

**CITY OF NISSWA
MINUTES –CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2021
5:30 P.M. – CITY HALL**

A City Council Budget Workshop was held on Tuesday, August 10, 2021, at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall, and was available on YouTube Live.

Members present: John Ryan, Mark Froehle, Don Jacobson, Ross Krautkremer, Mark Utzinger.

Members absent: none.

Also, present: City staff – Jenny Max, Tom Blomer, Terri Wallin, Maggi Wentler, Craig Taylor, Kiki Lindbery.

Audience members: Police – Luke Hall, Conner Collette.

A. Call to Order – Mayor John Ryan called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

B. 2022 Budget Discussion - Max prefaced the Agenda by noting that the discussion will be focused on any new or old ideas/proposals/visions from three of the City’s Departments. The remaining Departments will present at the Workshop next week. Preliminary long-term goals for the Departments were included for discussion. This is part of the Strategic Planning process implementation the City is working toward. Priority lists will come later in the budget process. Max asked for feedback regarding the potential for additional workshop dates in order to get through the general fund preliminary levy decisions for the 2022 Budget; she will also be working to develop the Organizational Chart, per some of the presentations tonight. It was noted that any residual questions the Council may have should be directed to Max so that she may provide follow-up information to all Council Members.

Pickle Factory – Terry Wallin noted that the last month (July) posted the largest sales total the Pickle has ever experienced. Revenues have increased over \$50k over the last three years; some of the increased revenue is due to drink price increases that have occurred, increased food sales, and increased sales of new additional products in the off-sale. Wallin also noted that one of the largest increases in expenses is due to credit card fees which have increased about 125%. Much of this has to do with Covid protocol and customers using cash less frequently. Discussion commenced. Capital improvement plans were discussed; major components of the Pickle’s plan include a new ice machine, lighting, and a future backroom/off-sale structure expansion. Employee retention plans were also discussed; Wallin noted that recent training sessions have helped with conflict resolution strategies. An additional employee was recently hired, which should eliminate some of the need for overtime for other employees – thereby contributing to overall employee satisfaction and staff retention. The Pickle has been working more closely with Spirits Liquor Store of late coordinating efforts where possible.

Police Department – Chief Craig Taylor – Chief Taylor summarized the Department’s main capital improvement requests into four main categories: a new K-9 proposal; an additional employee – Office Manager/Administrative Assistant; new software for video storage – Watch Guard; and updating police rifles. Discussion commenced. Council Members requested that Chief Taylor provide specifics at an additional meeting for the K-9 proposal regarding potential timelines, upfront costs, logistics, squad car ‘out-fitting’ for the K-9, etc., so that the Council could potentially act upon this proposal soon, as there is a dog and training available locally right now. It was noted that the K-9 upfront costs would be a budget-neutral issue, as the costs would come out of Police reserve funds.

Employee retention strategies were discussed, as was the request to add an additional employee/office manager position to the Police Department. The past year has shown an increase in year-round residents and tourism now, which has also led to a busier Police Department with a large increase in call volume. Discussion ensued regarding the need for updating police rifles due to new and ever-evolving tactics, rules, regulations, and expectations. Current rifles could be used as back-up equipment.

Mayor John Ryan called for a brief recess at 6:33PM. Meeting reconvened at 6:38PM.

Public Works Department – Tom Blomer - Blomer and Max clarified that the potential budget items presented for discussion tonight do not include any special assessments. Council Members asked questions about the required training within this department, the proposed feasibility study for a new City water facility, employer paid insurance fluctuations, and ‘other’ expenses (seasonal – recurring; mowing, for example). The vehicle matrix and timelines were also discussed as were vehicle fund balances. Blomer also presented the possibility of adding an additional employee/position within this Department as the potential new lift station and possible future water treatment facility will add an increased need for staffing. Discussion commenced regarding the potential for the Public Works Department to share some of the maintenance/mowing/landscaping duties with the Parks and Recreation Department. Blomer noted that there are currently some shared duties between these Departments. The new potential position could work within both of these departments, and they are not looking for an entry-level position. Blomer is optimistic that adding an additional staff person could help cut down on future overtime expenditures in the Department; there is currently \$31k for overtime costs budgeted for Public Works.

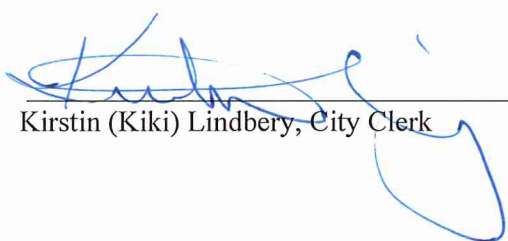
Max then polled the Council about whether an additional Budget Workshop would be helpful for them, and they determined that it would be beneficial to hold an additional Workshop on August 31, 2021, to summarize and prioritize budget items moving forward. Council Members noted appreciation of these workshops and believe they are helpful and provide a good starting point for the Budget process as a whole. Council Members were asked to forward all questions/ concerns to Max ahead of time so that she can gather and discern answers prior to the August 31, 2021, Workshop.

Adjourn – There being no further business, Motion by Utzinger, seconded by Krautkremer to adjourn the City Council Workshop at 7:22 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



John Ryan, Mayor



Kirstin (Kiki) Lindbery, City Clerk