

A Special Workshop Meeting (available via Zoom) of the Otsego City Commission was held Monday, January 18, 2021.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Trobeck at 6:00 p.m. with the following Commissioners present: Stacey Withee, Brent Milhiem, Lauri Krueger and Dustin McNees. Absent: None. Also present: City Manager Mitchell, and Fire Chief Weber.

A. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. PRESENTATION BY THE OTSEGO/PLAINWELL CHAMBER – REGARDING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONTRACT

Jenny Boerman, Executive Director of the Otsego/Plainwell Chamber of Commerce gave a presentation of the Chamber's Annual Report, which outlined their activities and future activities. She commented that the Chamber currently has 190 members. Ms. Boerman stated that she has a meeting scheduled with Main Street Manager Sweeney and Economic Development Director Rayman, to discuss ways to support each other. Jim Szilagyi of the Lynx was also in attendance representing the Chamber. Mr. Szilagyi thanked the Commission for their participation. He thanked Ms. Boerman for doing a great job. Mayor Trobeck commented that it is illegal for the City to pay "dues" (unless for professional development), so a contract was put in place between the City and Chamber. She commented that we need to see "something coming back" from the contract that we have in the past entered into. She commented on the difficulties that the General Fund is facing. She reminded the Commission that decisions need to be made based on facts, not emotions. Commissioner Krueger asked how many businesses of the 190 are in the City of Otsego. Ms. Boerman stated that 55 businesses are within the city limits. Commissioner McNees asked if other municipalities give funds to their Chambers. Ms. Boerman stated that the City of Wayland and the City of Allegan give funds. Commissioner Withee asked why Otsego Township doesn't participate. Ms. Boerman stated that they have never asked them. Ms. Boerman answered questions of the Commission.

2. CITY OF OTSEGO FUND BREAKDOWN

City Manager Mitchell gave a brief overview of the funds and how we need to start planning for the next six months and the future. He stated that we have been deficit budgeting for the past few years and we only have three years of fund balance remaining. He explained the difference in Governmental Funds and Non-Governmental Funds. A brief discussion took place regarding potentially placing a Headlee Override Amendment on the August ballot, and the role of the Commission, if this takes place. Charter amendments were also discussed, with the possibility of increasing the millage rate established by Charter, which would also include a vote of the people. Finance Director Storbeck explained the difference in the Headlee Override and increasing the millage rate. A lengthy discussion took place on how the Commission would educate the voters regarding these possibilities. City Manager Mitchell suggested to invite Department Heads to a future Workshop Meeting.

3. FUND BALANCE POLICY

Due to time limitations, this subject will be moved to the Regular Meeting.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

None.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Commissioner McNees, seconded by Commissioner Withee. CARRIED – 6:59 p.m.

Angela M. Cronen, MMC
City Clerk