

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Budget Hearing Meeting of February 8, 2020

8:00 a.m.

Present: Committee Chairman Mike Vanni, Council President Patton, Council members Charlie Malta, Monica Koudela, Natalie Antosh, Theresa Bisbee, and David Phares

Also present: Mayor/Safety Director Regovich and Finance Director Benedict

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m. by Chairman Vanni.

8:03 – 10:04 a.m.

Mayor Regovich and Finance Director Benedict provided an overall summary of the 2020 budget including the Special Revenue Funds. There are several notable items. The final payment on the Shoreland Crossings TIFF will be made this year, eight years earlier than required. The General Fund / EMS Fund split will remain at 55% General Fund and 45% EMS in 2020; however, we will need to adjust this again in 2021. Unlike last year, there will be no transfers from the General Fund to the Senior Citizens Fund; however, this may not be the case next year. It was noted that any expected wage increase for the Fire Department has not been included in the current budget at this time due to ongoing contract negotiations.

10:10 – 10:37 a.m.

Sean Brennan provided an overview of the proposed Building Department budget. Discussion again centered on his need for an additional full-time employee which will be included as part of the 2020 budget.

10:38 – 11:34 a.m.

Rob Pauley provided an overview of the proposed Service Department budget. There were several notable items. The leaf pick-up program was cut back to one pass through the city in 2019 due to cost and manpower constraints. A new asphalt hot box will be purchased this year. Unfortunately, due to the expected low balance again in the General Fund, we will not be able to replace the radios for the department this year.

11:39 a.m. – 12:18 p.m.

Chief Brian Turner provided an overview of the proposed Police Department budget. The department will be losing two officers this year. Due to the income tax levy failing, we will only be able to replace one officer at this time. As a result of a very generous donation from Excalibur, we will be able to continue with the K-9 program this year. Instead of purchasing two new vehicles this year, we have decided to lease them on a four-year lease-to-own option which will enable us to save money and be more cost efficient.

12:58 – 1:21 p.m.

Julie Kless provided an overview of the Recreation Department and the Senior Center budgets. Discussion centered on utilizing Laketrans as the city's transportation provider for both the Rec Department Camp Program and the Senior Center which will result in a cost savings for the city.

1:22 – 1:28 p.m.

Finance Director Benedict provided an overview of the Finance Department budget. After a tough year manpower-wise, the department is back to full strength with the hiring of two new employees. One of the more notable items is that the city will be transitioning to email for employee paychecks this year.

1:29 – 1:50 p.m.

Chief Ron Zak provided an overview of the proposed Fire Department budget. The only significant change this year was the retirement payout for Chief Posipanka.

1:51 – 2:05 p.m.

Finance Director Benedict provided an overview of all other funds. It was noted that she expects a significant increase in the Workmen's Compensation rates over the next two years due to claims processed over the past year.

2:06 – 2:50 p.m.

Mayor Regovich went over the potential revisions that may be made to the budget with discussion centering on the possibility of leasing nine new trucks – three for the Service Department; two for the Sewers Department; one for Roads; two for Parks; and one for the Fire Department. The program is with Enterprise and is called a Fleet Management Open-End (Equity) Lease Program. This would enable the city to get badly needed new vehicles at a significant cost savings as well as being able to acquire multiple vehicles instead of purchasing just one truck every year. A representative from Enterprise is expected to come to the February 18 Council meeting to further explain the program to Council as well as answer any questions.

2:51 – 2:56 p.m.

Committee Chairman Mike Vanni inquired about the upcoming sewer rate increase that will need to be implemented this year. Finance Director Cheryl Benedict and City Engineer Tim Lannon are still getting data together. Once this has been received, a meeting of the Streets, Sidewalks and Sewers Committee will be scheduled to discuss.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Vanni, Chairman
Budget Committee, Willowick City Council