
CITY OF SEDRO-WOOLLEY

Council Study Session
November 6, 2019
Public Safety Training Room

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

ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor Julia Johnson, Councilmembers: Brenda Kinzer, Germaine Kornegay, Chuck Owen, Judith Dunn, Karl de Jong, Jared Couch and Pola Kelley. Staff: City Supervisor/Attorney Berg, Finance Director Merriman and Public Works Director Freiberger.

Councilmember de Jong moved to amend the agenda to allow public comment on his proposal to add traffic calming to the 2020 budget in parts of his ward. Seconded by Councilmember Couch. Without objection, Mayor Johnson called for public comments.

Randi Miller from Railroad Ave. started with concerns about speeders on her street. Russ Rockafellow also from Railroad Ave. shared the same concerns. Tina Rockafellow from the same location shared the same concerns and stated that the number and speed of cars have increased since the SR 9/Jameson roundabout was opened. She also talked about police enforcement and an experience when no tickets were given and requested additional stop signs be added at various locations. Councilmember Couch requested that Public Works Director Freiberger review the request and bring back a recommendation for the council.

Sewer CIP, Facility Plan and Rate Study

- Mayor Johnson introduced Item 1; Public Works Director Freiberger talked about the sewer plant, capital improvement plan (CIP) and the status of the current rate study which was also presented to the utilities committee earlier in the evening.

Presentation of the Mayor's Balanced Budget

- Mayor Johnson introduced the 2020 budget and discussed her priorities and her budget message including: the new FTE for public works operations, improvement plans for Bingham, Olmsted, Winnie Houser parks and the land on Reed Street, the second phase of the public works facility, fire station 1.5, increasing ending fund balances from 8 percent to 12 percent, over time. Mayor Johnson also talked about her plan and request to the council to move from an annual budget to a biennial budget as well as her direction to staff to fully develop a comprehensive CIP. She also talked about budget pressures and demands such as increasing liability insurance costs, personnel costs, mandates, etc., along with proposed revenue increases and highlighted

specific expenditures. Public Works Director Freiburger talked about the impact of I-976, which is a loss of \$210,000 in the city's 2020 budget.

- Mayor Johnson addressed Councilmember de Jong's four proposals and asked a specific question about his proposal to fund Prop 1 within the budget if Prop 1 does not pass. Councilmember Kelley indicated that additional property tax increases could be increased if Prop 1 fails. Councilmember Dunn reminded the council about its banked capacity. Mayor Johnson suggested that 2020 discussion for 2021 would be appropriate for Councilmember de Jong's park proposal since the city has plans in 2020 to address three major park projects. Councilmember de Jong talked about his proposal to include some limited staff time to support partnering with other entities and to apply for funding to address invasive plants at Riverfront Park and develop a trail along the Skagit River. Mayor Johnson indicated that the city is coordinating with the 2020 Census through the planning department and would be able to provide information via the city's website and Facebook. Councilmember de Jong talked about federal funding that is allocated via the census and the possibility of adding an iPad/kiosk to allow people to complete the census at city hall and the library. Councilmember Kelley indicated that the Sedro-Woolley Chamber has agreed to host a site at its office.

Finance Director Merriman talked about the charts, graphs and trends for the 2020 budget. Councilmember Kelley asked about the social services item on Page 15 of the packet. Merriman and City Supervisor/Attorney Berg responded that that category includes the senior center, support for mental health to Skagit County, Community Action, and Helping Hands Food Bank. Councilmember Couch asked about revenues to the REET funds. Merriman responded that the 2020-budgeted amount is \$188,000 for each of the two REET funds (Funds 301 and 302). Berg talked about a few other specific areas of interest in the 2020 budget and changes between 2019 and 2020 on various line items. Discussion followed.

Questions were asked about EDASC and Volunteers of America. Councilmember Couch asked about the possibility of using REET funds and/or Fund 115 funds to increase funding for the AV upgrades for the council chambers. Councilmember Couch would like to see options as part of the budget process. Councilmember Kornegay asked about funding for infrastructure to support and attract businesses. Councilmember de Jong asked if his proposal 2, regarding park upgrades at Riverfront Park would be included in the budget. Mayor Johnson suggested that Councilmember de Jong connect Nathan Salseina, Public Works Operations Supervisor with the Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group to discuss the proposal. He also asked about his 2020 Census proposal. Mayor Johnson asked why it would need to be in the budget if there is no cost. Councilmember Couch asked if the goal was to add a third electronic station at city hall (in addition to the chamber and the library). Councilmember Kelley stated that the primary collection method

is electronic but if residents do not take the electronic option, door-to-door census workers will seek to collect the data at residents' homes. Councilmember de Jong followed up on his request for traffic calming and law enforcement emphasis in Ward 6. Councilmember Couch stated that he wants to find a solution, but does not appreciate when people state, "nothing is happening" when they also acknowledge that law enforcement is patrolling. Mayor Johnson indicated that this is a pervasive issue that needs to be addressed as much as is possible. Councilmember de Jong asked if the school might be willing to share information. Councilmember Kornegay reminded the group that Public Works Director Freiburger was already asked to look at some of the intersections that were reported tonight.

There being no further business of the council and without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 9:02 P.M.