

**JUNE 22, 2020**

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LEWISTON, IDAHO, met in a Work Session on Monday, June 22, 2020, in a virtual setting. Mayor Collins called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

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**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor Collins; Mayor Pro Tem Schroeder; Councilor Blakey; Councilor Bradbury; Councilor Kelly; Councilor Miller; Councilor Pernsteiner.

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Alan Nygaard; Chris Davies; Budd Hurd; Jana Gómez; Laura Von Tersch; Travis Myklebust; Tim Barker; Lynn Johnson; Dan Marsh; Joel Plaskon; Kari Ravencroft; Brittne Purington; Aaron Butler

**I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Collins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

*This is an opportunity for citizens to address the Council on agenda items or other items they wish to bring to the attention of the Council. Citizens are encouraged to discuss operational issues in advance with the City Manager. In consideration of others wishing to speak, please limit your remarks to three minutes.*

**III. ACTIVE AGENDA**

**A. STRATEGIC PLANNING - COUNCIL GOALS - Nygaard**

City Manager Nygaard presented a list of goals to the Council from the previous year that included development of the strategic plan, economic development and partnership with CEDA, Valley Vision and Beautiful Downtown Lewiston (BDL), cross partnership between City departments and major capital programs.. He provided an overview of the overall status of the strategic plan including the task completion and progress on major projects.

Councilor Blakey stated that the citizens that live within the city limits pay both a city tax and a county tax. He pointed out that citizens that live outside the city limits utilize services within the city but do not have to pay for them, such as the library, roads and parks. He requested that the City audit the numbers provided by the county to see how the funds are distributed. Mr. Nygaard replied that there should be an audit that can be done and feels that it would be worth exploring. Councilor Blakey requested the support of the Council to place this topic on a future agenda.

Councilor Miller stated that she feels the County provides many services that are available to residents within the city limits. She stated she would support the topic and feels that education for the community would be helpful.

Mayor Pro Tem Schroeder stated she supports having the topic on a future agenda and feels that more education and understanding of how taxes are charged would benefit the citizens.

Councilor Pernsteiner recommended that Councilor Blakey bring this topic to the Council following this year's budget session and have it looked at this fall, as it will not directly affect this year's budget. Councilor Blakey agreed that it would not affect this year's budget, but feels that it should be addressed so the information is available when citizens ask questions.

Mayor Collins and Councilor Kelly said they support this topic, especially on an educational level to help the Council and citizens know where the funding is distributed.

B. LIBRARY - Johnson

Library Director Johnson reviewed the FY'20 capital budget with a total revenue budget of \$711,510 and expense budget at \$708,508. She noted that the Library Board voted not to collect fines in the future, so there will be a decline in revenue for FY'21 due to that decision. Councilor Kelly asked how much revenue would be lost by not collecting fines. Ms. Johnson replied that the amount collected was about \$5,000, which was usually used for shelving and storage supplies.

Ms. Johnson shared the projected FY'21 capital budget totaling \$58,500. She noted that the rooftop construction project is slated to be finished in FY'20, but may potentially carry over to FY'21.

Library Director Johnson provided an overview of the FY'20 operating budget totaling 1,403,500. She stated that some expenses such as training and travel have been impacted by COVID-19. She said that they have not filled some part-time positions since the library has not been open and explained the positions currently available are tentative on the number of people allowed in the building.

She continued her presentation with the proposed operating budget for FY'21 with a total revenue of \$1,444,810. She explained the expenses for the upcoming year, including personnel and benefits are budgeted at \$1,050,590, library collection at \$112,000, operating costs at \$19,950, dues and

subscriptions(travel/training) at \$10,350, City IT Services and IT Capital at \$118,420, utilities at \$38,000 and software and technical equipment at \$19,250.

Councilor Pernsteiner asked if there has been any discussion regarding renting audio books for a fee due to the increase in cost for the material. Ms. Johnson stated that it had not been discussed. She stated Valnet and the Library work together to purchase the newest model of digital materials.

Mayor Collins asked if the Library has seen any savings during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Johnson replied Library staffing showed the area of most savings. She noted the Library was able to purchase more audio material so that the community could still access the materials while closed.

C. TRANSPORTATION/ENGINEERING - Davies

Public Works Director Davies presented the FY'21 budget for the Transportation Fund and Stormwater. He covered highlights from the Transportation capital projects including annual street preservation and Demolay Park Path and Pedestrian Improvements. He stated that Stormwater Capital includes the Rapid Assessment Program and Hall Ford Stormwater Improvements. He noted that the Rapid Assessment Program will continue into FY'21.

Mr. Davies provided the Council with the proposed Transportation Fund budget for FY'21 stating the total revenue is \$4,306,640 and the total expenses are \$4,586,417. He said that areas funded by Transportation are street lights, street maintenance, engineering, capital engineering, GIS/asset management, stormwater operations and Public Works administration.

Public Works Director Davies continued by reviewing the FY'21 proposed Capital Transportation Fund budget with a revenue of \$2,587,740. He provided an overview of all the projects that are proposed for FY'21. He explained the total overall budget for the Hall Ford Stormwater Rehabilitation project is \$1,200,000 over the next several years.

Councilor Bradbury asked if the Street Impact Funds are included in the Transportation budget. Mr. Davies confirmed. Councilor Bradbury then asked if the Street Impact Funds were considered an unconstitutional tax, what section of the budget would be decreased. Mr. Davies replied that there would be multiple options to be considered and presented to the City Council for a decision.

Mr. Davies replied to a question from Councilor Pernstiener stating that the difference from the revenue and expense budget will come from the fund balance. He stated there is a current fund balance of approximately \$550,000 that is unallocated. He stated that the City owns an asphalt paver and asphalt mill to

provide the cold mix program, but noted the asphalt paver will need to be replaced in the near future.

D. STORMWATER - Davies

Covered in discussion above

E. UTILITY FUNDS UPDATE/RATES - Davies

Public Works Director Davies provided an overview of the proposed FY'21 Enterprise Budget. He explained the proposed rate increase for Sanitation in FY'21 is 3 percent with a total revenue proposed at \$6,249,738 and the Operating and Maintenance expenses are proposed at \$6,796,949. He said the proposed capital project for FY'21 is the transfer station scale repair budgeted at \$100,000.

Councilor Bradbury questioned if the scales at the transfer station are necessary if the vehicles utilizing the service are not weighed. Mr. Davies explained that Sunshine Disposal Inc. (SDI) is contracted to haul the refuse to the transfer station to be weighed then to the landfill. Councilor Bradbury stated he feels that the contractor should be responsible for weighing their own refuse, rather than the City paying to weigh the truck loads for them. Mayor Collins added that he feels this is a topic worth researching, especially if it would be beneficial to the Sanitation Fund to pass that responsibility on to the contractor.

Councilor Bradbury asked for an update on the information that was requested at the May 18th meeting regarding direct hauling to the Asotin County landfill. He also requested information on how much could be saved if the recycling program was combined with the regular garbage pick up. Mr. Davies stated that Public Works staff is working on the numbers requested for the Council. He said the City currently has a contract with SDI for recycling that runs through the end of FY'21. He noted that if the Council would like to combine recycling and garbage, that would have to be negotiated in the contract with SDI. Mayor Collins stated that there was great support from the community in past surveys to maintain the recycling program, but if there is substantial savings that could be shared, the community opinion may change. Councilor Bradbury asked Mr. Davies to verify if the recyclables that reach the recycling center are actually being recycled. Mr. Davies stated that he would research that information the best he could.

Mr. Davies reviewed the proposed Wastewater budget for FY'21. He stated the proposed rate increase for Wastewater is 2 percent with a total proposed revenue at almost \$23,000,000. He stated the operating and maintenance costs are proposed at \$5,636,713. Mr. Davies then provided an

overview of the major capital projects slated for FY'21, noting the Wastewater Treatment Plant and the annual pipeline replacement program.

Bradbury asked for clarification on the Priority 2 & 3 budget. Mr. Davies explained that when the Wastewater Master Plan was created, all sewer lines over ten inches were studied. He said that the Priority 2 budget includes actual projects that were identified in the Wastewater Master Plan.

Mr. Davies continued with the proposed Water budget for FY'21 stating the proposed rate increase for Water is 5.25 percent with a proposed total revenue of \$18,678,250. He explained that when the City received the DEQ State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF), DEQ was not able to provide the total amount awarded within the same year. Mr. Davies stated that the City is on the list to receive the remainder of the funding, but the loan application has to be completed again prior to receiving the funds. Public Works is in the process of completing the application. In addition, the DEQ Planning Grant that was applied for last year is to prioritize the pipelines in downtown Lewiston. He stated that DEQ needs an acceptance letter from the City for the match grant by June 30, 2020. The City's portion for the project is \$30,000.

There was a consensus of the Council to move forward with the grant application process.

Mr. Davies continued his presentation with the proposed FY'21 expenses budgeted at \$6,305,563. He went on to explain the FY'21 capital projects noting the Well 7 and Community Drive Reservoir projects. He provided an update to the Council on Well 6. He noted Well 6 has had issues in the past and hopes that it continues to function for at least the next two years.

Mayor Collins asked if the rate increase of 5.25 percent was the contributing factor to the increase in the customer service charge. Mr. Davies confirmed. Mayor Collins asked if there were other methods available if the 5.25 percent increase was not approved. Mr. Davies stated that he feels there are no other options and the implications to the water system long-term would be significant.

Councilor Bradbury asked if the Well 7 and Community Drive Reservoir projects are slated to be completed over two fiscal years. Mr. Davies confirmed. Mr. Davies answered the question from Councilor Bradbury stating the City would be supplying that water to the new high school mainly through the Water Treatment Plant.

Councilor Bradbury asked if there is a limit to the amount of water that can be drawn from the Clearwater River. Mr. Davies responded that there is a limit, but the City is not at that limit currently. Mr. Bradbury asked for the

percentage amount that the City is allowed to draw from the Clearwater River and the actual amount the City is currently drawing. Mr. Davies stated that he would get the information and provide the numbers for the Council.

Mr. Davies responded to a question from Mayor Collins explaining that the issue with Well 6 is the alignment from when it was originally drilled. He explained that when Well 6 was drilled it was off line by about 30 feet. He stated that the pump is running and continues to function and there is no plan to replace it unless it fails prior to Well 7 being completed.

Councilor Bradbury asked what the proposed 3 percent rate increase on Sanitation is intended to cover. Mr. Davies replied that the increase is for operating expenses, maintenance costs and capital improvements.

F. SANITATION - Davies

Covered in discussion above.

**IV. CITY COUNCILOR COMMENTS AND DIRECTION**

Councilor Blakey said he would like some direction from the Council on the comments that were submitted to the City in regards to the events that happened downtown in the previous weeks. He asked for support from the Council on submitting letters to the legislators regarding the topic of firearms within the downtown corridor.

Councilor Pernsteiner stated that he would not support the letter because it is not the state legislators dictating the Second Amendment, but rather the US Constitution. However, he feels that the Council needs to recognize that weekend as a single incident and address the issue if it comes up in the future.

Mayor Pro Tem Schroeder stated she feels that the Council needs to portray the message that the Lewiston Police Department is who should be protecting the safety of the community versus an outside group.

Councilor Blakey stated he is not looking to overrule the US Constitution, but feels that the City should be able to have certain regulations on displaying firearms on City streets.

Councilor Kelly stated that he would support looking into what Councilor Blakey is voicing. He stated the Second Amendment is not put there to police the First Amendment.

Councilor Pernsteiner clarified that this is a very sensitive topic on both sides and stated that the Council should proceed with caution when it comes to Constitutional Rights.

Mayor Collins stated that the discussion is a great one to have, but he would not support letters to the legislators. He would support having a discussion with the second amendment group to be sure everyone understands both sides.

Councilor Bradbury stated that he is not in support of a resolution being sent to the legislators and believes that people should be able to express their beliefs.

Councilor Miller stated that the Library has some great programs this summer for kids and thanked staff for their efforts to get the programs created even while they were closed

Mayor Pro Tem Schroeder stated that she was able to attend the Visit the Lewis Clark Valley open meeting and found out that the tourists are still coming to explore the area. She feels that the Visit Lewis Clark Valley team is doing a great job advertising and bringing tourists to the Valley.

## **V. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Lewiston City Council, Mayor Collins adjourned the June 22, 2020, Budget Work Session at 5:14p.m.

The City of Lewiston is committed to providing access and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, and activities and encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about the physical access provided at this meeting, please contact City Clerk Kari Ravencroft at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting at 208-746-3671, ext. 6203.