

**MINUTES
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
2012 PROPOSED BUDGET AND LEVY
COOK CITY COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 17, 2011 – CITY HALL – 5 PM**

PRESENT: Mayor Harold Johnston, Councilors Jody Bixby and Elizabeth Storm
ABSENT: Councilors Karen Hollanitsch and Kim Brunner
OTHERS PRESENT: Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Cindy Palm and Maintenance Supervisor Bud Ranta

Mayor Harold Johnston called the special council meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

The purpose of this meeting is to hold monthly special study sessions to discuss budget planning for 2012. The November study session focuses on the budgets for Water and Sewer.

Water and Sewer budgets were reviewed with Maintenance Supervisor Bud Ranta. Current water meter issues (LABCO litigation) and a 2011 lift station replacement can reduce the budget annually. The maintenance garage is in need of replacement with excessive heat loss to the building. All other expenses were reviewed and are necessary to operate the water and sewer system.

Utility rates were increased in April 2011. A rate study and review will occur annually as part of the audit to review rates. The budget will continue to focus on reducing operating expenses and reviewing fees charged for operations as well.

The US Bank 1998 Sewer Refunding Bond for \$130,000 will be paid off on January 1, 2012 so the budget will be adjusted accordingly. There is a large quantity of remaining debt for the replacement of the infrastructure and the city will continue to review debt restructuring options and consider utilizing liquor store funds to reduce some of the debt.

Ninety five percent of the current infrastructure system was replaced in 2005. The city has developed a plan for future replacement of the infrastructure and will need to continually monitor the replacement fund for this plan. The water meters have an approximate ten year life and will need to be addressed for future replacement as well.

The sewer system had its lift station replaced in 2011 through grant funding and city designated funds. The city is seeking funding for utility and drainage improvement projects for 2012 and has designated \$50,000 for local funding.

Maintenance Supervisor Bud Ranta reported that future CIP plans include adjusting the control structures on the ponds and realignment and anchoring of 16 inch piping for the ponds as well. He also reported that he is satisfied with the new water tower, treatment plant and well and the project has produced a capacity to support a population of 1000 with the maximum at 1200.

Motion by Storm, second by Bixby to adjourn the meeting at 5:35 p.m. **MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Palm
Deputy Clerk/Treasurer