

**CITY OF SULTAN COUNCIL WORKSHOP– April 1, 2021**

Mayor Wiita called the workshop to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held via Zoom Internet Conference Service with all members in attendance at remote locations via computer or phone. Mayor called roll and the following were in attendance:

Councilmembers in attendance: Aldrich, Walker, Neigel, Vaughn, Sivewright, and Beeler; Absent: McCarty, and Student Rep DeBock.

Staff in attendance: Administrator Ibershof, Public Works Director Morgan, Planning Director Galuska, and City Clerk Pevey.

**CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None Noted

**DISCUSSION****AB21-41 Staffing and Operational Reorganization Plan**

Administrator Ibershof addressed the items in the packet to include a draft salary based on salary surveys from AWC, current organizational chart, and proposed future organizational chart. Ibershof explained the needs of the community are changing due to new development and critical projects; the city is growing, and it is clear additional staff is required to grow with the needs; along with the changing roles required for a changing community. Suggestion to shift roles from Building Official to Building Inspector; Engineer to Construction Specialist; Community Service Officer to Senior Planner; and Field Supervisor to Operations Manager. This change is estimated to save the city \$30,000 per year. Planning/Building Department is experiencing 20 new permits per week and the workload is much higher than expected. The city is predicting 220 to 250 building permits will be received in 2021.

Two options for growth presented as follows:

#1) Reorganization in June with staffing to meet the city's needs, current Building Official would remain on staff part time thru the transition, and immediate support for the Planning Director. Requires council support for an additional .5 FTE, additional wages/benefits with an increase of \$30,000 in wages; or

2) Reorg in September would lower wages and benefits, but staff would be challenged keeping up with the work and Planning Director forced to wait for needed additional support.

Discussion regarding financial resources and cost differences between the two options; concern over how additional staffing would be handle when building influx declines; acknowledgement of one time funds and moving cautiously in the financial arena; and concern for current staff and possible burnout if staffing changes held until September.

Administrator Ibershof reviewed the growth targets with council and recapped that the city received an additional 149 building permits and 140% increase in sales tax revenue of 2020. All one time money and proposal being brought forward is conservative to make sure the city can keep the people that are brought on by planning sustainable events, projects, etc. that the city can keep going despite the ups and downs of one time revenues. He reiterated that the city is making, "Sustainable moves that would fill the needs short term as well as long term".

Council also acknowledged the need to continue to focus on business development to attract new business as well. Council in agreement that the wage structure has recently been revamped to allow for growth and appreciation in seeing staff working to take advantage of the opportunities for advancement being offered to support long term employees.

Planning Director Galuska explained a boom of housing draws the attention of commercial developers to follow the growth of population. Already have had interactions with potential commercial customers and pre plat review of a few of those potential projects. Galuska explained the added Senior Planner position increases the capacity to allow a more thorough review of commercial code updates in preparation for anticipated development in this area.

Mayor Wiita confirmed that 2022 budget talks will look at the longer-term plan moving forward; and that the extra half FTE was needed to be able to keep the current building inspector on longer to handle the training transition. Discussion on projects in the works and anticipated timing of the projects coming online. Ibershof explained if council did not wish to keep the building official on part time; he would be coming back to council with a consultant contract at a much higher rate, as the transition position is a need in city staffing.

By Mayor's count majority in favor moving forward sooner rather than later. Ibershof explained will bring forward for resolution approving this change to the process with job search for potential candidates moving forward in April. Plan to hire additional staff on board by June.

Mayor Wiita explained briefly that the City was anticipating additional Covid Relief Funds and asked council to bring forth potential ideas of how to utilize this money to staff to research for consideration at a future meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None noted

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Councilmember Walker, seconded by Councilmember Sivewright, the council meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00 pm, all ayes. The zoom meeting connection was disconnected shortly thereafter.

  
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Russell Wiita, Mayor

  
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Tami J. Pevey, City Clerk