

UNION GAP CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING
Council Chambers, City Hall
Union Gap, Washington
November 26, 2007

- Call to Order Mayor Reeves called the Study Session Meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.
- Council Members Present Council Members Jim Lemon, David Butler (6:04 p.m.), Dan Olson (6:03 p.m.), Glenn Bateman, Dan Vanover, and Roger Wentz were present.
- Staff Present Robert Noe, City Attorney; Dennis Henne, Public Works Director; William Rathbone, Development Coordinator; Robert Almeida, Police Chief; Tim Whitehurst, Interim Fire Chief; Karen Clifton, City Treasurer; and Kathryn Thompson, City Clerk were present.
- Audience Present Ken Mehin, Phil Salzman, John Hodkinson, James & Michael Murr, Stephanie Korn, Dave & Debbie Matson, and others were present.
- 2008 Budget Mayor Reeves asked if the Council has any questions or discussion regarding the 2008 Budget.
- Council Member Olson commented the Council just received updated pages and he has not had a chance to read them, but he did notice the budget message has been updated to match the budget now.
- Council Member Wentz stated that is why he asked for a three or four-hour budget review session.
- Council Member Olson stated he would still like a replacement schedule and report showing the mileage on all the police cars. He stated we have 7 new vehicles and the department wants 2 more next year, but the reserve fund only has \$52,364. He questioned what money will be used for emergency repairs if the reserve money is spent for more cars, and questioned how the 5 cars on lease will be paid for if the three tenths of a percent sales tax money runs out.
- Mayor Reeves stated the first 5 cars are on lease, 1 car was purchased from the general budget and 1 car was purchased with the three tenths of a percent sales tax money.
- The Police Chief stated as the vehicles age, money should be put in the reserve fund to replace them, but there has not been enough money to put more in reserves. He informed the Tacoma study presented to the Council last May indicated that 50,000 miles on a patrol car is the same as 150,000 on a normal car.
- Council Member Wentz questioned how many years it would take to have 50,000 miles on a police car.
- The Police Chief stated the take home vehicle policy is too new to tell what the yearly mileage will be, but they are estimating about 12,000 miles a year per vehicle. He stated some of the officers live close to Union Gap and some live further away. He stated the department recently purchased 5 Crown Vic's and 2 Chevy Impalas. The 5 Crown Vic's helped implement the take home vehicle policy, but did not replace any of the pool vehicles and since the pool vehicles were on the road 24/7 the department still needs to replace 2 cars every year for the next several years.
- Council Member Wentz stated having the funds available to replace vehicles every year is a concern because there has not been long term planning and building of reserves.

The Police Chief agreed there needs to be money in reserves and informed the three tenths of a percent sales tax money is covering the lease payments and purchased one vehicle because it was a new program, but the three tenths money cannot be used to replace pool vehicles. He stated next year the three-tenths money will still pay for the leased vehicles, but money needs to be placed in reserves to cover 2009.

Council Member Olson questioned why money is not set aside in reserves in the 2008 Budget.

The Police Chief stated 2 new cars is approximately \$85,000 and there was no money to put into reserves.

Council Member Lemon questioned if the City can afford the take home vehicle program.

The Police Chief stated that is up to the Council, but the program has already started and there will be less maintenance cost than with pool cars and the cars should last longer.

Council Member Wentz questioned how many cars need to be in the take home vehicle program.

Mayor Reeves stated there are 18 commissioned officers.

The Police Chief stated there is a 2003 and a 2004 that need replacement and if 2 new cars are added every year the cars would need to last 9 years.

Mayor Reeves stated the City needs about \$100,000 every year for police vehicles.

Council Member Lemon questioned how many pool vehicles the City had.

The Police Chief stated we had 6 pool patrol cars.

Council Member Vanover commented that he agrees that there needs to be a reserve account, but the reality of the situation is that there is never anything left to build a reserve fund with.

Council Member Olson commented the cars assigned to the Chief and the two detectives should last a lot longer than the other vehicles.

The Police Chief stated there is a 10-year replacement on those vehicles.

Council Member Wentz questioned what will prevent the City from having to replace all 5 lease vehicles at the same time.

The Police Chief stated mileage and maintenance records will determine replacement.

Council Member Olson commented he appreciates receiving the take home vehicle policy, but he would like to add that the oil be checked at the beginning of every shift.

The Police Chief stated that is understood, but could be written out. He informed the sergeants will be checking all vehicles quarterly as well.

Council Member Olson stated the Council will have to take a hard look at the take home policy if the City runs into budget problems because it may take two or three years to evaluate. He also requested a report on the status of the

Discuss Agreement
with City of Yakima
for Transit Service

vehicles every year before budget time.

The Public Works Director distributed the draft agreement and apologized for the draft agreement not being in the packet. He stated this two year agreement is being proposed to provide a seamless transition from the existing system provided by the CMAQ grant. He informed there is a 120-day termination clause because of the number of buses and employees involved with providing this service.

Council Member Olson questioned the cost of \$500,000 for 12 months since the current program was \$209,000 for 6 months. He stated the Council has no idea how fair the price is and commented it appears the price is based on the estimated revenue of \$600,000.

Council Member Vanover commented the cost of the bus service should be a fixed amount and not relevant to what the City anticipates receiving in sales tax revenue.

The Public Works Director informed the cost per hour per bus is \$66 including insurance, employee costs, back up buses, etc. and the City can adjust the total price by changing the number of hours the buses are on the road.

Council Member Wentz commented it will cost \$143,000 to provide the extra peak hour bus service and questioned if the ridership shows that this is necessary.

Ken Mehin, Yakima Transit Manager, stated with the peak hour extra bus service a bus will come by every ½ hour, but without the extra service people will have to wait 1 hour for a bus. He stated people using the bus to get to and from work will not want to wait 1 hour for a bus. He also explained the cost of the 6-month program was \$214,000 but did not include dial a ride and Saturday service. He stated dial a ride usage usually starts out slow and increases so 20 percent is estimated as the maximum payout.

Council Member Olson stated he would like a breakdown of where the passengers get on and off the buses because he watches the buses on Main Street and South 10th Avenue and no one is on the bus.

Mr. Mehin distributed handouts showing the ridership for July through October 2007, and stated he can obtain information as to where the riders are getting on and off the buses.

Council Member Wentz questioned if there is federal money to offset the cost of the route, and stated he did not remember this service being projected to be this expensive.

Mr. Mehin informed the federal money has already been taken out of the total, and informed the proposed service is almost 2 buses per day instead of 1 bus.

The Public Works Director informed staff would like to place the final agreement on the December 10th agenda for approval.

Council Member Vanover questioned how the City will pay for the service the first three months of next year because the sales tax revenue will not be received until later.

Mr. Mehin informed Yakima will work with Union Gap and commented Yakima has still not received the money from the grant that is paying for the current bus service. He stated Yakima will bill Union Gap, but Yakima knows it won't be paid until April and there will be no interest or penalties.

Council Member Vanover stated he would like to see that language in the agreement.

The Public Works Director stated January service will be billed in mid February and won't even be due until mid March so we won't really be behind.

Council Member Olson stated he would like to adopt a 6-month agreement and advertise for proposals for bus service.

Council Member Lemon stated the City could adopt a 2 year agreement and still advertise for proposals because there is a 120 day cancellation clause.

Adjournment

After discussion, Mayor Reeves adjourned the Study Session meeting at 6:58 p.m.

These minutes dated November 26, 2007 were approved at the Regular Council Meeting of December 10, 2007.

ATTEST:

Aubrey C. Reeves, Jr.
Mayor

Kathryn Thompson, CMC
City Clerk