



CITY MANAGER

Elaine Leven

CITY CLERK

Cynthia Greenia

City of Fraser

CENTENNIAL COMMUNITY

MAYOR

Michael Lesich

MAYOR PRO-TEM

Dana Sutherland

COUNCIL

Amy Baranski

Patrick O'Dell

Kenny Perry

Patrice Schornak

Sherry Stein

**FRASER CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL WORK SESSION MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2024
6:30 P.M.
AS APPROVED FEBRUARY 8, 2024**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lesich called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Lesich led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

PRESENT: Baranski, Lesich, O'Dell, Perry, Stein, Sutherland

ABSENT: Schornak

OTHERS: City Manager Leven, Attorney Don DeNault, City Clerk Greenia

Motion by Lesich supported by Sutherland to excuse Council Member Schornak from the meeting.

AYES: Baranski, Lesich, O'Dell, Perry, Stein, Sutherland

NAYS: None

Motion Carried

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by O'Dell supported by Stein to approve the agenda for the January 9, 2024 City Council Works Session as presented.

AYES: Baranski, Lesich, O'Dell, Perry, Stein, Sutherland

NAYS: None

Motion Carried

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5. COUNCIL WORKSHOP

City Manager Leven opened the meeting by indicating the purpose was to review general rules and guidelines regarding how City Council and City Administration work together for a better City of Fraser. She then reviewed the agenda and the items that would be discussed.

Attorney DeNault stated he would be reviewing the packet in front of each of them. He added they should feel free to interrupt at any time with questions. He was hoping this would be a comfortable discussion amongst everyone and a learning opportunity for all.

a. Council/Manager Roles

Attorney DeNault reviewed the history of the City and its form of government. City Council sets policy and gives direction, the City Manager and other City Administration see to the day to day operation of the City.

Review was had of the City Manager's authority to hire within the City. There were certain offices, by Charter, that needed City Council approval for hire. Council Member Baranski interjected that the City Council had adopted a policy wherein they actually have input on other hires as well as those in the Charter.

The City Manager is the boss of all employees. They all answer to her. If employees were made to choose between answering to a City Council member or answering to the City Manager they would have to answer to the City Manager.

City Council has the right to gather information. This was something that was a good practice.

When needing something from City employees it's best to go through the City Manager. She can request the information from them and forward it to you. It's a good way to address questions so that the City Manager is aware that City Council might be looking for something and perhaps she can help. City Clerk Greenia added that she felt it was always a good practice to copy the City Manager on any emails to employees. Many times, she can answer the question or request faster than the employee.

Mr. DeNault stated that City Council members needed to be mindful not to put city employees in an uncomfortable position by asking them to do something or for information. Always go through the City Manager.

b. Council Rules and Procedures

Mr. DeNault began this item by noting that City Council was the legislative branch of the government so to speak. They would decide how we wanted to do business as a City.

He briefly covered the Open Meetings Act. It was a state law that basically states public bodies must make their decisions and deliberate in public. A short discussion was had on closed session. He shared with City Council that during public participation in a meeting it was not always a good practice to go back and forth with a resident. The public has statutory rights, but their public comments and the manner in which City Council deals with them is not about Freedom of Speech.

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Discussion was had on the minutes of Council and Board meetings. The only requirement, really, was what action was taken at the meeting. In certain instances, more facts that were presented at the meeting can be helpful.

Discussion was had on voting and fiduciary duties. City Council members are fiduciaries/caretakers of the City. They should all feel free to bring their life experiences with them to the meeting and enter discussion based on those. City Council members had an obligation to vote on items before them.

City Council took a short break at 8:15 p.m.

City Council reconvened at 8:27 p.m.

c. Parliamentary Procedure and Council Decorum

Mr. DeNault begin this item by stating that both MML and the MSU Extension had some great literature on this subject matter. Council uses "Robert's Rules of Order" during their meetings. However they have also adopted some of their own rules.

Everything is supposed to funnel through the Chair/Mayor at meetings. Courtesy and professionalism are always expected.

d. Budgetary Process

Mr. DeNault reviewed the Charter requirements regarding adoption of the annual budget. He stated that adopted budget does not give approval to necessarily spend the money in it, but it allows for the possibility of spending that money. Many items will still come before City Council for their approval before purchase is made.

He referred to the spending limit of the City Manager according to Ordinance at \$7,500. This was from an Ordinance that was adopted in 2001. Discussion was had on revisiting that Ordinance and adjusting that amount.

City Manager Leven then went over some items regarding the budget. She explained the fund balance and how that came into play each year. Discussion was had on what was considered a good percentage of the fund balance for the City to have. She shared with City Council that when she became City Manager, she enacted the use of the Agenda Request Form. This form came with every item that City Council receives in their packets. On that form there was a section that stated how the item would affect the budget. This made that part of the item clear to City Council before it was presented at the meeting. Many things that are in the budget are out of the control of City Council such as utilities, union contracts and other expenses that were fixed. She would be kicking off the budget process this month.

Mr. DeNault reminded City Council they had to also consider a fee schedule for the City.

Council Member Baranski shared that if she wanted to put something on the City Council Agenda she would email the request to the City Manager, Mayor and Mayor Pro-Tem. The Mayor agreed this was a good practice.

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6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Baranski supported by Sutherland to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

All Ayes

Motion Carried

Respectfully Submitted:

Cindi Greenia, Clerk

Michael Lesich, Mayor