

**MINUTES
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
2013 PROPOSED BUDGET AND LEVY
COOK CITY COUNCIL
AUGUST 23, 2012 – CITY HALL – 5 PM**

PRESENT: Mayor Harold Johnston, Councilors Jody Bixby, Kim Brunner, Karen Hollanitsch and Elizabeth Storm
ABSENT: None
OTHERS PRESENT: Administrator Clerk/Treasurer Theresa Martinson, 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 2013. The August study session focuses on the budgets for Streets and Alleys.

Streets and Alleys

A CIP Plan for Streets and Alleys was presented to the council to see what projects have and have not been completed.

Signage

St Louis County will be contacted for Retro Reflective Law changes for street signage for 2013.

Streets

The maintenance department will address snow removal at the community center parking lot after all city streets and emergency routes are cleared first. Snow removal will not be considered while the community center is idle, but will need to be addressed for safety access to the building for ambulance and fire.

Streets and Alley paving will be a continuous process. Downtown alleys were completed first (2010-12) due to difficult grading issues, added class five, high traffic and commercial accessibility. Maintenance intends on continuous paving on the city's south side as budgeted funds permit.

Buildings

The equipment garage is in need of replacement as daylight can be seen through the walls, heating bills are excessive and it is difficult to move and store equipment in the building. A design with no cost figures has been provided by JPJ Engineering and funding opportunities will be researched. Maintenance would like to construct the garage near the water treatment plant and tower to utilize the same entrance and group all buildings in one area. A current IRRRB Commercial Redevelopment Grant is being considered for removal of the old equipment garage and water and sewage plants. This project is a high priority on the CIP Project List.

Equipment

Current lawnmowers are 13 years old with one budgeted for replacement in 2013 and one in 2015. The equipment replacement fund is allotted \$7500 annually and funds will be utilized in this designated account for lawnmower replacement.

Ditch mowing was discussed as maintenance does not have the proper equipment for ditching as well as the added safety concern. Herbicide treatment is currently used at the sewer treatment ponds and done in house with a second maintenance person. Herbicide is long term damaging to the ponds and maintenance utilizes the safest treatment possible. Council questioned the amount of ditching compared to the cost to purchase equipment in house or to contract this service out. Maintenance will further research in house purchasing of equipment and/or equipment attachments and operating cost versus contracting out.

Maintenance also discussed the need for a portable gas generator on wheels for streets, water and wastewater plants with wastewater the most urgent concern. Safety grant funding will be researched and possible community sharing as well.

An absorption attachment for the skid-steer for snow removal should be considered as it protects both the operator and equipment from jarring upon impact during snow removal. The approximate cost for these is around \$1000 and will be further researched.

Miscellaneous

The North River Street Bridge Project remains idle as St. Louis County needs to meet with city officials to discuss the project in detail.

Dirt being deposited by the water plant area will eventually be spread when the 2012 Drainage and Utility Project is completed as some will be put back into the project for finishing.

The September budget study session will review the Recreation and Parks and Beautification budgets.

Motion by Storm, second by Hollanitsch to adjourn the special study session meeting at 5:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Palm
Deputy Clerk/Treasurer