

City of Connell, Town Hall Meeting, October 12, 2015

Attendance:

ELECTED: Mayor Bruce Blackwell, Councilmembers Rhonda Quinton, Kathie Silva, Ray Minor, Joe Escalera.

STAFF: City Clerk/Treasurer Maria Peña, Public Works Director Larry Turner, Police Chief Chris Turner, City Administrator Jed Crowther.

VISITORS: Manny Choi, John Lindner, Darrell Ferguson, Katherine Bingham.

Opened at 6 p.m.

City Budget Workshop Discussion

Budget discussions centered on impact to General Fund.

General Fund Deficit

City Clerk/Treasurer Maria Peña presented 2016 General Fund preliminary budget projections, which resulted in \$281,220 deficit in the General Fund. She clearly outlined the need to evaluate and select appropriate cuts, to shore up the deficit. Maria presented specific line-item data for certain expenditures; she identified portions allocated for fixed-type costs vs discretionary spending. This approach classified the most likely areas to consider for reductions, in order to balance the shortfall in the General Fund.

Revenue Enhancement

Potential methods to increase revenue were also discussed:

- **Car Tab Fees** – To institute \$20 per vehicle registration fees, to supplement the local Street Fund. This fee would be assessed with yearly license renewal; and would require establishment of a Transportation Benefit District to set up collections; expected to generate approximately \$30,000 per year.
- **Solid Waste Fund** – As an Enterprise Fund, Solid Waste must stand on its own and support itself. For this reason, and with a trend line moving lower, it was important to correct any deficit. Two options were presented:
 1. Return billing functions back to Basin Disposal Inc., rather than the City of Connell.
 2. Raise customer garbage rates to cover increased city costs. This method would require revising an older city ordinance which had limited the yearly rate increases. As a result, the city wasn't covering costs.

Pros and cons were discussed of each option.

Priorities

Mayor Blackwell presented his view of priorities of responsibilities by level of importance (*attached*).

Next Steps

Further evaluation and input was requested; to select areas to cut, to live within our means.

Closed at 7:50 p.m.