

Depoe Bay City Council
Workshop – Monday, July 31, 2006 – 7:00 p.m.
Depoe Bay City Hall

PRESENT: Mayor J. White, P. Cameron, A. Brown, G. Romans, J. Brown, M. Lavery

ABSENT: P. Taunton

STAFF: City Superintendent T. Owings, City Recorder P. Murray

Mayor White called the meeting to order and established a quorum.

Law Enforcement

Mayor White referenced a memorandum from Lincoln County Sheriff Dennis Dotson which provides a cost estimate for one full time deputy for Depoe Bay (copy attached to the original of these minutes), noting that Sheriff Dotson and Lt. Landers are present in the audience this evening. He then called for input from members of the audience.

Jeannie Ludlam, Anchor Ave., has surveyed her neighbors and reported that questions asked include: 1) what would the deputy's hours/schedule be, would there be rotating shifts, including weekends, 2) would speeding ticket revenues go to Depoe Bay, 3) would there be more presence in the downtown area than there was during the last contract period. Ludlam shared that her neighborhood is very safe which led to relaxed attitudes, and over the July 4th weekend cars in the neighborhood, left unlocked, were burglarized. She emphasized that there are elderly residents who live alone that need protection.

Mayor White said he has met with Sheriff Dotson and Depoe Bay now has more police coverage than before. He reminded everyone that even with an officer assigned to Depoe Bay there still will be crime and one deputy can't be everywhere all the time. Sheriff Dotson explained that if there is municipal court then fines go to the city court, otherwise fines go to the state court, the county gets minimal revenue from fines. He said that a contract with his office should be viewed as enhanced coverage, and that a forty hour week includes training time and time in court for the officer. Lt. Landers explained that when he served as Depoe Bay's police officer under the previous contract he rotated his shifts and set his schedule so no one knew when he would be on duty, adjusted his work schedule to accommodate the city's special events, and he is surprised to hear that there is a sense of lack of coverage in the downtown area since he spent much of his time there, including walking the area and making contacts with business owners. Dotson and Landers noted that this type of flexibility on work schedule may be somewhat restricted due to the Sheriff's Department current collective bargaining agreement.

Discussion ensued including the following: 1) If the City wishes to place a funding measure on the November ballot, this is accomplished by Resolution of the Council and to meet the filing deadline, the Resolution and Ballot Measure would need to be presented and adopted at the August 15th regular Council meeting; 2) The funding measure would be a local option tax levy with a fixed period of time, with the maximum being five years; 3) The City has accumulated \$127,000 of the Public Safety dedicated transient room tax dollars since July 2003; 4) It would take four officers for 24 hour police presence, and to date, the city has not been successful in obtaining funding for one officer; 5) A Depoe Bay officer would respond to calls outside the city while on city time; 6) There may be a benefit to the county to have an officer in Depoe Bay due to its central location.

Dotson clarified that the \$135,000 cost estimate includes first year start-up costs, following years cost would be approximately \$113,000 per year to sustain the contract. Discussion followed regarding providing an office area and impact on city staff in support of the law enforcement program.

Councilors agreed: 1) A law enforcement funding measure, a local option tax levy, should be placed on the November ballot and the funding period would be for five years; 2) inflation needs to be factored into the cost estimate; 3) a contract with the Lincoln County Sheriff's Department is the best alternative for enhanced law enforcement in the city; 4) the tax rate/impact to taxpayers needs to be determined.

In response to a question, Dotson explained that volunteer (reserve) deputies would not be available to serve as a dedicated officer to Depoe Bay. Mayor White offered to obtain information on a municipal court system from the City of Waldport.

Lou Trapani, said Little Whale Cove has a security person, he serves as relief two days a week, and the security person checks on residences in the area. He feels that the community will want to know if there will be an officer in the neighborhoods or if the officer will be writing tickets on Highway 101. He said that law enforcement is more than having a police presence, it involves people being responsible and participating. He believes the Traffic Safety Commission, of which he is a member, could help by working on developing a program to assist people in learning how to help themselves. He is supportive of a ballot measure and hiring an officer for Depoe Bay. Terry Wideman, member of the Traffic Safety Commission, said he supports a ballot measure and he feels it's all about communication, that the city needs to sell the benefits of the total strategy of neighborhood watch programs and law enforcement. He suggests an ad-hoc committee to work on strategy. Ludlam said if there is a measure on the ballot, her neighborhood would be happy to distribute information. John O'Brien said he is in support of a ballot measure and volunteered to assist in preparing voter information. Dotson offered his office as an information resource as well, and encouraged the city to obtain information from the City of Waldport regarding their experience with their contract with his department. He will be holding a meeting in Depoe Bay in October which will be an opportunity for information sharing.

Discussion ensued on providing information on the ballot measure to voters, that the City can provide factual information, not biased in favor of the measure, but this does not prohibit private citizens /campaign committees from distributing information relating to the measure as long as they do so in compliance with state election law.

It was the consensus of the Council that at tomorrow night's regular meeting, the Council will direct staff to draft a Resolution and Ballot Measure, a five year local option tax levy to fund a proposed contract with the County for one deputy, to place the measure on the November 7th ballot.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Mayor Jim White

Pery Murray, City Recorder