

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
AMES CONFERENCE BOARD**

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AMES, IOWA

JANUARY 22, 2019

REGULAR MEETING OF THE AMES CONFERENCE BOARD

The Regular Meeting of the Ames Conference Board was called to order by Chairman John Haila at 5:30 p.m. on January 22, 2019. Present from the Ames City Council were Bronwyn Beatty-Hansen, Gloria Betcher, Amber Corrieri, Tim Gartin, David Martin, and Chris Nelson. Story County Board of Supervisors present were Lauris Olson and Rick Sanders. Representing the Ames Community School Board was Gina Perez. Leanne Harter attended on behalf of the Nevada Community School Board. Gilbert Community School District and United Community School District were not represented.

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 27, 2018: Moved by Olson, seconded by Betcher, to approve the Minutes of the February 27, 2018, meeting of the Ames Conference Board.

Council Member Olson commented that the February 27, 2018, Minutes had stated that the study on consolidation of the City and County Assessor positions would be forwarded to the Conference Board members, but she did not recall receiving same. Ms. Olson requested that the study be sent out again.

Vote on Motion: 3-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

ASSESSOR'S BUDGET PROPOSALS: Ames City Assessor Greg Lynch highlighted information from the City Assessor's Annual Report. He brought the Board's attention specifically to Tables 1 and 2 on Page 3, Assessed Values and Taxable Values, respectively. The Assessed Values increased 4.2% from 2017 to 2018, and the Taxable Values increased 5.7% from 2017 to 2018.

Mr. Lynch explained several line items shown on Exhibit A of the Report, which is the 2019-2020 Budget Proposal. Regarding salaries, Mr. Lynch replied that the City Assessor's Office tries to match the percentage of increase that is forecast for City of Ames employees. He stated that 5% has been budgeted for salary increases: 3% for cost-of-living and 2% for merit; the merit increase is based on employee review and performance. He explained that it is anticipated that all employees would meet their performance goals; however, not everyone will get the same merit increase. Upon being questioned by Ms. Olson, Assistant City Manager Bob Kindred stated that City of Ames employees' increases are being proposed at 3% for cost-of-living; however, the Council has not approved the City Budget for next fiscal year. The two Union Contracts that have settled have settled at 3%. Ms. Olson indicated that the County is budgeting a 2% cost-of-living increase, although the County's budget has not yet been approved.

Mr. Lynch indicated that the insurance expense is only going up 2.3% this year, which is the lowest percentage of increase he has seen since he has been the City Assessor.

According to Mr. Lynch, one of the largest budget line item is for data processing services/major software. He brought the Board's attention to the breakdown of data processing-related expenses.

City Assessor Lynch informed the Board that the FY 2019-20 Proposed Budget totals \$1,206,970, which is a decrease of 1.0% from the current budget. Discussion ensued about comparing FY 2017-18 expenses with the FY 2019-20 Budget Proposal. Supervisor Sanders noted that last year was a re-valuation year and commented that he believed they are comparing valuation years versus non-re-valuation years. Mr. Lynch pointed out that the expenses did not go up that much. He further explained that they did not use \$20,000 that had been budgeted last year for a model to be built for this year, which was not needed and will not be carried forward. In addition, the \$34,000 budgeted for a Content Management System was not spent and will not be carried forward. Mr. Lynch commented that the staff's work is the same, regardless of whether or not it is a re-valuation year. In terms of a true scope of work, Mr. Sanders believes that that would not be comparing "apples-to-apples." City Assessor Lynch stated that they only ask for the amount of money that is absolutely necessary to run the office.

At the inquiry of Supervisor Olson, Administrative Assistant Dawn Tank compared the proposed budget to the 2017-18 budget year, specifically noting that IPERS changed, and there were new data processing expenses. She identified the Eagle Recorder (\$704), Data Cloud Solutions (\$5,755), and maintenance for the Document Management System (estimated \$10,000) as being new expenses. Utilities, Equipment Rental and Maintenance, and Equipment and Machinery will increase, and efficiency improvements to the Deputy Assessor's office are being requested.

City Assessor Lynch noted that the proposed taxation rate per \$1,000 valuation is proposed to be \$0.35032.

Mr. Lynch noted that the purpose of the Mini Board meeting is where a lot of the expenses are reviewed, not at the Conference Board meeting. Ms. Olson stated that the Story County Board of Supervisors sets its Supervisor assignments on January 2. This year, she only had a few hours to advise Mr. Lynch that she would be staying on the Mini Board for another year. Ms. Olson suggested that more advance notice be given regarding the dates for the Mini Board meetings and that they be scheduled later in January.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Harter, to approve the recommendations of the Assessor's Report.

Roll Call Vote: 3-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Corrieri, seconded by Perez, to receive the proposed budget, with adoption of the budget occurring after the hearing is held.

Roll Call Vote: 3-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Nelson, seconded by Olson, to set February 26, 2019, as the date of public hearing on the proposed FY 2019/20 City Assessor's budget.

Roll Call Vote: 3-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

REAPPOINTMENT OF GREG LYNCH AS CITY ASSESSOR: Chairperson Haila asked Mr. Lynch to explain his request for reappointment given his current term runs through December 31, 2020. Mr. Lynch explained that once the continuing education requirements have been met, Assessors become eligible for reappointment. He noted that he asked for reappointment in a similar manner the last time.

Board Member Sanders stated his preference that Mr. Lynch's request for reappointment wait until next January. He noted that Mr. Lynch and his staff do a good job, and his desire to wait for the discussion of Mr. Lynch's reappointment is not a reflection of his or his staff's performance.

It was the concurrence of the Board to take no action on the request for reappointment.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Sanders to adjourn the Ames Conference Board meeting at 5:59 p.m. Vote on Motion: 3-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

John A. Haila, Mayor

Gregory Lynch, Ames City Assessor