

PUBLIC HEARING

The Town Council of the Town of Weber City met for a special meeting at **6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 18, 2024**. For the purpose of holding a Public Hearing on Proposed Budget FY2024-2025. The meeting was held in the assembly room of the Weber City Town Hall.

PRESENT:

Mayor: Justin Addington
 Vice Mayor: (Vacant)
 Town Attorney: Michael Carrico
 Council Member: Eileen Deckard
 Council Member: Jeff Flanary
 Council Member: Zackary Salyer (working out of town – joined via phone)
 Council Member: Teresa Tilson
 Council Member: Wendell Tipton
 Others: Donald Harding, III – Police Chief, Penney Capps – Clerk, Frank Tittle – Public Works

ABSENT:

Treasurer – Rhonda Neeley (medical leave)

Mayor Justin Addington called the Public Hearing to order at 6:30 p.m. Mayor Addington opened the floor to discuss the Proposed Budget for FY24-25. Town Attorney Mike Carrico, explained to the public present that this is an opportunity for them to ask questions regarding Proposed Budget items, also for the Council to discuss the Proposed Budget with each other.

Council member, Jeff Flanary, asked if the figures reflect the delinquent Property Tax Due as well. The finance committee answered that if any Delinquent Property Taxes are paid within the next FY, they will be applied to the General Fund. There are no expenses earmarked to be paid with those funds, since it is impossible to know if they will be received. (Currently the Delinquent Property Tax amounts are: 2023 - \$4,116.49, and all other remaining years 2012-2022 total \$20,578.47)

Town Attorney, Mike Carrico, encouraged the Council to look at the numbers proposed for Public Works. Specifically, equipment that is needed. Tonight, council received estimates for a dump-trailer needed for daily use by Public Works, and the new budget did not appear to allow for that cost. Council member, Teresa Tilson, explained that there are funds still available in the FY23-24 budget for the purchase of the equipment needed. These funds were included in the Public Works/Street budget, for the cost of Trash removal, but with the Council vote in November 2023 to no longer provide trash removal as a Town service, the funds are still there.

Council member, Eileen Deckard, asked if the FY24-25 Budget has been properly reviewed with the Town Treasurer even though she is currently on medical leave, stating that the Town cannot adopt a budget without a Treasurer. Council, and Finance Committee Member, Teresa Tilson, explained that the budget numbers were mostly

compiled from a Draft Budget that the Treasurer provided in April before going on medical leave May 3rd. It was the Committee's understanding that she would be unable to legally do work for the Town during the medical leave. However, Council and Finance Committee member, Wendell Tipton, stated that he had communicated with the Treasurer, Rhonda Neeley, regarding these numbers, although not in person. He stated that she was willing to answer questions and help with anything that they needed and that she was provided the same information that the Council has before them tonight.

Jeff Flanary asked if there are any excess funds from the current budget that will be transferred to the new FY24-25 budget to make available for use in the future. That question cannot be answered fully until the end of June and finalization of all expenses. Wendell Tipton went on further to explain that figures in the Grants categories are conservative estimates, since some grant funding has not been awarded yet. And Court Collections income has been reduced to a conservative level since the court system is still backed up, and it is unknown when certain cases will be completed to collect those funds. Attorney, Mike Carrico, stated that it may even be less to expect because the law is changing, not requiring persons who receive government income to pay fines.

Council member, Teresa Tilson, asked if the remaining ARPA funds was included in this budget proposal. It is not. Since those funds are generally used for special projects, and restricted for certain uses, those remaining funds are not included in the FY24-25 budget.

Jeff Flanary asked how many officers are included in the Police Department budget. The answer is: 4 full time officers

There were some questions regarding the \$20,000 for Contracted Services in the Police Department budget. The majority of that cost is from the Scott County Commonwealth Attorney's office and the contract for the Scott's Works Program.

Those present in the audience were asked if they had any questions to ask the Council regarding the budget. There were none.

Mike Carrico asked the Council if they had any additional questions before the hearing ends. Council member, Zackary Salyer, had a question regarding the previous vote for the Town Clerk to be working for the Police Department, up to 50% of the time, and how that is reflected in the budget. He thought a grant was available to fund that cost. Police Chief Harding said there is no grant for that purpose. Mike Carrico spoke of a program through MEOC that will place, and pay for, office personnel up to \$12.00/hour for the Police Department, or non-profit agency.

Zackary Salyer also asked if the Utilities category contained enough due to projected rate increases for electric, water, etc.

Public comment was received from, Connie Tipton, asking if the Town could hire additional help for the office in the absence of personnel on medical leave. It was

explained that the Town has a part-time employee who is available when needed, and that in the past, the Town Clerk was able to handle all business that was presented in the office. It has only been in recent years to have a Town Treasurer.

She also asked if there has been any discussion for a raise for the Council members to receive for services. Teresa Tilson stated that the Town Charter stated that there was a maximum amount of \$75.00 per month that could be issued to the Council and would require a vote and meeting to change any of that.

Connie Tipton also asked the Council if they ever saw an opportunity in the future to reinstate trash services for the town citizens. Mayor Justin Addington, said that he has been in recent discussions with Gate City's Mayor, and our new Public Works department, to come up with a plan to offer trash service at a discounted price than what residents are paying now through independent vendors.

Final comments from the Finance Committee regarding the budget acknowledged that the Town has not had to borrow money to keep going, and most towns do. So it is a nod to the conservative nature the way business is handled by the Council and Town employees.

Mayor Justin Addington stated that it is time to move on to the scheduled Regular Town Meeting that was to begin at 7:00 pm, so he transitioned the meeting directly to the Regular Meeting by calling it into order at 7:00 pm. (no adjournment was necessary).

Mayor – Justin Addington

Town Clerk – Penney C. Capps