

New Plymouth City Council
Budget Workshop Minutes
9 June 2009
7:00 pm
New Plymouth City Council Chambers (Library)

The budget workshop meeting of the New Plymouth City Council was held at the New Plymouth City Hall on Tuesday, 9 June 2009 at approximately 7:00 p.m.

No guests were present.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Joe Cook. Role call was taken with Councilwoman Mayer, Councilmen Cline, York and Esplin in attendance. Staff members present were Beth Ann Christensen, Deputy Clerk and Leon K. Jensen, City Clerk.

The purpose of the workshop was to review expenditures and revenues from the 08-09 fiscal budget year and begin work on the 09-10 fiscal budget proposal for the City of New Plymouth.

Councilman Esplin asked whether or not the city is being double taxed for the ambulance and fire. He wanted to know if we could separate some funds and put the money into accounts where the more money is needed.

The council determined that they would like to see a spread of numbers over two years for budgeting purposes. It was determined that a 5 year spread on numbers would be good showing actual cost and the council asked staff how soon the information could be provided.

Councilman York asked if there was going to be an increase in the money for the councilmen. There are no benefits for the council and the council considered a pay cut but determined that their pay would remain the same.

Rural Fire contract questions were raised by Councilman York. It was determined that we would work with the fire department though this next year as location opportunities for the fire department may arise.

Public Works have requested a dollar an hour raise in wages. Admin staff was asked if they had considered what wage increase may be appropriate for them.

Admin requested a new software program to replace the current program in use. The capabilities of a new system were discussed. Where to obtain the dollars for such a purchase was also discussed. Data transfer from our current program to a new software program was discussed as well as the costs of such transfer. The council discussed the transfer of funds line items. The Caselle software package and costs were discussed. It was noted that Beth Ann Christensen, New Plymouth Deputy Clerk is very familiar with Caselle, having used it in the past. Costs were discussed and information was provided that the cost of such software would be approximately \$22,744.00. Monthly maintenance costs for the program were discussed. Councilman Cline asked how much data history could be gathered and stored. The cost of gathering historical information could be considerable. The council would like to see 5 years for the general ledger and the actual cost and open the budget. It was determined that we would need 12 months history for utility billings. Investments were discussed for the purchase of the software. The council discussed opening the budget for the purpose of allocating funds to purchase new software.

Questions were asked regarding support to the city by our auditor. We have invited her to the next council meeting but she has not responded as yet. Other auditor opportunities were discussed. Staff was directed to write to Jo Bolen and invite her to attend the next council meeting and provide the council with the New Plymouth City Audit for 2008-2009.

The Library budget was discussed and the Council accepted the budget as written and presented by the Library Board.

Wages were discussed for the public works and the council discussed the possibility of a 3% or 4% raise across the board for all staff. There was mixed support for larger raises versus lower raises. Councilman Cline still favors a 4% raise across the board. Discussion continued regarding raises and what may work or what may not. People have lost jobs and our employees should not feel threatened because they may not get the raise they deserve, due to down economy and lack of funds. The council decided to plug in 4% for all city employees and try to budget those figures in now.

Agenda items for the next meeting are as follows:

- Discuss opening up opportunity for auditors to bid on Auditing for New Plymouth City.
- Check on insurance bids for employees, health, vision and dental.
- Look for quote for 2010-2011
- Purchasing of new soft ware needs to be on the agenda

The council discussed medical insurance and the need to get a firm figure for insurance costs. It was determined that health insurance deductible out of pocket is \$300.00. Bids must be in writing for the new year and we should not go for primary coverage. We should check on these coverage's for the next budget year, 2009-2010. It was determined that the current health insurance deductible out of pocket is \$300.00.

The Hardin Sanitation franchise was discussed, the sheriff's department was discussed for the next budget year. **Councilman York moved to set the 14th of July for the next budget hearing, seconded by Councilwoman Mayer with the voting unanimous in favor.**

Councilman York moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilwoman Mayer with the voting unanimous in favor.

Meeting Adjourned

Joe Cook, Mayor

Leon K. Jensen, Clerk / Treasurer