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CITY OF SEDRO-WOOLLEY  
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Council Study Session  
January 2, 2019  
Public Safety Training Room

Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. with the Flag Salute.

Roll Call: Mayor Julia Johnson, Councilmembers: Judith Dunn Lee, Brenda Kinzer, Chuck Owen, Karl de Jong and Jared Couch. Absent: Councilmembers Germaine Kornegay and Pola Kelley. Staff: City Supervisor/Attorney Berg and Finance Director Merriman.

### **Overview of Financial Management Policies**

- Mayor Johnson called on Finance Director Merriman to present the financial management policies agenda item. He used a PowerPoint presentation to deliver his presentation (he also provided a handout from the Government Finance Officers Association).

Questions and discussions followed. Councilmember de Jong commented that he receives many questions about the TBD (transportation benefit district) and appreciates that the information is available on the city's website; he appreciates the quick response time from staff; and the information on the website is written in plain language. Councilmember Couch asked Merriman to grade the state of the city's current financial policies. Merriman responded that Sedro-Woolley's policies are workable but could be improved. Couch would like additional information on funding sources and associated requirements (i.e., why a sidewalk is a certain width). He would also like to better understand our tax history to be able to explain the city's revenue. Councilmember Owen asked about the library site clean-up costs; City Supervisor/Attorney Berg responded to the substantive question. Councilmember de Jong asked about how that information is made available to the public. Finance Director Merriman suggested that the library tracking worksheet could be available to council and the public on a regular basis. He also suggested that a library construction page could be added to the website. Councilmember Couch would like to identify the path forward with a prioritization of policies. Mayor Johnson expressed the importance of long-term plans to help the city achieve specific objectives. Finance Director Merriman shared an example of a long-range plan in Oak Harbor of increasing fund balances from 1% to 16%. They were able to achieve their goal in less than 10 years based upon the plan. Mayor Johnson asked Merriman about his opinion of Sedro-Woolley's fund balances. He responded that Sedro-Woolley is at 8% and his opinion is that a higher ending fund balance might make sense.

Merriman would like to begin with debt, fund balances and reserves and investments. Mayor Johnson thanked him for his presentation.

### **Miscellaneous**

- Mayor Johnson asked about possible dates for a council retreat in March. The consensus was that Mondays were good however, not March 6<sup>th</sup> and earlier in March is better. Mayor Johnson will follow up with the council when some possible dates are known.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 7:51 P.M.