

**CITY OF WINTERS
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING BUDGET MINUTES
Monday, August 23, 5:30 p.m.
Council Chambers, City Hall 310 S. Main, Winters, Texas**

*** NOTE: D/A on this agenda stands for Discussion/Action**

Call meeting to order. Mayor Lisa Yates called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Quorum check.

Present: Mayor Lisa Yates

**City Attorney Ken Slimp
Aldерwoman Sandee Schneider
Alderman Mark Burkhart
Aldерwoman Ursula Estrada
Alderman Stephen Joeris
Alderman Clayton Woffenden**

Agenda Item # 1: D/A on accepting 2021-2022 proposed budget: “A”, “B” or “C”.

Mayor Yates opened the discussion stating that there were additional options for the budget as there had been requests for additional numbers since the agreed upon numbers of the Budget Workshop. Budget “A” shows a 3% raise across the board with no additional police officers, this was the budget numbers agreed upon in the budget workshop. Budget “B” showed a 5% raise across the board with no additional police officers and Budget “C” showed a 5% raise across the board with one additional police officer. Mayor Yates commented that the council had unanimously voted years prior that the annual pay raise increase would be 3% and once raised from 3% to 5% she did not see that percentage going down in years to come. All budgets include the Christmas bonuses of \$500 for full time staff and \$200 bonuses for part-time employees. Mayor Yates pointed out that Budget “C” requiring additional staff for the PD was requested and worked into the budget on short notice after being denied in workshop. Alderman Burkhart stated he had no exceptions on the raise but did ask if Christmas bonuses had always been a part of the benefits package, to which the answer was yes, they had. He also inquired of Chief Geyer if the inclusion of a new officer would include an additional vehicle or if we already have one for their use. Chief Geyer stated, “we have two extra vehicles”. Sgt. Laramie Stone stated that the department already has the software needed for the vehicle as well. Again, Alderman Burkhart asked for confirmation that an additional officer would use existing vehicle and equipment, Chief Geyer confirmed. Mayor Yates asked if anyone else had any questions or comments, there were none. She shared concern for being caught off guard for request of additional officer and on short notice as no member of PD showed for the workshop. She further stated that it gave very little time to consider what funds we have to work with and where the money would come from if

decided that it needs to be spent. Mayor Yates stated that there had been talk of grant money that was being deposited into the city's account and that could cover the pay and overtime; the grant money referred to is the same money that is accounted for under the American Rescue Plan, and it is already accounted for and cannot be spent for salaries. The procurement has already begun as approved in a previous council meeting and will likely be used for water improvements, sewer improvements and possibly fiber optics and stated that we would be voting in regular meeting tonight on a resolution of procurement services with Public Management. Again, she expressed concerns of being caught off guard with the request for officers when we don't have the money; stating that the numbers she was presented with are of concern as they are about half of what it would take to add a new officer as they do not include benefits, uniforms, equipment, etc. Chief Geyer replied that she added all of that in there, to which Mayor Yates asked if it were closer to \$60,000 - \$70,000? Chief Geyer replied for the first year and states the first year was more costly as you are providing everything is "first-time" for the officer in that year, thereafter, it would be salary and insurance for the officer. Mayor Yates reminded the members of council to be clear of the numbers they would be voting on and whether it would be sustained or not. In conclusion, she stated she was not singling out that department but nothing else had changed since the workshop. Mayor Yates noted that we have not had a population increase and while there has not been a population increase does not mean that crime had not increased and she wished there would have been more data to support the request. Alderwoman Sandee Schneider asked why we needed another officer to which the reply was "we're always short-handed". Chief Geyer replied there are only four officers on the streets plus herself and if someone takes vacation, they're automatically short and the city is automatically paying who ever covers that absence overtime no matter what. She states further that there are always complaints about them going over their overtime budget and since she is generally the one covering, the city is paying her a ton of overtime. Chief Geyer said if they had a fifth officer on the street, they could work a swing and be able to work without any overtime; thus, cutting overtime out. Mayor Yates notes that overtime has been a long-standing issue with WPD and it is a fallacy to say that by hiring an additional officer it would cut overtime as historically that has not been the case and expressed concerns of having the same amount of overtime. Alderman Burkhart agreed and stated that an additional officer would also increase maintenance, fuel costs and such. He asked Chief Geyer if normal number of officers was four or five, her reply was four. She stated that there was a fifth officer, but he was hired by the school and the city did not cover his salary. Mayor Yates stated that once a new officer is hired, she did not see taking it a way. Chief Geyer stated that they have been working 48-72 hour shifts by themselves due to sickness, mandatory training, and such. Comments from Hector Reyna from the community stated concern of no police presence when an officer is having to take someone to jail in Ballinger. He states further that an extra body on the streets would be beneficial. Chief Geyer stated that just because an additional officer was hired did not necessarily mean that there would be two on the streets at one time. Alderman Burkhart stated that adding an additional \$60,000 to the budget the hopes would be that overtime would be reduced; historically throwing money at something doesn't always fix the problem. Chief Geyer said there is no way to budget for overtime; she did not plan on covid, she did not plan on a murder. Alderwoman Sandee Schneider asked if there was no assistance from the Sheriff's department, Chief Geyer stated that the RSCO does not work 24-hour shifts. Officer Tristan Granzin injected that the officers of the WPD are the back-up, which brings up the issue of on-call pay, something they are also looking into now. Hector Reyna from the community, stated that if you are on call, you are entitled to pay. Mayor Yates injected that there are different

laws for overtime pay. Concerns from Sgt. Laramie Stone is that you cannot leave town because you are on call while Officer Granzin also expressed concerns regarding safety issues after completing a 12 hour plus shift then being called back out and working while tired; stating it is not safe for the community or the officer. A question posed from Richard Humphrey asked if there is a federal manning factor for the number of hours a small town are required to work. Mayor Yates reiterated that police presence is necessary, and that over half of our city's budget goes to law enforcement, this is an emotional topic, and that better communication would have afforded better opportunity to make the decision more rationally rather than out of emotion. Mayor Yates stated that there is a lack of communication between the Council and the Department Head. Mayor Yates asked for a roll call vote when approving the budget. Alderman Burkhart expressed concerns of adding another \$60,000 to budget and the overtime still being out of hand and questions where the city will get the money. He also asked Chief Geyer if there was an issue with her department only taking a 3% raise and all other receiving a 5% raise. Chief Geyer stated there would be no issue with her department. Alderman Clayton Woffenden asked if by adding another officer the overtime would be cut. The consensus was that it would be cut but no guarantee on how much. Richard Humphrey asked how the management of the overtime budget is done, asking if it is done by the council to which the mayor answered no. Mr. Humphrey stated that might be the problem. Alderman Clayton Woffenden made a motion to adopt budget "c" adding an additional officer and giving all departments with exception of the street department, a 3% raise across the board. Attorney Ken Slimp informed Mayor Yates that one of these budgets could be accepted with amendments. Alderwoman Sandee Schneider seconded the motion. Mayor Yates at that time called for a roll call vote:

Alderwoman Sandee Schneider, for.

Alderman Stephen Joeris, for.

Alderman Mark Burkhart, for.

Alderman Clayton Woffenden, for.

Alderwoman Ursula Estrada, for.

All in favor. Motion carried.

Agenda item # 2: Adjourn Meeting.

Alderwoman Sandee Schneider made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alderman Stephen Joeris seconded, all in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m. Mayor Yates stated she will wait two minutes before going into the regular meeting.

Attest:



Acting City Secretary,
Sheila Lincoln



Mayor, Lisa Yates