CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR FOR 2010 BUDGET PROCESS

During the February 27, 2009 retreat, Council considered moving toward a biennium budget process. A proposed budget process schedule for a 2010/2011 biennium budget is included in Council’s agenda packet. While most of the proposed dates do not involve the Council, staff proposes a half day session in June for goal setting and policy review to be followed by a full day in October for budget preparation with the Department Directors.

Move the City of Ellensburg adopt a biennial budget. Tabb
Affirmed

Adopt the Budget Process Schedule as presented in the March 9, 2009 agenda packet. Affirmed

CONSIDERATION OF A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR A CARE GRANT FOR KITITAS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Kittitas County Public Health Department is requesting a letter of support for a Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) grant for a community collaborative approach to solving water quality issues in the Wilson Creek sub-basin.

Signing the letter does not commit the City to doing anything. If the grant is received a committee would be formed to develop goals and strategies for Wilson Creek and a representative of the City could be a part of that committee if desired. Council discussed the third paragraph of the letter.

Authorize the Mayor to sign the attached letter in support of the CARE grant Miller
striking the words "drinking and" from the third paragraph. Affirmed
STORMWATER UTILITY UPDATE

Council last studied this issue at a special meeting on February 26, 2007. Council viewed a PowerPoint presentation from John Knutsen, consultant with OTAK, on the stormwater utility update. Staff is requesting Council direction on how to proceed with the public process.

The City is going into the third year of a five year process under its NPDES II permit. The requirements increase substantially as the process progresses. The consultant reviewed the minimum requirements of the City’s program component. The City is partially in compliance; enhancements will be needed to the existing program.

Mr. Knutsen reviewed a summary of the new annual funding needed to support the creation of a stormwater utility. Funding could come from development fees, from the other utilities or other sources. After a review of the funding options the consultant's recommendation is to form a stormwater utility.

The determination of a fair stormwater fee was discussed. The establishment of City equivalent residential unit (ERU) was discussed. Proposed utility rates and fees for 2009-2011 are as follows:

2009 - $4.70 ERU/mo.
2010 - $4.70 ERU/mo.
2011 - $4.50 ERU/mo.

The three year average rate would be $4.60 per month for a total of $55.20 per year for single family residential.

The recommended next steps are: 1) establish public process; 2) adopt utility ordinance and rate structure; and 3) implement NPDES II requirements.

The recommended public process is: 1) website announcements; 2) newspaper ads; 3) public meeting/workshop; and 4) public hearing to adopt ordinance.

Public Works Director Akers has been doing the stormwater compliance work the last two years. This will stop the end of May, 2009. Public Works Director Akers anticipates staffing for the utility will be 3.5 to 4 full time employees. Council discussed adding a small amount to the monthly fee to begin building cash reserves. Staff is trying to bring in the lowest fee to ensure compliance; however, this is a policy decision for the Council. Staff would like to equalize the fees over three years.

City Attorney Pidduck advised the City can force compliance by placing a lien against the property. Decisions will need to be made for low income elderly as well as individuals who have stormwater treatment systems in place. The draft ordinance supplied by the consultant appears to be very comprehensive, has been used in other cities, and it should take a limited amount of staff time to
have it available for public review.

Council asked questions of the consultant and Public Works Director Akers. A component of the public process will be staff level discussions with the Ellensburg School District and CWU prior to the public meeting. Council discussed the role of the Environmental Commission in the development of a public outreach plan. Consensus was to get the draft ordinance available on the City’s website as soon as possible along with frequently answered questions (FAQs) for public review. The public meeting would be set when firm cost numbers are available. As the numbers change, staff may want to meet with Council again before scheduling the public meeting.

ADJOURN Motion to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. O’Brien

Affirmed

_________________________________
Mayor

ATTEST: ____________________________

City Clerk