

City of Camanche

January 25, 2016

The City Council of the City of Camanche, Iowa met in budget work session January 25, 2016 at 5:30 P.M. at Camanche City Hall. Present on roll call: Mayor Willis, presiding, and the following named council members: Metzger, Saxon, Lind, Varner, and Wruck. Also present were City Administrator Roth, City Attorney Randy Current, department heads Houzenga, Schutte, Hilgendorf and Jindrich.

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

Moved by Lind, second by Varner to approve the agenda. On roll call – all ayes.

Lind stated he was not in favor of having the 8th officer in the budget. He was looking at how high the pension costs were from 2010-2015. When he ran for council, he ran that if one officer left, they wouldn't hire another one. They would take care of it through attrition. Metzger asked if we take the officer out could it be added back in. She was informed that the budget would have to be amended. We could but we can't overspend the public safety fund. The money would have to be taken from something else. Wruck commented that if he would have been on the council back in 2010, he would have probably voted for the 8th officer. But then in 2012, the state stopped contributing to the pension fund and put the burden on the cities. Roth wanted to caution everyone – he knows everyone wants to keep costs down. Wruck told Houzenga that it's the council's job to give him a budget and he has to work within that budget. There was a lengthy discussion on pension costs.

Houzenga said not to gamble with public safety. He asked the council – when you were given the budget, wasn't it almost balanced and it included the 8th officer. Rich Schmitz said the solvability rate will suffer with not hiring an 8th officer. With 7 officers they were at 30+% solvability and now it is about 80% with 8 officers.

Roth asked the council what their goals were. He feels this town does a pretty good job. There seems to be some discontent. There have been very little increases in taxes. The city did Washington Blvd. and managed that increase in taxes.

Houzenga stated it's not about money – it's about getting the job done. Willis said the city provides service – that is what we do. What are we going to do next year then there is a shortfall? Are you going to cut another police officer or firefighter? Willis stated he would rather cut the new community center instead of cutting a police officer.

Saxon felt the council needs to look at the order of things in the budget. Tom will be leaving. What are we going to do with his position? Roth felt the city will lose out on a lot without putting someone in his position. Saxon was wondering if they could bring someone in to fill his position right from college. Roth reiterated that you can't run city hall with 2 people. Current informed the council that with the current ordinance, if there is no city administrator, the mayor and city attorney would be in charge.

Metzger asked Houzenga to provide a list of upcoming training. She also wanted to know what the officers are certified in. Houzenga reminded the council that he has to have adequate number of officers to cover when they send officers to training.

Willis was wondering if the council wanted to take all this information and think on it.

Metzger questioned whether the council pay could be lowered. She had done some checking with other towns and she feels the mayor's pay could be lowered.

Roth wanted to know what the council's objectives were. Is it to lower taxes or to keep them the same? Metzger would like to keep them the same. Roth commented that you could lower the city administrator salary by \$20,000 and could balance the budget. Wruck would like to see where the budget is at without the 8th officer. Houzenga commented that you would probably have to add an additional \$50,000 to the OT line. Wruck reminded Roth that the attorney line needs to be changed.

Roth informed the council that it is \$37,000 cheaper for medical only. Current stated the 411 pension covers retirement disability and pension. The city would have to cover 100% of the medical costs if a 411 employee gets injured. If the diagnosis is cancer or heart disease, it is classified as work related. Under 411 pensions, you are either disabled or not disabled. The employee would not be eligible for permanent partial disability.

Schutte feels the council should be fair. Why don't the other departments get cut? Why only police and fire? Who not library, park and rec, and city hall?

Varner was wondering if the Garner Hall project could be delayed. Jindrich stated that the city would lose the grant.

Roth asked the council if they wanted to go with medical only. What is your pleasure? The consensus of the council was to go with medical only. Current reminded them "You insure the risk that you can't afford to take". The council agreed to lower the city administrator salary to \$65,000 plus insurance and benefits. They would like to keep the levy the same and to put the extra into the contingency fund.

The next budget meeting will be after the February 2, 2016 council meeting. Houzenga thought the council should have it at a larger venue.

Budget work session adjourned at 7:16 P.M.

Trevor Willis, Mayor

Sheryl L. Jindrich

City Clerk/Treasurer