

January 25, 2011

The City Council of the City of Fort Morgan, Colorado, met this day in the Council Chambers of City Hall. The Honorable Mayor Terry L. McAlister called the special meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Roll Call: Present: Honorable Mayor Terry L. McAlister
Councilmember Scott Bryan
Councilmember Sharol Lyn Deal
Councilmember Debra J. Forstedt
Councilmember Brent M. Nation
Councilmember James A. Powers
Councilmember Ronald Shaver

The meeting was also attended by Acting City Manager and City Attorney Jeffrey Wells, Police Chief Keith Kuretich, Treasurer Terri Schafer, Director of Water Resources/Wastewater Treatment Gary Dreessen, Municipal Engineer Brad Curtis, Community Development Director David Callahan, Director of Community Services Patti Evans, Superintendent of Library and Museum Services Andrew Duneboo, Supervisor of Library and Museum Services Claudia Nickell, Golf Professional Tyler Tarpley, Golf Course Superintendent Chad Corp, Golf Pro Shop Manager Anna Blake, Cemetery Sexton Larry Carr, Recreation Coordinator Brad Weese, Human Resources Coordinator Cheryl Winberg and City Clerk John Brennan.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN THE SEVERANCE AGREEMENT WITH PAT MERRILL

Mr. Wells reviewed the agreement, which included the acceptance of the resignation of former city manager Pat Merrill, a release from any future claims and a lump-sum severance payment of \$77,721 to Merrill. Councilmember Powers offered a resolution to authorize the mayor to sign the agreement, which was seconded by Councilmember Nation. Councilmember Bryan stated that he is against such agreements in general and would vote against the measure. Councilmember Forstedt said she was also against this type of agreement but would vote in favor, in the interest of moving the city forward. The resolution carried on a vote of 6-1 with Bryan casting the dissenting vote.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION ON HUMAN RESOURCES CONSULTING AGREEMENT

Wells said consultant Mark Cicotello had originally signed a consulting agreement to help the city with special projects and to help find a permanent human resources director, but had been working in the capacity of a director for some time. Wells said Cicotello's role was clarified and some changes made during the budgeting process, and he would now be working on site at the city one day a week. This agreement would formalize that role. Powers offered a resolution to approve the agreement as presented, which was seconded by Forstedt and approved unanimously.

PRESENTATION ON FISCAL YEAR 2010 PROJECTS

Wells conducted a presentation and slide show on city projects accomplished during 2010, which included street paving work, new gas metering equipment, electric line rebuilding and conversion to underground lines, water main replacements and hydrant installation, renovation of the children's library area, the Rainbow Bridge Enhancement Project, repairs to a washout of the riverbank and nature trail in Riverside Park, upgrades to the Cargill detention pond and the completion of a new taxiway at the city airport.

DISCUSSION OF THE RIVERSIDE PARK NORTH LEASE FOR CATTLE GRAZING

Wells said the city has in the past leased the land it owns and recently annexed on the north side of the river from Riverside Park, and asked for council direction on continuing that practice. Wells said allowing cattle to graze the land earns the city a small amount of money and also helps keep vegetation growth on the property under control. The council consensus was to continue to lease the land for grazing.

REVIEW OF 2011 BUDGET

Ms. Evans began this next installment of the 2011 budget review with a presentation on the Community Services department, reviewing the budgets for the various departments under her control including staffing levels, revenues and expenses, planned capital projects, equipment needs and other matters. Evans reviewed the budgets for parks, museum/library, cemetery, golf course operation and maintenance, recreation, senior center and community services administration.

Evans reviewed reductions in staffing and consolidation of the museum and library operations, and capital projects that include upgrading the restrooms at Riverside Park and the pedestrian tunnel under the freeway between the park and the city. She also reviewed changes in hours of operation for some facilities like the library, museum and recreation center. Several department managers said the budget was lean but they would make it work.

Following Evans' presentation, Mayor McAlister called for a short break, which lasted from about 10:05 to 10:15 p.m.

Police Chief Kuretich then reviewed the budget for the police department, which he said represented no monetary increase from the prior year and a reduction in personnel. He said the budget may cause some increased response times but overall should not affect the levels of service offered by the department.

DISCUSSION AND COUNCIL DIRECTION ON GOLF COURSE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Wells said the city staff was seeking direction on how to spend \$600,000 that had been set aside for replacement of the golf course irrigation system and budgeted for expenditure this year, and also on changing a part-time employee at the golf course to full time. The council discussed the irrigation system and whether it was feasible to make improvements rather than replacing the entire system. Mr. Corp said he could not say what would be the best use of this money without knowing whether there would be money for further improvements in the future.

He said if the council was not going to continue to set aside money for full replacement, he could spend what is needed to fix the most pressing irrigation issues and any leftover funds could be used to make some other course improvements such as new tee boxes or bunkers. Powers suggested that the council get some firm figures on costs before making a final decision, and the council agreed by consensus. The council also agreed by consensus to leave the status of the second golf course pro shop employee at full-time as it had been budgeted for 2011.

UPDATE ON GAS AND ELECTRIC RATE STUDIES

Curtis told the council that the staff had been compiling information to provide to the Nebraska Municipal Power Pool for the studies, and the studies are expected to be completed within 60 days of NMPP receiving that information. The council asked for an update on the status in late February.

DISCUSSION OF WILLIAMS FARM PROPERTY AND POSSIBLE SALE OF HOUSE

Wells said the house located on the city-owned farm has been rented in the past but has some maintenance issues, and city staff believes the city should not be acting as a landlord. He said there had been some interest expressed in buying the house and relocating it. The council directed staff to seek bids to buy the house and move it, and also to level the foundation and clean up the site as part of the same agreement.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RE-LEASE OF EXCESS LEASED WATER

Director Dreessen said the city expects to have more water than it needs in the coming year, and has traditionally leased out excess water that the city has long-term leases for but does not need. Powers offered a resolution to authorize the leasing of this water, which was seconded by Nation and approved unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF START TIMES FOR UPCOMING WORK SESSIONS

Wells said the city staff planned to schedule several work sessions at city facilities to showcase these operations for the council, and wanted to start them as early as possible to allow as many employees as possible to be in attendance with minimal rescheduling of employee work shifts. The council consensus was to leave the start times up to the staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT/AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

BIDS, MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Brennan informed the council that 12 requests for bids for various equipment and services had recently been released, and information on the specifications and other details could be found

on the city Web site. Wells thanked the council for the city employee party held the preceding weekend, and said that after attending a recent meeting of the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska he expected that an increase would be coming in city wholesale electric rates.

Mayor McAlister adjourned the January 25, 2011, special meeting at 11:33 p.m.

/s/ Terry L. McAlister
Mayor

/s/ John J. Brennan
City Clerk