

City Council Meeting
Tuesday, November 26, 2024

Minutes

WORK SESSION

Mayor Watterson convened the works session at 6:29pm.

PRESENT

Councilmember Linda Gotovac

Councilmember Elaine Klamn

Councilmember John O'Callahan

Councilmember Jason Lawton

Councilmember Jeff Eisel

1. 6:30 pm Review of 11/26/2024 Council Agenda

No discussion.

2. Council Priorities

No discussion.

3. Budget Workshop

Mayor Watterson went over the proposed budget changes, expenditure cuts, 2025 campground closure and decreased street fund. Council discussion followed.

4. Discussion of 12/10/2024 Council Draft Agenda

It was discussed that a motion will need to be made to cancel the 2nd Council meeting in December as traditionally done.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Watterson convened the regular council meeting at 7:30pm.

PRESENT

Councilmember Linda Gotovac

Councilmember Elaine Klamn

Councilmember John O'Callahan

Councilmember Jason Lawton

Councilmember Jeff Eisel

5. Flag Salute

AGENDA APPROVAL

November 26, 2024

6. Agenda for the Regular Meeting of the 11/26/24.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion made by Councilmember O'Callahan, Seconded by Councilmember Gotovac.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gotovac, Councilmember Klamn, Councilmember O'Callahan, Councilmember Lawton, Councilmember Eisel

Motion passes 5-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

7. Meeting Minutes for 11/12/2024

Recommended Action: Motion to approve 11/12/2024 meeting minutes as presented.

Motion made by Councilmember Gotovac, Seconded by Councilmember O'Callahan.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gotovac, Councilmember Klamn, Councilmember O'Callahan, Councilmember Lawton, Councilmember Eisel

Motion passes 5-0

CONSENT CALENDAR

8. Consent Calendar for November 13, 2024 through November 26, 2024 consisting of

Payroll EFT's in the amount of \$47,046.94 and Claims checks #32847 through #32865 in the amount of \$203,237.29

for a grand total of \$250,284.23

Void Check #32846 due to EFT not actual Check.

Liquor Cannabis License: None

Recommended Action: Move to approve the consent calendar as presented.

Motion made by Councilmember O'Callahan, Seconded by Councilmember Lawton.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gotovac, Councilmember Klamn, Councilmember O'Callahan, Councilmember Lawton, Councilmember Eisel

Motion passes 5-0

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

November 26, 2024

PRESENTATIONS

9. Tenino VFW On Flag pavilion

Recommended Action: None, presentation only

Michael Scacchi with the VFW presented that the lights have now been installed at the VFW Memorial in the Tenino City Park, allowing for the flags to be flown 24/7. With that brings the questions of who is responsible for maintaining and replacing the flags, poles, etc.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC HEARING

10. 2nd Public Hearing of Proposed 2025 Budget: Expenditures

State law provides that each municipality hold two Public Hearings prior to budget adoption in order to provide the opportunity for input by the Public. Tonight's second hearing will focus primarily upon expenditures.

Recommended action: Move to accept the Administration's recommendations on budget expenditures as presented.

Mayor Watterson went over the rules of holding a public hearing and introduced Clerk Treasurer Scharber who attended virtually to go over the budget numbers with the public and Council. The Council had no questions for C/T Scharber.

The public hearing was open for comment from the public at 7:43pm: Community member Zach Leitzke, 324 Sussex Ave, commented "I'm bored so I am here, I'm just curious how cities operate because businesses seem to be a lot more simple, there's not much deliberation as there is that goes on here but I get why it's necessary, that's why I'm just asking questions like what's a grant writer cost, like that's a person that you guys hire to try and get this type of money. {Mayor Watterson explained the role of the grant writer and how money is allocated for that}. Another question I have is like service work for these fleet vehicles that you have, where's that done at? {Mayor Watterson deferred to the police to answer this}. They had an increase in their budget for that right? {Mayor Watterson explained the increase is due to the vehicles being older and needs more work to maintain}.

No further comments from community members were made. Mayor Watterson closed the public comment period at 7:49pm.

11. 2nd Public Hearing on the proposed 2025 Ad Valorem Tax Levy

Thurston County has provided the Assessed Valuation and Property Tax Worksheet for the purpose of calculating and the Ad Valorem Property Tax for fiscal year 2025. The City will hold

two Public hearings as required by RCW 84.55 on November 12th and 26th and is required to pass a resolution adopting the 2025 property tax by November 30, 2024

Recommended action: Move to accept the second reading and adopt an Ad Valorem Tax Levy using Highest Lawful Levy Procedures that would result in a total increase of \$2,041.97

Mayor Watterson went over the rules of holding a public hearing and introduced Clerk Treasurer Scharber who attended virtually to advise Council and public member of the numbers. The Council had no questions for C/T Scharber.

The public hearing was opened for comment from the public at 7:52pm, hearing none the public comment period was closed at 7:54pm.

PROCLAMATIONS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

RESOLUTIONS

12. Resolution 2024-09 Ad Valorem Tax 2025

A resolution approving the Ad Valorem Tax Levy using Highest Lawful Levy Procedures that would result in a total increase of \$2,041.97

Recommended Action: Motion to approve Ad Valorem Tax for 2025

Motion made by Councilmember Gotovac, Seconded by Councilmember O'Callahan.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gotovac, Councilmember Klamn, Councilmember O'Callahan, Councilmember Lawton, Councilmember Eisel

Motion passes 5-0

13. Resolution 2024-10

A Resolution of the City of Tenino Amending the Adopted 2025 Consolidated Fee Schedule

Recommended Action: Motion to approve Resolution 2024-10

Tabatha Nevy, 396 Sussex Ave, requested to know if utilities will be moving to automatic payments/paperless billing as a way to cut down on postage costs. Mayor Watterson deferred to Utility Clerk Marganelli to answer, she stated the city is actively working to get quotes from the billing system provider to determine if going paperless and allowing autopay is a sustainable option for the City. No quotes have been received as of yet.

Motion made by Councilmember O'Callahan, Seconded by Councilmember Gotovac.
Voting Yea: Councilmember Gotovac, Councilmember Klamn, Councilmember O'Callahan,
Councilmember Lawton, Councilmember Eisel

Motion passes 5-0

ORDINANCES

14. Ordinance 932 Budget Amendment

Recommended Action: Motion to approve first reading of Ordinance 932

Motion made by Councilmember O'Callahan, Seconded by Councilmember Gotovac.
Voting Yea: Councilmember Gotovac, Councilmember Klamn, Councilmember O'Callahan,
Councilmember Lawton, Councilmember Eisel

Motion passes 5-0

15. Ordinance 933 Budget Adoption

Recommended Action: Motion to approve first reading of Ordinance 933

Council Member Eisel commented the beginning balance of \$735,000 is included in the revenues for the year total revenues, this is the general fund of 2.394 million dollars, and we have the expenses of 2.267 million dollars. That \$735,000 beginning balance is money that we've taken from our restricted funds we loaned ourselves, it doesn't actually represent income for the general fund. If we take that out, then we end up with the revenue for the coming year being basically 1.6 million dollars with expenses of 2.2 million dollars. After two years of deficits or three years of deficit spending, were still deficit spending and I don't consider it a responsible budget here to continue deficit spending without even trying to cut our expenses. We've looked at raising taxes, we've raised it by \$7,000 now out of the \$2 million combined debt and deficit that we've been running. I don't think it is wise for us to wait till the first quarter, for three months to start digging into how to cut expenses. All this is doing is increasing the pain and extending it by not dealing with this deficit now with this budget, as we go forward the expenses increase, the insurances increases, the cost of the city increases, the length of time that our services are reduced increases. We need to deal with this deficit sooner rather than later and this budget doesn't address it at all. The mayor to his credit has done a good job cutting the easy stuff and squeezing budgets for our departments, but we're not going to get \$600,000 of revenue we can't guarantee that we're going to get that or come close to it. People talk about grants and maybe you get grants, that's not again a responsible way to fund a city, it's like going to the casino to make your mortgage payment. So I am going to vote no against this and I urge the council in January to sit down and take a close look at how we're going to cut expenses and it's not going to be easy cuts, we've done the easy cuts and Linda you asked me what I would cut and I don't know but to put this in perspective we have to make up \$600,000 on 1.8 million dollars of revenue, it's a full third of our revenue that we need to cut.

Counciler Gotovac stated: It is something we need to work on, yes, and I absolutely agree with you, but we have to pass a balanced budget. It's the law. So, moving on.

Counciler Eisel stated: I'm not moving on yet councilor, I will finish my comments. I have been here all year watching this develop from being undiscovered to oh my god and as the audits came, as the reconciliation of the past three years continued, and the problem got worse and worse, and we found out that we've been illegally withdrawing money from the restricted funds, this council has done nothing. It's almost like sweeping it under the rug, there's been no concern, there's been no questions, the resolutions we passed have had no response, and I have no confidence that by passing this, first thing in the year we're going to take serious discussion at last after a year on how we're going to reduce revenues in the city. That's the only way we're going to do this. That's enough.

Mayor Watterson stated: I respect what you're saying Jeff.

Motion made by Councilmember O'Callahan, Seconded by Councilmember Lawton.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gotovac, Councilmember Klamn, Councilmember O'Callahan, Councilmember Lawton

Voting Nay: Councilmember Eisel

Motion passes 4-1

REPORTS

16. Outside Agency

1) Chamber of Commerce

2) Economic Development Council (EDC)

3) South Thurston Economic Development Initiative (STEDI)

4) ARCH Commission

5) Experience Olympia & Beyond (VCB)

6) Timberland Regional Library

1) Chamber of Commerce: Council member Gotovac reported on behalf of George Sharp- Christmas tree lighting, Friday December 6th 6-7:15pm at Valley View Health Clinic. 6pm band and choir, 6:40pm Tenino motorcycle drill team, 7pm Santa arrives at tree by South Thurston Fire and EMS. Tenino Chamber holiday auction, Friday December 6th, after the tree lighting, at Tenino Eagles.

2) Economic Development Council (EDC): Council member Gotovac reported on behalf of George Sharp- Regional Expo on Thursday, December 5th at the Great Wolf Lodge.

3) South Thurston Economic Development Initiative (STEDI): Council member Gotovac reported on behalf of George Sharp- December 20th 8-9:30pm at Swede Hall in Rochester.

5) Experience Olympia & Beyond (VCB): Mayor Watterson reported during his recent meeting, he was informed there is going to be a change in leadership, he also notified council they have been cut from the city budget.

6) Timberland Regional Library: Linda McKenny, Tenino Timberland Library Manager, reported the Crafternoon for adults' event was a success, next Friday we will have art for elementary age kids, Saturday the 14th will be an intergenerational program called Superstars, December 19th will be another Crafternoon. No story time this Thursday, all non-holiday Thursdays at 10:30 for story time. Books and bites is our adult book club discussion and is taking a break in December, they will be back the last Thursday in January.

17. Committees/Commissions

1) Civil Service Commission

2) Façade Improvement Grant Review Committee

3) Finance Committee

4) Planning Commission

5) Public Safety Committee

6) Public Works Committee

2) Façade Improvement Grant Review Committee: Council member Gotovac reports the gym is getting closer and closer per the owner.

3) Finance Committee: Meeting was cancelled, waiting for audit report. Proposed for December 6th. Mayor Watterson reported we are beginning our 2023 audit; it will be less in-depth as the last one.

4) Planning Commission: Commissioner Carney reported during the last meeting, they discussed a community survey, finalized some questions for that. Just generally seeing where people's attitudes are in the community and what they see as some of the biggest opportunities that we could exploit in the coming years. They also discussed some zoning changes in regard to city owned properties, specifically where the food bank warehouse is located to determine when they best time to do a zoning change on it would be. The planners are working on that and will get back to us on when the best time will be.

18. Staff

1) Chief of Police

2) Director of Public Works

3) Code Enforcement/Building Inspector

4) PARC Specialist

5) Clerk/Treasurer

6) Mayor

1) Chief of Police: Mayor Watterson reported the police have been busy at the schools, there is a pretty big issue with the parking during student pick up.

2) Director of Public Works: Public Works Director Cannon reported they were awarded a grant for TIB for Old Hwy 99 starting at Huston St. They pay 95% of the project and the City pays 5%. We have been out street sweeping and doing maintenance up at the wells.

3) Code Enforcement/Building Inspector: Mayor Watterson reported that Police Clerk Rodriguez has been assisting with the day-to-day stuff, and it seems to be a bigger amount than expected to be.

6) Mayor: Mayor Watterson reported he has spoken with the library told them we are willing to move forward, and they are taking that to the board. He also made contact with the district court and spoke with them about taking over the city court services.

19. Liaisons

1) Bucoda/Tenino Healthy Action Team (BTHAT)

2) Solid Waste Advisory Board

3) TCOMM/911

4) Tenino School Board

5) Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC)

6) Transportation Policy Board

7) Thurston County Commissioner's Office

8) Legislature

1) Bucoda/Tenino Healthy Action Team (BTHAT): Council member Eisel reported the next event is January 30th in Bucoda at 7pm.

2) Solid Waste Advisory Board: Council Member Klamn reported they are meeting next week.

4) Tenino School Board: Council Member Lawton reported winter sports are underway now. A local foundation called 'For the Love' gave out 49 dinners to local families in the school district. Next meeting is December 16th. Council Member Eisel reported the VFW was at the meeting last night, the FFA did cemetery cleanup for the VFW. New Parkside cover is working great.

5) Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC): Council Member O'Callahan reported at the next meeting they will be going over the budget for next year. Member prices are increasing to allow for replacement of computers. He is still bringing up security on the trails during the meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENTS 2

Zach Leitzke, 324 Sussex Ave, commented: Jeff, where did all that money go? Like where did this deficit come from if you guys don't mind elaborating. {Council Member Eisel deferred to Mayor Watterson who reminded everyone in attendance that no response is to be provided during public comment periods, it is strictly and opportunity for members of the community to express concerns and make comment.}

Tabatha Nevy, 396 Sussex Ave, commented: I see that we are definitely in a place of struggle right now. Have we thought about putting together some kind of think tank, like pulling in local businesspeople and community members to kind of sit around a round table and discuss some different ideas for revenue, kind of thinking outside the box and being creative. I think we have a lot of resources in the community that are untapped and not pulled in to be a part of this process so I would like to see more people become a part of that solution. I don't know if that's something that's been brought up.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Happy Thanksgiving!

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Watterson adjourned the meeting at 8:05pm.