

SPECIAL MEETING DES MOINES CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

October 25, 2008

The meeting of the Des Moines City Council was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Mayor Sheckler at the Des Moines Activity Center, 2045 S. St., Des Moines, WA.

ATTENDANCE - Present: Mayor Sheckler, Mayor Pro Tem Dan Sherman, Councilmembers Dave Kaplan, Councilmember Pina, Carmen Scott, Scott Thomasson and Susan White. Also in attendance were City Manager Tony Piasecki, Parks and Recreation Services Director Patrice Thorell, Public Works Director Grant Fredricks, Police Commander John O'Leary, Police Chief Roger Baker, Finance Director Paula Anderson, Planning Building Public Works Director Grant Fredricks, Finance Operations Manager Cecilia Pollock, Assistant City Manager Lorri Ericson, and City Attorney Pat Bosmans.

ATTORNEY RESPONSE

City Attorney Pat Bosman gave her opinion on the question, as a matter of law, can cuts be made of General Fund for police services, including but not limited to funds for overtime, supplies, travel, training, professional services, and police positions paid from general funds. The short answer is yes. The ordinance called for the filling of seven police patrol positions, four Community Service Officer positions, one record specialist and a half time animal control officer. It also called for a reduction in crime rate and restoring general fund amount at the 1999 levels. The seven Levy lid positions have been filled. City Council can determine whether the levy funds have been used to meet its intended propose like filling the positions, reducing crime and maintain general fund budget expenditures in a way that the levy is not supplanting those expenditures. When it comes to levy money, the only significant issue is that the City is not supplanting monies.

POLICE DEPARTMENT PROPOSED BUDGET REDUCTIONS

Chief Baker read the following statement: "Five years ago my wife Shirley and I came to the City of Des Moines in response to your search for a new Chief of Police. We arrived a few days in advance of the selection process and fell in love with the community and actually entered into an agreement to purchase a home here prior to my being selected to be your Chief of Police. I came to you with a strong private business background, accomplished law enforcement background, and broad educational background. During the last 5 years, I have applied the knowledge, skills and abilities that I have acquired to help our staff create a more effective, efficient and sustainable police department that works closely with our community and other city departments. That process began in 2005 with the development of the Des Moines Police Department's first 5 Year Strategic Plan.

The Des Moines Police Department Strategic Plan is our business plan. It describes our mission, vision, values, goals and objectives. It identifies the strategic issues that are being addressed by the police department and describes our strategies for successfully achieving our goals. The strategic plan guides the development and implementation of our budget.

During the past five years, the police department has worked closely with the city manager, city council, and the community to implement creative solutions to reduce crime in our city and develop non general fund revenue streams for the police department. These measures include the creation or revision of ordinances that require fees for services that focus on crime reduction, and the passage of a property tax Levy Lid Lift that restores the police department positions that had been cut since 1998. All of these

measures were designed to reduce the police department's current and future draw on the City's general fund.

The police department also currently funds the activities of other city employees not assigned to the police department. Those individuals provide specific services for the police department that are not covered by general funds. Some of those other city employee positions would have been reduced to part time or entirely eliminated without police department support.

The police department business plan is to restore and sustain the police department by the creation of revenue streams outside of the City's general fund so that as the economy improves for the City those general funds that would have gone to restore police department can go to all of the other city departments. I have routinely described the process as "getting the big dog out of the general fund kitchen". That goal has been achieved by five years of hard work by the police department, city manager, city council and the community. To date, we have created about \$2,000,000 in annual revenue for the police department that has replaced about 20% of present and future police department general funding.

The City of Des Moines, like many other cities, continually faces uncertain financial stability but is blessed with great city staff. The police department stands ready again to further appropriately support other city departments during this current economic situation."

Chief Baker identified cuts that could be made to the Police budget without severe impact to the department, however reducing the budget can and does affect the ability to provide services to the community. The budget cuts will amount to \$150,000 to assist the city in balancing the budget, they are as follows:

- Reduce training by hiring lateral officers instead of new officers. There are 5 openings left to fill.
- Reduce overtime budget by \$50,000
- Office supplies could be cut by \$30,000
- \$5,000 professional
- \$1,000 training time over
- \$5,000 small office equipment
- Fuel savings projected to be \$25,000 with conversion of installing a 2nd battery in each patrol car to avoid running the cars continuously.

Patrol cars were running constantly to keep the electrical equipment powered and was causing batteries to die and wasting fuel. Installing a back up battery in all the patrol cars allows the officers to turn the car off, while still keeping the equipment operational. The money is in the budget for this conversion and will save fuel. There are 16 to 17 police cars, 14 of which are paid for out of general funds.

The issue of the officers taking home their patrol cars was raised and Chief Baker explained that the patrol officers can respond much quicker if they have their cars with them. They have the car for their block of shifts, then take their own cars home their last shift. Detective cars go home with the officer which gives the officer instant access and response when called out off shift.

One officer left the department to rejoin his military unit, contact with this officer has been lost so it is unknown if he will return. However, the department is required to hold the position open for 5 years.

The opportunity for that officer to rejoin the police force closes October 31, 2009. The delay in filling the position has resulted in a savings of \$40,000.

Councilmember Thomasson inquired if not spending the salary is really a savings or just money not spent.

Mr. Piasecki responded that when the budget is drawn up, it is budgeted as if every position is filled. One of the cost deferrals mentioned in the budget packet was to freeze vacant positions in the Police Department. That would create a salary savings.

Councilmember Kaplan stated that the purpose of the Levy Lid Lift was to restore the department to where it was in 1999 in terms of staffing. There are a total of 30 patrol positions currently, which are 2 more than in 1999. The issue is patrol, the Levy Lid was to restore the department to 1999 numbers in patrol, and it looks like there are 2 more positions than in 1999. Looking at staffing numbers, we are at or above where we were in 1999. The actual staffing is unknown in 1999, even though they were budgeted, its unknown if all positions were filled.

There was some discussion about which year the Levy Lid Lift referred to as to the level of police staffing to be restored.

Mr. Piasecki stated the Levy Lid Lift reference the year 1999 as the base year for restoration of the Police Department.

Councilmember Kaplan opined that in looking at the figures in 1999, the Department was at 57 positions, so according to the current figures, there are two more positions now then was budgeted for in 1998.

Chief Baker offered that there are two positions that are funded by other monies not in the Des Moines budget, the School Resource Officer and the other works at CJTC. He suggested that total numbers of positions is what should be viewed as the officers can be redeployed to where they are needed.

Councilmember Kaplan said that in looking at the figures now and the ones in 1999, there are new teams formed in the Police Department which were not there in 1999. In order to compare the two years, only total number of patrol positions should be looked at, however they are assigned is not the issue. As of today, the City is at or above the number of positions there were in the staffing levels ten years ago.

Mr. Piasecki stated that Court Transport and Court Security officers are being paid for by the Court budget.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman asked about the difference in the two positions in crime free housing, but in another report attached to the budget shows only one position.

Mr. Piasecki stated that in the crime free budget there is one full time CSO position that is in that department and then there is a position that is split between code enforcement officer and half of the administration assistant that works for the code enforcement officer to make the one full time FTE that are being paid out of the crime free budget. The FTE does not show up in the Police Department budget, they show up in the Public Works budget.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman stated that as a policy, the City wanted to have so many officers per so much population. Not included in that number were the administration positions, but it did include all other positions. Looking at the figures now, the ratio is exceeding the number the policy set.

Councilmember Thomasson felt the obligation to the levy would be 57 positions. This includes the CSO and the animal control officer. The goal was to get back to the level that was there before the cuts happened.

Councilmember Pina stated that the prime function of the police is to provide protection for the citizens. The ratios are not exceeding the levels and the police department is not a place to cut.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman suggested that Council should follow some type order to accomplish what needs to be done during this meeting. Review the cuts the police chief listed and see what is comfortable. Then deal with each department and the cuts suggested, then come back and revisit ones that are not as comfortable.

The Mayor called for a recess at 10:12 a.m. and reconvened the meeting at 10:27 a.m.

Mayor Sheckler noted that looking at the table of the police staffing levels, look at current level, and determine if they are they adding positions or just filling ones that are vacant.

Any hiring will not exceed the 32 patrol officers and 5 veteran detectives' positions that have been authorized.

There are some items on the police budget that Councilmember Pina wanted to know what the impact of the proposed cuts would be on the City. One of the concerns was the officer on leave and that has already been discussed and accepted by Council. There was \$202,055 to replace duly hired officers to replace task force officers and that item is just shifting which fund the officers salaries are being paid from. The officers that are doing functions again that were cut and then restored will be paid out of the Levy Lid Lift. This is just an accounting shift, and is not supplanting funds.

The impact on the functionality of the police department if three positions are frozen will leave those open and unfilled. It's takes up to 16 months to get an officer on the street once hired and through training. Stopping the clock just adds more time to get a police officer on the street.

Councilmember Kaplan is not in favor of freezing three positions, but would consider one or two.

Councilmember Thomasson stated that the structural deficit for 2009 is \$2.5 million. What is the estimated deficit for 2010?

Mr. Piasecki voiced that he has not been able to look at the budget for 2010 however assuming that the 2009 budget is balanced without using any of the deferrals, the estimate would be about one million assuming revenues stay flat and expenditures grow by 4 or 5 percent.

Councilmember Thomasson opined that not filling positions is not a sustainable cut.

Mr. Piasecki offered some referral type budget strategies, but the Council can balance the budget without using these strategies. If 2010 and beyond are not going to get better, then the Council may want to look for other ways to balance the budget. The referral to hold off replacing computer equipment,

that's \$500,000 worth of expenses that will not occur next year that can be used to balance the budget, but that, is not sustainable. That's the same way with freezing positions.

Councilmembers discussed the math used in calculating the staffing level that the Levy Lid Lift was meant to restore.

Mayor Sheckler inquired of the Council, should the City be looking at band aides or look at more sustainable cuts that will get the City through years to come. The question about math for the Levy Lid Lift positions is another question that should be answered quickly in order to continue with the budget.

Councilmember White agrees with other Councilmembers that the Council is expected to make the hard decisions and balance the budget. Times are tough and may not get better any time soon.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman summed up the items cut so far are freezing the three positions and suspending funding for the officer on military leave. The important thing is to understand how to respond to citizens about the cuts. There is a trust issue with the public.

Councilmember Kaplan stated it is important that the level of police staffing being restored is the proper level as authorized by the Levy Lid Lift. He agrees that sustainability is the key to balancing the budget.

Mayor Sheckler stated that the obligation is to the public to restore the police department to the proper staffing levels.

The commitment under the Levy Lid Lift is 57 plus 2 total positions. The police chief has the power to use the manpower as he deems appropriate according to the needs of the City.

Mr. Piasecki outlined the positions being discussed. There are a total of seven vacancies, one detective out of general fund, three patrol officers out of the general fund not including the military leave slot, one of the Levy Lid Lift patrol positions, a Community Service Officer, a records specialist, and a half time animal control that are funded out of the Levy Lid Lift that are not filled at this point.

There are 37 authorized police officer positions and eight sergeants, the rest of the numbers are records specialist, animal control, etc. The council agrees that there should be a total of 60 positions to include all officers on all programs. The one proviso being the crime free housing position, should the funding for this position be terminated, the position would also be terminated.

The next item on the recommended cut list is police recruitment incentives. The recommendation was to suspend due to hiring freeze. Since there is no hiring freeze, it is recommended to be removed from the cut list and the Chief will use it as deemed necessary to fill vacant positions.

Overtime in the police department was the next item for discussion. Minimum staffing is necessary, but if the vacancies are filled, overtime should be cut in half. The nature of police work does entail overtime, but it should not be used to fill in for vacations and sick leave.

The Mayor recessed the meeting for the lunch break at 11:28 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 12:36 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman summed up the changes to what the Chief had proposed; eliminate 3.5 positions, and overtime has to be kept in the budget as police need that time not just to fill in, but its part of the job at times. The total reduction in Police comes to \$600,000.

Mr. Piasecki and Chief Baker will review the police budget and decide which positions can be reduced if there is 3 positions to be reduced.

Councilmember Kaplan stated that the Council is clear; they want the patrol positions filled as part of the commitment.

Councilmember Thomasson felt the need is to focus on what the correct amount of overtime is needed and budget it throughout the year. Some of the events that consume overtime are Officer training, filling in for officers out sick, court appearances and if their shift ends middle of a crime event, that's overtime also. When the City has special events that also creates overtime. He proposes creating a time sheet to keep track of those hours to see where those hours are used.

Ms. Anderson explained to the Councilmembers that overtime is tracked and is indentified by specifics.

Councilmember Thomasson stated that what he would not want to occur is for the vacancies to get filled with overtime hours. Overtime should not be used to put more officers on the street or to accomplish minimum staffing. More information may be needed to estimate the overtime hours necessary.

Councilmember Pina feels this maybe micro managing the Police Department and the Council has already decided to let the Chief allocate the man hours as he deems needed. If the Police Department is staying within budget, that's the point.

Mr. Piasecki explained that no one wants to create overtime hours just for the sake of doing so. The minimum staffing requirements vary depending on days and hours. If the Police Department has issues that need overtime, make sure they have it, but the Police Department is handling their budget well. Scaling back the overtime in the budget is doable, with the understanding that if more overtime is needed, the department can have it.

Chief Baker stated that if three positions are eliminated, that salary money is gone and can not be used for overtime. The \$50,000 cut offered in overtime did not take into account those three positions not being filled. Focusing on patrol is not the answer to driving down the crime rate. The answer is to be proactive, what patrol does is reactive.

Mayor Sheckler stated that the figure for the police department is going to be 60 positions.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman summed up the agreed upon actions of eliminating 3.5 positions and switch officers with the Levy Lid Lift, that's \$202,000, with the Chief's list is another \$68,000 savings. Savings to the General Fund at this point is approximately \$600,000. Other savings that could be found would be to charge more for dependant medical insurance. The cost currently for just the police department is about \$463,000 and of that amount, officers pay only 10%, adding on another 10% in the employment contract would be a savings to the City.

Councilmember White felt the Civil Service overtime can be cut by one third and that would be a \$22,000 cut.

Councilmember Kaplan wanted to examine the high equipment replacement costs in the police department. Would like some explanation of why this item seems so high. Does each officer need to have their own equipment?

Chief Baker said when he took over, the equipment was in poor shape and a portion of it didn't work. When things did not work, there was no responsibility. Now when issuing tools to each officer, they are responsible for the tools that they have. The helmets and face shields are important safety equipment for the protection of the officers. The old and non-functional equipment has all been exchanged for newer, functional equipment. The life rings are necessary safety equipment as this is a bay city and water rescues do happen at the Marina. Most of the equipment that needed to be purchased has been bought, so there are no plans to make any big purchases for 2009.

Councilmember Kaplan proposed setting up an equipment reserve account that would replace equipment as it wears out.

Councilmember Thomasson opined that the money in the Levy Lid Lift fund should provide the 57 officers promised to the public. If the whole police force is 60 positions, make sure that as the money is budgeted the fund is responding as programmed. The 3.5 positions that will not be funded are general fund positions, not Levy Lid Lift position, so the public knows these are not cuts in the promised level.

Mayor Pro Tem listed the savings found to balance the budget to this point and they are as follows:

- Hiring Freeze and suspend officer
- Saving from a change in officers amounts to \$202,000
- Civil service \$22,000
- Savings from the Chief's list is \$68,200

Exact figures will be brought back to the Council before adopting an Ordinance.

OTHER BUDGET REDUCING MEASURES

The Councilmembers discussed the other strategies to balance the budget such as referral of assessments. This is only a one time fix and next year the schedule for equipment replacement would go back to the same schedule. Computers are normally on a three year replacement, now stretched to four, cars other than police cars are seven years. Police cars are scheduled to be replaced every three years, but that can be stretched.

Councilmember Thomasson proposed to change the computer replacement schedule from a three year cycle to four year cycle and the Council agrees.

This will save \$169,000 and next year would be about \$120,000 in savings so the permanent cut would be about \$40,000 per year.

The next issue discussed was the Building Maintenance deferral of \$72,000 to fund major repairs, one year hiatus on to putting money in this fund.

Councilmember Thomasson is not in support of this because it was not funded for 20 years, the maintenance is already behind and things are not getting done now. This is not a savings, it just masks the liability. Things were suppose to be done out of one time money that never showed up.

Council agrees that this is not a good idea and will not use this deferral.

Mr. Fredricks stated that there are eight projects needed for next year that would total about \$200,000 and the expected yearend balance is this fund will be \$350,000 so there is enough money to cover these projects.

Councilmember Scott stated that there are several smaller projects in the City that never get done because the larger projects overshadow them, but they are just as important. Such as the cottage on the beach park which is suffering from dry rot from leaves and mud piling up against it.

Mr. Grant echoes this concerns and it highlights the significant facilities maintenance issues. An inventory of all the properties the city owns and the state of condition and needed repairs would be a benefit and would assist in coordinating efforts to get things taken care of and repairs done.

Ms. Thorell opined that these comments echo her concerns. With the staff cuts; it is really difficult to keep up with maintenance.

Councilmember Kaplan felt that the Council should consider adding the study to gather information necessary for the inventory of maintenance as an expense for this year. Maintenance issue is an important issue and needs to be look at to cover the possible liability issues.

POOL SUBSIDY

Councilmember Pina suggested that possibly the City and Normandy Park could agree to help fund the pool with a levy or bond.

Councilmember Kaplan laid out the options for the pool, first it could close at the end of year or it could be kept open until the other pool opens. Other options going forward in terms of having dedicated funds for the pool are to form a district to tie in with park and recreation. If voters approved it, carrying the second half of the year would be fine. The concern about ending the contract at the end of the year is it may leave the school in a bad position as it would close during the school year.

Councilmember Thomasson stated that this solution in began in 2004, and it was an interim solution at that time. The long term solution could be for the school district to fund it totally if they would. The solution is to stay in the pool business, but how to fund it is the question.

Mayor Sheckler recessed the meeting at 2:09 p.m. and reconvened at 2:20 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman felt the only reason it is so important is because the school needs it. The citizens do not need a competition pool so let the school district handle it. The school owns the land, the pool is owned by the City. The school could ask the City to help with subsidizing by allowing citizens to use the pool when the school is not using it. With pools, operating costs are not the expense of the pool. Because it is a wet environment, the maintenance is expensive. He is in support of covering the costs of the pool until the end of 2009. Going forward, however, a good faith effort to find other solutions to keep the pool operating such as a levy or bond needs to happen.

The Councilmembers agree that cutting off the funding of the pool at the end of 2009 is the best option for the City, while trying to mobilize citizens to find other solutions to keep the pool operating. This should be a school district issue, not a City obligation.

Councilmember Thomasson summed up that the City accepted the lease of the pool from the county and the operating agreement. He suggested what was needed was to change the operating agreement in March to instead of the school district sending city money to pay to the third party, have the City pay the money to the school district and then pay the third party. That will make it a school district issue as opposed to a city issue.

Mr. Piasecki explained that there are several different agreements involved with the pool with Des Moines, Normandy Park, King County and the school district. Talks with the school district to make an agreement similar to the one Councilmember Thomasson proposed were turned down. The school district stated that if they owned the pool, it could only be used for school district purposes. The options he feels are either continue with the commitment as is currently being done and on the 31 of December 2009 the pool closes or put something on the ballot that deals with the pool. If the ballot measure, whatever that turns out to be passes, great if not, the pool closes.

Councilmember Kaplan felt that the City is obligated to find a solution to the pool issue. If there is enough community support for the pool, something should be put on the ballot in March. If that fails, there would be another opportunity to put it before the voters again before the end of 2009. His proposal would be to pursue a Park and Recreation district to include the pool.

MOTION: Councilmember Kaplan moved to extend the meeting until 4:00 p.m. seconded by Councilmember Pina, passes 6 -1 with Councilmember White voting nay.

Councilmember White was concerned about the amount budgeted for the 50th birthday party. It is difficult to justify spending \$50,000 when there are jobs being cut.

Councilmember Kaplan would agree to keeping the pool open till the end of the year conditioned on having a Parks and Recreation district, otherwise the closing date should be June 30, 2009.

Council agrees to remove the pool cut from the list.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman does not agree with a Parks and Recreation district for the pool.

Mayor Sheckler is in support of a levy for the pool of some kind. If it failed then the Council would be comfortable with saying that it was put before the voters and it failed.

The next item on the budget reduction is the Federal lobbyist. Councilmember White does not agree with this cut. A lot of work has been done to build relationships and it would be a shame to let it all go.

Next item on the reduction list is municipal court clerk half time position. Councilmember Thomasson stated that just reducing bodies without saying what work is not going to get done is not helpful.

Mr. Piasecki said that there will be less efficiency; things may fall through the cracks such as refunding bail would be delayed. He recommended taking this off the cut list and retain it at least for now.

The reduction on the senior finance analysis cut was the next issue and Mayor Pro Tem Sherman felt that with all the budget issues that are happening and will continue to need attention, it is important to retain what is in place. He recommended it be removed from the cut list and Councilmembers agreed.

Councilmember White left meeting at 3:30 p.m.

The next reduction proposed is the record services which involved the external services for City Council meeting minutes.

Mr. Piasecki explained that attendance at the meetings to record, take notes and then transcribe everything in detail takes many hours. The City Clerk is an hourly position and would run into overtime pay to fulfill this obligation. If this stays on the cut list, the minutes will be much more summary.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman stated that another committee he sits on went from very long, detailed minutes to very, very brief minutes and he would not be opposed to that under certain circumstances. If the actual audio recording of meeting is retained on the website for public access, the minutes become less important. The minutes are important to identify when something was discussed. If names and significant terms are left in then people searching the website can access to see when something was discussed and view what happened on that issue. He supports removing from the cut list and retaining the clerk.

Councilmember Thomasson opined that the minutes do not need to be as detailed as they are. In regards to clerk position, is it part of the duties of the position to attend all meetings and take the minutes? If taking minutes is outside of the position, maybe typing them up may not be outside the scope. Cutting positions is not the right conversation, what work will not be performed if positions are cut is the information Council needs to make smart choices.

Mr. Piasecki stated if the business license clerk/receptionist position gets eliminated, that will in effect close the doors and everything being done there would then funnel through the Planning and Public Works Department causing long wait times for the public.

Council agrees to remove this item from the cut list.

Personnel Human Services Specialist position was the next position to be discussed and Mayor Sheckler is in favor of retaining this on the cut list.

Mr. Piasecki felt that if the non essential duties were taken away, most of the responsibilities of this position could be accomplished with a 20 hour a week position. The balances of the duties of this position are not things that are critical to the City. This would still result in a saving of \$30,000.

Councilmember Thomasson stated that the duties of a position do not go just because the position goes away. The work that was being done still has to be done. If the City was budgeting by priorities, then the programs could be cut rather than positions. Making this position a part time position is a reasonable solution.

Mr. Piasecki felt that reassigning duties and do away with the frills could also be a benefit.

Councilmembers were in favor of making this a part time position and realize the \$30,000 savings.

The Council by consensus agreed to remove the DV advocate from the cut list.

Next item on the list was Planning Building and Public Works proposed cuts and those will stay on the list.

Mr. Fredricks outlined the fund benefiting activities outlined in the proposed cuts. Those are: General fund, right of way, which is offset by fees, capitol improvement project, which are offset by CIP transfers and development review which is offset by development fees. So the question the Council needs to answer is how much of the General funding benefiting projects do they wish to pay for out of the General fund. Part of the answer depends on the scope and extent of the Capitol program as to which staff reductions should stay on the list. Everybody on staff works on all four of these benefiting programs.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman favors leaving these on the cut list because there will be less activity, so there will not be as much work to do.

Mr. Fredricks voiced that it is much harder to find the quality team than technicians and big projects will be coming on the horizon. The position that is on the list is the least trained position, but cutting this will only amount to a \$12,000 savings. Projects will be reallocated to different funds to pick up the slack.

Councilmember Thomasson felt that if the saving is only \$12,000, he'd rather keep the position.

Mayor Sheckler opined that if the net savings is only \$12,000, then it may not be worth cutting because of the responsibilities of this position and the duties that would not be performed.

MOTION: Councilmember Kaplan moved to extend the meeting until 4:30 p.m., seconded by Councilmember Pina, passed unanimously.

The consensus was to leave the \$20,800 and the \$5,400 on the list, the other two are removed.

Mr. Fredricks explained to the Council that the front counter position on the cut list is a position he can not afford unless a big project comes in such as a jail or the like.

Council agrees to leave the one time positions on the list unless a large project comes in.

Mr. Fredricks stated that there is a process to go through to give employees notice and that process will be followed.

Mr. Piasecki explained that notices can be given before the budget has been adopted by sending out 60 day notices that there is a possibility that the position might be eliminated.

Mayor Sheckler asked Council for guidance on how they would like to proceed with the rest of the budget discussion. Most of the Council agreed that 7:30 Tuesday night would work for everybody's schedule.

The Council discussed the City of Des Moines 50th Birthday party and what the City can contribute.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman felt that \$50,000 was not a lot of money for a true one time event.

Councilmember Scott outlined some of the events that citizens are planning throughout the year. A few of them are: a black tie event at the College, a party in June and extra events on July 4th plus more. This gives plenty of time to have groups that are behind these events present ideas along with budget requests and personnel required to the Council for review.

Mayor Sheckler opined that committees would present to the Council steering committee their plans and funding sources. The steering committee then would determine how much each group would be eligible for depending on what they are doing.

Mr. Piasecki voiced that there seems to be lots of energy and excitement, but little organization. An event planner could help these groups to get organized. If the Council agrees to take the Recreation Specialist staff reduction off the list, Parks and Recreation could help the committees with their plans.

Councilmember Thomasson stated that the City needs to plan an events budget and stick to it. Events seem to continue to show up and the City does not have funds to meet all the requests. When city employees are being laid off and cuts are happening all through the budget, spending \$50,000 just does not seem the right thing to do.

MOTION: Councilmember Kaplan moved to reduce the \$50,000 allotment to the Birthday party to \$15,000. Seconded by Councilmember Scott. The new expenditure passes 6 -1 with Councilmember Thomasson voting nay.

Ms. Thorell has been and continues to look for outside sponsors and have some lined up to help pay for Community events. Fund raising is an ongoing process.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Sheckler adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lady of Letters