

**MINUTES  
WORKSHOP  
DOVER CITY COUNCIL  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
APRIL 28, 1999  
7:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Councilor Johnson, Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Wilson, Councilor Berry, Councilor Landry, Councilor Rawding, Mayor Wil Boc.

Absent: Councilor Reese and Mayor Pro Tem Perry.

## **1. DISCUSSION RE: BUDGET**

The Mayor called the meeting to order. He stated there is one small item that needs to be taken care of. It is an application for a raffle permit. The Mayor moves to grant, there were no objections.

The Mayor stated on page 9 is a summary of what the City Manager eliminated from the budget in case department heads want to address the items. He also passed out a form that shows what requests were made by department heads, what is presently in the budget by the City Manager, and what a particular councilor feels may be cut or added to. This may be handy to see where we would like to see cuts or additions in the budget. This should be returned to the City Manager by next Tuesday.

Berry asked Chief Bibber to explain his cuts again.

Chief Bibber explained the two (2) new positions are the most important. He stated the pickup truck is the next priority. He then prioritized the entire list. The Chief wanted to leave the council with the paperwork they had already received.

Landry stated he was not here on the Saturday of the Budget Workshop. He stated he wants procedures set in place. Landry also stated people have decided it's important for department heads to give their view of the world. He stated the City Manager should be able to represent all departments. He stated he feels it is inappropriate for department heads to be at the workshop.

The Mayor stated he feels it is appropriate for department heads to be here just one more time.

Landry reiterated the same.

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Johnson stated he was unhappy with last year's interpretation. He stated he feels the City Council has a great impact on the budget. Johnson stated he feels at this point we should be arriving at a consensus and at the end he would like a series of resolutions to agree to in a straw vote.

Rawding stated he was not 100% pleased with last year's budget, but he felt it was fair for the city and departments. He stated he is concerned that the tone of the budget is we are going to be adding in. Rawding stated he would like a 5% reduction in each department from the City Manager's stated amounts.

Wilson applauds Rawding's idea, but he stated he wants to take last year's budget and add in contractual increases.

The Mayor stated we need to spend more money to get money back for the city. This is a vibrant, growing city. The Mayor stated last year, we passed an increase of \$1.33, then knocked it down to 53¢. He stated we need to spend more money than last year. The Mayor stated he feels fat is already gone from the budget. He stated he wants to approve the City Manager's budget of \$2.31. The Mayor stated then two (2) major things will be happening; Claremont will be settled in the fall and increased revenues will knock the \$2.31 down.

The Mayor stated he would like to go through page 9, then let Wilson speak.

Berry stated he would like to take last year's budget excluding schools, then list all decreases that have been made. He stated, then if we decide to go line by line, we could basically use a one (1) page document. Berry stated, then we could go from there.

Landry again feels those are great suggestions. One last comment, he regrets we used the fund balance to offset the tax rate. He stated we are in 8 years of economic expansion. Landry stated we need to pass a budget we can live with it on its own, then if we get more revenue before the final tax rate is set, put that in the rainy day fund.

Rawding stated he has a different twist on it. He stated the projected savings on the tax rate may be real or may be fantasy. Rawding stated he also doesn't want to take any money from the fund balance. He stated he wants to commit here tonight that he is not looking into dipping into the fund balance and wants to give money back to the taxpayers.

The City Manager stated he feels staff can put together what they are looking for. He stated the important thing that drives the tax rate is how much the council spends based on how much it costs to run the fleets, buy pencils and paper, operate computers and pay our personnel. The City Manager stated he can fund everything in this budget.

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The City Manager stated the bottom line is costs increase and you want the same level of services.

Berry stated in presenting the budget the way he was suggesting shows that personnel costs are some of the largest increases. This lets the general public know what we are going through.

Johnson does not want to go through this line by line. He stated he wants changes that are made to reflect the council's decisions, not the City Manager's.

The Mayor stated he has questions about page 9.

The Mayor stated he has a question to Steve Stancel regarding the \$25K decrease for the Master Plan - Transportation.

Steve Stancel stated its important to start from scratch again to determine what is important for the next 10 – 15 years. He stated a city that fails to plan, plans to fail. He listed all the items that were completed by the 1988 Master Plan.

The Mayor asked whom the \$25K would go to?

Steve Stancel stated the Strafford Region Planning Agency has offered to do this. Stancel stated ideally a Master Plan should be done every five years or so. Stancel stated he feels we are behind the curve on our current Master Plan. He stated residents are very concerned about traffic issues and streets and sidewalks.

Landry stated traffic is important to him. He stated what would the value to the city be by having professional people in the city volunteer to update the Master Plan.

Stancel stated this would take a significant amount of staff to do it that way and we just don't have the staff.

The City Manager clarified our ability to do this in house as opposed to contracting this out.

Landry wants to explore his idea of professional people updating the Master Plan.

Rawding comments about prioritizing these items. He stated he feels this council has spent a lot of money. Rawding stated if we can move an item until next year, it would spread out the tax burden on the taxpayer. He stated if it can wait, that's what we should do. Rawding stated we have an awful lot of spending on our plate for this year.

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The City Manager appreciates Rawding's statements, but he comments on the 22 items, he has removed 14 of them. He stated he has removed these same items every year.

Stancel added information to the Master Plan. He stated in the Master Plan, we can charge developers fees for developing in certain areas of the city.

Schmidt addresses the growth aspect in relation to the Master Plan. He stated we are facing major growth in this City. Schmidt stated growth is a two-edged sword, though. He stated if we do not plan for growth, it will come anyway.

Berry wants the city council to follow the policy of the goals on pages 10 – 13.

Wilson stated on page 9, regarding line 4745 camera purchase. He stated as a result of an earlier discussion, he will be proposing we reinstate \$10K, the rest will be donated. Wilson agrees 4100 and 4200 will be cut. He stated we can put together a communications committee to run the cameras.

The Mayor is opposed to the camera.

Landry asked about the camera. Discussion ensued from Wilson regarding the camera with rebuttals all around.

Johnson commented on the Master Plan and cameras. He stated he is still up in the air on why.

The Mayor turned it over to Wilson for presentation.

Wilson stated he has no miracle solution to funding problems.

Wilson goes on to explain his plan. He provided the council with a handout with charts.

Johnson stated he is not ready to comment. He stated he is curious about why?

Wilson stated he is concerned about the fact that we seem to take for granted that we should focus on should reducing the \$2.31 because it will change the tax rate. He stated we could save \$1.5 million on the proposed budget and live as comfortably as last year and meet all the contractual agreements.

Johnson stated he does not agree that last year was that great of a year. He stated there were overcrowded classrooms.

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Wilson stated he simply wants to present a different point of view.

Johnson stated he agrees that his focusing on only the tax rate is inappropriate.

Wilson stated he is only trying to convey the general tone.

The City Manager stated he feels Wilson is right. He stated Councilor Wilson is showing his different perspective. The City Manager then clarifies with pages 42 and 43. He stated the city side is up by \$1 million with this.

Berry stated the council will meet again on Tuesday, May 4 with a simplified proposal – using pages 42 and 43.

Schmidt asked about where the increase in the school department service is.

Berry stated on page 391.

The City Manager will find it and provide the information to Schmidt.

Rawding stated he thinks when we are looking at how much the level of equipment and personnel of last year is compared to next year, we shouldn't take \$1 million and add four percent (4%).

Rawding mentioned combining the Police and Fire again. He stated he wants to utilize people and equipment in a better fashion. He stated he feels there could be savings there by sharing personnel and equipment.

Landry asked Wilson about one of his charts. Then comments on the budget cuts.

The Mayor asks everyone to come to the next meeting with their cuts.

Wilson wants the City Manager to come up with a plan, too.

The Mayor asked all the councilors where the cuts should be.

Rawding stated he still wants a 5% reduction in each department.

Landry stated he will do his best to come up with cuts.

Wilson asked about Cathy at the Library – they had a proposal regarding having the library open on Sundays. He asked would this be time and one-half or straight time?

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Schmidt commented on the Claremont issue that this is like the flight pattern of a bumblebee. He asked given the general outline, will Dover have any substantial change in funding?

The City Manager explained his take on the Claremont issue with regards to Dover.

Landry asked the City Manager, if you were a City Manager that counted their chickens before they hatch, so to speak, rather than the way you do it; would we be looking at \$1.75 increase rather than \$2.33. He thinks it's important for people to keep things in perspective.

## **2. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned 9:10 p.m.

Judy Gaouette  
CITY CLERK