

October 17, 2017
Garnett, Kansas

The Governing Body of the City of Garnett met in special session on October 17, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall with the following present: W. Gordon Blackie, Mayor; Jody M. Cole and Greg A. Gwin, City Commissioners; Christopher T. Weiner, City Manager; and Kristina L. Kinney, City Clerk. Whereupon the written request for said meeting as signed by Commissioners Blackie, Cole, and Gwin was read as follows:

We, the undersigned, Commissioners of the City of Garnett, Kansas respectfully request that a special meeting of the Governing Body of the City of Garnett, Kansas be held at City Hall at 5:30 p.m. on October 17, 2017 for the purpose of considering the following items, to-wit:

1. Budget hearing
2. Any other lawful business to come before the Governing Body

Signed:

W. Gordon Blackie
Jody M. Cole
Greg A. Gwin

The Clerk was instructed to enter such request at length on the journal.

The meeting was called to order at 5:37 p.m. by Mayor Blackie.

Commission Gwin noted that the numbers changed and some of the fund totals are slightly different but within the approved maximum that was published. City Manager Weiner said yes, there were some changes in the revised budget. The significant changes were that the newly created Director of Sanitation and Transportation position's salary has been split between Wastewater, Refuse, and Streets whereas the individual in that role was previously solely paid out of the Wastewater Fund; the Airport Fund was increased with a transfer to spend \$15,000 in order to apply for a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grant of \$150,000, with the city's share being \$15,000 (this transfer into Capital Improvements was budgeted for \$5,000 previously); Parkside #1, #2, and Park Plaza North's budget authority were all decreased – by \$5,000, \$2,500, and \$2,500 respectively; the Capital Improvements Fund was increased by \$10,000 to accommodate the extra \$10,000 for the Airport; and the Electric and Water funds both saw increases in transfers into the Debt Service Fund to \$22,500 from \$10,000 (for Electric) and \$7,500 (from Water) previously – this increase in the transfer into Debt

Service is due to a reduction in the expected cash reserves in the Utility Debt Service Fund – which was going to transfer its cash reserves into the Debt Service Fund.

At 5:45 p.m., Mayor Blackie opened the public hearing and asked for comments.

Susan Wettstein, Community Development Director discussed not increasing the mill levy which causes the utilities to subsidize the municipality rather than property tax. She stated we are one (1) mill lower than we were 10 years ago. Commissioner Gwin said he appreciated her thoughts and stated if the city increased the budget one (1) mill levy every year there would be a 25% increase over the spreadsheet. The taxes for the city are 22%, school district 28% and county 48%. He added that it would take two (2) mills for one (1) truck. Commissioner Cole said it is good to know things early. The city manager just started and going forward that will be great. Commissioner Gwin added we have done a lot of capital improvements on equipment; several new trucks for utility departments; updating to the sewer plant; and the electric line improvement. Commissioner Cole added the water treatment plant. She would like to see a 5-year plan on equipment so they can plan ahead.

City Manager Weiner reported that we are in the process of applying for a USDA Community Facilities grant for which provides up to \$50,000. The grant will pay 55% which covers things such as vehicles, equipment, etc. He added that he prefers to spend money left over in the budget at the end of the year rather than the first of the year in a new budget since we don't know whether there will be overtime or equipment issues. He is reviewing quotes for a city car to reduce paying mileage for training and for a small truck for the Director of Gas and Water since he doesn't need a truck as large as what we purchased earlier this. His truck will be given to the Director of Sanitation and Waste since they need a larger truck. He hopes to have the information on the grant by November.

City Manager Weiner stated he looks at things that benefit the community long term. He provided an example of a program to help young families buy starter homes. It's difficult for families to pay \$1,000 utility bills and move forward from renting. If we raise utility rates, then we push people out of town. Homeowners would increase the property value. There would have to be a financial review board to ensure a sound decision is made on providing seed money to help with down payments. This is something that we would need to decide if we want to get involved in. Commissioner Cole stated that we should talk with the school district and see if they want to work together on that. In other areas they build starter homes to help people get established.

Mayor Blackie stated he likes the ideas and we are looking to the future. He feels we have strong leadership to move us forward.

Commissioner Gwin stated he appreciated the time that the governing body and city staff spent working on the budget.

There being no further comments, a motion was made by Mayor Blackie, seconded by Commissioner Cole to close the budget hearing.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gwin, seconded by Commissioner Cole to approve the 2018 budget as presented. On roll call, the following vote was recorded: Ayes – three; Noes – none.

City Manager Weiner questioned if the governing body was in favor of broadcasting the city commission meetings by video on the website. It is a good way to get information out on what's going on. We could use a social media platform where people could watch it live or later. Mayor Blackie stated he was in favor of that. Commissioner Gwin added that we do publish audio now. City Manager Weiner stated when the audio file is reduced it is difficult to understand. Commissioner Gwin suggested that the governing body wear lapel mics.

There being no further business to come before the Governing Body, a motion was made by Commissioner Gwin, seconded by Mayor Blackie to adjourn the meeting at 6:28 p.m.

s/ W. Gordon Blackie
Mayor

Attest:

s/ Kristina L. Kinney
City Clerk