

**EATONVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING**

TIME: 6:15 PM

DATE: August 4, 2014

PLACE: Eatonville Community Center

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Schaub called the meeting of the Eatonville Town Council to order at 6:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Kerri Murphy called the roll. The following were:

Present: Council members James Schrimpsheer, Abby Gribi, Bob Walter, and Andy Powell. Brenden Pierce was not present.

Also Present: Kerri Murphy (for Town Clerk, Kathy Linnemeyer), Town Administrator Doug Beagle, Police Chief Jim Heishman and Fire Chief Robert Hudspeth.

OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor Schaub led the assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Kerri Murphy read the Mission Statement for the Town of Eatonville:

“The Town’s mission is to create, provide and administer municipal services while protecting the present and future health, safety, and general welfare of the community.”

ORDINANCE 2014 - 8

An ordinance of the Town of Eatonville, Washington, relating to regular property taxes; providing for the submission to the qualified electors of the town at the statewide general election to be held November 4, 2014 a proposition authorizing an increase in the regular property tax levy in excess of the increase otherwise allowed by chapter 84.55 RCW to fund public safety operation costs; setting forth the ballot title therefore; requesting that the auditor of Pierce County place the proposition on the November 4, 2014 ballot; providing for severability, ratification of past consistent actions, and fixing the time when the same shall become effective.

Councilmember Gribi made motion to approve Ordinance 2014-8 in one reading.
Councilmember Powell seconded the motion. All in favor.

Councilmember Gribi move Ordinance 2014-8.

Councilmember Shrimpsher seconded the motion. All in favor.

Councilmember Walter referred to Section 3 asking if there is an ending date that 2015 sounded open ended to him. He also asked what it will cost to put the measure on the ballot.

Mayor Schaub said that 2015 is when the levy will start and it is for that year only. Past experience indicates approximately \$5,000.00.

Councilmember Walter asked how the town is going to sell the idea. What sort of reassurance can the town give their rate payers? The town is doing the best it can to minimize any increases in property taxes.

Mayor Schaub explained that this was the reason he went forward with the three town hall meetings to get the word out there on where exactly the town finances are at this point and time. What we are looking at from a revenue stand point for current expense and just where our cost are. Public safety being that 65 to 70 per cent for fulltime with everything else in place for the current expense. Really the reason for the operating levy to not make a drastic change this year in public safety to be able to choose one or the other. Of the town being able to have at a fulltime capacity, because with the Safer grant it will conclude at the end of this year. We are at a \$ 270,000.00 short fall just in that revenue source. The town is not replacing a fulltime police force just to be able to go beyond the loss of the Safer grant. This will give us one more year to hopefully come forth with the best proposal of services that the citizens need. The best service for the dollar that we have and live within our budget. We need to evaluate and come up with our best option for continuing fire, ems and police at a level the town can afford and provide the best service.

Councilmember Schrimpsher this is keeping the status quo, this is not increasing anything. It is simply maintaining what we have now.

Mayor Schaub said this is only continuing what we have now for one more year to come up with the best option for the town. Plan B will still have to be in the wings because this will require 60% vote from the voters come this November.

Councilmember Walter asked if the town could address the senior discount for property taxes.

Mayor Schaub explained that this was something that is handled through Pierce County. This has to be out tomorrow to get on the ballot.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Jean David, 122 Curtis Lane – on Facebook there has been a lot of complaints about kids out late at night, in alleys and backyards. 4th of July gave Officer McGuire the license plate number of someone she is pretty sure is dealing drugs. He basically said there is nothing they can do.

Councilmember Gribi told her that she should bring this to the Public Safety committee which meets the first Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. at the Police Department.

Cyndy Ames, 971 Erine Ln. W.,- She wanted more discussion on the issue. Has lived in Eatonville for 14 years. Concerned with the cost. Will not support the levy.

Mayor Schaub for a \$ 200,000.00 home it would be an additional \$400.00 a year in property taxes for 2015.

Pat Kahler, 504 Center St W., - she wants to keep her Fire, Police and EMT's right here in Eatonville. She lives on a limited income. She would have to sell and move.

Council member Gribi confirmed that the levy is \$2.00 per \$1,000.00 and the amount would be \$400.00 more a year.

Karelina Resnick, 203 Orchard Ave N., - Our homes are our largest investment for most of us and we do not want to lose our homes to default. One thing to consider is to allow the poor to get a partial wavier for the tax increase.

Council member Gribi explained that she voted “yes” for this levy to be put forward to a vote to the people with the understanding that passing this, next year you will not see another officer. You will see the same level of fire service but it is not something that will be guaranteed into the future. There needs to be a drastic change. The town is 500,000 to 600,000 dollars short a year to be able to provide fulltime for public safety. With the amount of people that we have it is not fiscally responsible to ask the citizens to fund that much. This is why we had the town hall meetings. The Public Safety Committee is the first Tuesday of every month. Tomorrow they meet in the Police Department at 6:30 p.m. and going forward it will be in the Visitor’s Center. James Schrimpsheer and I both sit on this committee and are happy to have input. Need to hear what is important to people. She has seen on Facebook the issues going on around time. Chief Heishman is going to be doing a safety 101, letting you know what you can do to keep yourself safe.

Council member Schrimpsheer agrees with Council member Gribi that this is not fiscally responsible to send this forward but due to the current budget situation, if we do not send something forward it will lead to financial problems. These financial problems have been coming a long time and we are the council that has to deal with it. It’s a tough decision. He wants it to be made clear that this levy is in the voters hands. This vote tonight is to put this levy into the voters’ hands and you decide. As a council member, he is putting this into the voters’ hands. From a personal standpoint, he feels this is rewarding bad management but as a council member he has to look at the big picture. He strongly urges the town administration to look at what can be done to fix this problem because he will not vote for this again, to put this to the voters. The vote is in your hands. Mayor Schaub asked for a vote on Ordinance 2014-8. Unanimous. Motion carried.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Council member Gribi announced that the Public Safety Committee will meet at the police dept. at 6:30 p.m., going forward it will be at the Visitors Center. There is also a Finance Committee meeting at the Visitors Center on the 3rd Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. – Public is welcome.

Council member Walter asked who waters the large planters on Mashell Ave.? A lot of the plants look dead and depressing. Why are they not being maintained better?

Mr. Beagle explained that the plan is to remove the dead plants out of there and dispose of those. If some pots need all the plants removed then we will. The merchants were provided a letter this year to adopt a pot or hanging basket and no one stepped forward to do that. The plants will be maintained until they die. The business owners have been offered the opportunity to take care of them.

ADJOURNMENT

Council member Schrimpher moved to adjourn the Special meeting of August 4, 2014 and was seconded by **Council member Gribi**. All were in favor. Mayor Schaub adjourned the meeting at 6:49 PM.

Mike Schaub, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kerri Murphy, Recording Secretary