

CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES

September 6, 2016

The City Council met this date in a regular session in the Council Chambers at City Hall at #4 E. Lockwood at 7:36 p.m.

Present at Roll Call: Mayor Gerry Welch
Councilmember Toni Hunt
Councilmember Greg Mueller
Councilmember Ken Burns
Councilmember Matt Armstrong
Councilmember Frank Janoski
Councilmember Bud Bellomo

A quorum was present.

Also present: Mr. Steve Wylie, City Manager
Mr. Helmut Starr, City Attorney
Ms. Katie Nakazono, City Clerk

Mayor Welch welcomed Cub Scouts from Troop 314.

PROCLAMATION

Mayor Welch and the Council presented Daughters of the American Revolution representative Kathy Felix with a proclamation for Constitution Week, September 17-23, 2016.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Levying and Establishing the Rate of Annual Property Taxes to be Collected for the Year 2016 by the City of Webster Groves, Missouri

Mayor Welch opened the public hearing. Joan Jadali, Assistant City Manager and Director of Finance, gave a brief presentation [**Exhibit A - Copy in City Clerk's office**]. She stated that the City levies twelve different taxes for residential, commercial, and personal property tax. She showed a comparison of the estimate for next year and the current year (**See Exhibit A, page 1-2**). This is just the City portion. You can see the residential decreases slightly, commercial increases a bit due to the fact that commercial assessed values have decreased a bit while residential have increased. The total City residential levy is about \$1.43 decrease for a home with an appraised value of \$250,000. The total City Commercial levy is a \$72.45 increase for a business with an appraised value of \$250,000. She showed the rates for the three taxing districts (**See Exhibit A, page 2**). You can see there is no change between 2016 and 2015 with the exception of the Old Webster Taxing District Commercial rate.

Councilmember Bellomo stated that many people don't realize that property taxes are a relatively small piece of the City budget and the biggest tax is sales tax. Ms. Jadali clarified that property taxes are about 10% of the budget. I was thinking of communicating that either in the upcoming newsletter or Community Connection. I think there is a lot of confusion.

Councilmember Mueller confirmed that the City's total tax levy has been going down. Ms. Jadali stated that it has. The past ten years we have continued to decrease.

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Councilmember Mueller clarified that of the numbers shown, the City debt service is a service that will come to an end. Ms. Jadali stated that the number was higher. When Council decided it was ok to get the street improvements done and go to the voters for it, we knew we would be able to decrease the amount due to our credit rating and the fact that we weren't asking for more than we needed.

Councilmember Mueller stated that with the City's total tax levy and the debt service going down and coming to a conclusion, that will be a huge tax benefit for residents and commercial districts. Ms. Jadali agreed.

Dave Buck, 124 S. Elm, stated most of you know that when it comes to numbers, I am not the brightest bulb on the tree so bear with me. I figured the reason there was a public hearing and comment is that you want residents to come forward with comments. Therefore, I am responding as an 18-year resident. When I look at these numbers, and I am not doubting these numbers at all, although they have changed from what they were online, I don't understand what they mean. What does it mean for me as a resident. I am at the top of the organizational chart, you report to me. I know you hate hearing that. But the point is, our needs are important. When I saw this important information, my question was, what does it mean for me? Does it mean my taxes are going to go down? Does it mean they are going to go up? Give me some sense of what the year for me is going to look like.

Ms. Jadali stated that in reassessment years, what we are required to do is submit this information to St. Louis County. They send a letter to every resident telling the rates. You get a letter that is very detailed. It is kind of intimidating if you don't know what you are looking at. If you can get in the middle of it and review the numbers it might be easier.

Mayor Welch stated that you pay property taxes on your house. They are based on the assessed value of your house which changes every other year. This is a non-assessment year. The other thing is the rate you pay. The City is responsible for 10% of that bill you are going to get. What this hearing is about is what the City will charge you for that 10%. It is coming down, so you'll save a few cents.

Helmut Starr, City Attorney, added, if you have a house that was appraised for \$100,000, the assessor classified it as residential property. You pay 19% of that as your assessed value. So that is \$19,000 times the rate the City charges.

Ms. Jadali stated that if your house is worth \$400,000 appraised, you multiply that times 19%, divided by 100 and multiply that by the residential rate of .756 to find out how much money you would owe the City of Webster Groves.

Councilmember Janoski clarified that the County sends out letters on the rates. Ms. Jadali stated, correct. We also have it in the budget and on the City's website.

Councilmember Burns clarified that the tweaks in the numbers are a reaction to the Hancock Amendment. When the assessments go up, the rates get reduced so it is not a tax increase. Ms. Jadali stated that the only way we can adjust the numbers is if we have land improvements. Then County will let us improve our numbers based on that.

Helmut Starr, City Attorney, entered the following into the public record:

1. Handouts from Ms. Jadali.

Mayor Welch closed the public hearing.

BILL #8942 – FIRST & SECOND READING

Councilmember Bellomo introduced **BILL #8942 – ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE LEVYING AND ESTABLISHING THE RATE OF ANNUAL PROPERTY TAXES TO BE COLLECTED FOR THE YEAR 2016 BY THE CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES, MISSOURI**, and at the Councilmember’s request, the Bill was read twice, first and second times by title only, and placed on the agenda for future consideration of the Council.

Levying and Establishing the Rate of Annual Property Taxes to be Collected for the Year 2016 for the Webster Groves Library District

Mayor Welch opened the public hearing. Joan Jadali, Assistant City Manager and Director of Finance, gave a brief presentation [**Exhibit A Page 3 - Copy in City Clerk’s office**]. She stated that these are the numbers for the Library. The only difference here is commercial between 2015 and 2016. I do have the residential comparison for them (**See Exhibit A, page 3**). Theirs did increase in 2009 because of their improvements. Already in 2015 it is starting to decrease.

Mr. Starr stated that these are done separately because the Library is not a part of the City, it is a separate political subdivision. But State Statutes require them to present their budget and tax levy to the City annually for approval.

Helmut Starr, City Attorney, entered the following into the public record:

1. Handout from Ms. Jadali.

Mayor Welch closed the public hearing.

BILL #8943 – FIRST & SECOND READING

Councilmember Armstrong introduced **BILL #8943 – ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE LEVYING AND ESTABLISHING THE RATE OF ANNUAL PROPERTY TAXES TO BE COLLECTED FOR THE YEAR 2016 FOR THE WEBSTER GROVES LIBRARY DISTRICT**, and at the Councilmember’s request, the Bill was read twice, first and second times by title only, and placed on the agenda for future consideration of the Council.

REMARKS OF VISITORS

Margaret McAuliffe, 30 Joy, stated that with all due respect to each of you for the time you dedicate to the City, she wanted to bring up a flurry of criticism for Councilmember Mueller’s addressing of Councilmember Armstrong’s absences from business district meetings. I believe it is three absences. In the Webster Kirkwood Times and on social media I find it curious that the focus is on who is addressing the absence instead of the absences themselves. I attended the North Webster and League of Women Voters Forums where repeatedly Mr. Armstrong stated he would improve relations with the business districts pointing out the numerous empty storefronts walking the streets during his campaigns. I’d like to thank you and particularly Councilmember Mueller for addressing difficult issues even when they are not popular.

Dave Buck, 124 S. Elm, stated my comment deals with resident research to gain their ideas, feedback and opinions on matters of importance to City Council. Currently, the Council does a very good job of gathering resident research via remarks of visitors, public comments, resident emails and voice mails, W-K Times Mailbag letters, and personal conversations with friends and residents around town and city events, etc. This is important feedback but it is all qualitative in nature and conceptually only touches a limited number of residents in any given year.

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To complement this current effort, may I suggest that Council think about adding a quantitative online survey (such as Survey Monkey) where the number of resident responses could number 1,000 - 2,000, or more. After the defeat of Propositions S&W, such surveys were effectively used by the school district to conduct research and gain important quantitative, statistical understanding.

Council may choose to conduct such a survey only once or twice a year and use it to gain resident feedback on the bigger issues it faces, such as closing the budget gap caused by the change in the pool sales tax distribution and the different options Council is considering.

Again, its use would be to complement the already strong qualitative resident feedback you already gather. Thank you.

NEW BUSINESS - MAYOR, COUNCILMEMBERS, CITY ATTORNEY, CITY MANAGER

Mayor Welch stated that on October 6 there will be a coffee with the Councilmembers at the Recreation Complex at 7 p.m. Come and give us your feedback.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

BILL #8940 – THIRD READING

On motion of Councilmember Mueller, seconded by Councilmember Armstrong, **BILL #8940 – ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE PROPERTY AND STRUCTURE LOCATED AT 37 S. MAPLE AVENUE AS A HISTORIC LANDMARK**, having been introduced and read twice on August 16, 2016, was taken up its title read a third time and placed upon its passage to become Ordinance #8940.

Mayor Welch called for the vote on Bill #8940.

MEMBERS VOTING:

AYES: HUNT, MUELLER, BURNS, ARMSTRONG, JANOSKI, BELLOMO, WELCH

NOES: NONE

Mayor Welch stated that Bill #8940 was approved.

BILL #8941 – THIRD READING

On motion of Councilmember Hunt, seconded by Councilmember Bellomo, **BILL #8941 – ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE REPEALING ORDINANCE #6820 AND TERMINATING THE NORTH WEBSTER REDEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AS REDEVELOPER WITH RESPECT TO ALL OR ANY PORTION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD SOMETIMES KNOWN AS WEBSTER HEIGHTS WITHIN THE CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES; AND ACTIONS RELATED THERETO**, having been introduced and read twice on August 16, 2016, was taken up its title read a third time and placed upon its passage to become Ordinance #8941.

Mayor Welch called for the vote on Bill #8941.

MEMBERS VOTING:

AYES: MUELLER, BURNS, ARMSTRONG, JANOSKI, BELLOMO, WELCH, HUNT

NOES: NONE

Mayor Welch stated that Bill #8941 was approved.

NEW BUSINESS

BILL # 8944 – FIRST & SECOND READING

Councilmember Burns introduced **BILL #8944 – ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES TO ENTER INTO AND EXECUTE A CONTRACT**

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WITH ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI FOR MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE PROSECUTION IN THE ST. LOUIS COUNTY MUNICIPAL COURT MENTAL HEALTH/JAIL DIVERSION PROGRAM, and at the Councilmember's request, the Bill was read twice, first and second times by title only, and placed on the agenda for future consideration of the Council.

Mr. Starr stated that this stems from requests from the Police Department and prosecutor's office. Occasionally in Court we encounter individuals that have been charged with a violation, and the individual may not have the ability to understand the nature of the charge, or how to react to it. St. Louis County has a mental health court that deals with those who are more challenged at a particular time, and tries to divert them away from jail and into a more useful environment for the individual. The County will evaluate the cases individually, and if they accept it, the City will pay a one-time charge of \$300 per case. Then that defendant and those charges are transferred to the County and their program. If they don't accept the case, it returns here.

Mayor Welch asked who makes the initial recommendation. Mr. Starr stated that usually the Police will mention it to the prosecutor who will look at the situation and make the recommendation.

Councilmember Mueller clarified that this is an ongoing, successful program. Mr. Starr stated that it is. Councilmember Mueller asked if it was Mr. Starr's recommendation that we join. He stated that it is.

BILL # 8945 – FIRST & SECOND READING

Councilmember Janoski introduced **BILL #8945 – ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 70, "OFFENSES," ARTICLE I, "OFFENSES AGAINST PROPERTY," BY ADDING A NEW SUBSECTION 70.024, ENTITLED "FRAUDULENT USE OF A CREDIT DEVICE OR DEBIT DEVICE," AND MATTERS RELATED THERETO**, and at the Councilmember's request, the Bill was read twice, first and second times by title only, and placed on the agenda for future consideration of the Council.

Councilmember Armstrong asked if this is about scanners that can be put on gas pumps or other registers. Mr. Starr stated it is basically credit and debit cards or any device that would accomplish the same thing a credit or debit card would. St. Louis County is no longer prosecuting many of these types of offenses with lower dollar amounts. The jurisdiction for municipal court right now is \$500 maximum. As of January 1 that goes to \$750. That is why there are two numbers in the ordinance. We want to be in a situation where we can pursue those charges in municipal court if St. Louis County refuses to accept charges we send to them.

Councilmember Mueller asked if this language is from a model statute. Mr. Starr stated that it is from the State Statute and modified to fit the jurisdiction.

BILL # 8947 – FIRST & SECOND READING

Councilmember Bellomo introduced **BILL #8947 – ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT WITH ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI, PERTAINING TO THE PROVISION OF A WEBSTER GROVES POLICE OFFICER TO BE ASSIGNED TO THE MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL DRUG TASK FORCE OF THE ST. LOUIS COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT**, and at the Councilmember's request, the Bill was read twice, first and second times by title only, and placed on the agenda for future consideration of the Council.

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Councilmember Armstrong asked if this is a full time position. Mr. Wylie stated that it is. This is a longtime program and is renewed annually.

Mayor Welch asked, with regard to Resolution #2016-32, if there is an aesthetic component to the Crossroads Study. Ms. Perry stated that the end of it includes some schematic designs based on feedback received through St. Louis County as well as through the numbers they receive. It talks about the ability to add landscape areas, lighting areas. They are not going to do landscape design itself. They made it clear they are transportation.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilmember Armstrong, seconded by Councilmember Hunt, to approve the Consent Agenda.

Mayor Welch called for the vote on the Consent Agenda.

MEMBERS VOTING:

AYES: BURNS, ARMSTRONG, JANOSKI, BELLOMO, WELCH, HUNT, MUELLER

NOES: NONE

Mayor Welch stated that the Consent Agenda was approved.

The following consent agenda was approved:

- **Approval of Minutes** – August 16, 2016
- **Resolution #2016-30** – Authorizing the City Manager to Purchase a Replacement Vehicle for the Assistant Fire Chief, and Amending the Fiscal Year 2017 Budget
- **Resolution #2016-31** – Authorizing the Purchase of Three Mobile Data Terminals and Docking Stations for the Police Department
- **Resolution #2016-32** – Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into an Agreement for a Corridor Operations Study for the Crossroads District

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

No Appointments to Boards and Commissions.

EXECUTIVE (CLOSED) SESSION

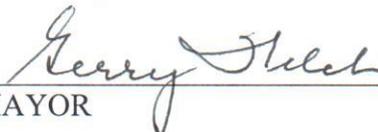
Mayor Welch stated that they would go into an Executive (Closed) Session that was called for prior to the regular meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m. on motion of the Mayor, duly seconded.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 20th day of September 2016.


CITY CLERK


MAYOR