

AUGUST 8, 2017 FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

3 p.m. Council Chamber. Members present: M. Hraban, R. Moore, B. Stoneberg for M. Platteter. Others present: A. Christianson, K. Gibbs, D. Parker, T. Verdegan.

Call to Order:

Committee Chair Moore called the meeting to order and presided. He went on to say it is going to be a tight budget year and that some expenditures may need to be frozen to enable needed street work.

Credit Card:

Motion was made by M. Hraban, seconded by Stoneberg and carried by voice vote to add new Chief Kyle Gibbs' name to the LFD's credit card.

2018 Budget Review:

Cemetery/Parks

Doug Parker reviewed budget requests for the cemetery, parks, engineering, celebrations and entertainment, and solid waste. A few highlights are as follows.

- The cemetery is running well, but there is a need to replace a riding mower. While the on-site well is still working it is likely to need attention before much longer.
- Similarly, the parks system is in need of a couple riding mowers as those currently in use are quite old and often in need of repair. On one recent day five mowers were down for repairs.
- It is uncertain where previous discussions of elevating parks and recreation efforts are going.
- The fence at Christman Field is in quite bad condition.
- Waste collection and disposal has been operated to be self supporting. It lost money last year, however, so it may be time to raise our dumpster fees. Our fees are quite a bit lower than private comparables.
- Our recycling trailer needs replacing. It was previously refurbished so that likely won't work again. A new one could cost \$30,000.
- The E M Dahlberg trail sign is among a handful in need of replacement.

Fire Department

Fire Chief Kyle Gibbs reviewed that department's proposed budget, noting that most lines are about the same as last year. He did note the following:

- Fire inspection costs will be up.
- Intentions are to replace locks on the fire hall, which are 13 years old. The back door also needs replacing owing to rust damage.
- Wages are up some.
- LFD has a couple new members, both of whom were previously on the department.

Economic Development

Al Christianson stated that many, mostly larger communities, call their facilities "industrial parks" because they are surrounded by manicured grounds that are park like in nature and help keep property values up. We have not been able to afford that luxury. Some years we are able to mow road ditches and vacant lands, while other years we are not depending on competing work, weather, etc. He showed increased costs to hire Rusk Co. Highway Dept. or others to do such mowing to keep appearances up. It was noted that field work recently completed by the Du Sells has helped improve appearances.

He also advised that general budget support for his position is up as The Mining Fund, which had provided much of that support, is way down for the following reasons:

- Weather Shield vacating the so-called "Visions plant".
- Sale of the former Conwed plant to Rusk County.
- Closure of the former Merit plant.

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at about 5 p.m.