



City Council Special Meeting

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This meeting was conducted electronically.

MINUTES OF THE BUDGET STUDY SESSION OF THE BRIGHTON CITY COUNCIL HELD ON APRIL 2, 2020

Call to Order

Mayor Pipoly called the budget study session to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Present were Mayor Pipoly, Mayor Pro Tem Gardner, Councilmembers: Bohn, Emaus, Muzzin, Pettengill, and Tobbe. City Manager Nate Geinzer, City Clerk Tara Brown, Community Development Manager Mike Caruso, DPS Director Marcel Goch, Finance Director Gretchen Gomolka, Human Resource Manager Michelle Miller, Management Assistant Henry Outlaw, Superintendent Daren Collins, Superintendent Corey Brooks, Assistant to the DPS Director Patty Thomas, Chief Rob Bradford, Attorney Paul Burns, and Attorney Jeff Alber. There were two persons in the audience.

Call to the Public

Mayor Pipoly opened the Call to the Public at 6:02 p.m.

Susan Bakhaus asked for clarification on furniture.

Mayor Pipoly closed the Call to the Public at 6:03 p.m.

Budget Discussion

Councilmembers asked a series of questions regarding how the meeting would be conducted and when questions would be asked. It was made clear that several Councilmembers were asking for extreme caution during the budget talks and take a conservative approach concerning the COVID-19 pandemic and possible tax revenue impacts. Some Councilmembers asked that no new projects move forward unless local streets millage projects and that all other infrastructure improvements be halted.

City Manager Geinzer noted the Rickett Road project second phase could be put on hold until a greater measure of the economic implications of COVID-19 can be realized. Mr. Geinzer also relayed that four employees have been laid off and there has been a hiring freeze in place. Additionally, there would be limited temporary summer help this year for DPS.

City Council discussed the potential economic fallout from the pandemic, Councilmember Bohn would like cuts to all aspects of the budget in preparation for serious revenue loss. Manager Geinzer stated the City is critical infrastructure and essential services—those positions necessary and essential are running at minimal staffing as they have been for several years now.

Councilmember Muzzin stated that years of neglect to the infrastructure will be compounded if it is pushed off again. Mr. Muzzin asked Director Goch if he expects regulations by EGLE that are necessary within the utility plants could be relaxed by actions from the Federal Government. Director Goch stated that he would never assume that could be a possibility. Staff and City Council discussed the needs within the utility department specifically outlining the necessity of hiring staff to fill vacancies. Mr. Goch noted there are three people in the water department, if two become sick, the City will need to rely on just

one operator to monitor the plant twenty-four hours a day. City Council drilled down into specific line item costs for employees with specific attention to utilities.

Direction refocused on capital needs and the necessity of maintaining and fixing current equipment has been hobbling along. Superintendent Brooks said that most of the equipment is thirty years old and in need of replacement and repair. Councilmember Bohn asked if it was beneficial to go out to bond to tackle the needs along with other projects to take advantage of a low interest rate. Manager Geinzer agreed and has been looking into rates and has been speaking with Director Gomolka to evaluate the timing with discussions with bond counsel and agent expected in the near future.

It was noted the Genoa Township agreement is almost complete, the City will gain approximately three hundred fifty customers and assume billing responsibilities. The City has been providing water to these customers but MHOG was billing each individual home. With the Genoa Township agreement comes approximately \$200,000 directly for the utilities department needs. Attorney Burns clarified the aspects of the Genoa Township agreement.

Discussion turned to administrative services and civic events. Assistant to the DPS Director Thomas remarked that some civic events have not turned in their applications but notes that those applications may still come in.

Council redirected to discuss road projects, specifically Rickett Road and grants that may be available. It was of great interest to Council to bond specific road projects with the Northwest Neighborhoods to take advantage of savings and grant contributions.

Councilmember Pettengill discussed furniture and how much has already been spent. Ms. Pettengill also asked how much is in the proposed budget for furniture. Ms. Pettengill was steadfast in her opposition to furniture related expenses. Director Gomolka relayed the specific expenditures associated with furniture and the amounts of each of the front desks that were replaced as well as what was still needed. City Council discussed furniture at length.

Call to the Public

Mayor Pipoly opened the Call to the Public at 8:56 p.m. Seeing and hearing no comment, Mayor Pipoly closed the Call to the Public at 8:56 p.m.

Adjournment

Motion by Councilmember Emaus, seconded by Councilmember Muzzin to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 p.m. **The motion carried by roll call vote, with Councilmember Bohn voting no.**

Tara Brown, City Clerk

Shawn Pipoly, Mayor