

Councilpersons:
First Ward: Gallenberger, Gibson
Second Ward: Schmidt, Hiers
Third Ward: Meurer, Bricher

Mayor: John Meisch
City Attny: Peter Ekstrand
City Adm: David Schmidt
Admin Assistant: Patty Heraty

Date: March 16, 2010

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Wabasha was held on Tuesday, March 16, 2010 and was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mayor John Meisch.

Roll call found all members present.

Mayor Meisch called for citizen comments. Mayor Meisch announced that anyone that wished to speak in regards to the budget issue on the agenda would be given an opportunity to speak at that time. Hearing no other public comments, he called for the Consent Agenda.

Councilpersons Bricher and Schmidt moved to approve the following consent agenda: Adopted by the following vote:

Ayes: Gallenberger, Gibson, Schmidt, Hiers, Bricher, Meurer, and Mayor Meisch

Nays: None

Approved the March 2, 2010 Regular meeting minutes.

Approved the March 10, 2010 Special Meeting minutes.

Approved the Wabasha County Fair Gambling Permit Application to Conduct Excluded Bingo

Approved the following warrants as presented:

Mayors	General Fund	5,440.23
Fire Dept.	"	1,451.37
Police	"	3,709.20
Zoning/Planning	"	184.26
Ambulance	"	425.59
Park	"	2,096.04
Pool	"	35.32
Streets	"	13,887.23
Total		27,229.24

Mayor Meisch brought forward item 5.1 Budget discussion and stated cuts have to be made. He stated that the council and city staff had met and come up with a budget reduction plan to cover the projected LGA (Local Government Aid) unallotment and projected shortfalls. He also stated that it is not expected the LGA funds to be replaced by the state and that further cuts may be coming.

City Administrator David Schmidt read into the record the following proposed budget reduction plan and proposed budget cuts:

2010 City of Wabasha – City Council & Staff Budget Reduction Plan

1. Staffing
2. The City Administrator is directed to prepare and sent out Request for Proposals for all Contract for services including but not limited to Audit, Engineering, Legal, Trash, Snow Hauling.
3. City Government
 - a. Planning
 - i. The Zoning Administrator's position will be reduced to 36 hours per week effective April 1st 2010. At the direction of the City Council and with the reduction in full time hours this position WILL NOT participates in the furloughs.
 - b. Police
 - i. The Police Sergeant's position will be eliminated effective April 1st 2010 and the department will eliminate the least senior officer effective July 1st.
 - c. Ambulance
 - i. The Ambulance Director's position will be reduced to 36 hours per week effective April 1st 2010. At the direction of the City Council and with the reduction in full time hours this position WILL NOT participates in the furloughs.
 - d. Library
 - i. The City will reduce the payment to the Library in the amount of \$10536.
 - e. The City of Wabasha Employee's have agreed to a two week furlough (80 hours per employee, except those designated for reduced full time) to be used by December 31, 2010 and with the approval of their direct report beginning April 1st 2010. The City will agree to cover the portion of PERA for those persons interested in making individual payments into the program to maintain retirement benefits.
 - f. Effective May 1st the City Council will meet the first Tuesday of the month and in accordance with the city charter may call as needed a second meeting. And in accordance with this change the Council has reduced its Pay by 50%

- g. City Hall Hours – Effective April 1st 2010 City Hour will have reduced hours for the public to permit effective workload management.

City Hall Hours - Starting April 1st, 2010		
	Employee	Public
Monday	7AM -4PM	10AM -4PM
Tuesday	7AM -4PM	10AM -4PM
Wednesday	7AM -4PM	10AM -4PM
Thursday	7AM -4PM	10AM -4PM
Friday	7AM -11AM	9AM -11AM

- h. The Parks Superintendent was directed by the City administrator and has taken the actions necessary to reduce the pool season by three weeks with an anticipated savings of \$15,000.
- i. Snowplowing – At the discretion of the Public Works Supervisor city wide plowing will commence at 3". For the safety of the General Public - Snow Emergency's will continue to be called at 1.5 inches to provide a safe environment for emergency vehicles and the traveling public.
- j. The City Council directs the City Administrator to take the necessary step to implement a Street Light Utility – Currently \$48,000 in Streets Department – *RECCOMENDED on a quarterly basis*
- i. *Current Budget for Street Lighting is approximately \$48,000 which would require approximately \$2.43 per parcel or \$1 per unit for multifamily units with three or more units and Manufactured Home Parks for maintenance and operation for street lights.*
 - ii. *Adoption of the Budget Plan would include the MOTION to call for a Public Hearing for a Street Light Utility to be held April 20th, 2010. (See attached draft ordinance)*
- k. The City Council directed the City Administrator to continue to monitor the campground and slip fees and if appropriate continue to adjust fees to meet market conditions.
- l. The City Council directed the City Administrator to reinstate the policy requiring organizations to contract directly with off duty police and or security personal for additional coverage for large events.
- m. The City Council directed the City Administrator to work with staff to develop a plan for additional camping in Jaycee Park.
- n. The City Council directed the City Administrator to continue to research the processes necessary to implement a Storm water utility fee as it will be required in the next few years by Federal Law.

DEPARTMENT	ACCT#	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	RUNNING TOTAL – INCLUDING PREVIOUS BUDGET CUTS	TOTAL CUTS THIS CYCLE
MISC	100-490-45400-449	CITY PUBLICITY	15,000	185,000	\$ 15,000
1 WEEK FURLOUGH		1 WEEK FURLOUGH - ALL	30,000	215,000	\$ 45,000
PARK	100-450-45100-527	EQUIP REPLACEMENT	2,000	217,000	\$ 47,000
ADMIN	100-450-45100-570	OFFICE FURNITURE	3,000	220,000	\$ 50,000
ADMIN	100-410-41500-350	TRAVEL	2,000	222,000	\$ 52,000
PARK	100-450-45100-103	PART-TIME	8,000	230,000	\$ 60,000
ADMIN	100-410-41500-433	DUES & SUBSCRIPTION	1,500	231,500	\$ 61,500
PARK	100-450-45100-223	BLDG. REPAIR SUPPLIES	1,000	232,500	\$ 62,500
CITY HALL	100-410-41900-401	BLDG. CONTRACT MAINT.	8,000	240,500	\$ 70,500
CITY HALL	100-410-41900-558	COMPUTER REPLACEMENT	2,500	243,000	\$ 73,000
POLICE	100-420-42100-308	INSTRUCTOR FEES	2,000	245,000	\$ 75,000
POLICE	100-420-42100-219	GEN. SUPPLIES	2,000	247,000	\$ 77,000
POLICE	100-420-42100-446	DARE	300	247,300	\$ 77,300
POLICE	100-420-42100-447	McGRUFF	500	247,800	\$ 77,800
POLICE	100-420-42100-588	COMPUTER REPLACEMENT	500	248,300	\$ 78,300
POLICE	100-420-42100-570	OFFICE EQUIP	500	248,800	\$ 78,800
STREET	100-430-43100-212	FUEL	2,000	250,800	\$ 80,800
FIRE	100-420-42200-381	UTILITIES	3,000	253,800	\$ 83,800
PLANNING	100-420-42200-580	INSTRUCTOR FEE	1,000	254,800	\$ 84,800
HPC	100-420-42300-453	HISTORIC PRES	1,000	255,800	\$ 85,800
PLANNING	100-420-42300-321	TELEPHONE	50	255,850	\$ 85,850
PLANNING	100-420-42300-322	POSTAGE	300	256,150	\$ 86,150
PLANNING	100-420-42300-200	OFFICE SUPPLIES	300	256,450	\$ 86,450
PLANNING	100-420-42300-469	PLANNING	1,000	257,450	\$ 87,450

COMM		COMMISSION			
PLANNING	100-420-42300-433	DUES & SUBSCRIPTION	300	257,750	\$ 87,750
AMBULANCE	100-420-42500-321	PHONE	500	258,250	\$ 88,250
AMBULANCE	100-420-42500-312	COMPUTER SUPPORT	700	258,950	\$ 88,950
STREET	100-430-43100-221	MACH. & EQUIP. CONT.	2,000	260,950	\$ 90,950
STREET	100-430-43100-308	INSTRUCTORS/CONT. ED.	600	261,550	\$ 91,550
STREET	100-430-43100-580	OTHER EQUIP.	2,000	263,550	\$ 93,550
STREET	100-430-43100-583	SIGNS	500	264,050	\$ 94,050
STREET	100-430-43100-551	EQUIP REPLACEMENT	10,000	274,050	\$104,050
STREET	100-430-43100-579	SAFETY	500	274,550	\$104,550
STREET	100-430-43100-582	RADIO EQUIPMENT	700	275,250	\$105,250
POOL	100-450-45300-221	EQUIP. MAINT. PTS.	500	275,750	\$105,750
POOL	100-450-45300-404	EQUIP. CONT. MAINT.	1,000	276,750	\$106,750
POOL	100-450-45300-103	PART TIME EMPLOYEE	3,000	279,750	\$109,750
ENGINEERING	100-410-41300-303	ENGINEERING FEES	2,500	282,250	\$112,250
ADMIN	100-410-41500-103	PART TIME EMPLOYEE	10,000	292,250	\$122,250
ADMIN	100-410-41500-308	INSTRUCTOR FEES	1,500	293,750	\$123,750
SUMMER REC	100-450-45200-219	GEN. SUPPLIES	300	294,050	\$124,050
ADMIN	100-410-41500-200	Office Supplies	2,000	296,050	\$126,050
FIRE	100-420-42200-308	Instructors Fees	500	296,550	\$126,550
LIBRARY		MAIN. OF EFFORT	10,536	307,086	\$137,086
REFUSE	100-460-46100-384	REFUSE DISPOSAL	3,000	310,086	\$140,086
Summer Rec	100-450-45200-103	Part Time Employees	2,000	312,086	\$142,086
Parks	100-450-45100-233	Building Repair	2,000	314,086	\$144,086
Ambulance	100-420-42500-221	Equipment Maint	2,000	316,086	\$146,086
Port Authority		Staffing	10,519	326,605	\$156,605
2nd WEEK FURLOUGH		2nd WEEK FURLOUGH - ALL	30,000	341,605	\$171,605
Pool		Direct Cut	15,000	346,605	\$176,605
Summer Rec	100-450-45200-103	Part Time Employees	5,000	358,605	\$188,605
City Council		Pay	12,000	360,605	\$190,605
Public Works		Snow Plowing	2,000	390,605	\$220,605
POLICE		Sergeants Position	30,000	420,605	\$250,605
PLANNING		4 Hour cut to Zoning	4,500	425,105	\$255,105
Ambulance		4 Hour cut to Ambulance	4,500	429,605	\$259,605
Street Light Utility Fee			48,000	477,605	\$307,605

Mayor Meisch stated that there has been discussion about raising taxes and stated at this time taxes cannot be legally raised. The only new tax the city is proposing is the street light tax. The city is also proposing to cut the city publicity to the Chamber of \$15,000 from the budget and was referred to the Port Authority to pick it up as it relates to economic development but they denied it at their last meeting. He also stated that the Port Authority may revisit that decision.

At this time Mayor Meisch opened the item up for Public Comment.

Brian Yenter, Chamber Member and Owner of Chocolate Escape and The Lofts, spoke in regards to the cuts in the city publicity. He is requesting the city help the chamber with the funds thru the Port Authority.

Chris Fancher, Director of the Chamber of Commerce – stated that the funds the chamber receives from the city amounts to 25% of the chamber budget and it would be devastating if they lost it. He stated that it would mean cutting activities, changing hours, cutting services to the public and cutting staff. He also stated that they receive grants that require 40% matching funds and they have already this year been awarded grants that they have to provide matching funds for.

Jeff Worrell, NEC – If the city publicity funds are cut it could mean a major drop in tourism because of less marketing. He stated that marketing is money extremely well spent and comes back to the community.

Chris Munns – Stated that he supports a plan that promotes commerce, however cutting the police department is not good.

Mike Cary, Teamsters Local 320 – Stated that he has visited several cities the size of Wabasha throughout MN and the police officers in Wabasha are lower in the state as far as pay. He stated that he hopes the city will re-evaluate and stop the lay-off of the officer and maintain the officer thru the end of the year. He stated that there are three main functions of municipalities and they are public utilities/public works, infrastructure, and

public safety. He says many small cities have a false sense that officers are not needed in the smaller communities.

Jim Roemer, 100 Bruegger Valley Road – Stated that that the city should look into selling some of the city owned property that is unused, such as the property that was purchased from St. Elizabeth's that overlooks the slough. He also stated that the Utilities Commission Reserve could be looked into. He also stated that he has concerns about the street light tax and charging people for a tax on parcels that are not usable. Mr. Roemer also asked if the furlough that is being proposed for staff would affect retirement. City Administrator, Schmidt stated that it would not affect staff retirement.

David Wodele, 208 Skyline Drive – Stated that he also has concerns about the street light tax. He owns properties that are not close to any streetlights and are so small; he cannot see paying a monthly street light tax on a parcel where the property tax is only 14.00/year.

Jim Niemmantsverdriet, 1603 River Drive S – Asked for clarification on the street light tax and whether it will be tax deductible. Mayor Meisch stated that it is classified as a tax not a fee.

There were no more public comments.

Council members Meurer and Bricher moved to approve the following budget reduction plan and budget cuts and presented. (stated above and attached A & B)

Approved with the following vote:

Ayes: Gibson; Schmidt; Hiers; Bricher; Meurer; Gallenberger; Mayor Meisch

Nays: None

Prior to the vote council discussion included the following:

- justifying giving the chamber money when city employees are asked to take furloughs and staff are being cut
- city providing the chamber a lesser amount/asking Port Authority to revisit giving the chamber funds because the last Port Authority meeting did not have all members present.
- how to determine where buildable lots are within the city and how to charge the street light tax/excluding small parcels
- reducing all officers to 36 hours so that an officer would not have to be laid off – it was decided that it was not possible – hours would have to be cut too much.

Mayor Meisch stated that the current projections are that things are going to get worse before they get better. He also stated that the current unallotments are being challenged in court and that it is an ongoing battle. City staff and council have taken the information and figures on LGA (Local Government Aid) unallotments given from the League of Minnesota Cities and put together the proposed cuts. Mayor Meisch also commended staff and thanked them for their hard work and dedication during the budget discussions.

Councilmember Meurer asked if it would be possible to keep the officer that was being laid off on as part-time. Mayor Meisch stated that he did not know if that is possible at this time, it would have to be looked at and it would be based on need. He also asked if it was part of the police union contract if a position became available in the police department in the future if the officer that is being laid off would have first chance at being re-hired. City Administrator and City Attorney stated that it was.

Councilmember Bricher stated that he had received several calls from the public regarding the issue of budget cuts.

Councilmember Gallenberger stated she has also received several calls from the public and asked if the subject of early retirement for staff had been discussed. Mayor Meisch stated that the possibility had been assessed, but that the length of time was prohibitive as it related to our staff.

Councilmember Meurer requested staff put together a list of city owned property and bring it back to the next meeting.

Round Table Discussion

Mayor Meisch stated that he read in the paper that Wabasha flood stage is currently projected for Sunday at 12ft and may possibly go to 13ft.

Councilmember Schmidt stated that he had received comments in regards to the street light tax and wanted to make it clear that there is a process that the council needs to go thru to approve the tax. There is a public hearing that still must be held to approve the tax and the council is not "sneaking" the tax by the public.

Councilmember Hiers announced that the Ike's are sponsoring a presentation by Tim Schlagenhaft at the Eagles Nest Café on Wednesday, March 24th at 7pm. It will be open to the public at no charge.

Councilmember Meurer requested an update of the city sweeping and pothole filling activities. City Administrator stated that the public works department has been out.

Having no other business, council members Bricher and Gallenberger moved to adjourn at 8:09pm. Adopted unanimously.

