

## SEPTEMBER 11, 2023

A Special Meeting of the Lake Benton City Council was held on Monday, September 11, 2023 at 2:00 PM in the Lake Benton Area Community and Event Center. Mayor Michael Carpenter presided. Trustees Rosie DeZeeuw, Karen Lichtsinn, Patrick Haynes and Scott Christensen were present. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen and Kristina Hernandez with the Lake Benton Valley Journal were also present.

Mayor Michael Carpenter called the Special meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

The purpose of the meeting was to begin work on the 2024 budget for the City of Lake Benton. Included in the Council's packets were the proposed funds to be assigned to CDs at the end of the year, and the 2024 budget worksheets.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then reminded the Council that the 2024 proposed levy must be certified to the County prior to September 30, 2023, and the final certification will be approved in December 2023. At that time, the City can lower the tax levy but not increase it. Mayor Michael Carpenter then informed the Council that there was no increase in property taxes in 2023. Mayor Michael Carpenter then stated the insurance numbers inserted in the worksheet are actual numbers and a 3% increase was added for the employee's payroll and a 3% increase in 2024 to the property tax levy.

The Council then reviewed the budget numbers that were inserted for Work Comp which was increased approximately \$2,205.00 for all the funds. The numbers have been inserted for Liability, Property and Auto insurance which was increased approximately \$4,100.00.

The figure for the City's 2024 LGA of \$280,132.00 was inserted as well as all the numbers in the General, TIF, Fire, Library, Water, Sewer and Garbage Funds. City Administrator Clerk Eileen Christensen worked with the Department Heads, and members of the Chamber-CVB, Parks/Rec, EDA and Historical Society.

The health insurance rates were increased 3.2% from \$904.31/employee per month to \$933.24/employee per month. The City belongs to a pool for health insurance through Southwest West Central Cooperative (SWWC) in which the City sometimes receives an annual reimbursement from money held in escrow. A former Council used these funds to create a Select Account-HRA fund for the three (3) full-time employees in 2018. The Council made a policy to approve a minimum amount of \$50.00 per year/per employee. The Council again agreed to contribute \$1,650.00 to each employee's HSA Account due to the decrease in health insurance premiums and the increased employee deductible.

The allocations to the EDA (\$7,500.00), Historical Society (\$6,500.00), CVB (\$7,500.00), Diner's Club (\$1,500.00), SW Initiative Foundation (\$350.00) and Lake District (\$4,000.00) remained the same as last year.

The truck fund for the Fire Department was increased in 2023 from \$20,000.00 to \$30,000.00 per the Township's request. The Townships are responsible for 67% (\$20,100.00) and the City is responsible for 33% (\$9,900.00).

The 2018 GO Bond (Principal and Interest) from the 2008 USDA Loan has been split 50/50 between the Water and Sewer funds. This was agreed upon by the City Council in 2014.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, a **MOTION** was made by Scott Christensen, seconded by Karen Lichtsinn and carried, the meeting adjourned.

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MAYOR

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ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK