

**MINUTES  
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
2012 PROPOSED BUDGET AND LEVY  
COOK CITY COUNCIL  
SEPTEMBER 22, 2011 – CITY HALL – 5 PM**

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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 2012. The September study session focuses on the budgets for Streets and Alleys, Library, and Parks and Beautification.

Streets and Alleys

Administrator Martinson met with St. Louis County Traffic Engineering to discuss options for traffic control along Gopher Drive. Speed humps were recommended over signage because signage is not always observed and can also be removed for maintenance, however; speed humps do not necessarily slow traffic down and unless the entire width of the road is covered, vehicles will travel around them. The council felt that the \$3500 cost of speed humps does not justify placing them in the 2012 budget for Gopher Drive at this time.

Administrator Martinson reported that a second maintenance person has been budgeted for in 2012. This position is distributed between water (25%), sewer (25%), streets (25%), parks and beautification (12%) and recreation (13%).

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

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue culvert/drainage/paving project was previously council approved in 2011 with funding from the liquor store and \$63,000 designated from the general fund. This project will now be combined with 1st Ave SW and funding will be applied for through CDBG funding. Designated funds will remain in place for this project into 2012.

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. Funding will need to be secured or liquor store funds utilized in the future.

Streets and Alley paving needs to be continued and Maintenance Supervisor Bud Ranta, recommends completing the downtown alleys which were started in 2010. The alleys are difficult to maintain with the grader and businesses receive high customer and vendor delivery complaints. The alleys are already sub cut and less expensive to pave than the streets.

In 2010, remaining budget funds were utilized to pave two alleys in downtown Cook behind commercial businesses with the remaining downtown alleys to be paved in 2011.

The council discussed the city's obligation to maintain alleys versus streets and feels assessment education should be done to determine what should be paved first and what should be assessed. Some council members also felt that streets should be paved before alleys as they are more visible.

Library

The library equipment fund will be utilized for building improvements as approved by the library board. For 2012, anticipated projects include roof repairs and interior ceiling work.

A service agreement with Shannon’s Inc. allows spring and fall maintenance of the air conditioning system in the library/police building. Funds are budgeted above and beyond for additional repairs and maintenance to the system.

Sidewalk shoveling will remain contracted to outside services. Sidewalks need to be maintained before the building opens for service.

Carpets will need to be cleaned in the library and police office. The police portion will be taken out of the police budget.

Parks and Beautification

Primary expenditures will be for parks maintenance and beautification in downtown Cook. The garden club will continue to maintain the city gardens as they have in the past.

The gardens near city hall were dismantled in 2011 and the Beautification Committee will make a recommendation to replace the gardens with maintenance free beautification. The \$2000 designated annually towards one table, bench and grill will be utilized towards the city hall garden replacement in 2012 since the funds were not used in 2011.

The River Street Park murals need to be re-leveled and stained. This may be a project that a specific group may be interested in with funding provided from the Parks and Beautification budget.

The 2012 General Fund Budget proposes the following:

Proposed Revenues: \$435,480.00

Current Levy \$311,560  
5% \$327,138 \$15,578

Proposed Expenses:

General	\$365,442.00
Deficit	<u>\$(13,758.00)</u>

The October budget study session will review the Recreation and Airport budgets.

Motion by Storm, second by Brunner to adjourn the meeting at 5:53 p.m. **MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Palm  
Deputy Clerk/Treasurer