

Mayor Lee Webster called the Special Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Council Members present were Kris Dawson, Dave Freels, Bob Fateley and Art Smyth. Also present was Police Chief Ron Oules, Officer Natalie Cariker, BPD Municipal Clerk Misty Ruiz and Deputy City Clerk Desha Dawson.

POLICE DEPARTMENT SALARY PAY SCALE AMENDMENT:

Officer Natalie Cariker stated that the 2008 salary scale on file does not reflect the appropriate increases and step/classification pay for the Brewster Police Department, which was effective October 2008. When the officers were given their Council approved pay increases (\$430.00 per officer) in October, all officers were at Step 4, with no one on Step 1. The salaries were adjusted to reflect years of service instead of months. The revised step increases will be given in 3.5% increments to make it more unison. One other change was to the Sergeant classification, which now has Step 3 at 12% on probation depending on current step level and Step 4 at 15% off probation, which is added to the current step. The BPD does not currently have a Sergeant Classification – only a Lieutenant (Officer Hook) who is being paid the appropriate salary for his Step Classification.

Officer Cariker stated that the changes to the Police Salary scale was reviewed and approved by the Teamsters Union Representative, Paul Parmley. The changes will only affect the 2008 salaries, and the 2009 salaries are still in negotiations.

Police Chief Oules stated that he wants to have the salary amendment in effect prior to applying for the COPS Grant, if Council approves him to do so. Therefore, when the salary is determined for the officer on the grant program, they will be appropriate and the City will not end up “eating” any portion of the wage. Council Member Freels asked if the wages would affect any of the current officer salaries at this time. Police Chief Oules stated no, all currently employed officers will not see any change in their current salary as this change will reflect what the officers currently make at this time, based on their step level.

MOTION: Council Member Smyth made the motion to accept the revised Brewster Police Department Salary Pay Scale (Step/Classification) for 2008. The motion was seconded by Council Member Freels and the motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES GRANT:

Police Chief Ron Oules presented the Council Members with a proposal that may allow for the City apply for one (1), possibly two (2) officer positions through the new COP Grant funds. This is a four-year grant that will fund the wages of a new hire or replacement officer. The grant will pay the wages and benefits of the new officer for three (3) years; the City will be responsible for paying for the fourth (4th) year.

Police Chief Oules went on to outline the savings to the City if this grant were approved for one officer. He projected that the City will save approximately \$200,000 in the three (3) years that the grant would be paying the officers wage and benefits. During the fourth (4th) year, in which the City will be responsible for paying the officer’s wages and benefits, it will be at a cost of approximately \$65,000. He also outlined the projected costs and benefits to the City if it were decided to hire two (2) officers on this grant. Police Chief Oules believes that with the money saved not having to pay wages and benefits for three (3) years, the savings to the City could help cover the fourth (4th) year for both officers’ wages and benefits. He also stated that by having two (2) officers on the grant program, this would be very beneficial for having coverage for holidays, vacations and when an officer off due to illness.

Council Member Dawson stated she believed the money saved should go to other things, such as jail fees and car replacement fund, or other operating funds that need to be replenished.

Mayor Webster asked what would happen if the officer hired on the grant decided to leave at the end of the four-year program – where would that leave us as far as number of officers? Council Member Freels is concerned about hiring one (1) officer, and especially two (2) officers on the grant due to the current economic status and what the ramifications would be if we overextended ourselves with respect to our budget. Council Member Fateley stated that the worst case scenario is that the grant hire officer(s) would have to be laid off.

As Chief Oules stated prior, we cannot use this grant money to pay a currently employed officers' wages and benefits. It is strictly for a new hire, replace a retired employee, or to be used for a rehire (ie: a reduction in force). There is an officer that will be leaving due to a projected lay off in January of 2010 due to budget constraints.

MOTION: Council Member Freels made the motion to lay off one (1) Brewster Police Officer effective January 15, 2010 due to budget constraints. Council Member Dawson seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Police Chief Oules noted that the deadline for the grant application is April 14th. He would like to know whether the Council is in approval of this grant, and should he apply for one (1) or two (2) officers. Council Member Freels, Council Member Fateley and Council Member Dawson all expressed they were in favor of only hiring one (1) officer on the grant. Council Member Smyth stated he was in favor of hiring two (2). The vote passed with a count of three (3) to one (1) in favor of hiring only one (1) officer on the COPS grant.

Council Member Fately praised the Police Department on their approach to this subject. This was very well presented and does show that the Police Department is aware of the budget crisis and also shows that they are looking for ways to save money within the City's budget, without compromising Community Services.

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business to come before the Council the special meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Mayor Lee Webster

ATTEST:

City Clerk/Finance Director Pamela Olsen, MMC