

**City of Lafayette**  
**City Council Meeting Minutes**  
**July 22, 2004**  
**6:30 PM**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Lotis Hanks called the meeting to order at City Hall at 6:30 p.m.
2. **FLAG SALUTE:** Mayor Lotis Hanks led the flag salute.
3. **ROLL CALL:** Diane Rinks, City Administrator, called the roll.  
*Present:* Edwina Meitzen, Bob Cullen, Mayor Lotis Hanks, Ron Ross, Michael Roberts, and Gary Filpi (6:35).  
*Absent:* Marianne Mitchell-unexcused  
*City Staff Present:* Diane Rinks- City Administrator, Andrew Jordan-City Attorney, Jamie Rhodes-Clerk.  
*Others:* Jim Rue.

4. **ACTION ITEMS:**

1) **Approval of Dismissal of Employee:**

Bob Cullen made a motion to approve the City Administrator's decision to dismiss Amy Hidden from employment with the City. Michael Robert's seconded the motion. There was no more discussion, the Council was polled, and the motion passed unanimously.

5. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

1) **Council Work Session regarding Law Enforcement Options:**

Ron Ross felt that there were four areas that needed to be addressed regarding law enforcement: code enforcement, response time, visual presence and volunteers. He feels that code enforcement is top priority to clean up the town, and will support the City's municipal court program. He would like to see better 9-1-1 response time by having a full-time deputy, and having a Lafayette substation would increase visual presence and quicken response times. Local volunteers could still be used in cooperation with the Sheriff's department. He would support a \$1.50 per \$1000 levy for a 5 year term, to be used for one full-time deputy and one 1/2 time deputy for code enforcement. This would prevent hidden costs to the citizens and keep responsibilities to the professionals. He stated that there were many other issues that the City needed to address, and it would be a better investment to work with the County. Discussion ensued on first responders and volunteers handling major crimes.

Bob Cullen stated that when he first moved to Lafayette, the City had its own officers. He felt that the Council needed to demonstrate to the community that law enforcement is something they would want to pay for. He does not want to get into the policing business; while there are benefits to having own police department, the bad outweighs the good. There are too many other issues facing the City for staff to have to absorb new police department responsibilities. Volunteers can not do all of the work, and there is not the staff, nor facilities, available to have own police department. He would support a ballot measure for \$1.00 to \$1.10 per \$1000, ask for the bare bones, already knowing what Sheriff's costs would be.

Michael Roberts stated he agrees on many of the issues, and feels that the Council's responsibility is to give the most enforcement for the dollar. He stated the city is already paying county taxes, and to contract with the Sheriff's would be paying double for services. It would be worth it to have ownership, local people, with knowledge of the community. He would support asking for \$1.00 per \$1000 for the first 3 years, then maybe \$1.50 for 2 years. He feels that having ownership over local police department is better than passing it to County Sheriff.

Gary Filpi indicated that he is still torn between the options. He likes the Sheriff's office because it has been in place before; it is easy and done right. He stated he does have a hard time with the \$86,000 for their contract. He likes what the Sheriff said about being able to schedule times and having dedicated officers. He also likes the ownership idea with having own police department. He wonders if the City would have time to handle issues properly if it had own police department. He is not solid on any idea.

Lotis Hanks stated that he is leaning toward Sheriff's office. Having a City police department previously, he stated that police issues took up 2/3 of Council's time and everyone blamed the Council when there were problems.

Edwina Meitzen said she is also leaning toward the County Sheriff office. She stated that the City does not have the capacity to screen potential volunteers or police officers. Other cities are having many problems with their police departments, and it would be too much work load for the administration to

handle. She would like to ask for \$1.00 per \$1000 to contract with the Sheriff's office, and also develop neighborhood watch programs.

Diane Rinks handed out a mock budget spreadsheet showing estimated costs for police services. A discussion ensued on property taxes and the City tax base. Diane Rinks stated that due to Ballot Measure 47 and 50, there is now a permanent rate of \$3.49, and as assessed value grows, the tax revenue will increase. She stated that the law allows the assessed value to increase 3% annually on existing property; Lafayette's increase has been higher than that due to growth. Discussion continued.

A discussion ensued on municipal court, fine assessment, and code enforcement. Bob Cullen asked about not having a municipal court program and using those funds in other areas. Diane Rinks stated that it would be difficult to cite someone into circuit court for a code enforcement violation, even if it was a state law. The only costs for municipal court are to the judge and a portion of staff time. She indicated that city staff can do much of the work for code enforcement, but there is a need to have an officer to issue citations. She does not want to have a person dedicated to code enforcement only; the Sheriff's office will assist with code enforcement when needed.

Ron Ross asked the Council what dollar amount they wanted to ask for, and for what term. Diane Rinks stated that 5 years is the maximum for a tax levy. Edwina Meitzen stated she was in favor of doing the levy for 3 years, in case it did not work out to contract with the Sheriff's office, then the City was not tied in for 5 years. Diane Rinks indicated that the funds do not have to be levied if there were problems. The contract with the Sheriff could be done on a yearly basis, unless they were willing to do a multi-year contract and lock in the costs. Levying \$1.00 per \$1000 would generate approximately \$76-80,000, based on this year's tax information. Diane Rinks stated that she would be willing to commit additional funds from the budget if needed, in order to fund one and one-half deputy. Andrew Jordan answered liability questions.

Bob Cullen made a motion to authorize the City Administrator to draft a ballot title that would include \$1.00 per \$1000 for the purchase of Sheriff services from the County Sheriff, for a term of 5 years. Edwina Meitzen seconded the motion. A discussion ensued on YCOM funding in the budget and having full time reserves. Bob Cullen said we should take advantage of the Sheriff's offer, and allow them to train reserves. Diane Rinks stated that if the plan is to go out for a levy, at the next Council meeting, she would like to put before the Council to resume the 20 hour per week program with the Sheriff, using money that was previously budgeted for law enforcement. Lotis Hanks called for a vote on the motion. There was no more discussion and the motion passed, with Michael Roberts voting nay.

## **6. ADJOURNMENT:**

Gary Filpi made a motion to adjourn. Bob Cullen seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:43p.m.

**Minutes Approved on this 12<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2004.**

### **APPROVED:**

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Mayor Lotis Hanks

### **ATTESTED:**

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Diane Rinks, City Administrator