

February 20, 2001

The City Council of Buffalo, IA, met in special session on Tuesday, Feb. 20, at 5:06 p.m. at City Hall with Mayor ProTem Kimes presiding, due to Mayor Hoovers illness. Councilmembers present were Greer, Kimes, Roe, Sheeder and Teel. Purpose of the special meeting was to finalize the fiscal 2001-2002 budget and decision of hiring another public works employee.

Motion was made by Roe and Teel to discuss the hiring of a new public works employee. Discussion centered on the hiring of another public works employee. Greer emphasized we need another person for jobs that are not being done in the City, such as fire hydrant flushing, sewer line jetting, tree trimming, electric work, another person part time at the treatment plant. Roe questioned Greer why more raises were discussed at a committee meeting when no one else knew this would be discussed, and Council wasn't aware of it? A lengthy discussion followed that items discussed at a committee meeting should be posted ahead of time so the public can be informed in case they want to attend. The Clerk told Council that the present budget figures that were presented at last weeks meeting would result in one or more of the following:

1. Raise taxes to the \$8.10 limit, and still have to cut \$3600 from the figures, or:
2. Cut the budget figures that were presented by at least \$58,000 to leave the tax levy at \$7.00 which is the present rate, or:
3. Cut some of the figures and use reserve funds that have accumulated over the years.

Roe said he is not for raising taxes and not for hiring another employee when we don't have the money to pay for one. Greer said some of the Capitol Improvement funds could be taken from the budget and cut down on improvements, such as the park because we spent a lot on the park this year. Bernauer said we have four parks, and one or more will need improvements on them this year, along with the new beach area. Kimes said we still have a motion on the floor about a new employee. On a roll call vote, not to hire another employee, all voted not to hire except Greer. Motion carried not to hire.

Teel asked Bernauer if she knew places in the budget that could be cut to pare down the \$58,000. She said the police increased their budget an additional \$44,319; the public works increased theirs an additional \$19,390; the policy & administration was increased an additional \$5,350. With these additional amounts, taxes would have to be increased an additional \$1.154 cents per thousand, beyond the state allowed limits at this late time. The state limit is \$8.10 per thousand without approval and special steps. Council asked where to begin cutting. Bernauer said she had figured in the police department that \$12,910 in salaries could be cut, plus the additional FICA and IPERS that go with it, and also \$2,000 in insurance could be cut. This would still allow funds for overtime and \$7500 for part time officers. Adams said as long as the budget is amended when he needs more salary money. Bernauer said she had doubled the amount for attorney fees compared to a year ago because we already are over the budget for this year. It could be cut down \$1900 if there wasn't so many calls made by the ones calling. This was cut back, along with \$1500 for building improvements. Since most of the increases in the public works department did not involve the salary for the proposed new employee, only \$3,200 could be cut from the public works area. The Scott County Library increased their charges to the City an additional \$1,985, which we have no control over. Roe said in past years when he was on the Council, the Clerk did a good job to keep the budget taxes low. Adams said a house appraised at \$80,000 would have a tax increase of \$80 per year and to keep services you have to raise taxes. Greer said you cannot keep taxes at the same rate and provide the same services you have now. Bernauer said if you raise taxes that amount, you will have a standing room crowd here on March 14, and a petition would be filed with the state in protest. It's only happened once since she has been here. Roe asked if there is any other place to cut down on the \$58,000, and Bernauer said what she would recommend is to use some reserve funds in the next budget and run the budget in the red, and by the end of June, 2002, the budget might not be in the red. You never know what could happen by then. She has watched some other budgets in the paper this month, and several of them are doing what she is recommending. She said we have a real good surplus built up, and that is from good budgeting and still keeping the tax rates low, but we should use some of that money. Teel asked Bernauer if she would finish it up with the changes and keep

the tax rate at \$7.00, the same as this past year. Motion was made by Roe and Sheeder to keep the tax rate at \$7.00 per thousand. All voted yes on a roll call vote. Motion carried. The public hearing will be at City Hall on March 14, at 5:00 p.m.

Motion made by Greer and Roe to adjourn the meeting at 6:11 p.m. All ayes. Carried.

Signed: David Kimes
David Kimes, Mayor ProTem, Buffalo, IA

Attest: Carol A. Bernauer
Carol A. Bernauer, City Clerk,
Buffalo, IA