

BAXTER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
Work Session
September 2, 2014

Mayor Darrel Olson called the City Council Work Session to order at 6:30 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Darrel Olson and Council Members Jim Klein, Todd Holman, Mark Cross, and Rob Moser.

STAFF PRESENT: Finance Director Jeremy Vacinek, Assistant City Administrator Kelly Steele, Community Development Director Josh Doty, and Police Chief Jim Exsted.

LOST Public Information

Finance Director Vacinek proposed a plan to develop local sales tax information, in various formats and lengths, to be presented in a variety of venues in the next two months. A City newsletter containing sales tax information is anticipated to be mailed the end of September or early October. Finance Director Vacinek explained during the initial ballot approval in 2004, the City distributed a newsletter and conducted three public informational meetings. Finance Director Vacinek explained the 2004 public informational meeting attendance might have been low due to overlapping with the Chamber's candidate meetings. Finance Director Vacinek further explained if it were not for the sales tax revenue, the average home in 2004 would have seen a \$400.00 annual property tax increase and a \$343.00 annual utility rate increase. Finance Director Vacinek clarified the language on the November General Election ballot was developed by bond counsel, and contains similar language used in 2004.

Council discussed conducting public informational meetings to help inform new residents who may not understand the initiative and to display photos of completed projects funded with sales tax revenue to aid in carrying the message. Finance Director Vacinek explained the property tax levy language is required by state law to be included. Even going through difficult economic times, the City did not have to rely on property tax levy to fund the projects earmarked with sales tax revenue. The Council expressed the importance of being clear with how the revenue will be spent.

Schedule Riverview Park Public Dedication

Council has previously expressed interest in conducting tours of Berrywood Park and Riverview Park in order to view the recent improvements to both parks and to discuss future planned improvements. The Council consensus is to conduct a public dedication of Riverview Park prior to a council meeting. At the time of the public dedication, the boardwalk will not be completed. The Council would like to display photos of the boardwalk at the dedication. If Council has time before the start of the regular council meeting, Council will stop at Berrywood Park for a quick tour. Information regarding the Berrywood Park improvements will be included in the next newsletter. The Council decided to hold the Riverview Park dedication at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 16.

Review and Discuss 2015 Governmental Fund Budget

Finance Director Vacinek explained as part of the 2015 budget process, the budget calendar includes a follow-up work session tonight. As in prior years, there are a few outstanding items. Health insurance will be discussed during the October utility work session. The preliminary governmental funds budget and property tax levy will be adopted at the September 16, 2014 council meeting. The final property tax levy may be reduced in December; buy may not be increased once it is set in September. Council

Member Holman discussed items on the cut list that were not included in the previous work session minutes. Council agreed to discuss the 2014 budget at year-end to see if there is a fund balance for the purchase of a skid steer, disc golf, or community development ordinance revisions. Council questioned if there is a need to fund additional ordinance contract support than what was allocated in the 2015 budget. Finance Director Vacinek explained the 2015 budget contains \$20,000 and there is approximately \$10,000 left in this year's budget. Council Member Holman discussed if additional funding should be a priority now that the Comprehensive Plan has been updated. Finance Director Vacinek explained the fund balance would be reviewed at year-end for possible allocation to a one-time capital project.

Mayor Olson closed the work session at 6:59 p.m.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

Darrel L. Olson
Mayor

Kelly Steele
Assistant City Administrator/Clerk