

MEETING OF THE CITY OF CONNELL, WASHINGTON  
CONNELL, FRANKLIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON

October 26, 2015

The Special Council Meeting, of the Connell City Council was called to order by Mayor Blackwell at 6:00 pm in the City Hall.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Bruce Blackwell, Mayor Pro Tem Monty Huber, and Councilmember's: Rhonda Quinton, Kathie Silva, and Ray Minor.

ABSENT: Councilmember Joe Escalera

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

VISITOR: Kathy Bingham, Franklin County Graphic; Citizens: Robert McCurry, Dave Gribble, and Darrell Ferguson.

**2016 Budget Discussion**

City Administrator Crowther talked about changes made to the 2016 Preliminary from the last Budget Discussion and that the City still had a deficit to address in the General Fund. The council would need to set priorities.

Ideas setting the City of Connell's Priorities:

- 1) Shall the City adequately fund water, sewer, and streets?
- 2) Shall the City continue 24-hour police coverage?
- 3) Shall the City provide ample resources for fire protection?
- 4) Shall the City continue to maintain current basic staffing levels?
- 5) Shall the City continue to provide full-time, front counter customer service?
- 6) Shall the City fund Pool/Park & Recreation at the expense of losing other functions?

City staff needed direction from Councilmember's in order to bring back a balanced Budget for 2016. City Administrator Jed Crowther asked each Councilmember to state their opinion and the following was heard:

- 1) Increase pool fees- \$6.00?
- 2) Amend budget if revenues come in
- 3) Have better pool management
- 4) Eliminate 2 big slides
- 5) Shorten the time frame the pool is open
- 6) No cuts to police department
- 7) Increase Community Center fees 10%-20%-30%
- 8) Did department heads look at cutting their budgets?
- 9) Pool close over laying someone off
- 10) Look at swimming lessons

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- 11) Look at swim team
- 12) Remove Park & Recreation Director
- 13) Should have raised pool fees sooner
- 14) Review Park & Recreation fees

Department Heads Cuts:

Clerk/Treasurer Maria Peña stated the only way was to cut in her department was to cut a position and close city hall down one day each week.

Chris Turner stated he would cut the clerk position over one of his officers.

Chris Schulte asked about the fire department budget and stated he was getting reimbursed from Franklin County for volunteer fire fighters training.

Larry Turner could take people of parks for winter months.

Mayor Blackwell stated you can't sell property every year to keep the pool open. You need to increase pool fees.

City Administrator Crowther, Clerk/Treasurer Maria Peña, and Department Heads answered Councilmember's questions on the 2016 Budget and provided information.

Helen Tobin asked why the City hired a Public Works Supervisor position again. Where did the extra funds come from in the city's budget to hire that position again? (Sewer and Water Rates) Where did the extra police officer funds come from? (Criminal Justice tax). Could inmates do more work for the city? It will be hard to staff pool with shorter hours.

Bob McCurry asked about transfer from General to Street fund. Does that mean that the street will not be getting cleaned? (No) What was the street funds revenue? (Natural gas tax). Does this included sidewalk? (No) Mr. McCurry asked about deficit.

Darrell Ferguson-Connell has had a pool for a long time. Pool provides life skills with swimming lessons. The kids keep busy during the summer months. Mr. Ferguson talked about Community Center fees and usage.

John Lindner talked about other small cities have a pool. Special levies were done to support the pool. Mr. Lindner wanted one of the City Councilmember's to set up and help raise funds for the pool.

Mayor Blackwell talked about not spending money the City doesn't have. Everyone has a fiduciary responsibility. Reserves are necessary for the City to have. Mayor Blackwell asked citizens to raise the money to run the pool. Take the pool out of the cities function.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Mayor Blackwell adjourned the Special meeting at 7:59 pm.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rose Courneya, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer

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Bruce Blackwell, Mayor