

**MINUTES OF THE
FERNLEY CITY COUNCIL
TENTATIVE BUDGET MEETING
APRIL 3, 2025**

1. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1.1. Pledge of Allegiance

1.2. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Neal E. McIntyre, Councilman Ryan Hanan, Councilwoman Felicity Zoberski, Councilman Stan Lau, Councilman Albert Torres, City Manager Ben Marchant, Deputy City Manager Lydia Altick, City Attorney Aaron Mouritsen, HR Manager Mitzi Carter, City Treasurer Robert Carson, Accounting Manager Jennie Carrick, City Clerk Kim Swanson, Administrative Specialist I Sandy Harris, Building Official Charity Birkel Planning Director Michele Rambo, Public Works Director Barry Williams, Utilities Director Seong Kim, Municipal Court Judge Lori Matheus, Court Administrator Sierra Keathley-Dunn. Councilman Joe Mendoza joined the meeting via Zoom at 6:06 pm.

Public Forum

None at this time.

1.4. (For Possible Action) Approval of Agenda

Motion: I MOVE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. **Action:** Approved. **Moved by:** Councilman Stan Lau, **Seconded by:** Councilman Ryan Hanan. **Vote:** Passed, **Summary:** Yes 4. **Yes:** Councilwoman Zoberski, Councilman Lau, Councilman Torres, Councilman Hanan.

2. STAFF REPORTS

2.1. (For possible action) Discussion regarding the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 proposed final budget including but not limited to: All funds within the Water Enterprise Fund; Wastewater Enterprise Fund; General Fund; Special Revenue Funds; Capital Improvement Program; rates; all city departments; the budget process; timelines, goals, and existing budget; debt, staffing, including but not limited to reorganization, reclassification, employee positions and contracts, new positions, and other matters related thereto.

City Manager Marchant presented the preliminary budget for fiscal year 2025/2026. He began with reviewing where we are at year to date this fiscal year, an economic outlook for next year, and then the Enterprise Funds overview, and finally the General Fund overview. With the current year's budget, the new wage scale has improved recruitment and retention efforts. The Shadow Lane construction is on schedule for completion by June, as is the Community Response and Resource Center (CRRRC). The water reservoir construction is also on schedule. Our operations are performing below budget, cost and revenues are performing above budget, and we are projected to end the year using 3.5 million dollars less than we originally budgeted. Instead of a \$4,000 deficit, we're looking at \$550,000 approximately, and that will change as we

come to the end of the fiscal year finishing up the CRRC and other projects. The 2013 Lands Bill Conveyance process is imminent. The Green Valley Park All Abilities' playground was completed, as were the improvements to Picchetti Park. He is confident that the City of Fernley's revenues are stable, and, for the most part, not susceptible to recession. Our property taxes, franchise fees, business licenses, and the RTC Funds are all stable. We may see changes to the planning and building permit revenues. So far, we're hearing a strong demand for continued investment in Fernley from our developers and that doesn't appear to be changing anytime soon. Our operating budget is balanced with operating revenues, having a surplus which ensures future sustainability. The Water Utility Fund is healthy. In our budget we propose making some major investments in the Water Fund which will draw down some of our cash and will allow us to move forward. These are new personnel requests that have been proposed by the Utility Director. We're proposing to add two water distribution shift operators, two water treatment shift operators and two utility engineer positions as of December 31, 2025. These positions are budgeted for half a year. The initial budget expense in this fiscal year would be \$331,442. But then the recurring expense would be for the full year, because these are going to be full-time year-round positions. Then we have capital requests in the Water Fund to add two modular buildings to create sufficient office space to house the new employees, and then they need some heavy equipment and trucks to replace the existing ones that are worn out and an SUV for staff. Total one-time expenditures are \$1.8 million. The Sewer Fund is a slightly lower-cost operation than the Water Fund. It's in a very strong position. The capital requests, a CCTV inspection plant van is a camera line that you can run through the sewer lines to check for blockages, repairs, and corrosion. They'll need a modular building at the sewer plant as well, and a replacement truck and SUV. One-time expenditure is \$900,000. One-time costs, and their relationship with CIP for the next 5 years are also going to see their cash balances coming down. We have operations, and then we have capital improvements and strategic priorities. On the operations side, we're presenting a flat budget that is a continuation of the prior year with no great changes. It includes the council priorities and department requests for continuing operations and recurring expenses, which are all balanced with the current projected revenues yielding a surplus. The capital and strategic priorities are what we reviewed in January, and these represent one-time costs of strategic investments to advance numerous goals and prepare for the anticipated growth and demand for services. This portion of the budget is expected to draw down reserves significantly to make these items possible. In the prior year, we had a very healthy fiscal year, where revenues exceeded expenditure by \$2.2 million dollars, and we increased our ending fund balance by that amount. In the current year we budgeted for a deficit of \$4 million dollars to cover the cost of the CRRC. Showing our current year's projection is that we're only going to need \$500,000 to finish the CRRC, and so we're \$3.5 million ahead of where we thought we would be a year ago. The ending fund balance is going to come down a little but remain above \$14 million. In the proposed Fiscal Year, we project revenues of \$20 million and expenditures of \$24 million. That's a difference of \$3.9 million. We have a cushion so that all the new positions that we are proposing to add to the general fund are sustainable in the long term, and that we have this opportunity right now to utilize that operating surplus and a little bit of our fund balance to invest in these strategic priorities.

Councilman Torres asked the spending in FY25/26 to continue pushing the sewage treatment plant forward. He inquired about the line item for operations of Phase One of the CRRC.

City Manager Marchant stated the sewage treatment is an ongoing project that Mr. Kim is working with WNDD. We are pursuing what funding is available through Federal and State sources to do the design planning exploration project for building a new wastewater treatment plant. We are not at a point yet to allocate funding in terms of design RFPs. He stated the line item for the Community Center has not been defined. We have a draft lease agreement with the Boys and Girls Club of Truckee Meadows where the plan is that they would assume a triple net lease, and they would cover all operating costs and utilities of that building. Unless they take occupancy on day one, then we are going to take possession of the building and pay for operating costs and utilities until the Boys and Girls Club is ready to sign the lease and enter it. Robert Carson, City Treasurer, stated in the CIP document for the wastewater fund there is a placeholder of \$2.5 million dollars set aside starting in fiscal year 2027 for potential construction. Councilwoman Zoberski stated that as a council member she would like to get updates about those conversations with the Boys & Girls Club.

Councilman Hanan stated we need to look at setting some deadlines and then look at some alternatives if these things can't be accomplished, we can't have an empty building sitting there. City Manager Marchant stated that in the General Fund we have new positions discussed in January that have been included in this budget. I would bring back to our next budget work session in May the job description and salary ranges for review and approve them when we go to the final budget hearing and approval on May 21st. At this point, these are just the budget placeholders. Additional recurring expenses would be included for the asset management software, and IT managed services solutions and any maintenance that would be involved with the Fishing Pond Park should that project move forward. The recurring costs are \$927, 888, and the operating surplus is \$2.7 million, so that would bring that down to \$1.8 million. For capital requests and one-time expenditure request: There's a 4th modular building in the facilities that would be located here at City Hall to accommodate either these new positions or new positions here. We have a request for a scissor lift; On Farm District Road flashing solar lights for crosswalk and bike path, and phase 3 design and construction; For Streets, we have requests for a 3-yard dump truck, an insulated bucket truck, a 3-quarter-ton truck which is a replacement vehicle, and an SUV which is a replacement vehicle. Streets also want to invest in a light tower, a skid steer and a new SUV in Public Works. We got a new truck with an Animal Services box on the back last year. Our vector control employee got drone certified this year and this is an investment in the drone to deliver a more effective mosquito and pest abatement spraying. Funds set aside for the Fernley 25th Anniversary in the Mayor and Council budget. In the Municipal facilities plan and facilities budget we need to replace the flooring here in City Hall. IT needs investment in hardware and equipment upgrades. We have the two corridor studies on Main Street and Farm District Road and the Storm Drain Master Plan; Animal Services Facilities Plan this would be for a design and a proposed location and facility; a Cemetery Master Plan; Comprehensive Master Plan update; Capital improvements Plan to substantiate our impact fee program and, Infrastructure Plans for the North Area and the South Area. These total one-time costs are \$2.7 million all in the general fund. In terms of staffing this year, we currently have 88 FTE's. We're proposing adding 11 1/2 employees citywide, bringing the total employee force up to 99.75 full-time equivalents. It was requested by the Council for a breakdown of the compensation for the new positions to show the salary, the retirement PERS pay benefit, and

the other health and insurance benefits and the total cost of each position. In reviewing the preliminary budget, it's a carry-over budget except for all the new additions. In the Water Enterprise Fund, we have additional staff. In the Sewer Fund we have the one-time expenses for the modular building and the machinery and equipment. A summary of both the one-time expenditure and the recurring expenditure is a total investment of \$3.1 million. The total expenditure on water distribution is \$9.8 million. In the water treatment budget for the water treatment plant, we have salaries of \$1.2 million, and then the services and supplies come to a total expenditure of \$2.4 million. The capital improvement projects scheduled for this year and the total costs associated with those for fiscal year 25/26 are \$15.5 million.

Councilman Torres inquired about the debt on the water treatment plant and if there is anything proposed to pay it off quicker. He also inquired about the rate study.

Robert Carson, City Treasurer, stated that payment is charged to the residents on their property tax bill in the equal amount to whatever the principal and interest is due for that year. That's included in the water ancillary fee revenue. It won't show up in the operating budget because it's only a balance sheet account, because it's your debt and your cash. Regarding paying off the debt quicker, Mr. Carson stated that there hasn't been anything that we've explored internally. If it's something you want to look at, we can do that.

Seong Kim, Utilities Director, stated that we are in the process of water rate study, but have not reached the conclusion yet. We are waiting for the consultant to reach us with that study outcome.

Councilman Hanan expressed concern about spending the savings in the Enterprise fund and it changes the whole question of how we adjust our rates.

Robert Carson, City Treasurer, stated the 5-year CIP is projects and capital investments that have been identified by staff. If they can be pushed out, you may be able to save some in the short term, but it may cost you more in the long run, and if you're cutting into your cash balances going forward, you may not have the cash when it comes time for a dire emergency.

City Manager Marchant continued with the sewer expenses. Salaries are \$2.1 million, and services and supplies come to a total expenditure of \$6,170,000. This is a maintenance budget. The capital projects for fiscal year 2026 are \$7.7 million in investments.

Councilwoman Zoberski, inquired about the expenses for professional services for every section.

City Manager Marchant stated that we are hoping to reduce those expenses for outside engineering with the staff that we plan to hire. Anything we can do in house, we'll do, but if it's too big, then we have these line items for professional services. Outside service repair and maintenance also refers to heavy equipment mechanic's work.

Robert Carson, City Treasurer, stated that the makeup of the \$900,000 in outside services or professional services engineering is for the wastewater plant upgrade to do a feasibility study and the preliminary design, and then also the final PER and initial design.

City Manager Marchant stated that the one request from Councilman Torres was to hold off on hiring the engineering manager in Wastewater and the Utility department until after we've gotten through this part of the budget. We do have a candidate that we have not offered the job to. We

would like to see if you're comfortable moving forward with that session, and we can just discuss the other future positions next month.

Councilman Torres stated that we need to be very careful with this budget and not spend beyond what we need. There's what we need and what we want, and I think with this budget that we can find a place in between what we need and what we want. I would rather risk spending a little bit more money out of our budget and having our outside contractors take the burden of hiring and retention benefits and retirement, than adding these 2 utilities engineer positions to our coffers, especially because you're only asking for 6 months.

Robert Carson, City Treasurer, clarified that the utilities positions are all funded by fees charged in the utilities. They're not reliant on property taxes, permits, or franchise fees. Unless something changes, the cash flow in those funds should remain relatively stable, because they're based on usage and fees charged in the water and sewer.

City Manager Marchant stated that taking a very frugal, careful and cautious approach is a good idea. I'd like to propose having a conversation about the two positions in engineering, and maybe Director Kim can address his reasons for wanting it, and whether he's comfortable with waiting. I think it's a reasonable request to push it out for 6 months. Tonight, I was looking for permission to move forward with the other engineering manager position, which he could use to move forward with a lot of the projects immediately.

Seong Kim, Utilities Director, stated our new plans for the new Utilities Department are to have four divisions in operations: water treatment, water distribution, wastewater treatment and wastewater collection system. Our systems are aging and need a lot of repairs and maintenance to improve the whole system. We are under heavy scrutiny by the laws you must be compliant with them. We are using a lot of outside engineering services. It leaves us with two issues. One is a time issue. We need this fix today or tomorrow, but you must wait for them to come and see the whole thing. We lose time. Another aspect is economics. We are overwhelmed with all the maintenance and repair work. If you go out for outside services, they usually charge 3 or 4 times what we give our engineers. I won't say that we can cover all their work maybe we can ` cover half of their work. The very complicated, complex design and engineering work construction work we cannot do, we need a professional service, but even if we can cover half of their work, we can still save a lot of money and time.

City Manager Marchant stated that there are inefficiencies in our contract services, and that we are not getting the value that we could be getting, and that's why the justification for hiring these engineers. We'll get jobs done faster, cheaper and at less expense than what the outside professional service firms are charging us. When we talk about these positions, it's not just on the expense side, we're saving other expenses to offset those costs and investments.

Councilman Mendoza asked about who was under Mr. Kim's department. He also stated that he is extremely cautious about hiring a bunch of positions. He wants to hire what we need to keep things moving. But he thinks it would be extremely important for us to get that efficiency study that he's asked to be on the agenda prior to making some of these major decisions. One of the concerns he also has with hiring is that back in November he asked for an onboarding process to be created for new employees. We want to hire new employees, and he still hasn't

been presented with an onboarding process for our new employees. He finds that to be a deficiency in hiring these new people.

City Manager Marchant stated that there are 16 positions total under the Utilities Department as we stand right now, and the proposal is for two more positions that were authorized by the City Council in February, which include the SCADA specialist and the Utility Engineering Manager would bring it to 18, and he has 6 proposed in this budget that would bring it to 24. He does have an onboarding binder prepared for employees and is working on an elected official onboarding process. It should be ready by the end of the week.

Councilman Lau stated we do need to start focusing on getting in-house engineering, especially with how much is coming to town.

Councilwoman Zoberski stated she leans on the side of caution as far as the utility engineers, because she doesn't understand where the workload is being distributed, which makes it hard to advocate for those positions.

Mayor Neal E. McIntyre called for a break 6:50 pm - 7:07 pm.

Mayor Neal McIntyre announced that for the record, if there is another outburst from Councilman Lau, he will be asked to leave.

City Manager Marchant restated his request for direction from the City Council on how to proceed with the Utilities Engineering Manager position that has been postponed until tonight's meeting. Fernley is in a very privileged and fortunate position. We don't have C-Tax, but we also don't have police, fire and pension liabilities. We're not in the same situation as the other cities in the State. He stated he's spent a year and a half getting familiar with the deficiencies of this organization, and what he has found and what every new director has found since they've joined the team, is that what an efficiency study will show you is that this organization is inefficient because we are shorthanded and overworked. We do not have the capacity to handle the workloads that have built up in every department. His particular concern a year ago was that the water and sewer utilities were particularly neglected with lack of supervision and direction, which Mr. Kim has brought as Utility Director and outlined a strategy going forward. He welcomes an efficiency study.

Councilwoman Zoberski stated it would be helpful to get the efficiency study done, so that we know how we can utilize the utility one and two. She's not entirely against the engineering manager; it's the other 2 engineers.

City Manager Marchant stated he'd like to have this conversation continued at the next work session, where we can bring the job descriptions and Director Kim can present those tasks those engineering positions would do that are currently being done by outside services.

Councilman Mendoza believes that all of them are on the same page of making sure they are doing what is right for the community. He is a hundred percent on board for giving our team the tools and resources needed to be successful and effective. He doesn't want to hire this position yet. We need to look at the department as far as what their job descriptions are, what their responsibilities are, because we said, this number 2 will help with scheduling and putting people to work. But it was also said in this meeting that the foreman helped with scheduling with the few guys that they do have as well. He believed we need to emphasize that efficiency study, to have factual information so that we, as a Council, can make decisions on who what, and how to hire.

Motion: I MOVE TO BRING BACK IN MAY THE JOB DESCRIPTION, HAVE SEONG KIM DO A PRESENTATION ON THIS POSITION SPECIFICALLY FOR THE UTILITY ENGINEER MANAGER AND THEN WE CAN MAKE A DECISION ON WHETHER OR NOT WE WANT TO HIRE. **Action:** Approved. **Moved by:** Councilman Albert Torres, **Seconded by:** Councilman Stan Lau. **Vote:** Passed, **Summary:** Yes 5. **Yes:** Councilwoman Zoberski, Councilman Lau, Councilman Torres, Councilman Hanan, Councilman Mendoza.

General Fund Budget Request

Mayor and City Council budget:

We have budgeted \$100,000 to be used to plan activities and a possible monument to celebrate the 25th anniversary of incorporation.

Councilman Torres expressed concern about the amount, not knowing what it was going towards, and if any of it was earmarked for the 4th of July.

City Manager Marchant stated that they have reached out to multiple groups in the community to gather some input about what's an appropriate way to celebrate the 25th anniversary, and I have a long list of ideas. It's just a placeholder for what the City Council is interested in pursuing in terms of this.

General Services Facilities:

We've talked about increasing the Maintenance Worker to full-time, and the Municipal Facilities Plan to the extent that we've reached maximum occupancy of the Municipal building here. This study will allow us to plan future expansions.

Councilman Torres expressed concern about the \$400,000 for modulares. He would like to see what is the most cost-effective while still allowing staff to have a comfortable work environment. We still have some space that is open from job openings that we haven't filled. We have not taken our larger offices and done anything to separate those so that they can be shared by two people instead of one person. We need to do that before we start spending half a million dollars. He agrees we need to buy one, because the yard needs. Purchasing the other 3 modulares at this point isn't the best use of our money because we may not fill all these positions. We don't if we are going to have office space available at the community center, depending on what happens. We're looking at, maybe 12 months out, and the chances are very high that we're going to have the entire west wing open if the Muni Court moves over to the justice court. If it is a need and not a want, then he is much more on board with it. Let's get the other 3 modulares; one at the water treatment plant sewage treatment plant, and at the yard.

Councilwoman Zoberski agreed that the Cottonwood yard does need one, but believes getting the facilities plan done first and then going from there without spending the \$400,000 would be a better idea. Have we thought about retrofitting some of the fleet vehicles, especially for the foreman, with more hardcore laptops.

Barry Williams, Public Work Director, stated the critical areas would be the wastewater plant and the Cottonwood facility. The modular at City Hall is needed. We are bursting at the seams, even with the vacancies that we have. As far as some of the larger offices, they're mainly occupied by department heads, and they really can't share offices because of the sensitive work that they do. We do have some vehicles that are already outfitted for laptops and communication devices.

Seong Kim, Utilities Director, stated that the necessity of the modular building is for our utility department operations. We have 16 employees, including himself, three foremen and only 4 have offices. The other 12 don't have any office where they can sit down in front of the computers to do their work, write reports, study or do training.

Councilman Mendoza inquired about setting up workstations in the facilities to do reports, check emails and things like that. If they had laptops that they were using in the field, we could set up a workstation with a docking station that they could do their work. We could probably consolidate one office for them to do their work and some training knowing that they're not going to be in it 8 hours a day. Regarding the two code enforcement positions, he would like to start off with one to get that program going.

Councilman Hanan stated he agreed with the three modulators that are coming out of the Enterprise fund and would like to wait on the fourth to see what comes free in this building.

Streets and Storm Drains:

Streets and Storm Drains is requesting an additional maintenance worker and additional one-time expenditures.

Councilman Torres asked if a grant was available for the flashing solar light on Farm District Road and if NDOT was going to share any of the expense for the bike path.

Barry Williams, Public Works Director, stated that the light is not grant-funded, it is totally city-funded as well as the bike path. If they do come up with grant funding, it will definitely be utilized.

Councilwoman Zoberski inquired about flashing solar light on Farm District by the baseball fields.

Barry Williams, Public Works Director, stated that the solar lights that are being proposed in the budget are an extension of the walking path that was completed last year. We are in the process of completing our corridor study for that section of Farm District Road from the roundabout all the way down to Highway 50, and we expect that that will be addressed in the corridor study.

Animal Control:

We have allocated \$150,000 for planning and design services to develop a facility and \$100,000 for the pickup with animal transport boxes to replace the old one.

Councilman Mendoza inquired about heating and air conditioning in the back for the animals.

Lydia Altick, Deputy City Manager, stated these are brand new boxes with a lift on the back. There is temperature control in the back for the animals as well.

Vector Control:

Vector control is requesting a drone at a one-time expense of \$65,000.

Engineering:

Engineering is requesting a pickup for \$60,000 and a mid-sized SUV for \$50,000.

Councilman Torres asked if we need two vehicles right now.

Barry Williams, Public Works Director, stated that one vehicle is replacing the aged older vehicle that they have in the fleet. The second vehicle would be for engineering staff, the director and deputy director for site visits.

Parks and Recreation:

Parks and Recreation Department is requesting \$100,000 for the design and construction of the Fishing Pond Park. \$700,000 for the construction of the In-Town Park Phase II. \$200,000 of the requested amount is from the General fund and the remaining \$500,000 from the Regional Construction Tax Fund.

Councilman Torres asked if the \$100,000 for the fishing pond included the actual building of it. He expressed concern about putting water back through it for our aquifer. His other concern is when it's built will it need to have filtration, something in there to agitate the pond, and is it going to include some type of security. Can we include in that same area a large open space where it could either be utilized as practice fields.

City Manager Marchant stated that it is the amount for the initial look and assessment. There's an expectation that we could use a lot less because the State Department of Fish and Wildlife has offered to help us with design work. This was part of the design of the exterior area outside the pond that they wouldn't help us with. Right now, we don't have a project to present to all these different stakeholders and partners about what we plan to do and what it looks like and how it will work. It's a 23-acre parcel with a potentially 10-acre pond. We could make it smaller to fit in a field in a certain configuration.

Mayor Neal McIntyre stated that he has been in talks with BOR, and they are on board with letting us pull water from the canal to put into the pond. There needs to be some type of filtration that circulates the water. We can also pull the water for the irrigation out of the pond. It will recharge the aquifer. Fish and Game will help us design the pond, and stock it 3 to 4 times

Councilman Stan Lau stated that he agrees with Councilman Torres regarding extra fields.

Councilman Mendoza wanted to be on record that this was probably one of the last things on our priority list for what we wanted to see in 2026, and there are a lot of other things that need to take place before we do a fishing pond.

Councilman Hanan asked with regard to the ball fields, do we have something in our conceptual plan to purchase additional adjacent property to expand, and would it be feasible to come up with a plan for Part A, and then an expansion at some point for Part B for more fields and space. The biggest complaint he gets over and over is that there is nowhere for the kids to go.

City Manager Marchant stated that it is not an option for this property at this time. There is a property adjacent that has a development entitlement on it that would expire in December of this year if it doesn't get renewed.

Mayor Neal McIntyre called for a break - 8:14 pm - 8:23 pm

City Manager Marchant parks and recreation is requesting construction of the sidewalk at the soccer fields and basketball court at Green Valley Park \$60,000, and a walkway in the parking lot of the Out-of-Town Park Soccer fields for \$60,000. The request also includes a pickup for \$80,000, a riding lawn mower for \$15,000, and turf sweeper for \$25,000.

Cemetery:

Public Works Department is requesting \$150,000 to complete a Cemetery Master Plan and outline the future development, maintenance and preservation needs of the cemetery.

Planning and Development:

The Associate Planner position is funded for the full year effective July 1st. One-time planning expenditures: The Comprehensive Master Plan update to consolidate and reconcile the numerous planning documents into one is \$300,000; develop a Capital Improvements Plan in support of the impact fee program is \$350,000; an Infrastructure Plan for the North and Southwest planning areas is \$300,000, and the development of the South Area Plan is \$300,000.

Councilwoman Zoberski questioned why we paying for somebody to put together a master plan while we're paying for all the master plans to put into it.

City Manager Marchant stated this has to do with planning going on in the city. The new area plans are for growth and stand alone as their own development. The Comprehensive Master Plan update seeks to reconcile all pre-existing plans that are often contradictory.

Michele Rambo, Planning Director, stated the Cemetery Master Plan and the Facilities Master Plan do not go in the Comprehensive Master Plan. Those are separate. What goes in the Comprehensive Master Plan is land use, conservation, transportation and a few other facilities. Not all the plans that we're requesting tonight are into the Comprehensive Master Plan.

Code Enforcement:

Code Enforcement is a new department. We do recognize that Councilman Mendoza suggested that we delay hiring the second position until the Manager is on board. City Manager Marchant suggested funding both positions for the whole year, just not knowing at what timing we could expedite all this hiring, because we don't want to arbitrarily say how much time the Code Enforcement Manager would need to get up to speed before asking for that position to help.

Councilman Torres agreed to start with one and build from that. He would rather it not be a post-certified position and allow them to be focused on code enforcement and not law enforcement. We are in a unique position as far as the city of Fernley. If you could do a cost savings on not being post-certified and bring back in May. Maybe after the beginning of the year, when this new person is hired the council can readdress a 2nd position.

City Manager Marchant stated that the discussions that we had previously as we built the idea of this program and position, drew heavily from our municipal court judge and city attorney. Their input was that, because of the judicial process and court writing, and how to bring a case to court, the best prepared people to do that would be a post-certified person who would know how to structure the program and administer it according to those skills developed in law enforcement. The difference between the Manager and the officer is the post-certification, that would be savings of \$49,000. This is a two-person job, especially for the size and growth and the complaints growing in the community. It would be good to budget for two. We should look for a manager level person to be able to build the program and learn from all the resources that we have in-house to be able to then train a more entry level person.

Councilman Lau agreed with Councilman Torres this position does not have to be post-certified.

Aaron Mouritsen, City Attorney, stated there are two different job descriptions one for post-certified, one for non-post-certified. He is an advocate for post-certified. If carrying a firearm is something that you want to enforce a position to do, he would definitely want them post-certified.

Judge Lori Matheus stated if at any point she indicated that she preferred a post-position she was misunderstood. We have a Marshal who is law enforcement trained who can assist in

training people who are currently doing it, as well as anybody who might come in on the 4th amendment and offer his assistance to escort them to high-conflict calls.

Councilman Hanan stated that he thinks we should hire a code enforcement person, and we do a survey at every interaction so we can keep tabulations on what their encounters are. Then decide on whether we need to hire a person that carries a firearm. He did agree that we have the capability of utilizing the training in-house. He asked if it is possible for the Building Department to fill in as the second one and then fund the second position for 6 months.

Councilman Mendoza stated the benefit from being post-certified is probably less than the liability that it will pose to the city. It was mentioned that maybe we could make arrests and hopefully have these people making arrests for violations that are continuous and things like that. Now we're looking at having to rent jail space from the county if we need to, and he thinks we're just going down a road that we shouldn't go down with the post-certification.

Charity Birkel, Building Official, when you do have to go to a more volatile type of situation, only having one person in that department is difficult. The workload for this code enforcement is vast. There's three people in my department, including myself, who are out probably 3 to 4 hours a day doing just code enforcement and paperwork associated with code enforcement. If you choose not to go the post route, maybe a few months down the road after the first one is hired, it can be re-looked at.

At 9:00 pm Mayor Neal McIntyre declared that he wanted to finish the agenda.

Councilwoman Zoberski stated the whole reason for us creating the Code Enforcement department was to separate from building. We want building to do building and code enforcement to do code enforcement.

Robert Carson, City Treasurer, stated the position could potentially be budgeted for half a year, if that's what Council decides. But if you pre-fund, nothing says you must spend it. That money is just earmarked if a new person is hired. If the manager comes in and decides it's only a one-person show, those funds just revert back. So, it's much easier to say we're going to go ahead and keep this placeholder up front.

Judge Lori Matheus stated that if the Marshall did the in-house training that they would have to pay for the certifications in overtime.

Marshal Dan Lynch stated that he does have certifications, and probably anything you want them to be taught. However, most of those certifications are for 2 or 3 years, and since he's been working here 3 years and hasn't gone to any of those recertification trainings. He doesn't think that's going to be able to happen without getting new training.

Councilman Torres suggested that we ask the sheriff's office if they could train them at a regular training class and do the certification. He stated he is on board with funding them both, filling one now and getting the training before they hire the second position.

Councilman Hanan stated he would like to fund both positions as non-post, and at whatever point the supervisor thinks he or she needs to hire the second person.

Councilwoman Zoberski requested to add a line item concerning public safety in the event that fire and EMS in Fernley need assistance keeping up with the growth of the city. The Council can decide what amount we want to earmark to help, assist and protect public safety. Right now,

our fire department is struggling to maintain staffing costs which puts all of Fernley at risk. It's not our obligation to help the Fire district in any way, but ethically it is our responsibility to pay attention if they're struggling. We should have somewhat of an emergency fund that is a cushion setback that if one of the districts that supports our city fails, we're able to assist in some way.

Councilman Torres stated if worse comes to worse, the State Department of taxation would come in, and they're not going to let them fail. He is on board with the idea of the in-kind stuff, especially the stuff to do with the shop and with their fleet service.

Councilman Hanan stated that he has had multiple meetings with the leadership from the fire Department and attended several fire board meetings. His understanding is that they have or will be notifying the State that they are not fiscally solvent, and they'll be working with the State to set a timeline for them. He stated if they are not able to function on their own maybe there needs to be a transfer, or maybe the city needs to create its own department.

Councilman Mendoza stated that being tied to the fire department, there was a lot of misinformation said this evening, and there needs to be a conversation publicly in regard to the status of the fire department. There is some stuff that has been said, that is true, but the state of the Fire Department, as it's being depicted right now, is false.

City Manager Marchant stated that this is the conclusion of our budget presentation this evening and thanked the council for their input and dialogue.

3. PUBLIC FORUM

None at this time.

The next City Council meeting will be April 16th.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before it, the Fernley City Council Tentative Budget meeting adjourned at 9:21 pm.

Approved by the Fernley City Council on May 7, 2025, by a vote of:

AYES 5 NAYS: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0 ABSENT: 0


Mayor Neal E. McIntyre


ATTEST: City Clerk Kim Swanson