



**CITY OF CAMAS  
COUNCIL WORKSESSION  
September 2, 2008  
4:30 p.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Paul Dennis presided.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

**Present:** Anderson, Chaney, Dietzman, Gerde, Higgins, Hogan (arrived 4:45 p.m.) and Smith.

**Excused:**

**STAFF PRESENT:** Bourquin, Carothers, Copsey, Durgin, Halverson, Hodges, Lackey and Leon.

**PRESS:** Heather Acheson – Camas Washougal Post Record.

**PUBLIC:**

Nellie Groeneveld, PO Box 604, Camas, WA:

Groeneveld stated she was pleased to read that Mitch Lackey was appointed as the Police Chief for the City of Camas.

Groeneveld stated her concern regarding the recycling bin on the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Everett and asked if the City of Camas was involved with setting it up.

Mayor responded that a staff member from the Public Works Department will look into the arrangement and report the findings to Groeneveld.

**FIRE/EMS:**

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Update:

Leo Leon, Fire Chief, distributed a handout highlighting a variety of EMS issues that he would like to discuss.

Leon reported that he has not received the final EMS Levy results from the elections office. As of August 29<sup>th</sup> the poll still showed 64.82% in support of the levy. With the passing of the EMS Levy this will decrease the Fire Department Budget deficit to one hundred twenty seven thousand dollars (\$127,000). This figure is without the EMS Levy funding from the City of Washougal.

Leon stated that with the passage of the EMS Levy a letter will need to be sent to East County Fire & Rescue (ECF&R) informing them that the City of Camas will continue to

provide EMS service to the East County area for the remainder of 2008. Leon commented that he has been working with ECF&R to determine how this service will be funded for the last four months of this year. Leon asked Council for permission to submit a letter to ECF&R to continue service as is.

Leon responded to questions from Chaney regarding the budget.

Leon gave a brief update on the Fire Authority meeting held on September 28<sup>th</sup> and reported that Paul Lewis will be bringing back a proposal for review. The proposal will also include the cost of the financial review. A meeting will be scheduled as soon as the analysis by Lewis is complete.

Leon commented that as a result of the City of Washougal's decision to pull out of the EMS Levy they will need to resolve the issue of getting final approval. Leon explained the process involved and stated that he plans to attend the Trauma Council's meeting tomorrow. Leon's goal is to explain to the committee that Washougal's decision is not in the best interest of their citizens, and that their request should be denied or at least deferred until 2010, when the levy ends.

Leon reported that the collection rate for the ambulance billings in August was 69% and is 61% overall for the year.

Leon displayed maps showing the EMS service area, locations of the fire stations and locations of the EMS calls in 2007. Leon explained each map. In August there were 241 EMS calls in between Camas, Washougal and East County.

Discussion followed.

Chaney asked and Mayor responded that there has been dialogue with the City of Washougal regarding their decision to pull out of the EMS Levy. Lloyd Halverson, City Administrator, has spoken to Nabil Shawa, Washougal City Administrator, but has yet to hear back from him.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS:**

Jim Hodges, Project Manager, distributed a memo covering the public works items. Halverson noted that in the interest of time staff decided to distribute the information via a memo. Public Works staff is present to answer any questions.

#### **ADMINISTRATION:**

##### **Staffing:**

Halverson reported that a position for an additional waste water plant operator was approved in the 2008 Budget. The hiring was originally scheduled for July, 2008, but was extended due to the construction schedule. Halverson stated that staff recommends proceeding with posting this position in the hopes of having the position filled in November. This position is entirely supported by utilities.

Budget Update:

Halverson relayed that recent events have helped to relieve some of the anxiety over the budget. The passage of the EMS Levy helps the EMS fund and there is more evidence supporting revenue projections and estimates. Halverson gave examples.

Halverson reiterated the underlying ideas of the budget framework:

- Use the 1% increase in property taxes
- No new tax initiatives
- Variety of valuable public services which merit support
- Marginal declines in staffing levels and services
- Assessment that 2010 will see “normal” economy
- Modest use of General Fund reserves are acceptable to Council

Summarizing, Halverson stated that it is a steady picture of a “rainy day budget”, which can make 2009 an acceptably cautious year. There is still a lot of detailed work that needs to be done. Halverson commented that he believes the City’s circumstances will require continued monitoring of the budgets, staffing levels and expenditures, not just during the budget season, but throughout the upcoming year. The framework recognizes the facts, provides a path forward and preserves vital services.

Halverson asked if it would be acceptable to Council to use some of the General Fund reserves as a carry-over to the 2009 Budget.

Halverson responded to questions from Council.

There was lengthy discussion regarding the use of General Fund reserves and a variety of options were explored. At the conclusion of the discussion Mayor summarized that Council’s desire is to decrease use of the General Fund reserves by one-half of one percent, compile a list of potential restoration items that were cut, and then, if the financial situation of the City improves during the year, the items could be added back in upon Council’s confirmation.

Halverson asked Council for confirmation to follow the path outlined by Mayor. Council concurred.

Chaney stated that he would like to see how the decrease in staffing levels will impact the level of services that the City provides to the community. Smith agreed.

Mayor responded that the budget could be discussed not only in financial terms, but what it means in terms of staffing. Halverson added that the proposed budget will be distributed to Council for review approximately October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Discussion followed.

Halverson commented on the EMS issue and the Fire Authority meeting. Halverson stated that it is his understanding that the fee for Lewis’ analysis will be approximately five thousand dollars (\$5,000), for which the City will be responsible to pay half. Halverson

proposed that the fee be taken from the General Fund and that a contract with Lewis be prepared and presented to Council for consideration at the September 15<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. Council did not have any objections.

Halverson commented that the EMS Budget is subject to further review and does not yet balance. The balance can come from either the expenditure or revenue side. Halverson illustrated potential avenues to balance the budget.

Discussion ensued.

Miscellaneous and Scheduling:

Halverson informed Council that he met with board members of the Moose Lodge and the discussion revolved around interests. Halverson gave a brief overview of the meeting and noted that the Moose Lodge will be providing the City with a specific proposal. Halverson added that a packet containing background information on the Moose Lodge has been distributed to the Parks Commission.

Halverson commented that an event for State Legislators will be held at the Pearson Airpark tomorrow at 6:00 p.m. and stated that both Hogan and he will be attending the event. If any other Council members wish to attend, there is one more opening.

The Association of Washington Cities (AWC) will be holding a regional meeting in Woodland on October 28<sup>th</sup>. Halverson informed Council to advise Leisha Copey, Executive Assistant, if they would like to attend.

Halverson reported that there are several staff members that have substantial vacation balances. They will be taking time off to ensure that their accrued leave does not exceed the maximum allowed by the policy.

Halverson asked Council if they would like a special meeting set to discuss the budget.

After further discussion it was decided to clear the workshop agenda on October 6<sup>th</sup> to discuss the budget and to reserve the following Monday for a special meeting if necessary.

**COUNCIL:**

Dietzman inquired about the access rights to the Anderson Well. Hodges responded to Dietzman's inquiry.

Gerde commented that she spoke with Sandy McQueen, owner of Haley's Flowers, in response to McQueen's concern about the possibility of moving the location of the Farmers Market. Gerde asked Hogan if the Downtown Vision Coalition (DVC) is considering moving the Farmers Market next year. Hogan responded that he believes there has been some discussion about this amongst the Farmers Market merchants, but nothing has come before the DVC to date. Hogan gave further details.

Gerde congratulated Mitch Lackey on his appointment to Police Chief.

Smith commented that she has been on 3 “ride-a-longs” with the Fire Department and found the experience to be very interesting.

**PUBLIC:**

Chris Kralik, 631 NW 18<sup>th</sup> Loop, Camas, WA:

Kralik asked if it would be feasible to get public input on the budget priorities. Mayor responded that public comments are always welcome and the first opportunity for comment will be at the October 6<sup>th</sup> workshop. Kralik responded that he was referring to some type of survey. Dietzman stated that a level of service study was completed in 2005, which she believes is still applicable.

Discussion followed.

Nellie Groeneveld, PO Box 604, Camas, WA:

Groeneveld asked what work is being done on the Louis Bloch Park and who uses it. Halverson responded that the park is extensively being used by the Babe Ruth ball clubs and that he will need to research what work is being done and how it is being funded. Mayor asked Halverson to report his findings. Halverson stated that he would.

Council and staff responded to several other inquires made by Groeneveld.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

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Mayor

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City Clerk