

City of Rigby
Council Meeting Minutes
October 1, 2015

Mayor Richardson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm Thursday, Oct 1, 2015. The pledge of allegiance was given by Scout Troup 390 and the prayer was offered by Schyler Walker.

The Mayor asked the clerk to call the roll.

Councilman Walker	Present
Councilman Maloney	Present
Councilman Simonson	Present
Councilman Olsen	Present
Councilman Burke	Present
Councilman Taylor	Present

Also present: Keith Hammon

ICRMP Insurance:

Councilman Simonson moved to waive the terrorist coverage in the ICRMP insurance seconded by Councilman Walker.

The Mayor asked the clerk to poll the council.

Councilman Walker	Yes
Councilman Maloney	Yes
Councilman Simonson	Yes
Councilman Olsen	Yes
Councilman Burke	Yes
Councilman Taylor	Yes

Review and Approval Bills:

Councilman Walker moved to approve the bills included the addendum for the library bills seconded by Councilman Olsen.

The Mayor asked the clerk to poll the council.

Councilman Walker	Yes
Councilman Maloney	Yes
Councilman Simonson	Yes
Councilman Olsen	Yes
Councilman Burke	Yes
Councilman Taylor	Yes

Approval of Minutes – Sept. 17, 2015:

Councilman Maloney moved to approve the minutes of Sept. 17, 2015 seconded Councilman Simonson.

The mayor called for a voice poll: All in favor none opposed.

Public Comment:

The mayor indicated he wanted to present to the council the proposal of merging the city police department with the county sheriff's department, he therefore asked Council President Maloney to chair the proceedings.

Councilman Maloney reminded anyone wishing to speak this evening that they needed to sign the sign in sheet at the back of the room.

Mayor's Presentation:

The mayor began by saying that it is not admirable when government spends funds on agencies and programs that are redundant and/or defunct. The role of government is to be mindful of its spending and its spending should be monitored. It is no more admirable when the city of Rigby spends \$700,000 on a service that could be done for one-half of the \$700,000. He went on to say that the city currently takes 60% of the \$1.2 million it receives in forced taxes and spends it on law enforcement. After reviewing the police expenditures the county sheriff has offered to provide the same service the city receives for one-half of what the city currently spends. This could amount to a saving of over \$300,000 or 25% of the taxes for the same police service. He then reviewed a pie chart showing the percentages of money spent currently and with a proposed contract with the sheriff department. The one chart showed law enforcement totaling 55% of tax receipts. A second chart with county enforcement the amount drops to 31% and 25% in saving. He then explained that there has been a misconception about other services offered by the city. He then reviewed the water, sewer, sanitation and sewer bond that those fees can only be used in their respective departments. Funds assessed for the four services cannot be used in other areas of the city.

He then wanted to correct a flyer that has been distributed around the city that had incorrect information on it and he wanted to cover the points that are incorrect.

City left without protection:

Under the proposed contract there will be no loss of police protection. Currently the city has one patrol officer on duty 23/7 and three support officers during the day. With the county there will be one patrol officer on duty 24/7 his sole duty being to patrol within the city limits of the city. In the sheriff's office there will be other support staff with sergeant, detectives, code enforcement and other supporting staff which is an increase in staffing. He then reviewed a chart showing the differences in personnel between the city and county.

Concern with not having dedicated detective:

The mayor explained the sheriff has worked in law enforcement for a number of years. His office has three detectives on staff that will share the responsibility to handle cases in Rigby that require a detective. This will be required in the contract. The sheriff knows the cost that this entails and it has been included in the contract.

Concern with not have an ordinance officer:

Rigby has an ordinance officer that works part time working two days out of seven. The county has an ordinance officer that will provide services to the city full time for five days out of the week. As a perspective the Rigby ordinance officer working two days a week and has an average written two tickets per month and about the same from the other officers.

Reimbursement of Assets:

The city will transfer the current vehicles to the county. As an alternative, the city could sell the vehicles and with the proceeds purchase new vehicles for the county. In the contract the county will take ownership of the vehicles and as they need replacing the city will purchase new vehicles from the capital program as is currently being done. As for other assets, they are subject to being declared surplus by the council and disposed or used as deemed by council.

Officers leaving the city and not having coverage:

There has been a case where the current police leave the city and assist county and state when necessary. This will not change. When needed all law enforcement respond to emergencies. If this happens the other county law enforcement will cover the city during the patrol officer absence. This is no different than currently being done.

Loss of Response Time:

The city will have an officer on duty 24/7 at all times. The sheriff's office is four blocks from the police department and the response time in the location is insignificant. The city police relies on the county for backup when needed and no other officer is on duty. The county will provide backup when needed to the "city metro" officer, when needed. There is no difference. The county/city officer will continue to respond to emergency calls. Again there is not loss of response time or decrease in services. The Rigby police department is closed two days a week when the secretary is doing ordinance duties. The office is closed at other times beside the two days a week. All phones when the office is closed are routed to the county. The sheriff office is open 24/7.

Loss of Personal Relationships:

The sheriff has indicated that all the programs currently being done he will support in continuing them including the reserve and junior cadet program. The sheriff wants to hire and retain the current personnel. The mayor said that if someone thinks an officer will turn his back on the city he personally and privately, the name of the officer who would be so inclined.

Taxes would not go down:

No decision has been made regarding the contract or any other factor involved. To claim that taxes won't go down is a misnomer. The discussion on taxes can and will be held after a decision is made on the contract.

The cost saving that the city is looking is ¼ of our tax dollars that is going to a redundant service that could be done at half the price. The mayor then stated the contract could be entered into with the city paying for 3 officers from the savings and has them do nothing and the city would still have \$100,000 remaining. The savings is substantial and significant. The saving from this need to have a discussion on how best to spend taxpayer's funds. The city has been told for months that a pay increase was needed or the city would loss officers. The added cost in implementing the pay increase would amount to \$50,000 per year. He does not feel this is a viable alternative for the city to continue. He cited four course of action: a) stay the course; b) increase salaries at \$50,000 per year; c) enter into the contract; or d) seek tax over ride levies to pay for police protection.

The Council President reminded everyone wishing to speak to sign the sheet.

Nancy Madson:

Supports the police. She recounted an event which occurred with a kitchen fire and the city police were the first to respond. She feels the police are dedicated and she supports them.

Ryan Day:

Suggested the council meets with the police to discuss if saving could be obtained. He felt this was sprung on them at the last minute. Felt the comparison between the police and sheriff was not comparing the same things. Noted the cost of the car replacement is not being considered. He would be willing to pay additional taxes for police protection. The cost comparison is not accurate. He also complained that the notice on the city water bill was not detailed as to the meeting. And the agenda notice of September 17 of the county/city contract was not specific or detailed enough for public comment.

Mandy Miller:

Although she lives in the county but has concern with the county taking on added responsibility. Her experience with the county has not been good. She would also like to know how this is an advantage to the county.

Mike Bryne:

Retold of an instance he experienced in California where a similar county/city force was initiated. His experience with a county enforcement was not good. Local police is better than county. Consolidation is not always the answer. Feels a small unit and local control is better than a larger force and loss of control. There is a tendency over time of less and fewer services associated with higher costs. The cost to re-up a department becomes cost prohibitive.

Morgan Lake:

Presented various charts showing different cities budget, number of personnel and tax valuation. Feels the city has a good police department. Mr. Lake asked if there could be a joint sharing of police services between city and county. Could the city operate with fewer officers? He sees three options: leave the pay at current levels; reduction in force; raise taxes. Felt tax increases not an option. 40% of his tax goes to the city from which 60% goes to the police. Cost of replacing a police car is not part of the police budget. Feels the final decision should be made on facts and not on emotion or advertising.

Darwin Dinsdale:

Questioned where the money to be saved will be used. Felt the public has a say on where it should be used being it is tax dollars. The cost to reestablish the police department is high and once the department is disbanded it will never return. Feels the city should stay with the current department.

Tiffany Jenkins:

Feels the numbers being presented looks good but she questions what the numbers will be in the long term. While her husband is an officer this issue is personnel to her.

Spencer Housley:

Stated that there have been 98 officers killed in the line of duty this year. Cost savings need to be looked at. This decision is putting stress on the families along with the community. What is best for the community needs to be looked at.

Rod Klingler:

His experience comes from what he experienced in California. Feels local police are more caring and have concern with local residents than a county officer. Feels there should be protection against consolidation and keep it small. The reason for police protection is because persons forego their own responsibility for protection to others because it's easier to turn it over to others. At the end of the day the final decision should be left to the individual.

Haley Krumbli:

Stated that we get what we pay for. Questioned the percentages versus the budget numbers, numbers easier than just percentages. Concerned with the initial cost of the contract, how long with this cost is the same. Startup costs are going to be high. Need a discussion on how the money saved will be used now not later. Concern with jobs lost. Feels community interactions that the police do makes her feel safer.

Sue Kenny:

Lives in the county but feels a small police force is better than a larger force. EMT and QRU responders rely on the response of the city police department. Has a concern with "trust" in the sheriff department. The county sheriff is currently overwhelmed with all that is going on in Jefferson County. Has concern with the response time from the county that the city will have.

Brian Juenke:

Feels it's a mistake to do away with the police department. Feels not all purchases have been thought through: recent bike purchase. Has concern with a county officer responding to a county call and leaving the city without coverage. Why not make cuts elsewhere: parks, rodeo grounds other departments and other employee's salaries. Parks while nice, parks are not required but water, and sewer and protection are the main reason for city. Look at all cuts across the board not just police.

Kathy Parker:

Police do respond when needed. Wants council to consider staffing plan for shift changes and vacations. Is the law enforcement better or equal? What are the calls in city and out of city? What will the savings be used for? What consideration has been given to growth in the county and city? Why get rid of an established agency? The city is growing and the city needs its own agency. Needs to revise the city code. What is the plan for gangs' suspension? Can dispatching be centralized to save costs? Calls shouldn't be bounced around.

Todd Grant:

He stated he is against consolidation and losing control of law enforcement. Feels this is just the beginning to nationalize police forces across the nation. Federal government is taking control of local government. Keep law enforcement local and under local control.

Keith Hammon:

Appreciates the support that he has received from the public. The strength of the police department is the officers themselves. Contrary to what the mayor said, there are three officers on staff. All get called out. If council wants him to cut his budget he will do so to keep his department. Even if budget is cut, services will be provided to the city.

Larry Anderson:

Was with Rigby police for 43 years, 34 as chief. Doing the contract will put the council under the direction of the county commissioners. Department needs to answer to the citizen of Rigby and its elected officials. Loss of department will be lost forever. Council will lose control to county government. Costs will increase without council having control or say. While the department has a budget of \$700,000, \$40,000 should not be listed and not all of the budget will be spent.

Ruth Miller:

Thanked officers for being police officers. Has concern with response that will be provided through the county. She has dealt with both the county and city officers. City officers are caring and there is no comparison with the county officers. County officers never respond when needed.

Charles Sherman:

Noted that the city has a drug problem and it needs to be addressed. Doesn't feel that one officer should be released. City needs to get control of the drugs in the city.

Anna Marie Hammon:

City needs to look behind the officers and the work they contribute to the city and its citizens. They devote their time and holidays when needed at all hours of the day and night. The officers in Rigby care about Rigby and its citizens. While the county does an awesome job for the county but the detective at the county cannot provide the service that being provided currently by Det. Martin.

Connie Moore:

She thanked the police for responding when she called about an issue she was having. She feels safe when she goes out at night.

Justin Webster:

The presence of the police provides him with a level of comfort since moving to Rigby in 2008. Security of the police allows the city to grow.

Velma Gregerson:

Likes the small town of Rigby with its loving and caring citizens. All need to work together both the county and city. The police department does a lot of things already stated. They also respond to stray dog calls. While her grandson was visiting her and not knowing the town, he was stopped by the police and questioned him due his out of state license and driving around town. He was lost and couldn't find her home, the police directed him to her home.

Wayne Clark:

Supports keeping the police. Growth in the county is growing at a greater rate than the city. Cost of the service from the county will increase. He computed the cost he pays on his taxes to around \$50 per month. He's willing to pay this for the protection that the city receives. Will the county provide support during parades, special events and all the other events they do. Homeowners insurance does receive a discount with a local police, will that discount remain with the contract with the county.

Ken Sharp:

He has worked for three police departments over his life time. If money is the only issue then the council should go ahead with the proposal. You usually don't get more for less. Feels the city needs to have two patrol officers on duty. Doesn't feel the city will be getting the same kind of service going with the county.

Paul Bradley:

Has been a volunteer with the fire department for 23 years. He values the officers and he supports them with a full time police department.

Jason Jenkins:

Jenkins recognized the police chiefs seated at the back row in support of the Rigby police department. The city is personal to each and every officer. Do you want an officer that cares or wanting to receive a pay check? The officers are here and will support the city 110%. The city assists the county and the county does assist the city. What will change if we consolidate? The city is given priority over a county officer.

Ray Kagel:

Noted that none of the speakers are in favor of the proposal. Has concern with the number of officers on duty as stated by the mayor and later by the police chief. The council needs to listen to the public

this evening. Questioned the accuracy of the pie charts. If the proposal is valid why aren't other cities following suit?

Jon Walz:

Has concern with water in the city and power outages. The police have an impossible job. They are usually cleanup after something has happened. Any police department will only work with the support they receive from the public. If the public doesn't support the police it won't work.

Mayor Rebuttal:

The mayor wanted it known that he supports the Rigby police department and is not looking at dismembering the department solely to dismember it. His primary focus in addressing this issue is seeing that public funds are spent in an efficient and cost effect manner. He responded that the county's response time will be slow. This will not be the case because the officers will only be on patrol within the city limits except when an emergency near the city requires their attention. The officers will be hired specifically for Rigby and not for the county. If needed there is room in the budget to add a full time detective to the Rigby contract. The contract can be amended to allow for the return of police assets if the contract should be cancelled.

The bottom line is not to get rid of the police department based on emotion or any personal feelings but on what is deemed the best and most efficient use of public funds. Our police will do our patrol with more support than we currently have. His goal and the council should be to cut spending and not reduce services. Taxes would not go down given the current plan. With a contract taxes could be reduced and the saving affected could be earmarked for future startup costs if and when it happens. He is not in favor of spending money where other alternatives and cost saving can be achieved.

While not covering all that was said this evening the mayor stated that he will be emailing the council points via email.

Council President Maloney concluded public comment.

Motion to adjourn:

Councilman Simonson moved that the council meeting of October 1, 2015 be adjourned seconded by Councilman Olsen.

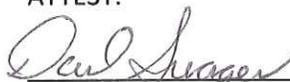
Council President Maloney called for a voice poll: All in favor none opposed.

Meeting adjourned: 9:05PM

City of Rigby


Jason Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:


David Swager, Clerk