

**Town of Garfield
TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING FINAL BUDGET
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES Preliminary Budget
Town Hall – November 16, 2016**

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Ray McCown called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Ray McCown, Neal Leon, Mark Young, Dave Ulrick, David Jones and Daymon Marple arrived at 7:06 pm. Staff: Clerk/Treasurer Cody Lord and Public Works Supervisor Reuel Klempel
Absent:

PUBLIC HEARING: 2017 Final Budget Hearing was opened at 7:07 pm.

Mayor McCown opened the Final Budget Meeting and asked Daymon Marple, Finance Committee Member, to explain to the council and public the proposed 2017 budget. Daymon explained to the council there was a change in the utility rate structure and he is suggesting to raise the sewer base rate instead of adjusting with the percentage of the annual rate increases. There will be no change in revenue but it will more accurately reflect money that is needed in the sewer account. The reason for the increase is for extra sewer plant wages, the influent and infiltration (I&I) problem and some extra money for necessary repairs at the plant. Mayor McCown added they will only be raising the sewer rate to adjust for immediate growing expenses and they will continue to raise the bi-annual amount for water, sewer and garbage to keep up with inflation. Mayor McCown said if they have any surplus they can put it into the sewer reserves for future projects.

Neal Leon asked how much the increase would be and Daymon said it will be \$16.14 which is an increase of 15.6% in the overall bill to residents. Daymon also explains they will be able to go to the Dept. of Ecology and tell them about the additional money they are raising and what it will be used for. He said it is a band aid for the immediate issues at hand and they can reassess next year. The sewer loan will be paid off in 2020 and the town should look at putting in a lagoon system and work on grants to help fund it. Daymon explains the water, sewer and garbage accounts still have their inflation factors of 3%, 2% and 3% respectively to keep up with inflation citing things like the county is raising their rates for tonnage dumped at the landfill this year. Mark Young asks what the change in the sewer base rate will be and wants to know what the rate change will net the town. Daymon said the old base charge for sewer was \$40.48 and the new base rate will be \$52.23 and it will result in additional revenue of an estimated \$56,300. The new base utility bill will come to \$119.49. Neal said he understands they need more money to properly operate the plant but this is an awful large pill for the town to swallow.

Daymon said the other thing to realize that if this is done and the plant doesn't come into compliance, DOE can begin to apply penalties to the town for being in violation. Neal clarified these funds are going to be used to pay the increased salary expense at the plant and also for maintenance expenses at the plant. Mayor McCown said yes and also talked about how they met with DOE recently and they were very supportive of moving to a lagoon system with zero discharge in the future which would only require a Level I Operator. The water from the lagoons could then be land applied to certain agriculture or the trees at the base of the cemetery hill. DOE would really like to see the town get the I&I problem under control. Mayor McCown said he is amazed how much cheaper they are than surrounding communities stating that many are charging about \$80 a month just for sewer charges. Daymon said he would like to see a comparison of other communities and know what they are charging.

Mark said the truth about the plant and the growing costs is that they have tried to keep the rates as low as possible for the longest time and now the infrastructure is starting to crack and they can't keep maintaining at this rate. The town needs to educate the community about what the future holds and if they don't make these changes now, what the consequences will be. For the welfare of the town the council needs to be able to sell to the community what they have to do and unfortunately and reluctantly their backs are against a wall. David Jones said hopefully in the near future the improvements needed will start to subside. David also said if they raise more than is needed or anticipated he would like to propose to reduce the sewer rate

again. Mayor McCown asked if there were any questions from the community and no one had anything to say.

Mayor McCown closed the Final Budget Hearing at 7:20 and reconvened the regular council meeting.

GUESTS: Scott Bowman

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: David Jones **MOVED** to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting Nov. 9th, 2016. Dave Ulrick seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Officer Joe Handley Present for this meeting.

In the last two weeks there have been quite a few calls for service, there has been nothing too crazy just normal police business. The department is starting to work on statistics for 2016 but it looks like there are about 40 more calls this year over the previous year. They are dealing with another junk vehicle at the trailer court. The snow tires will be put on the police cars next week.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT: Reuel Klempel present for the Public Works Department

Water

- Everything operating normally.

Sewer

- Hauled a load of bio-solids to Bar-Tech.
- Working on preventative maintenance items at the plant.
- The I&I problem has jumped significantly over the last couple days.
- Getting all the solids stabilized in the system.
- Got the DMR sent into DOE.

Garbage

- Everything operating normally.

Streets

- Everything operating normally.

Parks

- The park has been winterized and closed for the season.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Tracy Hoffmeister Using RV For Office Space and Shed for Studio

Mayor McCown said that Cody looked through the ordinance book and could find nothing saying she couldn't use the space as an office and leave it skirted just as long as she is not living in the trailer. Mayor McCown said she should have it licensed as a recreational vehicle. Mayor McCown said if no one else has any objection to Tracy using her trailer as an office, he will have Officer Joe Handley go over and notify her it is appropriate to use as an office. Mayor McCown said if they start seeing hoses or other indications that it is being used for a residence then they will have an issue with it. Currently there is also a lot line dispute between this resident and the neighbor but they were told to get a survey that this was not an issue the town could help settle.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Resolution 2016-11 Setting 2017 Salaries for Town Employees

Mayor McCown said this is similar to the salary resolution they had passed a couple months ago but now it reflects the COLA adjustment for the Budget Year 2017. Daymon Marple **MOVED** to adopt the 2017 Employee Salary Resolution 2016-11. Mark Young seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Ordinance 458-N Adopting the 2017 Budget

David asked if they will still conduct a public meeting for resident’s input after they adopt the budget this evening. Mayor McCown said they will need to adopt the budget this evening and they will conduct the public meeting for the rate setting for residents of Garfield at the December 14th meeting and they will conduct this meeting at the community center. Mark Young **MOVED** to adopt the 2017 Budget Ordinance 458-N. Daymon Marple seconded motion and the motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL:

Approval of Checks: Daymon Marple **MOVED** to approve the following bills presented to council for payment. Neal Leon seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Check Register #12530-12534

Claims: \$1,730.46

Total: \$1,730.46

Mayor McCown asked if anyone had anything else they would like to talk about and guest Scott Bowman said he had a question about the discussion about the amount of chickens a person could have. Scott said there is a property in town that is not over an acre and currently has a lot more chickens then the allowed 3. Mark asked if he was referring to the residence on 3rd Street. There was some discussion about whether it may be a zoning issue. Mayor McCown said they did already get rid of a lot of animals but the ordinance does go by the size of the property. Cody explained it is not a zoning issue but discussed at a previous meeting as a complaint based issue, if the cops receive a complaint about a property out of compliance regarding animals, then the police department would deal with it. Scott said another property in town had chickens and then put up a total privacy fence so it is impossible to see how many chickens they have.

ADJOURNMENT: David Jones **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 PM. Mark Young seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Ray McCown, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Cody Lord, Clerk/Treasurer