

FINANCE & BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE WORKSHOP MEETING
FY 2024 PROPOSED BUDGET REVIEW
July 12, 2023 – 9:00 A.M.

PRESENT: Joanne Melodayo, Chair
Natalie Conner, Vice Chair
Amy Auerbach, Member
Jack Samorajczyk, Member

EXCUSED: Jack Rader, Member

STAFF PRESENT: Alex Rey, City Manager
Sheila Dalton, Chief Financial Officer
Ginny Bodkin, Deputy City Clerk
Department Directors as Indicated

Chair Melodayo called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

1. Discussion: FY 2024 Proposed Budget Review

The Chair asked if there were any comments about the results of the CIP ranking and the summary that Ms. Dalton had sent; there were none.

Mr. Rey explained the tentative schedule for the day with all City Department heads presenting.

A line-by-line review of the proposed budget followed with a Director/Manager of each corresponding department present to provide details and answer questions. Line items that were discussed are included below.

General Revenue Fund – Alex Rey, City Manager; Sheila Dalton, CFO

- Healthy growth on property tax year over year
- Proposed millage reduction – Mr. Rey explained pros and cons
- Some item forecasts depend on the State (Half Cent Tax, Revenue Sharing, etc.)
- Federal Grants – slow time frame to include in budget
- Pinellas County reimbursement for EMS services
- Use of Impact Fees; how to get hotels to better fund Emergency Services (since they use them the most) and make more equitable
- Ad Valorem tax for hotels – how they are assessed
- Program activities – Library, pool, etc. Beach wedding fee increase should be considered
- Parking/parking ticket revenue – two new officers will help
- City of St. Pete has fees on commercial lease amounts per SF – consider that for the beach
- Interfund loan General Fund to Reclaimed Water; unused funds will carry back to the General Fund

Departmental Reviews

City Clerk Department - Amber LaRowe, City Clerk

- No staffing changes
- No new items FY 2024
- Continuing digitization project
- Elections charges come from Supervisor of Elections – based on size of ballot

Member Samorajczyk moved to approve the City Clerk FY 2024 budget as presented; Member Auerbach seconded – all in favor.

City Commission – Alex Rey, City Manager

- No changes

Member Samorajczyk moved to approve the City Commission FY 2024 budget as presented; Member Conner seconded – all in favor.

City Manager – Alex Rey, City Manager

- Allowances discussed - Housing Allowance – City Manager’s Health Opt Out Benefit will be reduced from the \$35K presented
- Public Information Officer (reduced to part-time .5)
- Addition of a Special Project Administrator (1.0)
- Fleet Fund – increasing vehicle costs

Member Samorajczyk moved to approve the City Manager budget for FY 2024 as presented, [with reduction in Opt Out Benefit]; Vice Chair Conner seconded – all in favor.

Finance Department – Sheila Dalton, CFO

- Former Finance Director resigned; Accounting Manager promoted to CFO
- Same Full Time Equivalent (FTE) of staff but adds an HR/Finance Technician
- Accounting/Auditing increased for CPA firm to supply additional support
- Software costs moved to IT

Vice Chair Conner moved to approve the Finance Department budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Samorajczyk seconded – all in favor.

City Attorney – Alex Rey, City Manager

- No change from FY 2023

Member Samorajczyk moved to approve the City Attorney budget for FY 2024 as presented; Chair Melodayo seconded – all in favor.

Library – Betsy Kettells, Library Director

- Becoming an Autism-friendly library (training, planning, new hire on autism spectrum)
- Staff increase of .63
- Contractual instructors for programs

Member Samorajczyk moved to approve the Library budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Auerbach seconded – all in favor.

Parks and Recreation and Aquatics – Jennifer McMahon, Chief Operating Officer

- Holiday Decorations increase
- Staffing remains the same as FY 2023

Member Samorajczyk moved to approve the Parks, Recreation and Aquatics budget for FY 2024 as presented; Chair Melodayo seconded - all in favor.

Parks and Recreation - Beach Maintenance – Jennifer McMahon, COO

- Equipment Rental
- Beach Law Enforcement needs – security (*see Law Enforcement below*)
- Enforcement of laws on beach – potential additional position next FY

Member Auerbach moved to approve the Beach Maintenance budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Samorajczyk seconded - all in favor.

Parks and Recreation - Parks Maintenance – Jennifer McMahon, COO

- No discussion

Member Auerbach moved to approve the Park Maintenance budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Samorajczyk seconded - all in favor.

City Manager: Planning – Jennifer McMahon, COO

- Review of the Comprehensive Plan is biggest change (estimated \$300K)
- Contractual/Professional Services – reduction of one planner; moved to and augmented by Consultants: for the PAG Overlay; an Architect for Overlay guidelines; a Historic Appropriateness Designation specialist – estimated costs of \$100K

Member Auerbach moved to approve the City Manager Planning budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Samorajczyk seconded - all in favor.

Fire Department – Fire Chief Jim Kilpatrick

- Added three positions for Firefighter EMT to match other municipalities/OSHA standards
- Restructuring to remove Administrative Staff and add Deputy Fire Chief in keeping with economy; look at County funded positions and ways to augment in next FY

Member Auerbach moved to approve the Fire Department budget for FY 2024 as presented; Chair Melodayo seconded - all in favor.

Fire Department: Emergency Medical Services – Fire Chief Jim Kilpatrick

- County provides \$2.8M, providing for twelve paramedics and the EMS Coordinator plus equipment and miscellaneous items (i.e. Marine Unit)

Member Samorajczyk moved to approve the Fire Department EMS budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Auerbach seconded - all in favor.

Law Enforcement – Alex Rey, City Manager

- Same staffing – 3 Community Officers (Sheriff's Deputies) – 24/7 patrol
- Excessive drinking, loud music, dogs on beach, and homeless discussed and the possible need for an additional officer
- Free SunRunner continues to bring people to the beaches

Member Auerbach moved to approve the Law Enforcement budget for FY 2024 with the addition of a recommendation to the City Commission to allocate an additional Community Officer for the enforcement of the Beach Ordinance and other illegal activities; Member Samorajczyk seconded - all in favor.

The Chair Adjourned for a lunch recess at 11:30 AM.

The Chair called the meeting back to order at 12:01 PM.

Public Works: Administration – Mike Clarke, Public Works Director

- Already added an Engineer - primarily electrical (undergrounding, etc.) and Mechanic
- Advocating for a FT Mechanic's Assistant for mechanics for next FY

Member Samorajczyk moved to approve the Public Works Administration budget for FY 2024 with the addition of a recommendation to the City Commission to allocate an additional full-time Mechanic's Assistant; Member Auerbach seconded - all in favor.

Public Works: Streets Maintenance – Mike Clarke, Public Works Director

- Shell Alleys maintenance decrease since moved to CIP Projects

Member Auerbach moved to approve the Public Works Streets Maintenance budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Samorajczyk seconded - all in favor.

Wastewater Fund - Mike Clarke, Public Works Director

- Addition of Utility Technicians and Sanitary Sewer Maintenance Worker
- Mobile generators for pump stations
- City Manager added that current revenue projections and budget show an approximate \$1M shortfall on Sewer Fund which translates into a potential rate increase; similar to the Reclaimed Water Fund

Vice Chair Conner moved to approve the Public Works Wastewater Fund budget for FY 2024 as presented; Chair Melodayo seconded - all in favor.

Reclaimed Water Fund - Mike Clarke, Public Works Director

- Transferred \$2M may not need all (repay balance to General Fund)
- Potential 15% increase
- County approved rate increases – County Public Works meeting upcoming
- County working on reclaimed water meters

Member Auerbach moved to approve the Reclaimed Water Fund budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Samorajczyk seconded - all in favor.

Stormwater Fund – Mike Clarke, Public Works Director

- More staffing will be needed due to sea level rise in near coming years
- Fee increases will become necessary due to sea level rise

Member Samorajczyk moved to approve the Stormwater Fund budget for FY 2024 as presented; Chair Melodayo seconded - all in favor.

Chair Melodayo left the meeting at 12:52 PM. Vice Chair Conner assumed the Chair role.

Community Development Department(CD): Transportation & Parking - Michelle Gonzalez, CD Director

- Code Enforcement Officers have been added

- Professional & Contractual – Providers for Flowbird pay stations, ticket processing, parking sensors
- Suncoast Trolley
- Additional Freebee costs (\$1million next year); pilot program with Looper
- Credit card transaction fees for parking

Member Samorajczyk moved to approve the CD Transportation and Parking budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Auerbach seconded - all in favor.

Community Development Department: Code Compliance – Michelle Gonzalez, CD Director

- Wages for Special Magistrates

Member Auerbach moved to approve the CD Code Compliance budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Samorajczyk seconded - all in favor.

Community Development Department: Facilities Maintenance – Michelle Gonzalez, CD Director

- No additional discussion

Member Samorajczyk moved to approve the CD Facilities Maintenance budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Auerbach seconded - all in favor.

Building Fund – Michelle Gonzalez, CD Director

- Two Vacant Building Inspector positions open
- Requesting another vehicle
- Digital plan reviews - additional large screen needed
- New permitting system and consultant support for that (bid review process still ongoing)
- This fund is close to exceeding maximum State fund balance – invest in technology

Member Auerbach moved to approve the Building Fund budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Samorajczyk seconded - all in favor.

Multimodal Fund – Michelle Gonzalez, CD Director

- Short-term to mid-term safety improvements on Gulf Blvd.
- Residential v. Commercial Impact Fees
- Gulf Blvd. Safety Study - Vision Zero

Member Samorajczyk moved to approve the Multimodal Fund budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Auerbach seconded - all in favor.

Administrative Services: Information Technology (IT) - Candyce Galloway, Chief Technology and Innovation Officer

- Shifting Focus to broader, integrated services – looking to add a Systems Analyst
- Software - technology surcharges from suppliers have increased and licenses and security
- Investigating the option of a lien search tool and phone text tracking
- Cyber Security – won a grant for \$70K for technology from the State (for threats)

Member Samorajczyk moved to approve the Administrative Services IT budget for FY 2024 as presented; Member Auerbach seconded - all in favor.

The City Manager and CFO will report back on Fleet and Capital Funds that were not discussed today; they will meet individually with the different Department Directors regarding Fleet needs and will update the Committee.

4. Adjournment

Vice Chair Conner adjourned at 1:52 PM

The next meeting will be the regular Quarterly meeting on August 2, 2023 at 3:00 PM.

These minutes were approved at the August 2, 2023 Finance and Budget Review Committee meeting.