



WATONGA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FOR JUNE 15, 2021

In accordance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Law, this Agenda was posted June 11, 2021 Prior to 5:00 PM. at the Watonga City Hall, on the door of the City Clerk's Office, located at 117 North Weigle, Watonga, Oklahoma.

The City Council of the City of Watonga did meet at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, June 15, 2021 in the Auditorium of Watonga City Hall, located at 117 North Weigle, Watonga, Oklahoma for a scheduled meeting.

Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance:

Council Present: Travis Bradt, Allen Cowan, Lindsey Doyel, Ladina Willis and Mayor Bill Seitter. Also present, City Manager Larry Mitchell, City Attorney Jared Harrison, and City Clerk Verlen Bills.

Declaration of a Quorum: At 6:03 PM.

AGENDA

1. **Approve the Minutes** of the previous Council Meeting held May 18, 2021

Travis Bradt made the motion to approve the Minutes of the Previous Council Meeting held May 18, 2021. Motion was seconded by Lindsey Doyel
Mayor Bill Seitter, hearing no further discussion, called for a vote:
T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye Mayor Bill Seitter aye.
Motion carried.

2. **Approve the Monthly Reports** from EMS, Fire Department, City Treasurer, Library, Police Department and Community Development.

City Clerk Bills noted, the Community Report just handed out is an updated or revised report.

Mayor Seitter asked to confirm, the Community Development Report is Building Inspection and Code Enforcement?

City Manger Larry Mitchell confirmed.

Travis Bradt: The tall grass is reported by Code Enforcement? There are only 13 cases, it seems I have seen a lot of tall grass through town.

Mr. Mitchell: We have a lot of volunteer compliance and that will not show on the report. The 13 cases that are the more involved situations where the City or a contractor may have to clean up or mow the property. We send a letter out and the property owner has 10 days to comply.

Mr. Bradt: What happens if they do not comply?

Mr. Mitchell: Generally, we hire a contractor to cleanup and mow the property.

Mr. Bradt: Are these local contractors?

Mr. Mitchell: Yes. We have several available. This time of year, grass grow quickly and it is hard to keep up with. By the time we recognize the problem, then we have to give the property owner 10 days notice, the grass can get very tall during those 10 days this time of year.

Mr. Bradt: Is this the way most communities deal with this problem?

Mr. Mitchell: We have to follow State Statues in dealing with this.

Mayor Seitter: Does the State Statues determine when we can hire contractors to do this work?

Mr. Mitchell: The Statues just sets out the terms of the violations. It identifies what things are violations. Then it is up to the city as to how they want to actually abate the nuisance, and most cities hire contractors. Very few cities use their own city staff. City staff is usually limited and already working their regular assignments.

Allen Cowan made the motion to approve the Monthly Reports from EMS, Fire Department, City Treasurer, Library and Community Development. Motion was seconded by Lindsey Doyel.

Mayor Bill Seitter, hearing no further discussion, called for a vote:

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye Mayor Bill Seitter aye.
Motion carried.

3. **Review and Accept** the list of Claims against the City of Watonga for the month of May 2021

Mr. Cowan asked about the electricity billing to EMS.

City Treasure Rodney Jacks: We do this to show exactly how much EMS is costing the City. There are other parts of City operations that are also billed to help track cost.

Mr. Cowan: We show expense for our Canine Unit. Was our dog retired?

Mr. Mitchell: He has not been officially retired by the City, but he was retired from the field by the Police Chief. There are donations set aside in a fund to help support the Canine. I think there's about \$1,500 to \$2,000 in donations and grant monies. Once the dog is officially retired, I believe the City is no longer obligated to provide benefits to the dog.

Mr. Cowan: The City needs to retire this Canine?

Mr. Mitchell: Yes, and we wanted to place that on the agenda for the July meeting. But, given the circumstances around the last 48 hours, we may be trying to do something a little bit sooner because we do need to address that issue. The City may have some liability exposure as the Dog Handler is no longer a City Employee. We are currently working on a way to handle this situation and this might require calling a special meeting. The circumstances as to how the dog was donated to the City are complicated and we need to be certain we do this correctly.

Mayor Seitter asked to confirm, the City does own the Dog.

Mr. Mitchell: The Dog was donated from Travis Daugherty to the Police Chief. Then the City entered into an agreement to set up the Canine Program and who would do the training and handling. There may be some debate as to who actually owns the dog.

Mr. Jacks: I just want to say, from day one, that dog has not cost the City anything. Originally I had concerns that the Canine Program would cost the City, but there have been enough donations over the years to cover all the expenses.

Ms. Willis asked, where is the Dog?

Mr. Mitchell: It is at Shawn Kays' residence. Typically the dog resides with the officer. They train together and work together and form a connection and communication. It can be very difficult, when something happens, and the dog needs to be relocated.

Mr. Jacks asked, is there another canine puppy in the works?

Mr. Mitchell: There is another officer that is currently training a 16 month old dog, but we have not talked to this Officer about whether or not we want to continue the Canine Program.

Mayor Seitter: The City does not want this dog? (The dog residing with Mr. Kays.)

Mr. Mitchell: In my opinion the City needs to formally retire the dog and assign that dog to, I would suggest, the trainer (handler) because it will be very difficult to relocate the dog. I have talked to several other Officers just today and another part of the issue is that the dog is having a serious health issues. The dog may not live another six months to a year. Trying to foster the dog into someone else care would be very difficult.

Motion to approve the Claims against the City of Watonga for the month of May, 2021 was made by Allen Cowan and seconded by Travis Bradt.

Mayor Bill Seitter, hearing no further discussion, called for a vote:

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye Mayor Bill Seitter aye.

Motion carried.

4. **Approve the Monthly Financial Report** for May 2021 from RS Meacham.

Ms. Dacia Phillips: There is a lot of other financial information to go over tonight so I will not spend to much time on this report. This report is for the first 11 months of the fiscal year. To start we will look at the General Fund total for year-to-date. We should be at 91.67% and we are actually about 95% so we are a little bit over. Total Revenue for year-to-date is \$1,858,142 and total Expenditures are \$3,219,567 which is 86% of budget, so we are under budget there. After transfers in and out, year-to-date, we have expenditures exceeding the revenues and other income. As you can see we show a large loss for the month, but that is because we transferred \$121,992 for the down payment for the new City Hall.

The next page of the report is the Light and Water Fund. Year-to-date, we have net loss of \$301,621, but that does include capital items of \$489,000 and that will be pulled out at year's end. So the net income excluding capital items is \$187,456 for the 11 months.

There was no activity in the Grant Fund for the month.

Next is the PWA Fund, year-to-date we have a net income of \$32,519.

In the Sales Tax Fund we are a little over 100% on revenue and for expenditures year-to-date is \$217,229. Most of that, of course is for the down payment on City Hall. There was also a Parks' capital expenditure of approximately \$9,800. Net year-to-date income for the Sales Tax Fund is \$39,284.

In the Street and Alley Fund, year-to-date net income is \$64,649

The last page of this report are the graphs of Sales and Use Tax. Mr Mitchell and I had talked about this earlier and we are right at budget for Sales Tax. Maybe about \$1000 under projections and of course, if we factor in the withholdings to payback the over-payments, we would have well exceeded budget. Overall, we are down for Sales Tax collections from July to June this year compared to last year by 19.86%. And the Use Tax, which is extremely unpredictable, you can see, we still account on the graph, for July of 2019, which was a very large month, so we are down 39.59% year-to-date, but these are much smaller numbers. That is the highlights of the May Budget Report and we will get into this a bit more when we talk about the amendment shortly.

Mayor Seitter asked about the Debt service – principle in the PWA Fund of \$38,528.

After some debate between Ms. Phillips, Mayor Seitter and Mr. Jacks it was determined that this was the annual lease payment for the three Police Units. Mr. Jacks noted that this is a three year lease and this is payment number two.

Mayor Seitter commented, we are basically buying a vehicle every year.

There was other discussion between Ms Phillips and Mr. Jacks about equipment leases and how this works in the budgeting.

Motion to approve the Monthly Financial Report from R S Meacham was made by Allen Cowan and seconded by Ladina Willis.

Mayor Bill Seitter, hearing no further discussion, called for a vote:

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye Mayor Bill Seitter aye.
Motion carried.

5. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** The pending City of Watonga Estimate of Needs for the fiscal year of 2021 – 2022. (Draft budget was provided to Council at the Budget Workshop on May 19, 2021.)

Mr. Mitchell: You have an updated Budget Memo that reflects all the changes the Council requested during the Budget Workshop discussions. The highlights of this are the bullet points on the first page. This budget includes a 3% utility increase for electricity and garbage service and 4% increase for water and sewer. There is also a \$2 per meter surcharge, so that we can expand our community cleanup activities. These rate changes are expected to generate about \$170,000 in annual revenue. I did some quick calculations based on a recent utility account for a family of four. For this current month their total utility bill was \$206.44. After I calculated the rate increase, that same bill went up a little more than \$6.00. Then you add the \$2.00 surcharge and that would bring the total increase for that month to \$8.00. Of course, that amount will be vary depending on the time of the year and with different accounts. It is a family of four with 2 teenage children but I do not know the size of the residence.

Mr. Bradt asked, when would this rate increase go into effect?

Mr. Mitchell: It would be effective July 1st. In order to generate the \$170,000 in revenue it will need to start immediately. If we wait till the Fall then we will lose part of the revenue from the increase.

The next budget item is a 4% salary increase for all full time employees. And, as we talked about in the workshop, for those employees earning less than \$20 per hour, the rate would go into effect July 1. The employees that earn over \$20 an hour will get a 2% increase in July and another 2% increase in January. The other point I would like to make here is that the cost of providing health insurance to employees, and 75% for their dependents, is estimated to cost the City about \$327,000. \$245,000 is for employees and \$81,000 is for their dependents. I can say that our health insurance program is one of the key factors in being able to hire people. We have had several new people hired recently and their primary comment is that we have a very good health insurance program. We may not be quite as competitive with salaries. But given the salaries, plus our benefit package, we are very competitive. I checked with other communities and our salaries are very close. We are competitive with other communities. The problem is just finding people that want to come to work and then actually staying at work. At any rate, I thought it would be interesting to point out that health insurance cost is a big chunk of our personnel cost.

Mayor Seitter: Does this include the retirement.

Mr. Mitchell: The retirement is another contribution of about 16% of their salary.

Mayor Seitter asked to confirm, this is 16% of their gross salary?

Mr. Mitchell confirmed yes: The other couple of comments I would have, The City entered into an agreement with the Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority (OMPA) for line maintenance work and we think that \$50,000 commitment is going to be paying a lot dividends to us. We will have an experienced line crew here that has the equipment to get work done in a timely manner. If we could find an experienced lineman this one employee would cost us more than the \$50,000 we will be paying to OMPA. I think that is a very positive program for the City to get involved in and I think it is going to pay for itself over time.

My other item I want to note, because we are changing our form of government from an Aldermanic Government to a Council Manager Government, we are recommending adding an Administrator Position. I would hope that you approve this position so that we can develop the job description and advertise for it. When we move to the new building, both our current City Treasure and City Clerk have requested that they be retained as part time employees so we do need a staff position, that's full time to handle payroll, employment benefits and other human resource activities. Currently, we have personnel records in the City Clerk's Office and the Payroll Office and then some departments also keep personnel records. When we move into the new building we want to combine and consolidate all of those records into one central location, because it has, over the past year been the cause of problems and issues. No one is certain as to what we have or do not have or what is missing. It has caused us to scramble at times. Our idea is to consolidate all this into one office responsible for all personnel records.

Mayor Seitter: Nothing against Mr. Jacks or Mr. Bills, and we discussed this previously, but I do not know that this position is going to be a benefit for the city.

Ms. Willis: My question is, are those personnel issues that we're addressing here? How is that going to benefit the community?

Mr. Mitchell: Currently, that's what they're doing now? I'll let them speak for themselves. I think we're doing an adequate job covering those job responsibilities with our current work schedule. At some point in the future, they may need to be full time positions. But right now, I think they're doing an admirable job. The City Clerk's position is going to be restructured a little bit, the City Clerk will have less responsibility for personnel, and more responsibility for municipal court and other functions that are more traditionally the City Clerk's responsibilities.

Mayor Seitter: My question is not about their work, I think they do a good job. My concern at some point down the road, they choose to resign, then will we find part time personnel? We do not know, I just do not see that as a benefit for the City down the road.

Mr Mitchell: I think, in the long term, you will have to be looking at full time positions.

Mayor Seitter: For budget purposes, would it not be better to leave the budget as is? My understanding that Mr. Jacks' position, the Treasurer is part time now, but the City Clerk's position is not?

Mr. Mitchell: We can put the money in the budget and unless Mr. Bills retires in six months, that money will still be in the budget. I would say at some point, you probably want to put that into the budget, for a full time position, but currently for this next year, I think we are good. But, I do not have any objection to putting the money into the budget.

Mayor Seitter: Is that what we are doing now?

Mr. Mitchell: Yes, this will increase the dollar amount.

Ms. Phillips: Should this be needed, we can do a budget amendment if needed.

Mayor Seitter: We are already going into the coming year with a projected short coming of about \$800,000. I question whether we should be considering, going into it further?

Mr. Mitchell: If you made this a full time position it would be.

Mayor Seitter: We are adding a position and then cutting back to halftime. I'm not understanding.

Mr. Mitchell: No, we are not cutting back. We would not cut anybody back. What I am saying is that, for the jobs, functions or responsibilities, that they are doing right now it is adequate. What I am also saying, is that you need a new administrative position to cover payroll, HR and other things that are being handled sort of indiscriminately at this point. There is no clear responsibility for how these things are handled. I think that a new position needs to be created to do that.

Ms. Phillips: The way you explained it to me was to consolidate the work with current employees.

Mr. Mitchell: That was my original proposal.

Ms. Phillips: I think moving into the new facility is going to give us a little more idea of how this is going to work. We were hoping to realize some efficiencies because the Light and Water and the City Clerk's office are both in the same area.

Mr. Mitchell: My original proposal was to promote a person who is already doing the job. That was not received very well. So yes, you would be adding a new position if you do not promote within.

Mayor Seitter: The other thing I would mention is that I think the new City Manager needs to hire this person.

Mr. Mitchell: That's fine by me. I am just saying I think that is the way you want to structure it. I do not need to be the one to hire that position.

Mayor Seitter pointed out, It does say a new position will be created / consolidated.

Mr. Mitchell: That is our note based on what you told us at the workshop. Originally, we were proposing that we would promote someone, which would be less expense to the City for the first year.

Mr. Seitter: I think I am a little uncomfortable, I guess I do not quite understand. This is not what I had in my mind when this was discussed earlier and this is probably on me.

Mr. Mitchell: Given the situation with your current personnel, I'm trying to give you what I think is the optimum way of handling those positions for the first year or two. When Mr. Jacks and Mr. Bills retire, you will probably make those full time positions and you need to expand that in that direction. But, given your current personnel, I think this is a reasonable alternative.

Mayor Seitter: If we put people in these positions, then we're kind of locked in. You are not going to be here, we will have a new City Manager that may look at things differently, and want to do things in a different way.

Mr. Mitchell: That is true. I do not disagree with that.

Ms. Willis: Where is the issue or problem at?

Mr. Mitchell: What I'm saying is now that you've gone from an Aldermanic form of government to a Council Manager form of government, and you're moving to a new facility, you need to restructure some of these departments, because they are going to take on other responsibilities that they have not previously had. I am talking from the perspective of an organizational structure. Do not take this personally, but, I do not really care who is in the position as the person, I think they are doing fine jobs. I am talking about the structure of the organization. I think you need to be forward. Right now you do not have a finance department. I think you will eventually need someone like a finance director. You do not have an HR director. You have people doing pieces of it. That is what I am saying, you need to restructure that portion of your organization to handle those increased responsibilities and that is my recommendation. Now, if the City Treasurer and City Clerk were full time positions, then maybe you don't need to do that. But basically, right now, you're relying on the City Manager and Ms. Phillips to do a lot of those things. I've spent probably at least a third of my time and maybe more on employee issues. What I'm saying is, if you want the City Manager be the HR director, then the City Manager is not going to be able to do other things. That is what I'm trying to get to. I am not talking about the personalities of who's doing what, per se. I am just saying that in order to restructure your organization a little bit, I think you've got to do something with the financial slash administrative part of your organization.

Mayor Seitter: I do not disagree. I guess the point I'm trying to make is that you are here now and you are proposing this to us. In three months, we will have a new City Manager and they will come in and say, we need to reorganize, and that person is going to be here. And we know that you will not be.

Several comments at the same time, not discernible.

Mr. Mitchell: You do not have to necessarily fill the positions, we are just putting the structure in place. If you do not want me to advertise that position, or fill a position, I'm fine with that. I'm just saying, with my experience over the last year that appears to be the gap in the organization. We have Amanda Black doing all the payroll, she is doing a lot of the HR and then she's also doing accounts receivable.

Ms. Willis: Who is the girl in the office here that does payroll?

Mr. Mitchell: Alaya Keierleber is the Municipal Court Clerk. She also does accounts payable. Ms. Black and Mrs. Keierleber both do accounts payable and purchase orders.

Ms. Willis: Would it be possible to have a format or chart with the details of this proposed position? I am not clear on this new position. What exactly are they going to do? So that there is no question. Will they be HR or are they doing Finance? Are they taking over a position completely?

Mr. Mitchell: I would say they would be doing more in HR and employee benefit, taking some of that responsibility away from Meacham. We're doing a lot of payroll here. Then we're sending it all off to Meacham and they check it and it goes back and forth. And it creates a situation where there are two or three people doing the same thing.

Ms. Phillips gave a brief description of the payroll issue and noted that it could be streamlined some.

Mr. Mitchell: The idea would be moving more to Personnel, HR and employee benefits work and less time on payroll.

Ms. Willis: Where will the salary come from?

Mr. Mitchell: It will come out of the Budget.

Ms. Willis: So we are adding to the Budget?

Mr. Mitchell: We are adding a portion to the budget. If we promoted this person from within, obviously, you would not be adding that much. But if you create a new position, then yes, we would be adding significantly, because then we are adding a new position.

Ms. Willis asked of City Clerk Bills, are you part time?

Mr. Bills: I am not part time nor am I full time. I do not receive any benefits as a full time employee. (I still work as an elected official.)

Mr. Bradt: It looks to me like we are overlapping and we are not being very efficient.

Mr. Mitchell: We currently are but as I said, I spent 30% or more of my time on HR. All I'm saying here is, do you want a new City Manager to spend 30% of their time with HR?

Mr. Bradt: I agree, that is not the City Manager's job, but I agree with what Ms. Willis, we need to clarify as to the characteristics and what this position is to accomplish, what are they supposed to do. That is my point.

Mr. Bradt and Mr. Mitchell did agree that we are not all on the same page here.

Mr. Mitchell: Maybe the way to talk about this or look at this, is to say if you plug this position into the budget, then I can develop the job description or draft job description. Then the new City Manager can approve that and hire that person or advertise for that person, but at least you have the position in the budget. Typically, that is how you add positions or change positions is at budget time. You can do it mid year as a budget amendment, if that is what you prefer to do. But as a City Manager, or HR Director, I can only hire or I can only fill positions that the council approves. I was trying to get the position in the budget, so that you would have an idea of what you have to work with. You could develop the position in the future. We do not need to hire the person July 1. I'm just saying that I think that's where your gap is in your organization right now. It is the fuzzy area with HR, payroll and finance.

Mr Bradt: Does a city our size, typically not having one of these separate people doing all this? One position for HR and one position for finance? Is our City too small or is it that way everywhere?

Ms. Phillips: With the communities we work with, it all rest with one person, not spread out over several people. Accounts payable or purchase orders is normally with one person in a community of your size.

Ms. Phillips asked of Mr. Mitchell: I am not sure what your experiences with this might be.

Mr. Mitchell: My experiences are from much larger cities for example Guymon. We had a full time HR director. Under that HR director, there was a payroll clerk. The payroll clerk did all of the the worksheets, the payroll hours and fringe benefits. The HR director was the person responsible for basically working with department directors on hiring people going through the hiring process, doing all the background checks and etc. We also had Fire and Police Unions, which the HR director would be responsible for negotiating agreements with the Unions. You do not have that here, but you are close. If the community grows and you hired another couple of Firefighters and another couple of Police Officers, then you could be in that position.

Ms. Willis asked, is there a chart or graph that might explain what you are trying to do here? I know you understand what you want to accomplish but it is not clear to me.

Mr Mitchell: I can create an organizational chart and list the duties and responsibilities.

Ms. Willis: I would like to understand what you want to streamline and how you want to accomplish this. How is this going to fit with Mr. Jacks and Mr. Bills?

Mr. Mitchell: A lot of work Mr. Bills has been doing now is collecting job applications as they come in. I'm saying that duty or responsibility should all be shifted over to one person, because Mr. Bills is going to have other responsibilities. Municipal Court being one of them. So those duties get shifted and you consolidate where your activities are. So that you have one person responsible for taking the application, scheduling interviews, hiring the person, doing the fringe benefits and doing the background checks and drug testing. There has been confusion over the last year who actually does the drug test. Is it Ms. Black, Mr Bills or the Department Director? We want to resolve this.

Ms. Willis: You are saying this new position will resolve this problem and I am trying to understand why we cannot resolve this right now.

Mr Mitchell: It has been a communication issue, and its been the practice and the practice has been, I guess depending on the day of the week, someone does it or someone else does it when somebody shows up, or someone's on vacation, and somebody else does it.

Ms. Willis: Can we not give a directive, we cannot get involved with that? They do this on their own, or I'm just not clear on this?

Mr. Mitchell: That has just been the past practice. We just changed, governments in April. We went from basically a Strong Mayor with Council Committees to a Council Manager form of government. Some of these activities were being done by a Personnel Committee, but once you change all of those responsibilities, it then goes to administrative people and we do not have any administrative people. You have department directors that are driving trash trucks and mowing yards. We do not have any staff support. The only staff support we have had in the last year has been me. I have been global and I am not saying that to be smart about it I am just saying that we do not have the support staff that the organization needs to do a lot of these things. It falls to who ever is available and falls to who ever is doing the hiring. All this needs consolidated, to be efficient, to be able to follow State Law to be able to follow Chain of Custody on a drug test. That is all I am recommending here.

Mr. Cowan: I think what Mr. Mitchell is proposing is a step in the right direction. We are trying to become a better organized group with the way things flow through the City from all directions. In my thinking, part of that process is to perfect those jobs. Instead of three people involved with a responsibility define it to one. Then there is more accountability. We have to have accountability. This will give us better, more clear accountability for those jobs and responsibilities.

Mr. Mitchell: If the Council would feel more comfortable doing a budget amendment after you hire a new City Manager, then that is an option. I was wanting to indicate where I think the weaknesses are and what needs to be addressed. How you address this is up to you.

Mayor Seitter: I agree. I think we may need to reorganize. Two points I would like to make, in my mind, it should be the job of the next City Manager coming in to do the reorganization, to organize the way they see. The second point, is about doing, like what you said, a budget amendment, because right now, by all of our estimates, were going in the hole \$800,000 next year. If we wait and do it as a budget amendment, we'll have a better idea, when we get ready to do this, whether or not the money is coming in according to estimates. These numbers are just estimates. That \$800,000 could grow to \$1,200,000.

Mr. Mitchell: About half of that \$800,000 is a capital project for the wastewater treatment plant. Ms. Phillips noted, the total capital outlay for this Estimate of Needs is \$3,141,869.

Mr. Mitchell added, about \$2,000,000 is for the Airport. It is the \$418,000 for the Disposal plant that I'm considering.

Mayor Seitter: I think, as we are hiring a new City Manager, we realize that we need to reorganize and we need to let the City Manager determine how this should be done. Everybody will have their own ideas about how to do this. Trying to reorganize at this time could put our people in a poor situation. A new City Manager may want to do things differently and reassign employees. We need to reorganize, but the next City Manager needs to be the one to make those decisions.

Mr. Bradt: It seems like we are behind in terms of job descriptions and that has created a problem. This will continue until we do something like what we are talking about. And we may need to add some more people and I'm okay with that.

Mr. Mitchell: I think you're right. That's one thing that really needs to be beefed up is current job descriptions for all the existing employees.

Mr. Bradt: We would not have the overlap concerns. And, I agree with what you're saying, the City Manager should not have to be dealing with all of this, that is not why we hire them. At least that is what I think.

Mr. Mitchell: It will depend on whom you hire. Each City Manager that you talk to or consider will have different skills. They may have more interest in project planning and that type of work and not as much interest in managing personnel.

Mr. Bradt: To me, they should have an interest in personnel.

Several others commented along those lines and how this government transition has complicated things.

Mr. Bradt: I think we should wait and do a budget amendment later.

Mayor Seitter: My other question is, we have, I think 75% of our budget is for personnel?

Ms. Phillips: That is very typical.

Mayor Seitter: So, if we start adding positions, then we are raising that percentage. And it is what it is, but people need to understand if we put more money into salaries, we are not going to be able to repair streets nor a lot of other infrastructure because our money is all in salaries.

Ms. Phillips agreed that this is always a debate.

Mayor Seitter pointed out, when you get overstaffed and budget cuts come, it is usually from the biggest category and that is salaries.

Mr. Mitchell: The rule of thumb is that personnel cost are going to be in 65% to 75% range, it depends on what's going on in the community and where revenues are coming from. Ms. Phillips said earlier that your sales tax is down, almost 20%. If you had 20% more in sales tax revenue, then you would have a lot more flexibility to do other capital projects, which in-turn reduces the percentage of spending on personnel. The \$18,000 to \$20,000 in monthly sales tax that is being withheld adds up to about \$200,000 annually. Even in larger organizations, my rule of thumb was 60% - 65% for personnel, 20% for capital outlay and 10% for maintenance and operation. But the biggest expense is always going to be personnel, because we are service heavy organization, and we are doing a lot of things that the private sector will not or cannot do.

Ms. Phillips found the exact numbers: The 75% we are referring to is the General Fund Budget, excluding transfers and capital outlay. In the Light and Water Fund, personnel cost are only 59% of budget, excluding the cost of electricity, transfers and capital outlay.

Mayor Seitter: But overall, it is 75%?

Ms. Phillips: No, that is just in the General Fund, I am not for certain collectively (overall). Our personnel cost exceed \$3.38 million and of course is the largest use of resources. That also includes benefits.

Mayor Seitter: That is the point I want to make, and we want to add to this number by adding positions?

Ms. Phillips: That is why I worded that with create / consolidate. When you get into the new facility, it may allow for some consolidation of positions.

Mayor Seitter: That is what I want to see, are we really talking about consolidation or a new position?

Ms. Willis: I would like to look at how we might consolidate some staff.

Mr. Mitchell: We really can not, or we should not, staffing is already pretty thin. When we look at each department, as I mentioned earlier, the Park Superintendent is riding a mower and the Street and Alley Superintendent is driving a trash truck. There is no bloating in our organization. As far as extra positions, we do not have any. The Light and Water Superintendent has been asking for a third person in the Utility Office for two or three years. When one of them is sick, one person can not run that office by themselves, That may be a benefit in the new building because all those offices are going to be closer together. We could do some cross training, so when someone is on vacation or someone is on leave, then we can rotate people around. It is very hard to do in the current situation.

Mayor Seitter asked again: It is not a consolidated, it is a new position?

Mr. Mitchell: It was both: It was a new position, promoting someone into it, who is already doing the job of what I am asking the position to be. In the short term, the added cost would be about \$6,000 to bump up that position. But, in the workshop, the preference indicated was not to do that promotion. So, if you do not promote that individual, then yes, you are creating a new position, you are adding another salary.

Ms. Willis pointed out, that promotion was based on your feedback, not the New City Manager and I think that is what Mayor Seitter is trying point out.

Mr. Mitchell: The reason I made that recommendation is that she is doing that job already.

Ms. Willis: There is nothing wrong with the recommendation. And we are not saying that she is doing bad work. But, if I understand what Mayor Seitter is saying, we want to welcome in the new City Manager and let them review the situation. They may have other skills sets that would help from a different prospective. Your ideas may be the best way to go, but I agree with Mayor Seitter that we need to keep our options open at this time and to try and keep our budget tightened up until we see what revenues are going to be available.

Mr. Mitchell: That is why you are elected. My job is to recommend and your job is to approve.

Mr. Cowan: With the change in the form of government, the City Clerk and the Treasurer now become employees. So, we need to to create two positions or job descriptions. I do not disagree with Mr. Mitchell but...

Ms. Willis and Mr. Cowan asked, do we have job descriptions?

Mr. Mitchell: We have job descriptions, but they are very basic job descriptions. They need to be improved and brought up to date. And that's another job that needs to be assigned to someone. If you assign that job to the department director, then he will need to get off the tractor for several hours to get that done. That's the issue. We have employees working. Not that others are not. These people are primarily supervisors or foremen and we do not have the staff positions that support the supervisors.

Mayor Seitter asked, are the supervisors on the tractors and trucks because we do not have enough staff or because we cannot hire the staff?

Mr. Mitchell: Both. Right now we have three positions open in the Street and Alley Department. He may have gotten one hired.

Mayor Seitter: It's really about not finding people to work.

Mr. Mitchell: I think it is both. We have talked about past practice and that has been that the department supervisor, in addition to doing all the administrative responsibilities is a working foreman. So in order to take that part of the supervisor's workload away, we need to hire another person. And, right now, we do not have the revenue to hire another person. It's a catch 22 kind of thing. And it takes a long time to build that organization. Obviously, it also takes revenue and part of that is what you did with the utility rates. It is not an easy thing to solve. It is a lot of what I would call baby steps, you take one small step and fix an issue. Hopefully, by doing that one small step we create other opportunities, and you take the pressure off some of the existing department supervisors. Department supervisors are doing some of the Human Resources work right now. We have no HR Director and the City Manager is not doing it so the department supervisors are having to do this work.

Ms. Willis suggest that other entities would use volunteers for their panels. The volunteers would do the ordination and interviews. This seemed to work really well.

Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Willis debated this briefly.

Mr. Mitchell handed out the list of Capital Improvement Proposals that had been created from the Budget Workshop.

Mr. Mitchell: You can compare this Capital Improvements Proposal with what is in the Budget Memo to get an idea where we are. This list was put together after the Budget Workshop. I do not have any other comments at this time.

Mr. Mitchell asked Ms. Phillips for comment.

Ms. Phillips: When we started the Budget Meetings we went from a deficit in all funds of \$1,148,417 to a deficit of \$806,446. We decreased the loss in the General Fund, but I think there were some additional positions unfilled. In addition, in the Capital Outlay, we went through that item by item and I think most of that fell into the Sales Tax Fund, and the Light and Water Fund.

Mr. Mitchell: The listed handed out should also show what funds are going to pay for those improvements. The back of the list is Light and Water and these items will be paid for from the related service, electric, water or sewer.

There was questions and answers about the list, but no one objected to the Capital Improvements.

Mr. Bradt asked, about the budget for EMS. Has it always lost money?

Mr. Jacks: Originally, it operated at a serious loss. This year, I have been eating my words. This fiscal year EMS Director Josh Boden has worked his tail off. As of today, the General Fund is only out a little over \$30,000. He is that close to breaking even, really close.

Ms. Phillips: We are still not certain about some of the back-billing.

Mr. Jacks: We went two years without any payments from Medicare. Mr Boden is changing billing companies. He has never been happy with Acu-File. They have not delivered as promised.

Ms. Phillips: This was one of the discussions in the past, this is why it is shown as Bullet points, to show where we are at.

Mr. Jacks: Medicare payments are very sporadic. We might get two payments one week and nothing for three months. The account fluctuates quite a bit and we never know if the money is there when bills and payroll need to be paid. It is very unreliable making budgeting difficult and General Fund has to pick up the balance. But Mr. Boden has made some great improvement this last year or so.

Mr. Mitchell: I can tell you from my experience that if you're in the ambulance business, you are doing good if you're collecting 80% of the revenue. It will never pay for itself. That is why private companies do not want to run EMS because it is not a moneymaker. The same with fire departments, nobody wants to run a fire department either.

Mr. Mitchell continued: Guymon did an experiment where they hired a company to come in and help manage their departments because they were having the same kind of personnel issues. They could not recruit anybody. They could not find a building inspector, they could not find licensed people to run their water and wastewater treatment plants. So, they hired a firm to come in and manage all of their departments. This company agreed to do that, however, they excluded Fire and EMS employees. They did not want to deal with these departments because there was no way to make the money work and there was so much liability. This company would only manage the operating departments like community development, building inspection, water utilities, parks and recreation and library.

Mayor Seitter: Any further discussion?

Mr. Mitchell: I think we have a solid budget here. We are spending some money, but I think we are spending it in the right areas. In the utilities, as we have talked casually before, I think we are making good investments in your electrical distribution system with upgrades to the substation and the agreement with OMPA. I think is really going to be a big benefit to the community. And we are addressing the issue with the wastewater treatment plant. We have those three big utility issues and I think we are addressing them spending the money in the right areas by replacing some critical capital equipment.

Mr. Cowan: It is never easy to approve a budget where we are going \$800,000 in the hole.

Ms. Phillips noted: A lot of those expenditures are going to be paid from restricted funds and fees that had been collected in a prior year. Even though it says operations, it is operations from fees.

Mr. Mitchell pointed out in the Budget Memo: On April 30, 2021 the we had 175 and 165 days of cash on hand. I can tell you that in a lot of communities that number maybe only 30 or even 15 days of cash on hand. The rule of thumb is 90 days. If all the revenue streams vanished, the community could continue to function for three months. And we have 165 days. In Lawton we had a 90 million dollar budget and the fund balance was down to \$100,000, that was cutting it too close.

Mayor Seitter: I think the budget is great, except for the new position. We could do that with a budget amendment at a later date with a new City Manager.

I would entertain a motion.

Allen Cowan made the motion to approve the Estimate of Needs as presented for 2021 – 2022, less the section; “a new position will be created / consolidated for financial services that will oversee general financial administration as well as payroll.” Motion was seconded by Lindsey Doyel.

Mayor Bill Seitter, hearing no further discussion, called for a vote:

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye Mayor Bill Seitter aye.

Motion carried.

6. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve Budget Amendments for the Fiscal Year 2020 – 2021 as recommend by RS Meacham.

Ms. Phillips explained, as we fall under the Estimate of Needs there is accounting that does not have to be, but we do some of this anyway because we want to be good financial stewards. So, we are going to go with all the required columns of the Municipal Budget Act. I think that also helps us to approve a budget.

In the January amendments, we actually went in and looked at the financials through May 31 and projected out to what the end-of-year numbers would be. And, to try and avoid the unexpected, we also checked with several key personnel to see if there might be anything that could come up in June. We want to make sure all is covered.

If we look at page two, we are actually increasing the fund balance. That means we are increasing budgeted revenues more than we are increasing expenditures. And it shows, in the General Fund we are decreasing the fund balance. In the Light and water we are decreasing the fund balance by \$30,224, in the far right column. In PWA we are increasing fund balance by \$35,500, which just means we are increasing revenues more than we're increasing expenditures. Under Capital Projects, we are increasing the fund balance by \$140,901. And then in Special Revenue Funds, Street & Alley, we are increasing that by 202,000 and so on down the list. Overall, the grand total of all funds is \$205,730. If you want the details of why the ups and downs, that is shown in the memo.

I would say, in the General Fund we did increase revenue by \$27,000. And then, the main reason for the decrease in the fund balance was the \$177,225 which was a transfer to make the 20% down payment on the new City Hall. That's the main driver for the decreasing fund balance there which is a fixed asset purchase. In Light and Water, there is not a great change. We did increase revenues by \$23,000. And the main reason for expenditures was the \$80,000 for the sludge pit clean out, assessment and evaluation. On PWA, it's an increase in fund balance and I am not going to read them all here. In the Sales Tax Fund, the main increase, in that fund, is the Capital Lease Proceeds that pay for the building in the Governmental Fund. That shows as revenues, so that's the \$585,000 increase. In Street and Alley, we increased the fund balance and that is primarily for the street projects that did not get completed this year, hopefully that will get completed next year.

That is the major points of this Budget Amendment. Are there any questions?

Mayor Seitter: As there are no questions, I would entertain a motion.

Motion to approve the Budget Amendments for the Fiscal Year 2020 – 2021 as recommended by RS Meacham was made by Allen Cowan and seconded by Travis Bradt.

Mayor Bill Seitter, hearing no further discussion, called for a vote:

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye Mayor Bill Seitter aye.

Motion carried.

7. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve an amendment to the Agreement establishing Oklahoma Municipal Assurance Group, Article III as follows: “The effective date of this agreement shall be June 1, 1977 and shall continue in perpetuity.”

Mr. Mitchell: This is a simple change to their bylaws or charter as requested by the Oklahoma Municipal Assurance Group. They are asking for confirmation and they need about two thirds of the Member Cities to pass this.

Mr. Bills: When this was set up in 1977 they did not think it would still be in business 50 years later.

Mr. Mitchell: They are asking for an extension.

City Attorney Jared Harrison: I would venture a guess, probably back in 1977 you could not have an entity set up in perpetuity but had to be for a certain number of years. Or, maybe the laws have changed, and they have run out of time and need to get updated.

Mayor Seitter asked, this is just procedural?

Several responded yes.

Mr. Mitchell: OMAG does provide a lot of benefits to the Cities. I would hate to see them go.

There was brief discussion of the business model.

Allen Cowan Made the motion to approve an amendment to the Agreement establishing Oklahoma Municipal Assurance Group, Article III as follows: “The effective date of this agreement shall be June 1, 1977 and shall continue in perpetuity.”. Motion was seconded by Ladina Willis.

Mayor Bill Seitter, hearing no further discussion, called for a vote:

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye Mayor Bill Seitter aye.
Motion carried.

8. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve paying \$5500.00 for the 4th of July Fireworks to be reimbursed by the Lions Club as requested by Park Superintendent Donnie Dunn and allow the Fireworks Display at Huff Lorang Park.

Parks Superintendent Donnie Dunn: I should apologize for not getting this done earlier. This would be my eighteenth year to do the fireworks show. This is how we have done this in the past. The Lions Club collects the donations and then reimburses the City. This keeps the State Fire Marshall's Office from having to oversee this. It is paid for by the City, on City property and done with City employees. This simplifies thing.

Mayor Seitter noted, the Lions Club has always been able to raise at least the \$5,500. It has never been a problem.

Travis Bradt mad the motion to approve paying the \$5,500 for the 4th of July Fireworks and allow the Fireworks Display at the Huff Lorang Park. Motion was seconded by Ladina Willis. Mayor Bill Seitter, hearing no further discussion, called for a vote:
T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye Mayor Bill Seitter aye.
Motion carried.

Mr. Dunn added, the Chamber of Commerce is planning on 4th of July festivities at the park, but they were not able to get on Council Agenda in time.

9. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To renew the Agriculture Lease with Brian Sawyer for the second year of the three (3) year lease of the property known as the Huff-Lorang Agriculture Lease, with the same terms as the current lease agreement. Said property is approximately 63.23 acres. Legal Description; The Southwest Quarter (SW/4) of Section 18, Township 16 North, Range 11 West of the Indian Meridian, in Blaine County, Oklahoma, LESS AND EXCEPT a tract of land described as follows: Beginning at the Southwest corner of said SE/4 Section, thence North 1075.3 feet, thence East 884 feet, thence South 1075.3 feet, thence West 884 feet to the Point of Beginning, containing 21.82 acres more or less and LESS AND EXCEPT 44.75 acres in the Northwest corner thereof which is used for and known as Huff-Lorang Park, and LESS AND EXCEPT 3.2 acres bounded on the North and West by railroad right of way, on the South by 11th Street and on the East by Laing Street.

Motion to renew the Agriculture Lease with Brian Sawyer for the second year of a three year lease of the property know as the Huff-Lorang Agriculture Lease, with the same terms as the current lease agreement was made by Travis Bradt and seconded by Lindsey Doyel. Legal description as noted above.

Mayor Bill Seitter, hearing no further discussion, called for a vote:

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye Mayor Bill Seitter aye.
Motion carried.

10. **Discussion and Review;** of Watonga Police Department Vehicle Use Policy No. 702, drafted by Lexipol LLC and adopted with Watonga Resolution No. 2015-8 on July 7, 2015, as requested by Mayor Bill Seitter.

Mayor Seitter: If I understand, it is up to the Police Chief to determine whether or not Officers can drive vehicles home.

Mr. Mitchell: Under this policy in the Section 702 for unscheduled take home vehicle use, circumstances may arise etc. and circumstances are unplanned and were created by the needs of the department and other reasonable transportation options are not available, if the Member lives within a reasonable distance, and it says generally not to exceed 60 minute drive time from the city limits.

Some expressed concern of that time limit.

Mr. Mitchell: Most of the departments I have worked with, set a radius around the police station of 15 to 20 miles. Time is not a dependable measurement. We can drive down the highway much faster than we can a dirt road. I was surprised to see that number of 60 minutes.

But to answer your question, yes, it says in here that it is at the discretion of the Police Chief to make that determination. It is in Section 702-41. It says vehicles may be reassigned and utilized by department members at the discretion of the Chief of Police, or his authorized designate. I can tell you that currently there are two officers driving vehicles home. One of those is currently going to CLEET training in Ada. The other officer taking a vehicle home, is the nighttime shift supervisor and he is subject to call out where response time can be an important concern.

Those are the only two that I know of, but I I was surprised when I saw that 60 minute rule in there. Currently we have Mr. Rumsey with the Oklahoma Municipal Management Service who is reviewing all of these policies. His report should be completed by the end of July. I'm hoping that this is one of the policies that he would have a recommendation on. I have not talked to him specifically about this, but my experience with this is typically specified in miles with 15 to 20 mile radius being the norm.

Mr. Cowan questioned that distance considering the small size of Watonga.

Mr. Mitchell: we can set any distance we feel comfortable with, then it is at the discretion of the Police Chief as to who is allowed a vehicle.

Mayor Seitter: It's my understanding from Mr. Rumsey, if an Officer is in a City Vehicle and is involved in an accident then the City is liable because it is a City Vehicle, whether or not the Officer is on duty or not. If they are in their personal vehicle then the City is not liable.

Does the IRS consider vehicle use taxable compensation?

Mr. Mitchell: Yes, we file this with the IRS as part of the Officer's compensation.

Ms. Phillips clarified some of the details about this, whether it is for work or for personnel benefit.

Mr. Mitchell: But the benefits, of course is response time. This also allows for a larger presence in the neighborhood, that Police Officers live here in our community and are visible throughout the community.

Mr. Cowan: In the City limits I think that is a great idea.

Multiple responses and comments.

Mr. Mitchell: Currently, we have two officers driving vehicles home.

Mr. Cowan asked, how far outside the City Limits are they driving?

Mr. Mitchell replied, I am not certain but it is much less than the 60 minutes. I can find out. I do think the two Officers driving the vehicles do have valid reasons.

Mr. Cowan: It is normal for us to provide transportation for Officers attending CLEET.

Ms. Phillips replied, if it is for training.

Mr Mitchell: And the other Officer is a shift supervisor. Now, once we hire a new Police Chief, and we get the Department reorganized, that Officer may go to a day shift and would not need to be the shift supervisor. All of this is subject to change from time to time so vehicle assignments will change.

Mayor Seitter asked, is it common in most Cities for the Police Chief to make that determination as to whether an Officer drives a vehicle or not?

Mr. Mitchell replied, yes.

Mayor Seitter: My other concern about Police Units being driven home, would be the additional mileage and wear on the vehicle. The vehicle will wear out sooner causing extra expense to the citizens.

Mr. Mitchell: There are pluses and minuses to this. That needs to be weighed and considered. But this Lexipol Policy is a standard policy that has been put together by OMAG and adopted by most of the OMAG Communities. I would be surprised though if these Communities did not modify the 60 minute drive time.

Mayor Seitter: If this is common, then where did that 60 minutes come from?

Mr. Harrison and Mr. Mitchell discussed: That may have been just an arbitrary number used as a place holder for the original template and was meant to be adjusted to fit the local community.

Mr. Mitchell: The Lexipol Policy has been very helpful for smaller communities that do not have the resources to properly develop this kind of thing on their own. It is also helpful when personnel move from community to community and the Police Department policies are somewhat consistent.

Mr. Bradt: When an Officer goes to CLEET training they have to drive an hour?

Mr. Mitchell: CLEET Training is in ADA, the drive time is well over an hour.

Several discussed making changes to this Policy.

Mr. Mitchell: Mr. Rumsey may have some recommendation for this or when we hire a new Police Chief they may also have some ideas.

Mayor Seitter asked, do we want to wait to address this concern or does it need to be on next month's agenda?

Mr. Bradt: I would think we want to wait and see what Mr. Rumsey has to say.

Ms. Willis agreed.

Mr. Mitchell: Mr. Rumsey thought he would have is draft report in a month, so his final report should be available by the end of July.

Ms. Phillips: I do want to clarify my answer to you. There is an exception of a qualified non personal use vehicle and is not subject to taxation, and should not be included in an employee's wages, or qualified non personal use vehicle as defined by the IRS as the vehicle the employee is not likely to use more than minimally for personal purposes because of its design. These types of vehicles included, clearly marked police and fire vehicles, unmarked vehicles used by law enforcement officers, and the note is that the officer must be authorized to carry a firearm, execute search warrants and make arrest as such etc... At any rate, so for limited use, for the present, that kind of thing is not taxable. But, I think we should have to look at each situation individually. Because there are some cases where some unmarked vehicles are not allowed for the exclusion.

Mayor Seitter noted, this was for unmarked vehicles. All of our vehicles are marked vehicles.

Ms. Phillips: Yes, if the vehicles are clearly marked and the Officers are authorized to carry a firearm, execute search warrants and make arrest.

Mr. Harrison: I think that is where we will get into some differences. We are talking about somebody taking it the vehicle outside of city limits. Once they get outside the city limits, unless they're deputized by the Sheriff, they probably do not have the authority to serve warrants at that point. That might pull them out of that IRS exception.

Mayor Seitter: Are the Officers instructed about what is proper vehicle use and what is not? And how do we know if the vehicle is being used as it should be?

Mr. Mitchell: We should have a fair idea where the vehicles are going because we have installed GPS units. We may not know what they are doing but we should know about where they are.

Mr. Harrison reading from the policy: Circumstances may arise where Department vehicles must be used by members to commute to and from a work assignment.

Mayor Seitter: Is this policy being communicated to the Officers? Do they see this policy?

Mr. Mitchell: Yes, the Policy is reviewed and signed off by the Officers.

Mayor Seitter: Are there any other questions on this policy?

Mr. Harrison asked if there were any instruction for him from the Council on this matter.

No further comments were made.

11. **Council Comments:**

No Council Comments.

12. Mayor Comments:

Mayor Seitter: I want to comment that I appreciate the City Employees. It is hot and getting hotter this time of year and I know our workers are out in this heat a lot. It's not fun out there right now but we appreciate their efforts.

The other comment I wanted to make, I think it is time for us to start communicating better to our community about our water issues and what we are looking at in the way of costs for water treatment, in the very near future. If I am not mistaken, we are looking at a two to two and a half million dollar facility that will need to be built and we need to be at least started on it in the next two years.

Mr. Mitchell: The way I remember reading the Consent Order, the timeline is that the City needs to have its financing completed, or at least identified by January of 2023. I do not remember when the scheduled calls for the actual start of construction. After that financing deadline of January 2023, we would go into the design phase. After that there would be the advertising for construction. I think the project would complete somewhere around 2024 or 2025. But you're correct, we need to have the financing lined up by January of 2023, which is only a year and a half away.

I did have a meeting with DEQ about a week and a half ago and met with several agencies that provided grants and loans. The problem is that most of those programs are low interest loans. So, even if you get a loan, we have to figure out a way to repay the loan. But, at least we would have approval for a loan which would identify our funding source for the project. Obviously, we would not have to start making debt service payments until sometime closer to the start of construction. A loan arrangement would buy us some time.

I did have a good meeting with Indian Health Services, they said that we should be getting a letter in the next month or two regarding approval of a grant through their organization. Unfortunately, it is something like \$250,000. It is a start. It would help pay for some of the incidental expenses and engineering expenses.

At any rate, I think you are correct Mayor. I think Public Education is something that needs to start happening on a regular basis.

Mayor Seitter: It is hard to see this happening without higher utility rates.

Mr. Mitchell: During a meeting with USDA, which is a Rural Development Group, we got into a debate, one gentleman told us that our utility rates are very low. In order for us to qualify for this particular program our base water rate will need to be above \$45.00.

There was discussion as to what we charge at this time. It was noted that we are currently doing a rate survey. Speculation was that our base water rate is about \$18.00.

Mr. Mitchell: We are almost half way there. My debate with USDA continued and I reported that we only have 1400 customers. Even if we tripled our rate we would still come up short.

Mayor Seitter: The other thing we were talking about, is there the possibility, over time, that we can lower the amount that this is going to cost?

Mr. Mitchell: If we continue to monitor the nitrate levels and can provide evidence that the nitrate levels are declining, then there might be a way of downsizing or reducing the size of the plant. I think we will still have to have some sort of treatment facility.

Mr. Mitchell discussed the possibility of packaged plants or pr-engineered plants if we could downsize some.

Mayor Seitter: That was the comment I wanted to make. We need to get this out to the community and let them start hearing about this so maybe we lessen the sticker shock some. We have a year and half to let people know and we do not want someone to say that they did not hear about this.

13. City Manger Comments:

Mr. Mitchell: I have a letter from the Chamber of Commerce. Mayor Seitter and I have talked with the Chamber about moving into the new City Hall and I think they are very excited about the idea. They had ideas and suggestion as to how we could sell the existing property once they get moved. Details would for certain need to be worked out.

The other comment I have, as we have a vacancy in the Police Chief's position, I have asked Oklahoma Municipal Management Services (OMMS) to send me a proposal for them to do the recruitment for that position. That process would include, not only posting and advertising the position and developing a job description for the position, but they actually have an interview panel comprised of law enforcement officials to conduct the interviews. Then they will make recommendations to the Council. They will not necessarily tell us who to hire, but they give a ranking or a profile and give Council a list with their recommendations and who the leading candidate would be. Then, obviously, it would be up to the Council follow up with a second interview or a final interview. But, OMMS is going to send me the proposal, hopefully in the next week or two. I do not know yet what that would cost. I know when you hire consultants or hiring groups to help cities hire city managers, for example, those fees can be anywhere from \$15,000 to \$25,000. I would guess that this is probably going to be less, it might be closer to \$8,000 to \$10,000? Once I get a proposal, I will share it with you.

Earlier, at the start of our meeting, we had discussion about the situation with our canine program. I would like to ask Council for a very quick Council Meeting, 10 or 15 minutes, maybe Friday, to take some sort of formal action, whether by resolution or by just simple motion, to retire our Canine Officer and assign that dog somewhere.

There was some discussion among the Council about a day an time and who might be available.

Mayor Seitter officially announced a Special Council Meeting for Friday June 18, 2021 at 3:00 PM.

14. **Adjourn:**

Motion to adjourn was made by Travis Bradt and seconded by Allen Cowan.

Mayor Bill Seitter, hearing no further discussion, called for a vote:

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye Mayor Bill Seitter aye.

Motion carried at 8:04 PM.

Mayor Bill Seitter

City Clerk, Verlen Bills

Notice:

Governor Stitt ended the State's COVID-19 Emergency effective May 4, 2021. The amendments to the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act will be allowed to “sunset” 30 days hence. So, after June 3, 2021 we will revert back to the Open Meeting Act (less the emergency amendments) and Council Members must be present in person.