

CITY OF POCA TELLO, IDAHO  
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
BUDGET RESTRUCTURING  
FEBRUARY 11, 2016

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AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: The City Council Budget Restructuring meeting was called to ROLL CALL order at 12:55 p.m. by Mayor Brian Blad. Council members present were Roger Bray, Steve Brown, Craig Cooper, Jim Johnston, Gary Moore and Michael L. Orr.

Mayor Blad announced that Council will review the Department presentations dated September 3, 2015 thru January 21, 2016. The presentations included the following information: 1. Employees; 2. Total Budget; 3. Activity or service the department provides; 4. Percentage of city services supported by taxes and percentage that are supported by user fees; 5. Ideas to increase city revenues; and 6. Future needs. The presentations were discussed. No vote or formal action was taken.

General Discussion followed regarding the following topics:

LIBRARY - The Library is essential, but perhaps the hours of operation could be cut back. Creation of a library district could be an option. It was mentioned creation of a library district would have to come before the community as a vote. Although tax payers are still paying the expense, the City would no longer oversee the costs.

CITY SERVICES - Are there some things the City needs to get out of the business of providing? This choice is difficult to determine. Council was reminded that the Zoo was once on the table to determine if it should be closed. Now major improvements are being done at the Zoo.

Require individuals to pay for City services they receive. Staff will need to evaluate what is being charged for services in other cities to remain competitive. Department presentations have shown that staff is tracking the actual costs of service. Some citizens may feel their property taxes should cover the costs and not be charged additional fees.

CITY PARKS – How many parks does the City have in the Park System? What are the benefits and costs for having parks?

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT - To begin the Fiscal Year 2017 budget, Council will need to determine what anticipated revenues will be and set the budget accordingly. It was suggested that departments develop a “flat” budget while waiting for the final revenue figures. Any payroll increase and/or health benefit increase will be adjusted for each department during Council’s meetings to establish the budget.

It was mentioned that in order to keep City services where they currently are, Council may need to increase property tax. As outlined in the February 11, 2016 Study Session, Finance staff is unable to make further adjustments because the City is at the maximum allowed for levying property tax as set by the State of Idaho. Options to move funds to other categories in order use a different taxing authority were shared. The special budgeting needs for Fiscal Year 2016 were reviewed. As a result of these special budgeting measures the issues with Fiscal Year 2017 exist.

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Joyce Stroschein, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer explained there is not enough of a balance in property taxes to levy or in the foregone balance to equal the City's need for Fiscal Year 2017. She noted that the exemption for home owners may increase and this will cause an additional decrease in available taxes.

General discussion continued regarding the general fund and property tax increases taken over the period of 2006 to 2011.

SUGGESTED COST SAVINGS IDEAS – a) Have one vendor for each of the following expenses: cell phone coverage, cleaning services, motor pool with a central supply that will provide tires and other materials, and a clothing contract. Departments were encouraged to consider researching these types of cost saving measures; b) School Resource Officer wages being paid by School District No. 25; c) Look at reduction of work force in a measured and very intentionally oriented way; and d) be aware of what funds a department utilizes to make sure it decreases the expense where needed.

Mayor Blad and Ms. Stroschein will follow-up on the discussion ideas and report back to the Council.

There being no further business, Mayor Blad adjourned the meeting at 1:49 p.m.

APPROVED BY:

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BRIAN C. BLAD, MAYOR

ATTEST AND PREPARED BY:

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RUTH E. WHITWORTH, CITY CLERK