



CITY COUNCIL

OCTOBER 29, 2011

ROLL CALL – PRESENT: Alderman Wilson
Alderman Holmes
Alderman Tendam
Alderman Grover
Alderman Rainey
Alderman Burrus
Alderman Fiske
Alderman Braithwaite

A quorum was present

ABSENT: Alderman Wynne

PRESIDING: Mayor Elizabeth B. Tisdahl

A SPECIAL MEETING of the City Council was called to order by Mayor Tisdahl Saturday, October 29, 2011, 9:10 a.m. in the Council Chamber for the purpose of conducting a FY2012 Budget Discussion and Consideration.

CITIZEN COMMENT

Efrain Berrocal (Schubert Ave, Chicago) and Kathy Whyte (Brown Ave., Evanston) both City of Evanston employees, spoke on the elimination of their positions.

Seth Green (Wesley Ave.) spoke on behalf of the Y.O.U. board and staff. He told Council they appreciate the support in the current budget for Human Services and that they hope it is maintained.

Tom Fischl (Leonard St.) spoke of his support for police and fire officials and their pension funds.

Junad Rizki (Sheridan Rd) expressed his concern over the 8% property tax increase, money being spent frivolously, money being spent on consultants for studies that staff should be able to conduct, yard waste stickers and more.

Jim Mizell (Grove St.) volunteer / producer with Evanston Community Media Center spoke on the topic of ECTV and the franchise agreement and changes that will be proposed.

Wendy Pollock (Oak Ave) voiced her opinion on the proposed cuts and the impact it will have on the quality of life in Evanston. She opposes the outsourcing of vital jobs, particularly in the Department of Forestry and is concerned about public safety issues, citizen requests, snow removal, etc. She mentioned the fact that the City won the Governor's award for sustainability efforts. She is glad to see the City's commitment to environmental issues but reminded Council that trees are a major part of that and must be taken care of.

Mike Vasilko (Reese Ave.) said he was here to advocate a real economic development plan that includes the support of local businesses as well as a general focus on new ideas for sources of tax revenue that prevents the need to raise property taxes or layoff city workers.

Henry Bayer (Chase Ave, Chicago) is the executive director, AFSCME Council 31 which is the collective bargaining representative for many City of Evanston employees. He came to testify against the privatization of some parks and forestry department jobs. Considering the many job functions performed by these employees, including helping with snow removal, he believes the elimination of these positions would hurt the City, especially in the coming winter. He pointed out that citizen input on *Engage Evanston* had privatizing services very low on the list of ways to deal with the budget. He urged Council to not lay off people who are providing a vital service.

City Manager Bobkiewicz now called upon Marty Lyons for his presentation.

Mr. Lyons stated the presentation on the proposed capital improvement plan would include projects to be carried over, new capital projects, debt service and a summary with an upcoming budget schedule. He also told Council that all of the directors responsible for the projects were present should anyone have any questions.

Throughout the lengthy presentation of proposed projects listed under various funds, the aldermen and Mayor Tisdahl had numerous questions that were answered by Mr. Lyons, Mr. Gaynor, Ms. Robinson, Mr. Stoneback and Mr. Bobkiewicz.

Once the presentation was finished, Mayor Tisdahl called on aldermen who had questions about various sections of the Budget. Some questions were answered right away while other questions will be answered by staff at a later date.

Regarding the debt service, Alderman Burrus expressed her desire to keep the debt to \$5 million. Alderman Wilson agreed and thought it best to keep it at a more manageable level. City Manager Bobkiewicz said it would help him to know if all of Council is in agreement of \$5 million and if so, staff would come up with a proposal on how to get there.

Alderman Rainey asked for clarification: is it GO bond debt or total new debt? Mr. Bobkiewicz responded that it is his understanding it is GO Bond Debt. Mr. Lyons explained that the \$5 million is not an arbitrary number and that when you look at the

debt table we are retiring \$6 million - \$8 million of GO debt each year so our goal is to stay below the amount we are retiring so we continue to cut into the total outstanding. All agreed to the \$5 million.

Alderman Rainey, citing the memo from staff (pages 50-53) regarding their opposition to eliminating the four (4) Parks/Forestry positions and the one (1) Secretary position, wished to make a motion to restore those positions. She stated that as a resident, she did not want to be without the services these positions provide. Mr. Bobkiewicz explained that if Council votes to put those positions back, then we would need an additional \$204,000 in revenue or other cuts taken in order to budget.

Alderman Rainey made a motion to restore to the budget, the four (4) Parks & Forestry workers (at \$140,000) plus the secretary position (\$64,000) and it was seconded.

Several aldermen spoke on the motion and asked for some clarifications.

Alderman Holmes made a motion to amend Alderman Rainey's motion to add back the Parks and Forestry positions, the Secretary II position, the Technical Support Specialist I position, and the Parking Manager position. Alderman Rainey seconded.

Several aldermen spoke on the motion and asked for some clarifications.

Alderman Holmes' motion failed on Roll Call 3 ayes, 5 nays.

Alderman Rainey's motion failed on Roll Call 2 ayes, 6 nays.

Mr. Bobkiewicz went over the upcoming budget schedule reminding Council that the next meeting would be November 14th with citizen comment, and a special meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 16th. He told Council that if they needed more time, they just need to tell him. He is hopeful that Council will adopt the budget on November 28th. Alderman Holmes asked that the meeting on the 16th start at 6:00 p.m. It was agreed.

Motion was made and seconded to adjourn. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Autwell, Deputy City Clerk