



**CITY OF CORNING
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL
CLOSED SESSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2015
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
794 THIRD STREET**

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A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL:

Council:

**Darlene Dickison
Dave Linnet
Tony Cardenas
Willie Smith
Gary Strack**

Mayor:

All members of the City Council were present.

The **Brown Act** requires that the Council provide the opportunity for persons in the audience to briefly address the Council on the subject(s) scheduled for tonight's closed session. Is there anyone wanting to comment on the subject(s) the Council will be discussing in closed session? If so, please come to the podium, identify yourself and give us your comments.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

D. REGULAR AGENDA:

- 1. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – EXISTING LITIGATION PURSUANT TO SUBDIVISION (d) (1) OF SECTION 54956.9:
Hoffmann v. Jourdan, et al**

E. ADJOURN TO REGULARLY SCHEDULED CITY COUNCIL MEETING AND REPORT ON CLOSED SESSION: 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Strack announced that Council met in Closed Session with the City's Legal Counsel and received an update on the case status.

Lisa M. Linnet, City Clerk



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B. ROLL CALL:

Council:

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Mayor:

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All members of the City Council were present.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by the City Manager.

D. INVOCATION: Led by Mayor Strack.

Persons of no religious persuasion will not be expected in any manner to stand or to participate other than to remain quiet out of respect for those who do choose to participate.

E. PROCLAMATIONS, RECOGNITIONS, APPOINTMENTS, PRESENTATIONS: None.

F. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR:

A member of the audience welcomed new City Manager Kristina Miller and addressed the Council asking if Mrs. Miller would have a contract; she was informed no. She then asked the salary step at which Mrs. Miller was being hired; she was informed by current City Manager Brewer that Mrs. Miller was hired at Step B on the salary schedule. This individual then requested that each of the Bargaining Unit Memorandum of Understandings be placed on the City's website.

Another member of the audience asked what the total benefits costs for the new City Manager would be; Mr. Brewer responded stating that he didn't have that information at this time however it would be provided. The audience member then asked who served on the screening panel; Mr. Brewer stated the City Council made the decision. The next question asked was if there was justification for hiring at the Step B level; Mayor Strack responded stating that there were circumstances which justified this step.

G. CONSENT AGENDA: It is recommended that items listed on the Consent Agenda be acted on simultaneously unless a Councilmember or members of the audience request separate discussion and/or action.

- 1. Waive reading, except by title, of any Ordinance under consideration at this meeting for either introduction or passage, per Government Code Section 36934.**
- 2. Waive the reading and approve the Minutes of the November 24, 2015 City Council Closed Session and Regular Meeting with any necessary corrections:**
- 3. December 3, 2015 Claim Warrant - \$148,315.21.**
- 4. December 3, 2015 Business License Report.**
- 5. November 2015 Wages & Salaries: \$422,816.71.**
- 6. November 2015 Treasurer's Report.**
- 7. November 2015 City of Corning Wastewater Operations Summary Report.**

Councilman Cardenas asked to pull item 3, Claim Warrant for a separate vote as he will abstain from voting as he is listed on the warrant in relation to reimbursement for medical insurance cost benefits resulting from his prior employment with the City.

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An audience member requested that the November 24, 2015 City Council Closed Session and Regular Meeting Minutes be pulled for clarification.

Councilor Linnet moved to approve Consent Items G-1, and G-4 through G-7. Councilor Smith seconded the motion. **Ayes: Strack, Dickison, Linnet, Cardenas and Smith. Absent/Abstain/Opposed: None. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote of the Council.**

H. ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA:

2. Waive the reading and approve the Minutes of the November 24, 2015 City Council Closed Session and Regular Meeting with any necessary corrections.

An audience member asked why Councilor Smith abstained from voting on the Streetscape Bid as she was required; he was informed that she had a relative (electrician) associated with the Project. Councilor Linnet then moved to approve the Minutes as written and Councilor Dickison seconded the motion. **Ayes: Strack, Dickison, Linnet, Cardenas and Smith. Absent/Abstain/Opposed: None. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote of the Council.**

3. December 3, 2015 Claim Warrant: \$148,315.21:

Councilor Dickison moved to approve the December 3, 2015 Claim Warrant in the amount of \$148,315.21; Councilor Smith seconded the motion. **Ayes: Strack, Dickison, Linnet, and Smith. Absent/Opposed: None. Abstain: Cardenas. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote with Councilor Cardenas abstaining.**

I. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND MEETINGS: None.

J. REGULAR AGENDA:

8. Acceptance of the 2015 Traffic Speed Survey.

City Engineer Ed Anderson briefed the Council on the Speed Traffic Survey. Councilor Linnet asked when the trailer was last calibrated; he was informed by Chief Jeremiah Fears that was not known. Mayor Strack stated that this would be checked.

An audience member stated that she has noted what appears to be a lot of speeding on Houghton Avenue within the last six months.

Councilor Cardenas moved to accept and adopt the 2015 Traffic Speed Survey; Councilor Dickison seconded the motion. **Ayes: Strack, Dickison, Linnet, Cardenas and Smith. Absent/Abstain/Opposed: None. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote of the Council.**

9. Presentation of recommendations from General Fund AdHoc Committee.

City Manager John Brewer presented the summary for this item outlining the 4 separate recommendations resulting from the 9 member General Fund Ad Hoc Committee (GFAHC) appointed by the Council on June 23, 2015 attached as Exhibit A. He informed Council that in addition to those recommendations, also included is some other alternatives for general fund savings attached as Exhibit B which could be implemented in the future by subsequent action of the City Council. All of the recommendations presented for Council consideration are:

- Gather input from the Fire Chief, Police Chief and Public Works Director regarding how they'd modify their budgets to reduce General Fund Spending by 7%; and/or
- Initiate a Ballot Measure for supplemental Sales Taxes or to form a Benefit Assessment District; and/or
- Present the various Dispatch Alternatives;
 - 1. Police Dispatch** – Consider contracting out for Dispatch Services with the Tehama County Sheriff's Department with 3 separate options listed as:
 - Option A – 24 hr./day/7days a week for an annual cost of \$180,697;
 - Option B – 12 hr./day/7 days a week for an annual cost of \$120,464; or
 - Option C – 12 hr./day/5 days a week, 24 hr./day on weekends for an annual cost of \$135,522.

Current Budget for Police Dispatch is \$482,737, of that total \$401,737 is dedicated to salaries and benefits. The savings under Option "A" could provide an annual savings of

as much as \$302,000 annually, however the first year under this option would only provide a possible savings of \$104,000 after the payback of the \$197,989 for the Police Dispatch Remodel Grant funds per the most recent letter received on November 11, 2015. Option "A" wouldn't account for the value of the receptionist/record keeping tasks regularly provided by the Police Dispatchers. Options "B" and "C" offer less savings as well.

2. **Fire Dispatch** – Consider contracting out for Dispatch Services with CalFire:
 - **24 hr./day/7 days a week** for an annual cost of \$65,000.

Current Budget for Fire Dispatch is \$354,013, of that total \$346,513 is dedicated to salaries and benefits. If the City were to eliminate its Fire Dispatch Center and contract with CalFire at \$65,000/year, the savings could amount to \$289,013 annually. However by doing so the City would no longer receive the \$31,000-\$32,000 received via contracts for dispatching services. Total net savings could be \$285,000 per year.
3. **Consolidated Dispatch Center** – A draft plan for consolidation of the two Dispatch Centers into a single Consolidated Dispatch Center located at the Police Dispatch Center (due to the recent upgrades at this location, it is most cost effective for the consolidated Center to be located at that location). Vacancies in the Police Dispatch Center could be used to facilitate a transition to a single consolidated Dispatch Center. Implementation would occur over time through cross-training and creation of a single position description titled "Emergency Service Dispatcher (ESD). As vacancies occur in Police Dispatch, instead of recruiting from outside the organization, we move the best qualified ESD from the Fire Dispatch to the new ESD Center. We would not fill the vacancy at the Fire Dispatch Center, instead the hours and/or days of operation would be reduced proportionately to the reduction in staff; eventually the entire Fire Dispatch Staff would be cross-trained and transferred. In this manner no lay-offs would be necessary. It would likely take many months to complete the transition to a more cost effective and efficient single Emergency Service Dispatch Center. Savings to the General Fund would similarly be postponed, however once completed the potential savings would be considerable; amounting to about \$320,000 annually, and over a five year period could amount to approximately \$1,600,000.
4. **Collect additional Dispatch Fees from the City of Orland, Orland Fire District and Capay Fire District** – Currently the City receives between \$31,000 - \$32,000 annually to provide fire dispatch services for the City of Orland, Orland and Capay Fire Districts. We could seek increases to those contracts which would increase revenues. We have determined that increasing the rates by 36% would generate about \$12,000 of additional revenue each year which would mean an additional \$5,500/year in costs for Orland and Orland Fire District, and about \$1,000 more annually for Capay Fire District which would equate to \$60.30/call vs. the current \$44.10/call. Although the combined population and areas of the Orland, Orland Fire District and Capay Fire District exceeds that of the City of Corning they pay a combined total contracted cost to the City of \$31,000 - \$32,000, however the total budget the City pays to operate Fire Dispatch is over \$350,000. From a cost/benefit perspective, the three contracted agencies account for about 38% of the fire dispatches. To account for their true costs, the sum of the fees collected from the three agencies should be more on the order of \$133,000.

Exhibit B Alternatives offered to accomplish short term and long term General Savings:

1. **Short Term Alternatives:**
 - a. Suspend some, or all of the General Fund Capital Purchases included in the 2015/2016 Budget and require prior City Council approval of any General Fund Capital purchase (budgeted or not) that exceeds \$5,000. This could potentially result in deferred spending of up to \$140,830.
 - b. Implement some or all of the General Fund Budget Cuts recommended by the Department Heads as "Recommendation No. 1." Potential savings could amount to \$230,000- \$294,000 annually and potentially result in the loss of two positions in the Police/Police Dispatch Departments.

2. Long Term Alternatives:

- a. Collect additional dispatch contract services fees from the City of Orland, Orland Fire Protection District and Capay Fire Protection District;
- b. Initiate a ballot measure for supplemental sales taxes or form a Benefit Assessment District to support Public Safety in the City of Corning;
- c. Increase the Transient Occupancy Tax from 10% to 12% which could potentially generate over \$60,000 annually to the General Fund;
- d. Enter a contract with CalFire for Fire Dispatch Services which could result in the loss of up to four Fire Dispatcher positions and provide a potential savings of \$250,000 annually;
- e. Enter a contract with the Tehama County Sheriff's Department for Police Dispatch Services which could result in the loss of up to five Police Dispatcher positions and provide a potential savings of \$102,000 in the first year, to over \$300,000 annually in subsequent years;
- f. Take action to consolidate the two Dispatch Centers where the City could potentially save \$300,000 annually. The savings would not be immediate in the case of consolidation, but instead occur through attrition and would not immediately eliminate any City positions. At the request of the Mayor, Mr. Brewer further explained this proposed process (see item 3 above).

Councilor Linnet stated that the Fire Dispatcher who suggested cross training in Police Dispatch suggested this to cover shifts for Sick Days, Fire Dispatch could cover, not to combine Dispatches. He further stated that the experts contacted stated that a consolidation does not work.

Mayor Strack stated both the Fire Chief and Police Chief visited Chico where they have a system similar to the consolidation suggested and it appears to work. Councilor Linnet and Chief Spannaus stated that they have two dispatchers on duty, one that handles fire and one that handles police issues at all times. Mayor Strack confirmed that they are cross-trained and stated that because of their size they would need two Dispatchers to accommodate; as the City of Corning grows someday we might need to also. There was some discussion related to number of calls received at each dispatch and type of calls. The difference between a centralized and consolidated dispatch was explained.

A member of the Volunteer Fire Department spoke in regards to resources at other agencies in comparison to the City of Corning, specifically the number of Dispatchers on duty at a time, the manner in which Dispatchers track calls, etc.

A member of the public requested a clarification between an incident call (call for service) and communication call. It was also explained the relay process of receiving cell phone emergency calls.

Councilor Linnet requested clarification as to why the Department Heads are not allowed to make cuts to their "Wish List" or Capital Improvement Plans as City Manager John Brewer stated. Mr. Brewer responded stating that was not what he stated and directed Councilor Linnet to Exhibit B, Short Term Alternative number 1.

Councilor Cardenas stated that this is not the first time this issue has come before the Council, it dates back to the 90's and now we have a problem, this is an ongoing thing and we need to be responsible for our budget and become fiscally sustainable for not just this year, but for future years as well.

A member of the Volunteer Fire Department spoke stating that the Council expects the Fire Department to take the brunt of this long term plan through the taking of 67% of their budget. Councilor Cardenas stated that one of the options that resulted from the Ad Hoc Committee was, if we can't do a combined dispatch, to consider contracting dispatch services out for both Police and Fire to achieve a savings. A member of the audience asked how contracting out vs utilizing employees presents a savings; Councilor Cardenas stated that it costs less to contract out and explained why. He also mentioned the possibility of seeking a vote on a sales tax increase which has not yet been discussed. He also stated that we need to find final solution to this issue so that we do not have to revisit this every few years, pitting department against department.

Another member of the audience stated that the three most important departments are Fire, Police and Public Works. We need to work at making the City better, getting more people and making a better place to be.

City Attorney Jody Burgess presented information he received at the League of California Cities where they discussed the same problems that we are facing. He stated one of the main things stated was do not deplete your General Fund otherwise you can't do that stuff unless you get a grant (bringing business in requires something to work with to accomplish that). The issue is, what is fair to the public...are we currently over spending for a service that is combined right now between two. It shouldn't be Fire vs Police, but rather what is the public getting, what can be done better and if there is a way to safely accomplish this.

Following confirmation by some members of the Fire Department that the Department still stands behind their stated action to walk should Council cut Fire Dispatch as stated at the June 9th City Council Meeting, along with the voiced views and suggestions made by other members of the audience and staff, Mayor Strack suggested scheduling a Special Meeting in January for further discussion and possible action on this item. By consensus of the Council a Special Meeting will be scheduled. The first meeting in January, City Council will provide Staff with direction. **Discussion Item at this time only... action to be taken at a later date.**

K. ITEMS PLACED ON THE AGENDA FROM THE FLOOR: None.

L. COMMUNICATIONS, CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION: None.

M. REPORTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS: City Councilmembers will report on attendance at conferences/meetings reimbursed at City expense (Requirement of Assembly Bill 1234).

Dickison: Reported that the LAFCO Meeting scheduled for tomorrow had been cancelled and that the Community Action Agency Meeting is scheduled for next Tuesday.

Linnet: Reported on the discussions and actions taken at the JPA Meeting, graffiti clean-up and shopping cart collection.

Cardenas: Thanked John Brewer for his service to the City.

Smith: Announced the Senior Centers scheduled Lamb dinner.

Strack: Thanked Police Chief Don Atkins for his service to the City acknowledging that this was his last meeting.

N. ADJOURNMENT!: 8:18 p.m.

Lisa M. Linnet, City Clerk