

Mayor
William Siegel
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Council Members
John Gordon
Eddie Neal
Willard Rodarmel



**Office of the
City Manager**

119 Fox Street
Lemoore ♦ CA 93245
Phone ♦ (559) 924-6704
FAX ♦ (559) 924-9003

Staff Report

ITEM 3E

To: Lemoore City Council
From: Judy Holwell, Project Manager 
Date: July 31, 2013
Subject: Budget Adjustment – Electricity - Downtown Event Lighting

Discussion:

There are two electrical panels in the Downtown area that provide power to certain electric outlets, twinkle lights in the trees, and Christmas decorations/lights. For at least the past 13 years, the Lemoore Chamber of Commerce has been paying the PG&E bills for these two panels. Recently, Chamber CEO, Maureen Azevedo, questioned why the Chamber was paying for the electricity when they were clearly a benefit to Downtown and should be paid by the City. On July 25, 2013, Maureen informed the City (see attached email) that she had cancelled service with PG&E. The two meters are now in the name of the City and Council is asked to approve a Budget Adjustment for the cost of the power estimated at \$2,000 for the year.

It is unclear when or why the Chamber began paying for the electricity. I researched City records back to the year 2000, which showed that the Annual Budget for the Parking and Business Improvement Area (PBIA) account included a line item to reimburse the Chamber \$80-\$100 annually for electricity. However, none of the funds were ever expended from this account. After several years of this line item being included in the PBIA Budget, but not being spent, the line item was removed and no funds were budgeted. This information was provided to Maureen during the April 10, 2013, Downtown Merchants Advisory Committee Meeting and again during a Chamber Board Meeting.

After further researching and asking several people about this subject, I was led to Cathy Martin, a former Chamber Executive Director. She indicated that in an agreement with the City during her tenure in the 90's, the Chamber agreed to 'maintain the Christmas lights'. However, she said the City did the actual maintaining of the lights while the Chamber paid the electricity for the months that the Christmas lights were on.

Attached is a schedule provided by the Chamber showing the amount billed by PG&E for the two electric meters for calendar year 2012. The amount for the two meters totaled \$1,517 for the year. The total for the two months that the Christmas lights were in use was \$869 (December and January bills). The cost for electricity Downtown is expected to increase slightly due to the addition of the weekly Lemoore Tuesday Night Market.

Budget Impact:

Increase the Maintenance Division budget (Account Number 4220-4340) by not more \$2,000.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Council approve a Budget Adjustment for the Maintenance Division for an amount not to exceed \$2,000 to pay PG&E for the two electrical meters Downtown.