

City of Carter Lake
City Hall – 950 Locust St.
Budget Meeting
Proceedings: Wednesday, February 25, 2015 – 6:00 PM

The Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Gerald Waltrip called the Budget Meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Roll Call: Present – Council members Ed Aldmeyer, Dave Huey, Ron Cumberledge,
Barb Melonis and Barb Hawkins
Also present – City Clerk Doreen Mowery

1. The Mayor invited the public up to the podium to make any comments that they want about the budget. The following people got up and spoke both for and against the proposed budget: Dave Holeton, Dave Lodes, Susan Wilson, Jessica Raymond, Theresa Hawkins, Jonathan West, John Paterson, Diana Norville, Sharon Orton, Jerry Bell, Paul Christensen, Kathleen Knudson, Stephanie Schuster, and John Wallace.

Council member Cumberledge stated that there is not a plan to eliminate the Resource Center programs however there may be some job cuts. He stated the council was going to try to merge resources. There was discussion regarding salaries and the possibility of cutting salaries. Much of the discussion revolved around the Resource Center.

The Mayor read a letter to the council and the public proposing various ways to eliminate the budget shortfall. His suggestions included; take some of the parks workers' wages out of maintenance, bring monthly water testing in house, leave the building inspector as a part-time employee, take programming out of the Resource Center and put it in the Library, have the Library take on the Carter Lake paper and eliminate the Resource Center and the Director. He also suggested that all department heads receive a wage freeze, no new police cruisers and no new equipment in the maintenance department, and close the Water Rescue Unit down in the Fire Department. The Mayor stated the overspending has been going on for many years.

Additional comments were brought to the attention of the council regarding the Water Rescue Unit, the Library being used as a Resource Center, and the Council Bluffs School System providing after school services. The Mayor has visited with Kids and Company regarding their programs. He also stated that the majority of the cities with a Resource Center run them out of their libraries. There were questions about access to the library due to their limited hours of operation. There were questions about the number of daily interactions with the children at the school's Resource Center. The Librarian feels they can handle any type of programming and as many kids as needed. Use of the school for the Resource Center and their programs currently does not cost anything to the City. Josh Snelling, one of the youth that uses the Resource Center, spoke out against getting rid of the programs. He feels the programs have been beneficial to him.

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Council member Melonis does not intend to eliminate the Resource Center. She does not want to see anyone lose their job except for the Office Assistant for the Resource Center and Newsletter contractor. She also does not want to lose any programming. She is suggesting that the wages budgetted for all departments would not be increased, no new hires, and find a different, more cost effective way, to have a newsletter. Council member Melonis suggested that there be better use of the Senior Center funds, their employees, and their resources. She will not approve any new vehicles. She also suggested that one vendor and one plan should be used for all city cell phones. The department heads are currently working to get that accomplished.

Council member Cumberledge asked Shawn if his employees would agree to a 10% cut in wages. He stated that no one is willing to give and some of the employees are asking for large raises.

Department heads are asked for their budgets prior to knowing income projections. The Mayor had previously instructed some of the department heads to make a list of “wants” and a list of “needs”.

Council member Aldmeyer suggested that the cruiser be cut from the budget and then half of those funds would be allocated to vehicle repairs in the Police Department.

Council member Huey suggested that the department heads go back and cut from the wish list to get below their needs list. He would rather see department heads make the cuts than the council.

The clerk explained the ramifications of the Mayor and Council not coming to an agreement and adopting a budget in a timely manner.

Council member Hawkins stated that the proposed budget can be amended in the future. She would like to see dollar figures for the suggestions that the Mayor has made. She will look at whatever the Mayor brings to the council for consideration. She would be willing to amend the proposed budget as needed.

Council member Huey asked for any additional ideas from the department heads and for them to look at their budgets again.

Council member Aldmeyer feels there is still room for movement on the proposed budget. He stated it is important to have all of the ideas presented when developing a budget. He thinks the department heads did an excellent job.

The Mayor stated he would put a figure to all of his proposals.

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Pastor Dave Holton stated that Linda Tice does more at the Senior Center than what is expected of her. She goes above and beyond to assist the seniors.

John Paterson agrees with Barb Melonis that the council should be the ones that divvy out the available funds.

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for all of their input.

The special city council meeting was adjourned at 7:52 PM.

Doreen Mowery, City Clerk

Gerald Waltrip, Mayor