

**GRANDVIEW CITY COUNCIL
STUDY SESSION MINUTES
NOVEMBER 19, 2007**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Norm Childress called the study session to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Present were: Mayor Norm Childress and Councilmembers Bill Flory, Pam Horner, Jan McDonald, Robert Morales, Javier Rodriguez and Joan Souders.

Staff present were: City Administrator Scott D. Staples, City Attorney Jack Maxwell, City Treasurer John Myers, Public Works Director Cus Arteaga, Police Chief David Charvet, Fire Chief Pat Mason, Parks & Recreation Director Mike Carpenter, Librarian Linda Dunham and City Clerk Anita Palacios.

2. 2008 BUDGET DISCUSSIONS

City Administrator Staples began the discussion by reminding Council of the budget deficit in the amount of approximately \$325,000. He presented the following ideas for balancing the 2008 budget:

		One-time Only	Increase Revenues	Decrease Expenses
1.	Increase City utility tax ⁽¹⁾⁽⁶⁾		\$325,000	
2.	Ask voters to consider increasing private utility tax ⁽²⁾		\$400,000	
3.	Ask voters to consider annexing into the Yakima Valley Regional Library ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾			\$210,000
4.	Discontinue swimming pool program			\$ 55,000
5.	Discontinue museum program			\$ 15,000
6.	Discontinue animal control program			\$ 60,000
7.	Discontinue code enforcement program			\$ 36,200
8.	Discontinue graffiti removal services			\$ 25,000
9.	Sell city cemetery ⁽⁴⁾	\$ 21,000	\$ 30,700	
10.	Reduce recreation staff from 2.0 to 1.0 FTE			\$ 60,000
11.	Do not fund vehicle depreciation 2008 in Current Expense Fund	\$ 80,000		
12.	Sell library property ⁽⁵⁾	\$384,300		
13.	Sell some of public park space	unknown		
14.	Library Technician vacancy ⁽⁷⁾			\$ 40,000

⁽¹⁾ The current tax rates on water, sewer, and garbage were 17½%, 6%, and 17½% respectively. In order to raise an additional \$325,000, the rates would need to be increased to 19½%, resulting in a monthly household impact of \$3.50. In the alternative, if the sewer tax was kept at 6%, the water and garbage taxes would need to be increased to 35%, resulting in a monthly household impact of \$5.75.

⁽²⁾ In 2008, the special election dates were 2/5, 3/11, 4/22, and 5/20. The current tax rate on private utilities was 6%. In order to raise an additional \$400,000, the rate would need to be increased to 8.5%, resulting in a monthly household impact of \$7.50/month.

- (3) Please note that this option does not preclude joint public YVCC facility. The \$210,000 represents estimated annual savings to the Current Expense Fund. The current regional library levy was 48.3¢ per \$1,000 of assessed value.
- (4) Based upon the 2003 proposal, \$30,700 represents sales tax dollars currently used to support the Cemetery Fund.
- (5) This assumes successful joint project with YVCC, and property would not be available for sale until 2010. The estimate is based upon 2007 assessed value.
- (6) It should be noted that under state law the City Council does have the ability to establish a discount program for low-income senior citizens and disabled persons.
- (7) Under this scenario the vacant position would not be filled. Instead, the City would increase the number of library pages from one to two, increase library aides hours to fifteen hours per week, and close the library at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, instead of 8:30 p.m.

Following review of the ideas presented and considerable discussion, Council agreed to budget additional funds for another police officer in the amount of \$75,000 and increase the City utility tax to cover the budget deficit in the amount of \$400,000. Council also discussed the idea of putting a ballot measure to the voters to increase the private utility tax.

Concern was expressed with the effect the proposed utility rate increase would have on the industrial users.

City Administrator Staples suggested that Council allow staff to meet with the industrial managers to discuss the proposed utility tax increase and report back to Council at the December 3rd meeting.

3. RENTAL INSPECTION PROGRAM

Public Works Director Arteaga explained that staff met with the City of Pasco's Code Enforcement Officer to discuss Pasco's rental inspection program. Positive results of their program were:

- The program applied to all rental units, which leveled the playing field. All rentals met the same requirements, which resulted in all landlords charging the same rental fees. It was noted that landlords charging the same fee improved the neighborhoods with quality renters.
- A simple inspection report was implemented for all inspectors to follow and the rental dwelling license would not be issued unless the inspection form was submitted with the rental dwelling application.
- Pasco offered an option for inspections services to be completed by city personnel at a fee of \$30 for single family home plus \$3 for each additional unit. Currently, Pasco was completing approximately 99% of all inspections, which has helped with follow-up on needed repairs.
- The success of Pasco's program was credited to the public hearings that were held. Education was the most important element of this program.

Public Works Director Arteaga recommended that the City implement a rental inspection program to provide better housing, more attractive neighborhoods and improve the quality of life for many of the older neighborhoods.

Following discussion, Council concurred with the concept of implementing a rental inspection program and instructed staff to invite the City of Pasco's Code Enforcement Officer to a future meeting to further discuss the program.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The study session adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Norm Childress

Anita Palacios, City Clerk