CITY OF GILBERT
MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2017
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Mayor Milos called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

Present: Mayor Milos and Councilors Robich, Pontinen and Bol. Councilor Robich arrived late at 5:08 p.m.

Absent: Councilor Vertachnik with notice.

Staff Present: Fire Department Officers Skenzich, Devich, Public Works Operations Director Lautigar arrived at 5:50 p.m. and Administrative Assistant Bennett.

The Fire Department Officers Skenzich and Devich would like the Fire Department pension raised. Councilor Robich stated the rental income for antennas on the water tower was included in the original budget but we don't have signed contracts for the antennas at this time. That would potentially mean there would be a $20,000 deficit in the budget. There is a plan in place if that ends up being the case. The City Council is not comfortable with increasing the Fire Department's pension. Councilor Robich discussed how there are many projects that need funding and with everything that needs to be done there isn't extra room in the budget for the increase.

Discussion, Fire Department Officer Devich is not asking for anything above and beyond. The Fire Department's Treasurer is in the process of getting the number of how many fire calls the Fire Department has had for the year (their calendar year ends annually on November 1st). The budget reflects $32,000 for wages and salaries for the Fire Department. There is a $4,300 surplus. Questioned if that could be deposited into PERA. Councilor Robich noted that for the 2018 budget that even though there is $4,300 left over, it isn't part of the revenue for the following year.

There is no line item in the budget for revenue for the Fire Department, the Fire Department has raised an estimated $10,000 through advertising, events and grant writing. The Fire Department would like to see a correlation in the budget with their fundraising efforts and grants.

Mayor Milos questioned why the surplus can't be put towards the pension. Councilor Robich stated that the City Council doesn't have the figures and doesn't know what the balances of the funds are. It's uncertain as to what's in the checking account. They have to go with the information they have.

It was noted that there is $4,300 left in the budget for the Fire Department. Council Robich agreed but stated they aren't sure if that money has already been spent or allocated towards something else in the budget.

Fire Department Officer Devich stated there is an issue with the budget and a problem with transparency. The City needs to go back to meeting with individual departments to figure out the budget. The Fire Department hasn't seen a budget in five years.

Fire Department Officer Devich questioned a line item for $5,500 in the Fire Department's budget. Councilor Robich stated that was for Workman's Compensation Insurance. They are seeing in on

their budget now because it was split out by department in 2017. Which explains why they haven't seen that expense previously.

It was noted that $10,000 went back to the city. It's difficult to believe that there is nothing that the city can give to the Fire Department. It was noted that the City Council can't quantify the number as accounts haven't been reconciled.

It was questioned that if the payment is due in 2018, why the surplus can't be taken from the 2017 budget? Councilor Robich stated that any money not used goes back into the general fund. It was questioned why the $10,000 that the Fire Department raised didn't go back to the Fire Department. Councilor Robich we won't know until we know what is in the general fund.

It was questioned if the $4,300 surplus could be sent to MN PERA. MN PERA allows and recommends contributions. If the Fire Department makes a proposal of $1,600 per years of service. Could a check for $4,300 be sent to MN PERA. Councilor Robich stated that seems appropriate but it would depend on expenditures. There was a tentative verbal agreement to send MN PERA a $4,300 check and move to have pension raised to $1,600. Councilor Robich stated that as long as the numbers hold up that it seems agreeable.

The Fire Department is looking to get to a point where they match other area Fire Departments. Comparisons were made to other area cities and townships. Discussion regarding the comparison of Fayal Township versus Biwabik Township. Gilbert Fire Department has been in effect since 1922, they have consistently had 20 or more active members since that time.

There was clarification made regarding turnout gear. It was tabled on October 24, 2017 but the Fire Department was not asking for additional turnout gear, only what has already been budgeted for. Mayor Milos stated that she already has $1,200 raised toward another set of turnout gear. Capital Outlay has always been a line item on the budget. Requested that the Fire Department works on a wish list for what is needed. Turnout gear is not paid for until it's delivered. and it can take nine weeks to get turnout gear. Fire Department Officer Skenzich can request that Fire Safety USA invoices them before the end of 2017. It was noted that Minnesota Energy donated $2,000 towards turnout gear in 2017.

Fire Department Officers Skenzich and Devich, in 15 years on the Fire Department they've received $139,000 in grants, of that, the city's expense was less than $8,000. The Fire Department has made over $215,000 worth of donations to the community.

It was questioned if a fund could be set up with to help with potential upcoming needs. Specifically, a type of a depreciation fund.

Mayor Milos questioned different potential fundraising ideas for the Fire Department, potentially have a gun banquet. Milos has been advised that the city of Cohasset has done a gun banquet in the past and it was very successful, Cohasset raised approximately $14,000 on the banquet. Mayor Milos also offered the idea of having a Fire Department Women's Auxiliary. Any money raised by the Fire

Department, the Fire Department would keep. The money raised would not go back into the general fund.

The public works budget was reviewed. Discussion, Public Works Operations Director Lautigar asked the Council if there was any money being allocated for the Broadway Street project happening in 2020. He stated that there are storm sewers, curbs and gutters that need fixing. We have some storm sewers collapsing. There are also bad spots on the sidewalks. This is not covered by MN DOT. MN DOT will assist with the Broadway Street project. Lautigar asked if there is money being put aside for these other projects. Councilor Robich stated there is $150,000 in the 2018 budget to fund 501 and projects of that nature.

The City Council would like to get a layout of a plan of what needs fixing. Lautigar will work with Jamnick to come up with a plan and present that to the City Council in December.

Discussion around gutter, sidewalk and curb replacements. This is something that the city used to do. Previously the resident was responsible for paying for the concrete needed and the city would pay for the labor.

The City Council would like to put together an official work order process. They'd like to assess all projects and prioritize the projects.

Councilor Robich asked Lautigar if he had gone over the budget with City Clerk Sakrison. Lautigar stated that he had briefly gone over the budget with Sakrison and he gives his input as needed regarding the Public Works Department.

Capital Outlay for City Hall was discussed. Per Lautigar there is a furnace that needs replacing, the air conditioning unit needs replacing, the front fascia of the building, lighting improvements, new interior carpet and paint is also needed. The furnaces are checked monthly, they are 20 plus years old. The City Council is open to the idea of setting up funds to deal with these issues. Right now, it isn't clear exactly how money is being spent. Councilor Pontinen stated that they need to start looking into grants for these upgrades.

Upgrades discussion, per Lautigar, the Community Center has a clear coat of concrete sealant on it that was done previously when the building was tuck pointed, it could use another coat especially in certain areas. The City Hall building could be sprayed as well. Per Lautigar, it would cost $200,000 to replace the furnace for the Community Center. There is the option to get two smaller furnaces to save money. One furnace would run during the fall until the other furnace is needed. It would work the same in the spring, both furnaces would be running until we are able to taper off and only once furnace is needed to heat the building. Lautigar would like to put a concrete stoop in the Legion Room of the Community Center. He would like to see the Legion Room have good doors and stoops. Councilor Robich stated there are lots of grants available for Community Centers. They would like to get funding together to potentially build a new Community Center. There was discussion about putting money into the current Community Center versus building a new Community Center. It was questioned if the current Community Center is listed on the Historical Registry. It was unknown.

The meeting ended at 6:23 p.m.

Katelyn Bennett

Katelyn Bennett, Administrative Assistant

ATTEST:

D. Elizabeth Milos, Mayor