

A Special Meeting of the Royal Oak City Commission was held on Wednesday, May 26, 2010, in the City Hall, 211 Williams, Royal Oak. The Meeting was called to order by Mayor Ellison at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL	PRESENT	ABSENT
Mayor	Ellison	
Commissioners	Andrzejak Capello Drinkwine Poulton Rasor Semchena	

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PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Dick Close, 1026 Royal, was concerned about proposed layoffs in the Police Department. They need to maintain a high level of city services.

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Mr. Rick Karlowski, 419 Virginia, spoke against raising the water rate. He suggested they propose a millage on the sewer portion of the water bill.

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Mr. Bob Sullivan, 3011 N. Blair, president Royal Oak Sandlot League, noted they would be taking over as park attendant at Memorial Park. He spoke of the improvements the League made at the parks. They received a matching grant from the Detroit Tigers Foundation to improve ball fields.

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Ms. Kathy McNulty received the 2009 Civilian Employee of the Year award in the Police Department. Of the 50+ City employees that received a layoff notice, she and many others were single females. Ferndale and Madison Heights offered employees a small incentive to retire before determining the need to further reduce staff through layoff. It seemed a sensible approach.

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Mr. Guy Mitchell spoke about a letter he sent to the Mayor and Commission regarding the Building Department. Revenue was down slightly over the last few years. If the multiple steps in the letter were implemented the department would be able to recover costs and build a solid foundation for the future.

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Mr. Steve Gareau is the City's Electrical Inspector. It was still a busy department. Since July 1, 2009 they had performed over 8,000 inspections. The State sent many municipalities a letter offering to take over permitting and inspections. Plan reviews would take 2-3 weeks and inspections could take 48 hours or longer. If there were any complaints or appeals they'd have to be filed with the State. Other communities have a program to try and keep foreclosed homes from being sold in less than code compliant condition.

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Ms. Carol Dodge has been a clerk in the Fire Department for 14 years. She purchased 10 years of Retirement Service Credit at a cost of \$74,883.84. In 2008 she received a Letter of Understanding stating that on October 30, 2010 she would be eligible to retire and receive retiree healthcare. On May 18, 2010 she gave her retirement notice to Chief White and Human Resources Director DiPaolo. That same day

she received a letter stating her position was being eliminated and that she would be laid off on June 26, 2010. She listed her job responsibilities. As #15 out of 47 on the AFSCME seniority list she wanted to know why the contract was being ignored with regards to laying off part-time employees and clerks with lower seniority first. It made more sense to use the attrition policy and eliminate her position after she retires. Who decided what positions were being eliminated? What process was used to make the decisions? She believed she was being discriminated against because she was due to retire with benefits in 4 months. She was being forced to take a lower position and pay cut to save her job. It made no sense to force another person out of their job and learn a new job for 4 months of work. In the 8 days since notifying Ms. DiPaolo of her intention to exercise her bumping rights there have been no meetings, no bumping rights discussed, no answers given and no positions made available. She hoped they could explain the justification for her layoff.

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LIBRARY

The Youth and Teen Services Director position is funded but will remain vacant for a year. Use of the fund balance is expected in both years of the proposed budget. The Library uses no money from the General Fund.

Library Director Karshner noted there may be some staff retirements in the second year of the budget. The Library Board has decided to do a concentrated fundraising campaign. If they were open less than 55 hours a week they would lose their Library State Aid.

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FARMERS MARKET

No significant changes were anticipated. The Community Farm was briefly discussed.

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ICE ARENA

There are no significant budget changes.

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SENIOR CENTER

Revenues are expected to remain flat. Expenditures are increasing slightly. Use of fund balance is requested each year and anticipated in the future. There are no anticipated cuts to senior services.

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AUTO PARKING

Revenues are budgeted to remain flat. Expenditures are decreasing due to the declining transfers out to the General Fund in future years.

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OTHERS (FOLLOW-UP)

There were no significant changes in the budget for the Woodward Dream Cruise.

This is the first year for Arts, Beats and Eats. Personnel costs consist of mostly police with some fire and EMS. Revenues are budgeted to offset expenditures.

Workers Compensation revenues are proposed to decrease due to the reduction in personnel.

Several members of the Commission spoke in favor of the hybrid approach for the Building Department.

An updated budget for the Court was presented. It included increasing the fine for overtime at a meter to \$10.

Commissioner Semchena wanted to discuss budget adjustments and components of the water rate increase at the next meeting.

Mayor Ellison left the Table at 8:27 p.m. and returned at 8:30 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Andrzejak ran the meeting in his absence.

Information on off-peak water rates was requested. Additional information was requested regarding the costs associated with Information Systems prioritization report and delaying equipment replacement.

The Commission approved the amounts for Meetings/Conferences, Travel and Dues/Memberships. A report on "Budget With Zero Actuals" was requested.

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REVENUE ENHANCEMENTS PARKING SYSTEM

Extension of meter hours, charging for meters on Sunday and increasing parking rates were discussed. If enforcement hours were extended past 10 PM the net ticket revenue increase would be about \$112,000 per hour added based on the \$8 fee and net meter revenue would increase about \$73,000. There would be a one time cost of approximately \$45,000 to change the meter signage. The Police Chief was willing to do this as long as it was done on an experimental basis. Several members of the Commission spoke against charging for parking on Sundays.

The Mayor called a special budget meeting on Thursday, June 3, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

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BUDGET POLICIES

This item was postponed to June 3rd.

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Upon Motion of Commissioner Drinkwine, Seconded by Commissioner Semchena, and adopted unanimously, the Special Meeting was adjourned at 10:29 P.M.

Melanie Halas, City Clerk

The foregoing Minutes of the Special Meeting held on May 26, 2010, having been officially approved by the City Commission on Monday, June 7, 2010, are hereby signed this seventh day of June.

James B. Ellison, Mayor