

The Cannon Falls City Council met in a work session on Wednesday, November 13, 2019, at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. Present were Mayor John Althoff and Council Members Mary Jill Bringgold, Bill Duncan, Steve Gesme, Derek Lundell, Morris Mattson and Matt Montgomery. Also present were Dave Maroney, City Administrator; Lanell Endres, Finance Director; Nicole Miller, Library Director; and Jeff McCormick, Police Chief.

Purpose	The purpose of the work session was to continue discussions related to the 2020 budget and levy.
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Pledge of Allegiance	Mayor Althoff led in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.
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Approve Agenda	A motion was made by Council Member Lundell, seconded by Council Member Duncan to approve the agenda as presented. All members present voted aye. The motion was declared passed.
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Discussion	City Administrator Maroney indicated the meeting was a follow-up from the previous week's meeting and provided the opportunity to further discuss the police department budget and the budget as a whole.
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Council Member Duncan stated he felt that cutting any patrol officers was out of the question and that the police department budget was way too high. He indicated he looked at the management and administrative areas in the police budget noting there were two management and two clerical positions in the department and he felt that only one of each was needed. He stated he felt the high salaries should be cut and that the police chief and one administrative assistant position should be eliminated.

Other council members agreed that the part-time and patrol officer positions should not be cut or reduced. Council Member Montgomery asked the Council to look at the budget as a whole and questioned what the goal was for the budget and levy. He stated he felt there were other ways to achieve that goal rather than focusing on one department. He also stated he felt the 2020 budget as presented by the police department was fiscally responsible.

Mayor Althoff reviewed several budget items such as health insurance, fire department, ambulance service, library, Cannon Valley Trail, public works and administration. He stated he felt it all came down to the police department's budget and questioned why Cannon Falls was spending so much more than other cities the same size.

Council Member Gesme stated he had received calls with about a 10-1 ratio from citizens that don't want any changes made to the police

department. Council Member Lundell noted that they could be asking why other cities were underfunding their police departments and that in order to have a good police department and good officers, it costs money. Council Member Gesme indicated he was not in favor of eliminating positions based on comparisons to other cities.

Administrator Maroney discussed data for other police department budgets citing 30 cities with populations ranging between 3,500 and 4,500. He stated 7 cities had higher costs and after removing cities that had very low costs likely due to others providing police services (County Sheriff Department similar to Pine Island), there were still 16 cities that reported lower annual costs, in some cases significantly lower.

Council Member Bringgold felt the records assistant position should be eliminated. Council Member Mattson stated he felt one administrator should be eliminated and that based upon his calculations that the labor costs for administration of the police department were 50% of the total labor budget. Council Member Montgomery stated he felt that if the chief and staff person were eliminated, this would damage the police department. Chief McCormick stated he thought the administration costs were closer to 35-40% of the overall budget rather than the 50% stated. He further explained the staffing levels and restructuring that had taken place within the department. He stated that if the Council wanted the level of service provided to the community adjusted, they would do so.

The consensus of the Council, except for Council Member Duncan, was to wait a week to discuss the budget further and then decide how to move forward.

Adjournment

The meeting was duly adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Cannon Falls on the 19th day of November, 2019.

John O. Althoff, Mayor

ATTEST:

David Maroney, City Administrator