

Town of La Conner

Town Council Special Meeting
November 8, 2011 – 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Upper Maple Center

Mayor Hayes called the special meeting of the La Conner Town Council to order at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Councilmembers Brunisholz, Hubbard, Tracey, Welch, and Wright.

Also Present: Administrator Doyle, Finance Director Taylor, PW Director Lease, and Fire Chief Taylor

Mayor Hayes stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposed 2012 Fire Department Budget, a possible levy lid lift, and the 2012 Public Works Budget.

Levy Lid Lift – Fire Protection Services: Finance Director Taylor stated that the current levy rate for property taxes is \$1.92 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation in La Conner, and \$.23 per \$1,000 for the current fire station bond for a total of \$2.15 in 2011. The current fire bond retires in December 2012. Ms. Taylor stated that this is an item for discussion only and something the council may want to consider in 2012 for fire equipment in 2013.

Ms. Taylor provided a spreadsheet with an example of a levy lid lift of \$.45 per \$1,000 for fire protection equipment in 2013 and the effect it would have on various home values. This level of increase would provide approximately \$60,000 per year for the fire department.

Administrator Doyle reported that the Fire Authority Proposal is a long process and may take two to three years to implement and get all parties on board. He provided information that showed a comparison of fire tax levies in the area, and La Conner was the lowest at \$.23 per \$1,000. Discussion followed on fire grants that the Administrator has applied for and getting the Fire Department up to current standards. He stated La Conner needs to attract new volunteer fire fighters, restructure and increase the stipends.

Councilmember Brunisholz requested information on the total tax levy that La Conner residents pay compared to other neighboring communities for the next meeting.

Fire Chief Taylor stated that they would like to restructure to a Battalion Chief and Second Battalion Chief instead of a Fire Chief and Training Officer.

Discussion followed on increasing the fire reserves in 2012 to \$25,000 and providing the council with a plan for re-structuring the fire department, use of the additional funds, and the concept for the fire authority.

Public Works - Proposed 2012 Budget: Public Works Director Lease reviewed the following budget items:

- \$21,000 to replace the 1991 GMC 1500 truck that is a crew truck used daily and has required a lot of repair and maintenance in recent years.
- The chessboard at the skateboard park was a donation by the contractor.
- \$18,000 for a part-time laborer primarily for ground maintenance

- Eliminate replacing the flashing light on Maple Street at \$2,800
- Eliminate the parking improvements on WA Street.
- Further research on the wash down system for the trucks & equipment.
- Re-roof Maple Hall kitchen for \$13,000 with a slight pitch.
- Replace Garden Club and Maple Hall chairs & tables.
- Pursue a grant for \$675,000 for the Caledonia Pump Station.
- Rebuild East Caledonia pump for \$12,000.

Councilmember Welch requested a salary and wages reconciliation for the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Lorraine Taylor, Town Clerk

Ramon Hayes, Mayor