

**SANDSTONE CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
Tuesday, June 9, 2020, 6:00 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Spartz, Palmer, Gaede, Riley, Rahier

Members absent: None

Staff present: Administrator George

Others present: Pine County Courier Editor Alaena White

SPECIAL ITEMS OF BUSINESS:

Discuss Community Service Officer Position

The item of renewing the contract with the Pine County Sheriff's Department for additional law enforcement services came up at the May 21st Council Meeting. During that discussion, it was mentioned that the City had been looking into the concept of creating a Community Service Officer (CSO) position that would supplement the Sheriff's work in Sandstone. Since three of the Council Members were not on the City Council when those previous discussions took place, it was decided that a Special Council Meeting would be held to further discuss options. Council Members were provided with a copy of the proposed Job Description.

Administrator George explained that the idea to create a CSO position arose out of the desire to be more proactive in deterring crime and addressing code enforcement issues. A meeting was held in October, 2018, with Sheriff Nelson, County Attorney Frederickson, and County Commissioner Ludwig. George, Mayor Spartz, and Council Member Palmer attended on behalf of the City. At that meeting, a few suggestions were made for the Job Description; such as, adding park patrol, and requiring training (First Responder, EMS, other). The Sheriff stated that he was not opposed to the idea, but was concerned about the messaging – that the City is making an investment to partner with the Sheriff, not that the Sheriff's Department is not doing their job. All agreed that was the case. Everyone also agreed that the right candidate(s) is really key to the success of the position.

George explained that originally the thought was that the position would be Full-Time; however, after further discussion, perhaps it would be better to be flexible, depending on the needs of the chosen candidate, if the position were created and if the City decided to move forward with it.

At the June 9th meeting, questions were raised concerning communication, de-escalation training, mental health training, first aid, liability insurance, benefits, uniforms, vehicle, cellphone, etc. It was noted that there are agencies in the community that the City can partner with for the various training needs. Council Members were generally in favor of the idea, noting that it would be worth the investment, this person can spend time getting to know the business owners and community members, freeing up the Sheriff's Deputy for more serious matters, making monthly reports to Council, etc.

There was also discussion about increasing the contract hours with the Sheriff's Department. To go from the current level of 5 days/week at 10 hours/day to 7 days/week at 10 hours/day, the annual contract would increase \$65,027. The City budgeted \$80,000 for the new CSO position in the 2019 budget, and then budgeted \$40,000 in the 2020 budget as a place-holder, since the position was not created in 2019. Mayor Spartz pointed out that it doesn't have to be an either/or situation. The Council can always discuss additional hours with the Sheriff.

Example Job Descriptions for the position will be shared with all Council Members so that they can further review what other communities have done. Revisions will be made to the proposed Job Description. The item will be placed on the July 15th Council Meeting Agenda for further discussion and possible action.

ADJOURN

Motion Riley, second Palmer to adjourn. Motion passed 5-0. Time 7:15 p.m.

Peter Spartz, Mayor

Kathy George, Administrator