

**MERRIAM CITY COUNCIL  
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES  
9000 W. 62ND TERRACE  
July 28, 2008  
7:00 P.M.**

**PUBLIC HEARING                      2009 BUDGET AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET**

Finance Director Cindy Ehart explained the budget process. The 2009 budget was developed over the last five months with seven Council work sessions. It was the Council's desire to focus on maintaining high quality public safety services, streets and infrastructure.

The 2009 budget faced many challenges due to rising energy costs, flat sales tax collections, and flat property valuations.

The 2009 budget includes a proposed 6 mill increase to 27.186 mills. The estimated Assessed Valuation for Merriam increased only .6% over the prior year.

City sales taxes were projected at 95% of actual 2007 collections, plus \$150,000 for anticipated new retail from the two new retail development projects.

County sales taxes projected at 98% of 2007 collections. The state is processing refunds to a large business in 2008/2009 and the result of that is expected to reduce revenues by \$135,000.

The General Fund will receive a transfer in from Risk Management Reserve Fund of \$100,000.

Personal services changes include two new Firefighter trainees to be added effective 7/1/09. A Public Works Maintenance Worker position will be increased from 32 hrs/wk to 40 hrs/wk. It has been determined to suspend funding for the Assistant City Administrator position for 2009. This position is currently vacant and the duties have been absorbed by other administrative positions. The funding for Assistant Fire Chief has been suspended until 7/1/09. The CIP Project Manager position, which was not funded for 2008, has been eliminated. A salary range adjustment has been implemented resulting in approximately 2% range increases to most groups. This was done as result of an in-house salary survey of certain positions comparing the salary ranges to similar positions of surrounding cities.

Council's priorities and goals at the April work session included:

1. Sound budgeting
2. Code compliance
3. Maintain high quality public safety services
4. Neighborhood revitalization
5. Drainage issues
6. Economic development and related issues
7. Updating ordinances, sign code and comprehensive plan
8. Revitalization of Downtown Merriam
9. Maintain city infrastructure
10. Focus on positive working environment/relations with City Staff and Council.

The proposed mill levy increase will result in a \$468.96 City Tax Bill for a home valued at \$150,000, which is an increase of \$104 per year for the average homeowner.

Capital Improvement funding sources come from 50% of the 1% City Sales Tax; ¼ Cent City Sales Tax for Streets; the City's share of County specialty taxes; and I-35 Redevelopment District tax increment.

While preparing the update for the 5-year capital improvement plan it was discovered that four major street projects have increased over 2 million dollars from the previous year due to increased asphalt costs. As a result there were changes made to the timing of construction to Residential Street Groups 2, 3 and 4.

Current projects underway include Residential Group I (58th St, 59th Terr, 60th Terr, Hemlock, Knox); 61st Street; 49th Street Overlay; Merriam Pointe (W. Frontage Rd./67th St.); Merriam Village (Eby St./Quaker Creek); and Vavra Park Enhancements.

2009 projects will include 47th Street; Residential Group II (56th St, 57th St, 57th Pl); and Residential Group III design (Hemlock, Goodman, Hardy/66th Terrace)

Following tonight's Public Hearing, Council will have an opportunity to vote on the proposed 2009 budget.

The next steps include the 2009 Budget filing with the County Clerk by August 25, 2008, and a published budget document which will be available in December.

Mayor Wilkes opened the public hearing to public comments.

Irene French, 10235 W 70<sup>th</sup> St., commented that as councilmembers sometimes they only hear negative comments but she wanted the council to know that there are many positive and good things happening in Merriam. The city has children's programs, art programs, recreation, car shows and a visitor's bureau. As the council is asking for a 6

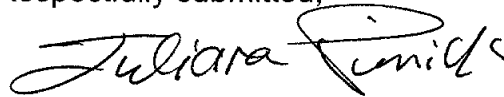
mill increase this budget year that is fine just as long as 6 mills is enough to sustain the city in the manner the residents have been accustomed to.

Aleese Martini, 10000 W. 53<sup>rd</sup> St., commented about the 6 mill increase and is concerned about what it will do to the elderly. Ms. Martini further commented that her biggest concern was the small 2% increase for staff, and that 2% was for some positions and not all positions. In her opinion 2% is not an adequate increase for employees with the cost of everything going up lately. Ms. Martini felt it important to retain the staff and suggested that 2% may not be enough to retain employees.

There being no other public comments. The public hearing closed at 7:30 p.m.

*Approved: 8-19-08*

Respectfully submitted,



Juliana Pinnick  
Interim City Clerk