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**City Council Work Session Minutes
Levy Planning**

**Monday, October 25, 2021
6:00 p.m., Zoom Community Auditorium**

***Minutes are unofficial until approved by Council.
Council approved minutes as presented November 8, 2021.***

1. ROLL CALL:

Council President Wenzl called the work session to order at 5:51 p.m. via Zoom Webinar Video Conference.

The Council conducted the optional work session in a “hybrid” format allowing the public to attend virtually via **Zoom Webinar** and in-person in the Community Auditorium. Members of the public could observe the work session **LIVE on Zoom Webinar** or on television on Tualatin Valley Community Television (TVCTV) Government Access Programming.

ROLL CALL: COUNCIL PRESENT ATTENDED BY ZOOM WEBINAR: Donna Gustafson; Kristy Kottkey; Timothy Rippe; Elena Uhing; Mariana Valenzuela; and Malynda Wenzl, Council President. **COUNCIL ABSENT:** Mayor Peter Truax.

STAFF PRESENT ATTENDED BY ZOOM WEBINAR: Jesse VanderZanden, City Manager; Paul Downey, Assistant City Manager/Finance Director; and Anna Ruggles, City Recorder.

2. WORK SESSION: LEVY PLANNING

Downey and VanderZanden facilitated the work session and presented a PowerPoint presentation, noting the purpose of the work session was to address Council Objective 4.2, to conduct a needs assessment for the upcoming levy renewal. Downey gave an overview of the Council work sessions held on March 15, 2021 (Levy 101), September 13, 2021 (Levy Needs Assessment) and October 11, 2021 (Levy Polling), noting there was Council consensus to:

- Replace versus renew levy;
- Consider polling up to \$1.95 levy rate; and;
- Do not study any further the following potential revenue sources: Enterprise Zone (EZ) Tax Exemption, Non-Profit Tax Exemption and Urban Renewal Agency.

Downey reported the purpose of this work session was to discuss polling methods and continue discussions pertaining to the Right-of-Way (ROW) Utility Bill Fee; Public Safety Utility Bill Fee and/or Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT). Four examples were proposed for discussion purposes: 1) Lower the Street Light Fee by \$0.75 and implement a ROW fee of 5% in lieu of a franchise fee; 2) Lower the Street Light Fee by \$0.75 and implement a Public Safety Fee of \$1.00; 3) Lower the Street Light Fee by \$0.75 and implement a Public

Safety Fee of \$1.00 and implement a ROW of 5% in lieu of a franchise fee; or 4) No changes to fees and accrue additional revenue through levy property taxes. Downey recapped background information pertaining to the levy history (November 2002 (\$0.99) to November 2017 (\$1.60)); and General Fund Staffing Levels by Department, explanation of staffing changes, and Police, Fire, Parks and Recreation and Library staffing metrics and projected staff through 2028. Additionally, Downey summarized the polling methods from the pollster, noting telephone polling, i.e., 300 likely voters by telephone, has become very difficult and expensive due to cell phone use only. The pollster estimated the City would only be able to get about 100-125 telephone responses, which is not statistically relevant enough to provide a high level of probability. To get to a statistically relevant sample size of about 300, the poll would have to include direct mailing to randomly selected voters in combination with telephone surveys. The estimated cost is \$54,000. The pollster recommended the City consider using focus groups. Focus groups would not provide the same results as a poll but would provide some valuable information about the levy. The more focus groups, the higher level of accuracy. To hire a professional moderator and an in-person focus group is about \$9,000 per group and \$8,000 if conducted online. A group typically has 8 or 10 random selected voters and the discussion lasts a couple of hours.

Discussion:

Council President Wenzl opened the floor as roundtable discussion ensued pertaining to the methods of polling versus using focus groups and whether to pursue implementing a new fee(s). Valenzuela noted in her experience working with focus groups, the costs are relatively inexpensive than quoted above. In conclusion of the above-noted roundtable discussion, there was Council consensus to:

- Proceed with focus groups.
- Discuss further whether to consider implementing a ROW fee.

The Council discussed implementing a Public Safety Utility Fee; however, Council was undecided. Additionally, the Council discussed potential election dates to place the measure on the ballot; however, Council was undecided whether to consider May 17, 2022 Primary or November 8, 2022 General Election. If not May, the timeline bumps back six months, which would allow additional time to conduct aggressive outreach.

No formal action nor formal decisions were made during the work session.

3. ADJOURNMENT:

Council President Wenzl adjourned the work session at 6:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Anna D. Ruggles, CMC, City Recorder