

City of Camanche, Iowa

January 14, 2014

The City Council of the City of Camanche, Iowa, met for the purpose of a budget work session January 14, 2014 at 6:00 P.M. at Camanche City Hall. Present on roll call: Mayor Fahlbeck, presiding and the following named council members: Willis, McManus, Lind, Varner, and Wruck. Also present were City Administrator and department heads Houzenga, Schutte, Rickertsen, and Jindrich.

A moment of silence was observed. Mayor Fahlbeck led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Fahlbeck stated he takes the budget process very serious. The complaints received from citizens concerning raising taxes have a lot to do with raises of county and school taxes.

Roth stated this isn't going to be the hardest budget. Over the next 10 years it is going to get worse. There are 900 cities in Iowa and they are all going to be affected.

Rickertsen presented a list that included trucks he would like to purchase, water main that needs to be replaced under the railroad tracks at the 4th Avenue crossing, street sweeping contract and proposed street program. Lind was wondering, if the streets that are to be chip sealed, if there could there be some more explanation given to the residents, i.e. newsletter. Rickertsen stated chip seal is like a band aid. Wruck was wondering if the streets that are chip sealed, could it be done at a different time of the year. Rickertsen stated it would probably be done in May or June when it is warmer. Trevor was wondering if the council could give Rickertsen their blessing for the street sweeper contract. The council all agreed to go ahead with BWC Excavating for street sweeping.

Schutte stated when the fire department went from a basic to a paramedic service; the ambulance billing was to be used to offset the expenses of the third EMS. He has eliminated \$4,500 in expenses from his budget. Under the capital line, that is in anticipation of purchasing defibs. They have been in service from the 1990's. He has applied for a FEMA grant which would provide 95% funding. The goal is to use only 5% of tax dollars. Roth stated he is glad the fire department took over the zoning responsibilities. Rickertsen stated the third firefighter has been a big help to public works – i.e. helping with flow testing. The hydrants are working better because they are checked once a year. Schutte stated this also helps with the ISO rating – flow testing, lubricating.

Houzenga stated there were 6 full time officers in 1980; the seventh one came on in 1992/1993; and he hired the 8th officer in 2010. He hasn't raised anything in his budget. The only items he would like to purchase are \$3,000 for a computer server and \$3,000 for cabinets/work station in dealing with meth cases. As far as training, Iowa law mandates each officer have so much training. Lind stated that people have commented about the dollar amount spent on ammo for training. They think it is excessive. Houzenga stated that the State mandates at least one training day at the range. He likes to do it at least twice. Houzenga also informed the council that the \$80,000 that previously was budgeted for communication consolidation is now being used for that 8th officer. Rich Schmitz stated he tries to schedule HEAT team training with minimal OT. Since 2006, he himself has been involved in 10 HEAT team incidences. Lind questioned how much in the budget was for the reserves. Houzenga informed the council that this year he will be putting half away for a new squad and the next year the rest. The last squad car that was sold (the 2007) had 180,000 miles.

Judy Dell and Audra Adams, representing the Park and Recreation Commission, spoke to the council. Judy stated the city hasn't had any Christmas decorations on the poles for 4 years. The Commission is currently raising money for new lights starting at 6th Avenue and continuing down to 14th Avenue. They are asking the council to budget \$6,100 to put the wiring on the poles. They are also asking \$10,000 towards a skateboard park. The Christmas lights will be snowflakes with LED lights. There will also be a banner stating: in honor, in memory, or sponsored by.... Judy and her husband have visited three different companies. Park and Rec is also going through Alcoa in hopes of getting a grant for a clock in Central Park – street light.

Schutte commented that the city has done a good job budgeting for replacement equipment. A fire truck costs roughly \$375,000. It is easy to eliminate the transfer to the equipment CD but then they wouldn't have the money for a replacement. They would have to come up with a lot of money.

Houzenga stated that the company that performs the meth lab cleanups comes out of Missouri. There have been 30 felony arrests since May and he is currently looking for ways to help out. In order to maintain the chain, someone has to sit there until the cleanup crew comes. The last time someone had to sit there 12 hours and he used the reserves.

The next budget meeting will be January 28 at 6:00 P.M.

Fahlbeck wanted to give the department heads an opportunity to give the council an overview. McManus feels the department heads do a good job with the money.

Roth commented that the city is \$106,000 apart between expenses and revenues if they decided to keep the tax rate the same. The council can raise property taxes, find alternative revenues (franchise fees), or storm water utility tax (pays toward the disposal of storm water). Franchise fees can be placed in a separate fund to help offset the deficit in years to come.

At 8:05 P.M., being no further business, the Mayor declared the budget work session to be adjourned.

Kenneth A. Fahlbeck, Mayor

Sheryl L. Jindrich
City Clerk/Treasurer