

MINUTES
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
LAWTON WATER AUTHORITY
JUNE 23, 1998 - 6:00 P.M.
WAYNE GILLEY CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Cecil E. Powell, Chairman. Invocation was given by Pastor Wayne Schoonover, Liberty Heights Chapel, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Notice of meeting and agenda were posted on the City Hall notice board as required by State law.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: G. Wayne Smith, Richard Williams, Jeff Sadler, John Purcell, Robert Shanklin, Charles Beller, Randy Warren.

ABSENT: Carol Green (attending church function)

ALSO PRESENT: Gil Schumpert, City Manager; Felix Cruz, City Attorney; Brenda Smith, City Clerk

PRESENTATION OF EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH AWARD TO LUIS CURET,
MUNICIPAL COURT

Donna Mata, Court Clerk, introduced Luis Curet as Employee of the Month. Mr. Curet had volunteered with the Sentinel Program for Municipal Court, followed by part time employment and then full time employment. His positive attitude has improved the morale of Court employees, as well as making those being required to pay fines to feel less stress. Curet has translated a Notice of Rights form into Spanish and his bilingual abilities are very valuable. Mr. Curet has been married for 36 years, has six children and six grandchildren. He is retired from the U.S. Army, a previous member of the Lawton Human Rights & Relations Commission, Optimist Club Member, avid runner, and 1977 world novice champion in Putt Putt Golf.

Mayor Powell presented Mr. Curet with a Certificate of Honor, a plaque from T & S Printing, two nonchargeable days of leave, and gifts from The Perfect Marriage, D J=s Car Wash, El Zarape, Video Triple and John and Cook=s. He commended Curet=s outstanding accomplishments. Curet thanked the Mayor and Council, Ms. Mata, the EAC and his co-workers for the recognition.

CONSIDER MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETINGS OF MAY 26 AND JUNE 9, 1998

MOVED by Shanklin, SECOND by Sadler, for approval of the Minutes. AYE: Warren, Smith, Williams, Sadler, Purcell, Shanklin, Beller. NAY: None. MOTION CARRIED.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

1. Consider an annual increase of 2% on the Authority=s utility system and recommend such increase to the Lawton City Council. Exhibits: Resolution (for information only)

Purcell said he requested the item, which was discussed last year but never acted on. He said the budget was recently completed, and some say this is the wrong time to consider this item, but it should be out in the open. Purcell said there is annual inflation and the City Manager and staff need an idea of available funding to be able to prepare the budget. The suggestion is to recommend passage of the resolution to increase rates 2% beginning July 1, 1999; it is not for July 1, 1998, and there was some confusion on that point. It would be effective one year from now and every year on July 1 thereafter, the sewer and water rates would go up 2%. If a resident uses 2,000 gallons of water, it would be a twenty-nine cent per month increase; if they use 10,000 gallons of water, it would be a forty-nine cent per month increase. A commercial account using the minimum would increase \$1.47. Future members would have the ability to alter it, but it is meant to keep up with inflation, assuming it is 2% or less.

Beller said he felt it was not the proper time to consider this, and in the near future, the citizens may be asked to approve a sales tax increase or if not, utility rates would have to be substantially increased. He said they should wait for the voters to voice their opinion about the sales tax and perhaps a small utility increase, if the two could be coupled together, but if this is voted on tonight, even though it would not take effect until 1999, it may plant a seed in some of the minds of citizens that the utility bills are being tinkered with. Beller said he hoped a sales tax program could be developed to include prioritized items so people would know specifically what the money is for, and then as Shanklin had mentioned, economic development may need to be included for a quarter or eighth of a percent, and develop a package that is palatable.

Purcell said the items Beller mentioned had to do with specific CIP projects, such as water, sewer, streets, etc. He said this item is for the yearly operating budget, not related to what might be done for capital improvement. Purcell said an item such as this could preclude the problems experienced in this year's budget from happening to such a degree in the future.

Warren said he thought it should be done out in the open and up front so everyone would know we are not trying to fund projects but to let everyone know it is to cover inflation which the City cannot control. He said the money needs to be built into the budget because it is known that inflation occurs every year so he would support the item.

Shanklin said this same motion was made recently and died for lack of a second. Purcell said it was not the same motion. Shanklin said it was very close. Purcell said it was to do it this year. Shanklin said you are conveying to the public that their bills will go up and conveying to the staff that the money is there.

Shanklin said if the tax base is not increased through economic development, water will be \$75. He said he had been out of town for five days and returned to read the paper to find that he was the one wanting to take CIP money to put it in the budget, and that is not true at all and was never mentioned; what was mentioned was that there was a \$1.9 million that staff could not get to due to being busy with the projects on hand, and there is a 1990 CIP fund of \$800,000 for a street that

was never prioritized, and how it could be prioritized over 34th Street or 38th Street is not known. Shanklin said if they plan to let that \$75,000 sit out there in this one account for the next 50 years because we will do nothing at 52nd and Gore, he did not understand that rationale. He said as far as he was concerned the budget had not been solidified. Shanklin said he heard the City Manager try to tell Warren that the boat was back was in the budget and Warren told him it was not in there and he knew it was not, so if we were that confused, how many other items are we confused on.

Purcell asked for a point of order, stating he did not understand what this had to do with the item. Shanklin said he did not understanding telling people you are going to automatically raise their water next year with the other items on the table and that said he could not support the item.

Schumpert said as a point of clarification, the conversation he had with Warren was one which he said there was discussion about the budget as to what would be exactly in the budget and Schumpert's comment was that one thing for sure was the boat for the police department would not be in the budget. Shanklin said he did not hear it that way and asked Warren if he did. Warren said yes.

MOVED by Purcell, SECOND by Warren, to approve the increase in utility fees annually by 2% and recommend adoption of the increase to the Lawton City Council to take effect 1 July 1999 and be automatic every year thereafter unless a future Council says no.

Williams asked why this is being brought forward now if it is not going to go into effect until next year. Purcell said so everyone knows up-front, we just finished the budget, had all the flap, and one of the reasons for the flap is that we have not had anything built in; this was mentioned a year ago but not done when the budget was finished and he was bringing it up now, not for a particular reason other than to get it done once and for all.

Beller said if we do not get an approval for the sales tax, and a mix of the utility increase, we will have to substantially increase utility rates and that would be the time to put the 2% in the out years perhaps, but if it does not take effect until 1999, it might be a good idea, in his opinion, to wait until the results of the combination of sales tax and utility increase that can be presented to the people and Cruz said the quickest it could come back would probably be November.

Purcell said Beller is talking about CIP items, not the operating budget. Beller said both could be done.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Purcell, Warren. NAY: Smith, Williams, Sadler, Shanklin, Beller.
MOTION FAILED.

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2. Consider increasing landfill fees, increasing fees for roll-on/off (reever) fee containing

demolition materials from structures ordered demolished by council resolution and demolished and removed by owner, and recommend adoption of the resolution to the City Council. Exhibits: Resolution (for information only)

MOVED by Beller, SECOND by Smith, that the Water Authority recommend to the City Council the approval of increasing landfill fees, increasing fees for roll-on/off (reever) fee containing demolition materials from structures ordered demolished by council resolution and demolished and removed by owner, and recommend adoption of the resolution to the City Council. AYE: Williams, Sadler, Purcell, Shanklin, Beller, Warren, Smith. NAY: None. MOTION CARRIED.

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m. upon motion, second and roll call vote.

CECIL E. POWELL, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

BRENDA SMITH, SECRETARY