REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

June 19, 2019

Officials in Attendance: Mayor Dorothy Knauss; Councilmen Payton Norvell, John May, Evan Schalock and John Wight; Councilwomen Nicole Norvell, Cori Wuesthoff and Carra Nupp

Staff Present: City Administrator Mike Frizzell, City Attorney Mike Waters, Clerk/Treasurer Pamela McCart

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Audience Comments: None

Approval of/Changes to Proposed Agenda:
Mayor requested the addition of "Personnel Discussion" under New Business. Motion by Councilman Norvell to approve agenda as amended, seconded by Councilman Schalock. Roll call vote taken with all in favor. Motion carried.

Announcements/Appointments (including):
- Mandatory training on public records will be held on June 24 and 25th for City employees.

Presentation: None

Executive Session:
At 6:32 the Mayor announced that the Council would go into executive session for ten minutes to discuss litigation. At 6:42 the Mayor called the meeting back to order.

Committee/Commission Reports:
- Finance, Councilman Norvell: Met with Chief Burrows – may be looking at a budget amendment in the near future for items he would like to purchase.

City Administrator Report:
- The public records policy as listed on the agenda is not ready yet – will have for July meeting.

City Attorney Report: None

Old Business: None

New Business:
The Mayor stated that last week she had been approached by C/A Mike Frizzell requesting that he be allowed to step down into a Public Works Director position. I agreed to that. (The City did have a public works director at one point). This left us with the dilemma of what to do. I totally, heartily recommend that we do not hire another city administrator. (Since 1986, the City has hired seven city administrators.) There a couple of reasons why I feel this way: 1) with only 2.5 years left in my term I feel it is unfair to bring someone in that the next mayor may not like; 2) a city administrator needs to be well trained in finance/budget/administration and public works. Past city administrators have been knowledgeable in one area but not both. Mike is the only one who has known both; and 3) my proposal would take the politics out -- I'm going to recommend a new position which will not be a political position, so I probably won't ever have to hear 'I want to run for mayor because I want to fire someone'.

Mike and I reviewed the current city administrator job description and that of the previous executive secretary and came up with duties for an Administrative Assistant to the mayor.
Mike would then handle everything out in the field -- working with the engineers and those projects just like he’s done. I’m going to have to step in and handle some items for the next 2.5 years until I can train this person to be an administrative assistant to any mayor. The draft job descriptions for Public Works Director and Administrative Assistant have plenty of latitude to require them to do whatever a mayor directs. The primary responsibility of the Administrative Assistant would be to serve as the public records officer. We are required by law to train that person. I would immediately get that person into training. That person would be completely responsible for keeping track of all the public records . . . I think since the first of this year Mike has spent 60% of his time on public records requests. This position’s secondary responsibility would be taking over some human resource issues.

Mike and I took the AWC salary data for cities and towns -- the category size council had picked for everyone else -- and we calculated 85% of those amounts for these positions. The Public Works Director base wage would be $6,524.60 (37.64/hour) and the Administrative Assistant base wage would be $3,751.05 ($21.64/hour). The annual budgetary effect would net savings to each of the four utilities but net a cost to the current expense. The draft organizational chart shows everyone answering to the mayor with the public works staff under the Public Works Director. The Electric department doesn’t change. The Administrative Assistant would not supervise anyone and would not make any decisions on his/her own -- but in 2.5 years I feel I can bring that person to a place where he/she would understand how to work under any mayor. Neither of these positions would serve at the pleasure of the mayor -- we deliberately took that out. The number of employees would stay the same because Mike would basically be replacing Gary Nussbaum but in a higher capacity.

The Mayor stated that council establishes positions, but it is up to the mayor to fill those positions. She stated that a current employee is interested in the administrative position and is well qualified. I am committed to do what I need to in order to make these transitions work. It should work for us that same as it does for Colville, whose population is double. And I hope the transition would work with any mayor no matter how much time he/she spends in the office.

The C/A stated that existing public work employees are not qualified for the director position. The WWTP requires a Group III certification -- only Robin and I have this, and Robin has been out for over five months. A Level II water distribution manager certification is also required, and I have been that person for the last eight years. It recently became a requirement to have an in-house CDL trainer and I just received that certification last week. I will also act as back-up public records officer because of the experience I’ve acquired. I will be taking all the public works engineering projects with me -- that is where those duties really belong. You wouldn’t be dumping a full C/A workload onto the Administrative Assistant.

Motion by Councilman May to establish positions of Public Works Director and Administrative Assistant, seconded by Councilman Schalock. Roll call vote taken with Councilwomen Wuesthoff and Nupp voting against, remaining votes in favor. Motion carried.

Adjournment:
At 7:09 PM, motion by Councilwoman Nupp to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Norvell. Roll call vote taken with all in favor. Motion carried.

Mayor Dorothy L. Knauss

Clerk/Treasurer Pamela McCart