

City Council OKs new spending plan

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The Desert Trail

TWENTYNINE PALMS — People who need conditional use permits from the city of Twentynine Palms may find the cost going down in the future, depending on the recommendations of a Twentynine Palms City Council task force.

Task force members Steve Spear and Joel Klink were named by council members at the regular City Council meeting on Tuesday, May 22, the same meeting which saw council members

approve the city's budgets for the next two fiscal years.

Council members voted 4-0, with Elaine Bernal absent, to approve a budget for the 2007-08 fiscal year and a tentative budget for the 2008-09 fiscal year.

In the same motion, council members also approved a fee schedule for 2007-08, while appointing the task force to look into possible changes.

Councilman Steve Spear brought up the possibility of making changes, saying he felt the fees the city was

charging for conditional use permits was too high.

The fee schedule approved Tuesday night shows, under conditional use permits, a pre-application fee of \$3,500 in 2007-08, up from \$3,032 in 2006-07.

The fee for a major amendment to a previously approved conditional use permit will be \$950 in 2007-08, up from \$870 in 2006-07.

Spear also said he thought law enforcement and code enforcement fees were too low.

Budgets

The spending plans approved by council members Tuesday call for general fund expenses of \$6,583,650 and general fund revenue of \$6,650,000 in 2007-08.

The biggest single expense will be law enforcement, with the city scheduled to pay the county \$2,670,060 for law enforcement service.

The next largest expense in 2007-08 will be the recreation department, at \$462,260.

On the revenue side, property taxes

are set to be the city's biggest source of general fund revenues, expected to bring in \$3.6 million in 2007-08.

Finance Director Ron Peck reported to council members that property taxes are increasing as new construction is added to the tax rolls.

He added that the city's interest revenue is going up because of higher interest rates and more money in the bank.

The tentative 2008-09 general fund budget calls for \$6,678,050 in expenses and \$6,650,000 in revenue.