

CITY OF JEFFERSON
Council Worksession
February 10, 2022
6:30pm

COUNCILORS PRESENT: Dave Beyerl, Keonali Hutley, David Kellogg, Mayor Michael Myers, Walt Perry, Bob Rossiter, David Watkins

COUNCILORS ABSENT: none

STAFF PRESENT: Sarah Cook, CM/R; Jeff Buskirk, PWD

OTHERS PRESENT: MCSO Deputy Aaron West, Deputy Sofia Contenta, and Commander Jeff Stutrud

I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Mayor Myers called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and led in the flag salute.

II. **WORKSESSION TOPICS**

A. Lease Agreement: T-Mobile Communication Facility

Sarah Cook provided background information on the lease in front of the Council, noting the framework was the same as other cell phone carriers that the City had an agreement with, such as AT&T and Verizon. T-Mobile was seeking space on the existing tower and the amount of rent was calculated using the same square footage formula as the others. Councilor Beyerl moved to approve the lease agreement with T-Mobile and Councilor Kellogg seconded. All in favor: Ayes – 6, Opposed – 0. **APPROVED.**

B. Q & A Re: Funding for 3rd Deputy

Mayor Myers welcomed everybody in attendance and noted his intent was to have a very open conversation with the public, a time for Q & A, and asked everybody to be respectful of others by not talking at the same time or interrupting. He would call upon people with their hand raised to speak and he would make sure everybody had a chance to talk. There were many handouts available to the public, which displayed various scenarios and calculations on the differing costs of a levy vs. a safety fee, property tax income comparables, history of the costs of police services over the years, and a very informative tri-fold that had gone out for every-door-delivery in Jefferson City limits.

Before calling on citizens to speak, Mayor Myers explained the consideration of a public safety fee, which was proposed to become effective July 1st, if the Council voted to go that approach. He explained the costs of law enforcement changed year to year and that it could take up to a year to bring on a 3rd deputy, noting by then perhaps a 4th would be needed. He shared information about the City of Philomath's public safety fee, which they were able to decrease over time as development occurred, bringing more revenue into the City and helping cover costs of police services. On the other hand, Mayor Myers pointed out a tax levy was only good for 5 years, if it was approved by the voters, and it only affected property owners. Both Sarah Cook and Commander Stutrud shared information on how the actual costs of the officers were passed directly to the City, noting the County did not make money on the contracts, and the City paid for everything said deputy needed right down to the laundering of uniforms.

A gentleman in the audience expressed his favoritism for the safety fee, noting it was the only way that every person paid equally, as opposed to a property tax levy, which only affected property owners and was based on home values.

Mark Weis, 720 N Sunrise and Ken Dlobik, 191 9th St. – preferred to let the people vote.

Clarification on the difference between contract deputy and non-contract deputy was provided, with Deputy West further pointing out the average response time, when a contract deputy was on duty, was around 3 minutes, vs. around 44 minutes when a non-contract deputy had to respond.

Ron Kress, 709 Cottonwood – was curious about what it would take to start up a local police department, noting that after a few more years the City would be paying nearly a half-million dollars for MCSO. Mayor Myers shared information on the history of the Jefferson Police Department, the extremely high risk insurance, litigation costs, required training, and more. There was so much involved and at such high costs, he indicated there was no way the City could maintain it for any amount of time, and you couldn't keep officers because they'd move on to higher paying agencies and the City would be back to square one. Commander Stutrud added to the list of considerations to think about, including evidence storage, jail/holding facility, dispatch services, vehicles & equipment, etc.

Commander Stutrud, responding to a woman's question about required training, noted the police academy was 16 weeks long and included things like criminal tactics, investigation laws, case law, use of force, equipment & weapons training, and other annual certifications that were required of all officers. The woman proceeded to question the election process, to which the Mayor further explained, noting if a levy were to pass, the City would not see funds come in until the following year and maintaining the same level of police coverage would be dependent on a levy passing every 5 years.

An error in one of the spreadsheet calculations with different levy scenarios was discovered and staff would update and bring back corrected figures. Mayor Myers spoke about how the property taxes came into the City's General Fund, which was also where the police services were paid from. He pointed out the cost for police services exceeded the amount of property taxes the City received and other revenue sources were supplementing those expenses, which could include franchise fees and state shared revenues from liquor and cigarette taxes, which were all population based.

Mayor Myers was interested in what the Council was thinking, based on the comments they'd heard. Councilor Kellogg indicated he had come in 100% behind going to a vote; however, was torn on the fee after hearing the comments and concerns about the levy only affecting property owners and the fee going to everybody across the board. Councilor Watkins spoke on the importance of more deputy coverage, noting the development that was due to come in, which would bring more population. On that note, he pointed out it could be possible to see a decrease in the fee over time. Councilor Perry was leaning toward the fee because it could be controlled locally. Councilor Rossiter agreed, and pointed out the various entities that would not pay a levy because of their tax exempt status, whereas, with the fee, everybody paid equally. Councilor Beyerl agreed with what had been said, noting with the local control of the fee, future Council's could evaluate the continued need. He also encouraged people to share the information on the next two forums with their neighbors so more people could attend and be informed. Mayor Myers followed up to note any new person moving to town would pay the fee as well, so over time more people would be paying into it. Future Council's could decide to reduce the fee, like Philomath did. He spoke of the long-term, positive relationship the City had with MCSO and the quality of deputies that had come from contracting with them.

A woman in the audience expressed concerns about more apartment complexes coming in, as she felt crime would increase because of it. She said she was vigilant and would continue watching as much as she could and hoped others would too. She wondered if the City had a say on what could be built, to which the Mayor briefly explained the different zoning regulations and state land laws that limited a City's ability to restrict. Deputy West spoke on the types of crimes, noting there had been a lot of property crimes (theft, etc.) rather than crimes against people. The best deterrent would be the presence of more law enforcement in the area.

Mayor Myers thanked everybody for attending and encouraged them to spread the word so others would join in the next sessions. The Q & A session concluded at 7:51pm.

III. **ACCOUNTS PAYABLE** – Councilor Perry moved to approve, seconded by Councilor Beyerl. Discussion: annual fee for Statesman Journal was noted. All in favor: Ayes – 6, Opposed – 0. **APPROVED.**

IV. **VISITORS** – None

V. **COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS**

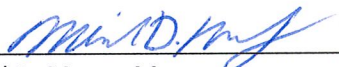
Walt Perry – the City hosted the LOC Small Cities meeting that afternoon. It was well attended, a long meeting, and a lot of information sharing.

Bob Rossiter – attended the Marion County breakfast and thanked the Commissioners for attending the WTP ribbon cutting. He noted the Commissioners were very intrigued with Jefferson’s accomplishments.

Keonali Hutley – very impressed with the new water plant and pleased to know the City was responsible with the money; always making good, well-informed decisions.

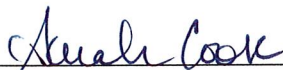
VI. **ADJOURNMENT** – Dave Beyerl moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Kellogg. All were in favor and the meeting closed at 8:07pm.

MINUTES APPROVED this 28th day of April, 2022.



Michael D. Myers, Mayor

ATTEST:



Sarah Cook, City Manager/Recorder