

# City of Willow Springs

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## Special Council Meeting

Monday, November 6, 2023

City Hall Council Chambers

Closed Session at 5:30 pm – Open Session at approximately 6:30 pm

**Present:** Mayor Brooke Fair, Alderman Danny Bradley, Alderman Kim Rich, Alderman Tyler Morris, Alderman Phill Knott, City Administrator Beverly Hicks, City Clerk Heather Tooley

**Absent:** City Attorney Zane Privette, Police Chief Wes Ellison, Assistant Police Chief Al Lewis

**Guest:** Officer David Hocking, Officer Joe Barnhouse, Steve Schwandt

### ANNOUNCEMENT OF QUORUM

City Clerk Heather Tooley called the roll.

Mayor Brooke Fair opened the meeting of the Board of Alderman at 5:30 pm with a quorum present.

### AGENDA APPROVAL

**Motion by Alderman Knott, second by Alderman Bradley to approve the agenda. Motion carried 4-0.**

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

**Motion by Alderman Knott, second by Alderman Bradley to move to executive session for (1) Legal, and (3) Personnel pursuant to §610.021. A roll call vote was taken:**

**Aye: Bradley, Rich, Morris, Knott**

**Nay: None.**

The meeting moved into Executive Session at 5:31 pm and adjourned at 5:44 pm with no action taken.

**Motion by Alderman Rich, second by Alderman Knott to adjourn closed session and return to open session at 5:44 pm. Motion carried 4-0.**

### NEW BUSINESS

**2024 Budget Work Session:** City Administrator Beverly Hicks discussed the \$7.6 Million draft budget for 2024 with Council, highlighting items on both the revenue and expense side.

#### Revenue

- **Electric Rates:** The City is scheduled for an electrical rate study and Hicks does not recommend a rate adjustment for the beginning of 2024.
- **Water/Sewer Rates:** The last rate increase occurred as a three-year step increase from 2017 through 2019 at a rate of 3.5% each year. Over the last 2 years, the City's water

system has been audited to ensure the billing software reflects the information on the meters. Some commercial accounts were found to have an incorrect multiplier and those issues were corrected.

Regular burden expenses have increased by approximately 15%, such as fuel, employee benefits, and uniforms, to name a few.

With the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) continuing to impose new regulations, expenses are expected to continue increasing.

Hicks provided a table reflecting water and sewer rate increases 2024 through 2026 at a rate of 3% and 4% each year. Council agreed on a 3% increase for both water and sewer rates, with the intent to reevaluate at the end of 2024.

### Expenses

- **Airport:** The runway will be resurfaced in 2024 through a 90/10 MoDOT multi-modal grant, with the City's 10% match being approximately \$38,000.00. The airport board also requested funds to upgrade the lounge with a new heating and cooling unit.
- **Administration/City Hall:** A review of the City's municipal codes was last conducted in 2008, which ensures the local ordinances are consistent with state and federal laws. The cost associated with this review will be approximately \$12,000.00.
- **Animal Control/Code Enforcement:** The City's current transport cage is very old, worn, and only allows one animal. A request has been made to purchase a new double carrier and one mobile singular model to accommodate small animals for a total cost of approximately \$2,000.00.
- **Electric Department:** Lead times and material costs continue to increase. We will be purchasing a load of electric poles for approximately \$36,000.00. A 7200 voltage recloser is of the highest priority for large circuits such as the south junction and the industrial park at a cost of approximately \$35,000.00.
- **Sewer Department:** One focus for 2024 is to seal/grout manholes and lift stations where infiltration is evident. The first stage will cost approximately \$40,000.00.
- **Water Department:** The High Street tower needs repairs to maintain compliance with DNR regulations and the cost will be approximately \$29,000.00.
- **Fire Department:** The City will continue to replace SCBA breathing apparatuses and bunker gear for firefighter safety, however, we will continue to search for grant funding to offset these costs.
- **Police Department:** The plan is to purchase agency-issued rifles and shot guns in the future and increase the training/education budget to ensure police officer safety, as well as remain compliant for risk mitigation.

The City is also looking to be placed on a replacement program with Peacemaker, who is the company that provides data terminals in the cars. A 3-year replacement would cost \$2,350.00 per vehicle. A 4-year replacement would cost \$1,875.00 per vehicle. A 4-year replacement (including the handheld ticket writer) would cost \$2,500.00 per vehicle. Each of these options provide a no-fault warranty.

A request was also made to update security cameras for the new evidence room, along with 2 gun safes for both evidence weapons and agency-issued weapons.

- **Street Department:** One goal is to provide more paved streets, over-lays, and chip-sealing with the new oil distributor, which will increase the supply/material budget from the current \$107,000.00 to \$140,000.00 for oil, rock, and concrete.

A request was also made for a used 5-yard dump truck with an estimated cost of \$40,000.00.

- **Wastewater Treatment:** The replacement of the influent control panel was requested as top priority for a cost of approximately \$38,000.00.  
We will continue purchasing 2.2 HP pumps for the filters and keep them on the shelf for the event when a existing one needs replaced.  
We need to replace gears for the clarifier for a cost of approximately \$11,000.00.  
Bearings and chains for the aerator need to be replaced for approximately \$4,000.00.  
The lift station on Sunshine Drive is very old and will need to be replaced for a cost of approximately \$185,603.00.
- **Employee Wages:** According to the Social Security Administration, the 2024 Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) will be 3.2% and upon approval of Council, the wage grade/step plan will be adjusted.
- Several departments have discussed the need of pole barns or buildings to house the new equipment, vehicles, and critical supplies for an approximate cost of \$80,000.00. This would protect hydraulic hoses, keep snow/ice from piling up on vehicles and equipment, and allow items to be plugged in. While this is not currently in the budget, we may revisit the discussion later.
- The Willow Springs Public Library requested a 10% increase in support to \$3,575.00 monthly, for an annual total of \$42,900.00. The City currently provides annual support in the amount of \$39,000.00.
- The Willow Springs YMCA has requested a continuation of the current annual support in the amount of \$16,200.00.
- The Willow Springs Chamber of Commerce has requested a continuation of the current annual support in the amount of \$1,200.00 for the purpose of a utility cost off-set.

**Motion by Alderman Bradley, second by Alderman Knott to adjourn the meeting at 6:45pm. Motion carried 4-0.**



*Heather Tooley*  
 Heather Tooley, City Clerk

**CITY OF WILLOW SPRINGS**

*Brooke Fair*  
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 Brooke Fair, Mayor