



## **Minutes for the City of Mount Rainier Maryland Mayor & Council Work-Session**

**Date: May 1, 2012**

**Place: One Municipal Place, Mount Rainier MD 20712**

**Presiding officer: Mayor Malinda Miles**

**Councilmember's present: Brent Bolin, William Updike, Jimmy Tarlau and Ivy Thompson**

**Councilmember's absent: N/A**

**Staff present:**

**City Manager Jeannelle Wallace and City Treasurer Vijay Manjani**

**Councilman Tarlau:**

**Is the CIP money not part of the 1<sup>st</sup> read?**

**Treasurer VJ Manjani**

**The CIP is tentative.**

**Mayor Miles:**

**Let's talk about CDBG Community Development. At our last discussion we had the discussion about getting Mount Rainier included in the upcoming next three years of funding or applying for funding. There is no possibility for us to go with the state Mayor Miles, County Councilman Will Campos and Alonzo Washington met with Director Eric Brown to discuss Mount Rainier inclusion in the upcoming round of funding. It's the Mayor's understanding based on information provided and the signed letter presented that there should not be a problem for Mount Rainier being included in the package for the upcoming three years. I need Mr. Jackson to supply me with the document and I need Mayor and Council to take an action that will vote to approve Mount Rainier participating in the next round of funding for CDBG. After the work-session we need to take that vote.**

**Councilman Bolin:**

**Did we get something in writing?**

**Mayor Miles:**

**No, but I trust what they said.**

**There are concerns about the current leadership of the Gateway CDC for the Art District about funding to them it's not off the table. When discussions resume Mount Rainier, Brentwood and North Brentwood should have a seat at the table. I send thanks to the Better Block Project it was well done.**

**Budget**

**Please see the attached proposed budget.**

**At 1.58 tax rate we are in comparison with two other cities which are Greenbelt and Morningside.**

**City Manager:**

There has also been discussion about raising our tax rate to be even with the constant yield rate and right now we are lower.

**Treasurer Mr. Manjani:**

Mr. Manjani talks about the changes made to the budget. Pg. 55 line 6482 it went down \$17,500.00 in the equipment purchase that is reduced in the MRTV line.

**Chief Scott:**

We need to replace two 2007 cars. These cars have exceeded 100,000 miles and are requiring a lot of work. We can keep them for at least another year if we have to wait. The chief prefers people over things and doesn't want to lose any positions in his department. I am willing to hold off on equipment and we provide a high level of service to the residents.

**Councilman Tarlau:**

Let's take a look at delaying your vacancy for six months that would save ½ of salaries in overhead. Is that something you can live with?

**Chief Scott:**

Yes, we can live with that.

**Councilman Updike:**

We are talking an officer in the field versus an administration person which an officer would be some value to the community.

Chief Scott explains the necessity of the administrative staff.

**Councilman Updike:**

I thought that 3<sup>rd</sup> position was relatively new so how were you managing the legally reporting required before that position?

**Chief Scott:**

It was a combination of other people doing them.

Mayor Miles says some of that work has been contracted out.

Chief Scott says all of the police reports are on time now.

Councilman Bolin's position is officers on the ground before evening position at the Police Department.

**Chief Scott:**

Anything below 16 officers we will have to cut services.

**Councilwoman Thompson:**

The 16 officers would be your choice to keep all of your current positions.

**Chief Scott:**

Yes, and ½ of a couple of the salaries can come out of speed camera money.

Councilwoman Thompson: says the speed camera money has dwindled.

**Treasurer Mr. Manjani:**

The salaries come out of that money and that's how it's reported to the state. This is the speed camera revenue.

**Councilman Updike:**

We have a structural deficit and we have to figure out somewhere to cut.

**Treasurer Mr. Manjani:**

We won't have to give the state speed camera revenue any more because that's 10% out of our budget.

**Councilman Tarlau:**

If we don't fill a police officer position what will it save for 6 months?

**Treasurer Mr. Manjani:**

That position will save about \$32,500.00 and for the entire year approximately \$67,000.00 and we can get through this fiscal year the way we are without raising taxes if we make some of the cuts now that are being recommended.

**Councilman Updike:**

Structurally we have to cut two positions to cover the deficit or find \$150,000.00 in a budget that doesn't have it. We can get through another year by but it will have to happen. I am not in favor of keeping the station open at night versus boots on the ground.

**Councilman Tarlau:**

I am against laying off an employee this year. I'd rather not fill a vacancy and put a freeze on filling any positions this year unless it's approved by the council. Reduce the CIP taking money out of reserves and figure out next year what we will do structurally.

**Councilwoman Thompson:**

I am not in favor of not filling an officer position. I'm in support of taking money out of reserves and raising taxes now instead of waiting a year. In order for us to maintain the level of services we have now we need to raise taxes.

**Councilman Bolin:**

I'm not in favor of raising taxes and if we do then we have to cut positions, I see a lot of expenditures in the future and not a lot of reserves. We are not going to get there raising taxes two cents and not lay anybody off. I don't feel we should fill vacancy at the police department.

Mayor Miles agrees with not filling vacancy. I feel the administration night position at the police department needs to be there and I'm not for raising taxes this year. We don't have any reserves and we won't fill the position at the police department and no position should be filled without coming before the Mayor and Council.

The police contract is coming up and we to make decisions on how to finance that. My understanding is that once hired after six months they move to next level with a raise.

**Chief Scott:**

No, the next will be promotions.

**Councilman Tarlau:**

I feel negotiations should be revenue neutral.

**Chief Scott:**

My staff would prefer a furlough rather than laying off people.

**Councilman Bolin:**

A 1% cut in each department is one penny tax rate and I'm not in favor of raising taxes. We can't spend any more money from reserves. We need to hold on to that and do the cutting.

**Councilman Tarlau:**

We should look at 5% cut in departments across the board.

**City Manager:**

We have cut expenditures back to the 2010 level and that's realistic because our expenditures have not gone down.

**Treasurer Mr. Manjani:**

If you factor in some of the things we could do without our revenues every year have decreased. If we keep the tax rate at .79 cents we won't get the property tax revenue we got this year because that will drop. When you are lower than you constant yield you are lowering your revenue by that amount. We won't get the property tax revenue which is the biggest chunk of our revenue we won't get that in 2013. It's a bare bones budget.

**Councilman Bolin:**

I feel I don't have enough information in front of me to make a decision.

Mayor Miles says that the city will survive without doing anything to the CIP.

**Councilman Updike:**

I oppose to not putting something in the CIP.

Councilwoman Thompson says \$50,000.00 won't address the minor issues we have.

**Councilman Updike:**

Mr. Updike is in favor of money for the C.I.P.

**Councilman Tarlau:**

I suggest we zero out of the CIP and if there is something that has to be done than have a special session and vote on it. Eliminate the position in the police department and fill no vacancy and the other take out of the reserves.

**Mayor Miles:**

May I get a straw vote on approving the budget with the caveat of zero in the capitol improvement plan and don't fill the police department vacancy and have a special meeting if money has to be moved from the reserves.

**Councilman Tarlau:**

I want to make a decision in the context of future years.

**Councilman Updike:**

I would like to see future projection as well and I want to know what one cent would cost a household versus keeping the administrative position at the police department and eliminating the code officer position.

**Treasurer Mr. Manjani:**

**We can give projections but every year something is gone; some revenue we get is gone. Time is uncertain.**

**Councilman Tarlau:**

**I would like for us to look at the city tax credits.**

**Councilman Updike:**

**You can do a worst case scenario and it will be helpful for us.**

**Treasurer Mr. Manjani:**

**The tax credit goes to resident making less than \$60,000.00 a year. We give 10% of what the state gives.**

**Mayor Miles:**

**This tax credit goes to the neediest in our city and raising the taxes will hurt a lot.**

**Councilwoman Thompson would like to see money in the capitol improvement plan but the CIP budget is off the table and would like the Council provide with years of projections.**

**Councilman Bolin:**

**Based on what's been decided what is the consequence of one or two cents and in 2014 the same?**

**Mayor Miles:**

**What is the cost of cutting the code enforcement position?**

**Treasurer Mr. Manjani:**

**The code enforcement position is about \$55-57,000.00 with benefits.**

**Mayor Miles:**

**What does code enforcement generate?**

**Treasurer Mr. Manjani:**

**In 2011 we received actual money of \$43,572.00**

**Code violations were \$2,233.00**

**Abatement services \$2315.00**

**Liens increased 20,000.00**

**Councilman Tarlau stresses he does not want to eliminate a position.**

**Councilman Bolin wants the position cut.**

**Councilwoman Thompson is not in favor of losing a code officer position.**

**Code Enforcement stays in.**

**Councilman Bolin:**

**If we're not cutting code enforcement then where is that money coming from?**

**Councilman Updike:**

**When Mr. Manjani does the projections do we leave the officer position out for a year?**

**Councilwoman Thompson:**

**We would see 15-18 positions from the police department in the projections.**

**Councilman Bolin:**

**I feel there is significant need for a capitol improvement plan.**

**Mayor Miles:**

**Before we can get to closure on the budget we need to get the projections and where we go in future years. Mr. Manjani says he will send the projections in five days and we will converse and decide whether to do things differently.**

**Motion to adjourn**

**Councilman Updike**

**Second Councilwoman Thompson**

**Vote 4-0**











