

Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Fateley called the special meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. Council Members present were Kris Dawson, Jerry Tretwold, David Freels and Art Smyth. A quorum was present. Also present were Finance Director Pamela Olsen, Public Works Director JD Smith and Deputy Clerk Desha Dawson. Mayor Lee Webster was also present, however, did not conduct the meeting due to conflict of interest.

EMS LEVY – ORDINANCE NO. 807:

Finance Director Pamela Olsen stated that this ordinance needs Council approval to be on the ballot in August. The funding will not be available unless we approve the interlocal agreement as well. The dispatch fees are included in this. By approving this, it would allow the City of Brewster to retain 20% of the funds from the levy to cover the EMS dispatch fees, which are currently being paid by the City with no reimbursement or funds from the District.

Council Member Tretwold stated that the last time the EMS Levy was up for Council approval and negotiation, there was quite a bit of dispute over the dispatch fees. By passing it today, it will give us plenty of time to negotiate with District.

Council Member Tretwold also stated that the \$0.47 will be based on the new property value assessments. The \$0.47 is the same amount as the previous levy. Council Member Fateley has a problem with the amount being the same, considering the higher property values. He believes that we need to be very forthright with the public and explain to them exactly what this levy will mean for them monetarily. Council Member Tretwold is in agreement, stating that we need to make sure that the voters understand exactly what is going on.

Council Member Freels wants to see the dispatch fees included in this ordinance. He does not have a problem passing this, including the dispatch fees. Council Member Fateley stated that he will not approve the \$0.47 unless the District can show us what they intend to use the money for, but is in favor of the City retaining a portion of this to cover the dispatch fees.

Finance Director stated that this levy should go to the public. Council Member Tretwold noted that if this is approved today, we do need to tell the public why the Council has approved it and how the City and the citizens will benefit. Basically, the City will be able to recover some of the money that we have been paying for the EMS District dispatch fees. Council Member Freels stated he will vote for whatever gives the City the best shot.

Council Member Fateley asked why the City cannot negotiate any “wants” prior to the Levy. He also asked why the District has not indicated ahead of time why they are requesting the \$0.47. The amount may be the same, but the assessed property values have gone up since the last levy. Since the amount is the same as the previous levy, he believes this is deceiving to the tax payers as they may believe they will be paying the same as the prior levy.

Finance Director Olsen stated that the City would get 20% of the levy monies which is less than what the District would actually be paying, if they were paying for their share of the dispatch fees.

Council Member Fateley again stated that he has a problem approving the \$0.47 unless the District can clearly state what the money will be used for and how much they will need *before* the levy is run. Council Member Freels stated that if this is approved by Council, the District will be required to tell us what the money is for. Council Member Fateley stated that the tax payers deserve to know what they are being asked to pay for. Council Member Tretwold stated that if we can't negotiate an agreement with the District, then we can notify the Assessor that we will not be collecting the monies for the EMS Levy.

Council Member Fateley asked that if the ordinance is not approved today, can we go into negotiation with the District and possibly put this on the ballot in November. Finance Director Olsen said that if we wait until November to run the levy and Council was not able to come up with an agreement with the District before the election and the levy passed in November, that would not leave Council any time to finish trying to negotiate as the resolution for taxes has to be to the Assessor shortly after election for it to be included on the 2009 tax rolls.

Council Member Tretwold believes the City needs to be completely honest with the public about why the Council is approving it. We should also let them know that we understand the \$0.47 is the same as the previous levy amount and that it will generate more money because of the higher property values, however, keeping the public informed as to why the City is supporting it, ie: retaining dispatch fees, yet make the District explain exactly what the money will be used for.

Council Member Fateley asked if that \$0.47 is locked in, do we have to ask for the full \$0.47, or can we ask for less? He noted that page four (4) of the ordinance reads "...property tax levies of \$0.47 or less per thousand dollars...". Finance Director Olsen stated the County does not send out any of the money until the Council approves the ordinance. With this ordinance, it allows us to ask for \$0.47, but we can lower the amount of money requested when we send in our request to the County. Council Member Fateley stated he would approve this ordinance only if this amount could be \$0.47 or less, as decided by the Council.

MOTION: Council Member Tretwold moved to approve Ordinance #807, EMS Levy, with negotiations between the City of Brewster and District #15 to follow. He also stated there should be continuous notification to the citizens of Brewster in monthly newsletters regarding the progress of the negotiations between the District and the City of Brewster. The motion was amended to say the City should also explain to the citizens the reason we, the City, are asking for 20% of the levy money is to cover the EMS dispatch fees we pay. The motion was seconded by Council Member Freels and passed with four (4) Council Members in favor. The fifth (5th) Council Member, Art Smyth, abstained due to a conflict of interest. The motion passed by majority vote.

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business to come before the Council the special meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Mayor Pro-Tem, Robert Fateley

ATTEST:

City Clerk/Finance Director Pamela Olsen, MMC