

**Minutes of Public Hearing
Held May 14, 2013**

Mayor David L. Jack called the Public Hearing to order at 6:00 p.m., May 14, 2013 in the Borough Assembly Chambers. Assembly Members Wiederspohn, Stokes, Jamieson, McCloskey and Stough were present. Assembly Member Christian arrived at 6:20 p.m. Borough Manager Timothy Rooney and Borough Clerk Kim Flores were also in attendance.

Public Hearing Item

The purpose of the hearing is to give citizens an opportunity to make comments on the City & Borough of Wrangell's Budget for FY 2013/2014 prior to a final decision to be made by the Borough Assembly.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

There was no written testimony.

Manager Rooney reported that the City had a meeting with the City's Insurance Broker; they were looking at several different options for the City. Rooney said that for now, Staff's recommendation was to leave the proposed amount for the medical insurance in the budget as is was.

Manager Rooney also reported that Carl Johnson, Public Works Director, had met with a representative from AT&T to try and get to a reduction on cell phone costs; looking at putting all of the cell phones under one group plan instead of separated out by each department. Rooney stated that he hoped that the City could save some money by doing this.

ORAL TESTIMONY

Cynthia Waddington, Box 953, spoke on behalf of the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce. She stated that the amount that was provided to the Chamber from the City was absolutely needed; the funding was a necessity for the Chamber.

Julie Decker, 123rd Street, stated that the concerns she had were that the City looked like it was in a good position with the reserve funds, however that was at a first glance look; thinks that was where the initiative was coming from; community was just now starting to grow; can be seen by the raise in population in Wrangell; can be seen in the projects around town.

Ms. Decker said that she felt like the cuts in the operating costs, as stated on page 44a of the draft budget, would be a result of the vote of the people. She said that this was not a good thing; on the other hand, she didn't believe that using the reserve funds was a good thing to supplement those proposed cuts.

Ms. Decker stated that the thing that concerned her most was that the short term projection for the next five years on both the State and the Federal level was reduced budgets. She further stated that she had been in Juneau four times during the last session; reduced budgets were a consistent message from everyone; the message was to also to be prepared, because this was not a one-time thing, reduction in budgets would continue to happen. She said that when looking at two of our three sources of the City's funding being reduced and the potential for the initiative in the fall, the picture for our continued growth didn't look good.

Ms. Decker said that a lot of people have put a lot of effort into getting our community to where it was today. She said that the reserves or pockets of money that could be used for Economic Development projects were important to have available. She said that the City should not tap into those reserves when there was shortage in the operating expenses.

Ms. Decker stated that another concern in the proposed budget cuts were the cuts to the school; the school was one of the areas that helped to bring new people to our community; young families that have small children look to see if the community has good schools and a safe community for their children before making a move to a new area. She said that our school system was an area that the community could promote; could help bring people to our community; in the last two years, Wrangell had tested 2nd school in the State. She stated that was because we support our schools in the community and through funding.

Jeff Jabusch, 211 Oceanview Drive, Finance Director, stated that the draft budget was an ongoing process. He asked that if anyone found any errors or had any questions, to let him know.

Mr. Jabusch stated that when Staff had new knowledge about the healthcare costs or any other corrections, he would try and incorporate all of those changes in the final proposed budget.

Recessed at: 6:09 p.m.

Assembly Member Christian arrived at 6:20 p.m.

Reconvened at: 6:50 p.m.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

There was no written testimony.

ORAL TESTIMONY

There was no oral testimony.

Adjourned at: 6:51 p.m.

ATTEST:

Kim Flores
Kim Flores, Borough Clerk

David L. Jack

David L. Jack, Mayor

