



**CITY OF CENTERTON
SPECIAL
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CALLED BY MAYOR BILL EDWARDS
JANUARY 5, 2022**

(1) Roll Call-

The Special City Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor, Bill Edwards at 6:00 p.m. Those present and answering roll call were Mayor Bill Edwards, Misty Elam, Darren Warren, Josie Reed, Keith Higginbotham, Justin Cowgur and Amy Rochette. Those present and not answering roll call were City Clerk Todd Wright, City Attorney Brian Rabal, Finance Assistant Shannon Zappettini, HR Director Jocelyn Diaz, Police Chief Cody Harper, Director of Public Works Lance Johnson, Fire Chief Matt Thompson, Planning Director Lorene Burns, Chief Building Inspector Robert Coffelt and Animal Services Director Cody Wilson.

(2) Review Salary Study –

Bruce Johanson of the Johanson Group addressed the City Council, making a detailed presentation of the Classification and Compensation Study for the 53 Job Positions and four (4) Elected Positions in the City of Centerton. The report was included in the Council Packets and the presentation included the following items for discussion:

- List of Positions / Job Descriptions
- 15-Factor Rating System
- Graph of Actual Pay
- Market Pay Comparison Data
- Pay Policy Ranges
- Elected Official Salary Comparison
- Job Valuing Summary
- Pay Policy Trendline vs. Actual Pay Trendline
- Pay vs. Pay Grade Ranges
- Recommendations for Salary Adjustments in the Upcoming Budgets

Mayor Edwards recommended allowing the Council some time to study the report, suggesting that a follow-up Work Session with Council and Department Heads, be held the 4th Tuesday in April, 2022. Council was in agreement.

No action was taken by Council.

(3) 2022 Budget Discussion –

Mayor Edwards opened discussion of the 2022 Proposed Budget (this is continued discussion from the Budget Work Session held on 10/21/2021).

Edwards said he did reach out to a couple of Audit firms, regarding a potential audit of the recent financial incident and was given a figure of \$165.00 per hour for an estimated 30-50 hours. He said they would review the procedures and what we enter into the system. He said they would not be available until late spring or early summer, due to Tax Season. He said he also spoke with the State Audit, to report the incident and to ask for them to consider a Special Audit. He said they will not do a Special Audit unless they are asked to do so by the Prosecuting Attorney. He said Legislative Audit will be here for the Annual Audit in late spring or early summer, and will be here for approximately three (3) months. He said they will do a Risk Assessment in regard to the incident, looking into the specifics, and make recommendations. He said we need to consider our decision into the Budget, and recommended letting State Audit look into it.

Mayor Edwards said he reviewed the notes and comments from the last Special City Council meeting, then met with his Department Heads, and would like to go ahead and put a Purchase Order process in place. He said he has an Ordinance for approval at the next Council Meeting, with the requirement of a purchase order for any purchase over \$100.00. He said any emergency spending will be handled separately, as to not hinder city business, and is included in the Ordinance. Justin Cowgur asked that there be an e-mail trail for those occasions. He asked the Council for permission to hire a Billing & Receiving Specialist, who would review and issue those Purchase Orders. He said the purchase order would then go to the Financial Director for review and approval of available funds, followed by review and approval by the Mayor, and finally back to the Department Head, for purchase. **Council supported adding the position of Billing and Receiving Specialist.** He said we have begun the process of looking at Purchase Order System options. He said we will do it manually until we have a system in place.

Mayor Edwards also asked Council for their approval of the position of a Mayor's Assistant (re-allocation of an existing position), which will work downstairs at the New City Hall. He said this person will continue to the work currently being done at the front desk, as well as being the main contact for funneling FOIA requests. There was discussion about FOIA request flow. **Council supported the change in Title and role of the Mayor's Assistant.**

Financial Assistant Shannon Zappettini explained her role as Accounts Payable, with the new Billing and Receiving Specialist position being for Accounts Receivable, and the Mayor's Assistant position as a receptionists, with no access to financials. She said previously the front desk person also handled Accounts Receivables. She pointed out how this added position will also help us with segregation of duties.

Misty Elam asked HR Director Jocelyn Diaz for reasoning behind the request for an HR Coordinator. Diaz explained that she needs someone who can do more than filing. She said she would like to have someone to help in other areas, so that she can be more available for employee needs, and gave examples.

Police Chief Cody Harper stated that he has permission from the Prosecuting Attorney to take possession of the recovered city property items from the recent incident. He said he will provide a follow-up e-mail for Council. He asked for the permission of the Council to: 1) Document the property and put into City Use, where needed. 2) Document the property and return items to vendors, where possible. Harper said the majority of the recovered items are used in the city on a daily basis, and have been purchased by the Street Department over the years. There was discussion about items or funds being returned to the department it was purchased out of and then re-allocated if necessary, for budget transparency. **Council supported the use and/or return of the city property.** Harper said per his discussion with the Prosecuting Attorney, they would be contacting Legislative Audit, in regard to furthering the audit investigation, which would include a thorough audit of the city, as a whole. **Council was in support of the additional depth of audit.** Harper said the statement from the Prosecutor's Office is that they are in receipt of the case and of the evidence at hand. He also said there would be notification if the evidence led anywhere else in the city, with any other subsequent charges.

Mayor Edwards said that he met with his Department Heads after the last Council Meeting, to discuss the use of credit cards. He said there is a Purchase Card for each Department (with a daily spending limit), a Wal-Mart Card Lowe's Card and Tractor Supply Card. He said there is no issue with cancelling the Wal-Mart Card. He said we get a 10% discount when using the Lowe's Card, and they would like to keep it. There was discussion about setting up a Lowe's Account, which can be used with a P.O. system, and the same with Tractor Supply. **Council was in support.**

Mayor Edwards said he received an e-mail asking that Council look at the Ordinance for the Salary of the Mayor, and revisit the minimum amount. There was discussion, with varying recommendations. **Council asked for a blank Ordinance at the next Council Meeting.**

Mayor Edwards stated that he proposed \$400.00 per scheduled meeting for City Council Members. He also proposed a \$50.00 per scheduled Meeting increase for the Planning Commission. There was discussion. **Council asked for no change for City Council or Planning Commission pay at this time.**

Darren Warren asked about the request for another Code Enforcement Officer. Director of Public Works Lance Johnson addressed the Council, explaining the expanded current roles for Code Enforcement and Inspections, and the added need. There was discussion. Warren asked for the roles to be cleaned up to match the job descriptions. Johnson explained the reasoning for Code Enforcement to fall under the Police Department. Police Chief Cody Harper agreed. Johnson explained that with Code Enforcement being under Public Works, his two (2) employees can focus on inspections. Warren agreed that Code Enforcement would better fit under the Police Department, at this time. He asked that we take a look at our Citation Policy, to make it more effective. Chief Harper said that is a City Council item. **Council was in support of the proposal.**

Justin Cowgur asked what our budget was for IT. Mayor Edwards said the budget is \$45,000.00, and we currently contract it out. He briefly detailed what service the city receives for that amount. Cowgur said it would be nice to know what the pay structure would be for an IT employee. He said he could research it in salary studies.

Darren Warren stated that we need to look at the possibility of having a Staff Attorney. He said we may not necessarily look at it in this budget, but we do need to have discussion about it. He gave an example behind his reasoning. Mayor Edwards said we could continue discussions.

Amy Rochette asked what was being removed from the Street Department Budget. Mayor Edwards said an asphalt machine was removed, and the funds are being reallocated to Street Improvements and Sidewalks. He said we will continue to put asphalt projects out for bid. **Council was in support.**

Police Chief Cody Harper asked Council if they are going to delay implementing recommendations from the Salary Study, to set aside the salaried employees, and look at the pay of employees that are below the minimum pay grade, as he is fighting the most competition at that level. There was discussion. **Council asked to wait until the April Work Session to discuss employee pay.**

Fire Chief Matt Thompson stated that he would like the Council and Department Heads to have more Work Sessions together, so that we can communicate better and plan for the future. Mayor Edwards said the 4th Tuesday of each month is always open. **Council agreed that there should be more Work Sessions.**

Darren Warren mentioned Constrained and Unconstrained Capital Improvement Budgets for wants and needs and planning for the future, with our budgets and our reserves.

Mayor Edwards said the 2022 Proposed Budget has to be approved by 2/01/2022, so he would like to bring it back to Council on 1/11/2022. Council agreed.

(4) Public Comment -

City Clerk Todd Wright opened the Public Comment, with a three (3) minute time limit per comment.

Public Comment –

Carl Rabey – 122 Skinner Street – Mr. Rabey commented on Open Purchase Orders and Emergency Purchases. He questioned whether the City was going to use the Salary Study it just paid for or not. He said the AML will provide a Salary Study and generic Job Descriptions for free. He recommended being careful about placing blame, until there are policies and procedures in place. He said those policies and procedures are also how you measure your employees. He said anything that has to do with finances needs to have policies and procedures.

(5) Adjourn-

Keith Higginbotham made a motion to adjourn at 8:08 p.m. with a 2nd from Amy Rochette. All council members voted in favor and the motion carried.

Bill Edwards, Mayor

Todd Wright, City Clerk