downturn. Council discussed the Alder Street Park completion project and the fact that park impact fees could help backfill monies spent to complete the project. The 2009 Street Maintenance item at $958,133 is not budgeted with road funds. This money would be for repaving and taking care of current infrastructure. The purpose of including this item would be to keep cash on hand. The Softball lighting project ($175,000) could be paid off as revenue comes in from park impact fees. This amount represents the City’s match to the grant previously received. A brief discussion ensued on the possibility of the City losing its grant funding for this project if the City cannot come up with the match money. Council requested information on models of rental fees that could be used to pay off this project. Portions of the City Hall roof ($78,000) need to be shorn up in sections over the next 2-3 years.

Group C items are a long range plan and could or could not be included in the maintenance bond. Council discussed including the animal shelter building as part of the capital facility analysis. In answer to Council inquiry, the decision to go out for a maintenance and completion bond does not have to be made as part of the 2009 budget; however, the decision does need to be made before the City expends money on the Dolarway Road project. The City will need to pass a resolution of intent to include funding in the bond for this project as well as any other projects selected for inclusion in the bond. The makeup of the bond will need to be decided in the first half of next year.

Parks Department staffing issues were discussed in terms of the Alder Street Park project as well as the justification for a maintenance building at Rotary Park for storage of equipment used at that...
Council discussed a proposal to add funding for trails identified in the draft Non-Motorized Transportation Plan to the Group C project list. Council discussed the River to Rodeo Trail and the Town to Gown trail. After discussion, Council consensus was to add the River to Rodeo Trail to the Group C list.

Mayor Lillquist discussed the results of a meeting she and City staff recently attended on the Third Interchange Study at Umptanum Road to route truck traffic. The outcome of the study does not support the traffic numbers needed to justify a third interchange. The Department of Transportation believes other improvements could be made to the West Interchange, such as roundabouts.

Council consensus was to receive an analysis of different funding packages including what they would look like and numbers for each. Council will then be in a position to make decisions as to what stays in and what stays out of the bond. From Group C Council would like to combine Item 4 – pool building evaluation, Item 5 – City’s comprehensive capital facility analysis, and Item 6 animal shelter building and add the Rodeo to River Trail. Council requested police statistics on vandalism of its vehicles to support the item for secured police vehicle storage.

An update to Appendix B4 of the salary schedule for employees in the OPEIU bargaining units was distributed. These contracts were finalized in August. The salary schedule for the non-represented employees will be before Council for consideration next month in the form of a payroll resolution.

Council will hear from community groups requesting program funding at the November 3, 2008 regular meeting. Additional presentations are anticipated from the FISH Food Bank and Hope Source. Staff noted the lack of additional new money for such requests and suggested encouraging partnerships to pursue avenues for new money.

The condition of downtown city street trees was discussed as well as the lack of a formal street tree program. Council would like information on what it would take to develop a tree program for the City.

Council reviewed Councilmember Miller’s memorandum on page 54 of the agenda packet outlining possible funding sources for future City revenue. Staff noted the City of Tacoma has a ballot measure for a local license tab fee on the November 3 election. A public hearing on transportation and park impact fees will be conducted during the November 17 regular meeting. An analysis of park and recreation fees will be provided to Council. The Finance Department will be reviewing all City fees after the first of the year to ensure the cost of the service being provided is covered by the fee charged.

With a citizen vote, Council could implement a real estate excise tax for the 2nd ¼% for capital projects. This tax depends on the economy and is not a stable source of revenue. Public Works Director Akers will provide more information on levying a motor vehicle fuel tax. This tax would also require a citizen vote and would not likely generate a lot of money.
The City has used community development block grants (CDBG) and community economic revitalization board (CERB) programs in the past. Council discussed the Ellensburg Business Development Authority’s participation in packaging the West Ellensburg projects to maximize these funds. Applying for grants was discussed as well as the need to find funding for a half-time grant writer. The City does not have someone to administer, acquire and spend grants. Brownfields Program funding was discussed in relation to specific sites in the City.

City Manager Barkley will provide Council with an outline for funding a part-time grant writer position. A business & occupation tax could be implemented on energy utilities but would require a citizen vote for electricity and gas. Council will see a stormwater utility fee on a future agenda.

One councilmember cautioned against imposing additional taxes and fees that could push potential employers away from the community. Council briefly discussed economic development and the EBDA.

**ADJOURN** Motion to adjourn at 10:49 p.m. O’Brien

Affirmed

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Mayor

ATTEST: _______________________________________

City Clerk