

MINUTES

COUNCIL-MANAGER BRIEFING

December 7, 2009

The Council-Manager Briefing was called to order at 5:15 p.m. at the Fairfield Municipal Building, 5350 Pleasant Avenue. The following Councilmembers were present: Terry Senger, Marty Judd, Mitch Rhodus and Tim Meyers. Staff members present: Art Pizzano, Angie Johns, Dave Crouch, Dennis Stuckey, Don Bennett, John Clemmons, Mike Dickey, Jim Bell, Mary Hopton. Also present: Judge Joyce Campbell.

Review of 2010 Operating Budget

Finance Director Mary Hopton gave an economic update noting that income tax revenues were flat in November, but we are down for the year at about 1.3 million. City Manager Pizzano clarified that this was anticipated. Ms. Hopton explained how estimates are created and month-to-month.

Municipal Court

Judge Joyce Campbell stated at the beginning of the year, the entire fee schedule was examined and increases were made to most of those fees to generate more money. She commented that the uptick in personnel is due to the court being required to rehire an employee who left on disability and the benefits were not in the 2009 budget. Judge Campbell does not anticipate much of an increase in salaries for this year. She recommended meeting to discuss the pay band structure. She explained that the Supreme Court will no longer pay for acting judges. She stated one of the largest expenses is postage. She explained the \$10,000 set aside for the law library and due to the restructuring of the library they are going to buy the books for the court this year. She discussed the costs for indigent defense in which the court pays for people in other communities to have a public defender. She explained on Tuesdays and Wednesdays a lot of the docket is in Spanish, so interpreters are used and the Department of Justice has indicated that any court charging for its interpreters will be sued. She stated as of December 1, the caseload is up about 1,000 cases this year from last year. She discussed the probation department including reporting and non-reporting probation and probation officer staff. She stated revenues are down by about \$25,000 per month, which is a function of the economy. She explained if they cannot get the money, non-violent offenders will be placed on community service. She stated that they received a grant from the Highway Public Safety; they run an OVI docket on Mondays at ten o'clock for all second and third drunk driving cases within the past six years. She explained that these offenders get intensive individual treatments, group therapy, and acupuncture three mornings a week for twelve weeks and a study is being done by Northern Kentucky University to see if it works. Judge Campbell explained the use of scam bracelets. Councilmember Rhodus thanked Judge Campbell for using the community service people not only in the City, but also with the non-profits like the FYBA.

Law Director

Mrs. Hopton stated that expenditures are flat for 2010 and the primary expense is legal service and out of that we pay a monthly retainer, prosecution and billable services. Law Director John Clemmons stated when they went with the city, they indicated that they would do their best to hold their hourly rates and budget and they are doing so this year. He explained the city does this on an independent contract arrangement in which the legal services fee includes all the personnel that work under that contract. Mr. Clemmons briefly discussed the transition from being with Millikin & Fitton Law Firm to the new Clemmons and Wolterman. He explained that he and Steve Wolterman were the primary lawyers out of the Fairfield office to work with the City and Pete Froelke has been the prosecutor for at least 40 years. Councilmember Rhodus asked if it is necessary that they call on someone with a different expertise, how is that handled. Mr. Clemmons stated they could call on others, but there really is not much that they have not been able to handle with regards to the city's service. Councilmember Meyers commented on the historical value associated with Mr. Clemmons, Mr. Froelke and Mr. Wolterman.

Police

Mrs. Hopton stated the police department is the largest single budget within the general fund with 92% of their budget for personnel. She commented the line item for sustenance of prisoners and it has been decided that the Justice Center is a more applicable cost center for that item. Chief Dickey explained that the jail bill is going to hit about \$600,000. Mrs. Hopton commented that this year it is almost double the expense and will be close to \$600,000 this year. Chief Dickey commented the daily rate for prisoners is \$65 per day. Chief Dickey responded that salaries' being up is contract driven. Mrs. Hopton stated they have 61 sworn officers and are the largest group. City Manager Pizzano commented by comparison for cities our size both locally and nationally, our ranks are smaller. Chief Dickey commented while personnel costs are a positive, the bulk of the line items and operating costs are down. Councilmember Meyers expressed his appreciation for the offsets.

Parks & Recreation

Mrs. Hopton stated 85% of the budget is personnel costs. Parks and Recreation Director Jim Bell discussed the bank charges associated with processing credit card payments. He commented they do not add a fee at this time, they view this as more of a convenience fee. Mrs. Hopton explained we are going out to bid on our banking projects next year in April. She stated the Judge and

Court have gone out on their own in the past and they will try to use our dollar volume to reduce the fees. Jim Bell clarified no personnel will be added. She stated the only thing that would fluctuate for part timers is the number of bodies not the number of hours. Mr. Bell discussed management of the part-time positions, specifically lifeguards. He discussed the biggest challenge is that they will lose a couple of employees through retirement for parks/golf maintenance. Councilmember Meyers commented during tough economic times like this, he firmly believes that the parks system is a savior in many respects because it provides people to still living in the community an outlet. Councilmember Rhodus commented when compared to other cities around with similar parks we consistently see ourselves with a fewer number of employees doing relatively the same thing. Mr. Bell explained we will not need personnel for Black Bottom project. Mrs. Hopton stated personnel costs for Marsh Fishing Lake are about 65% of the budget. Mrs. Hopton stated revenues at the Community Arts Center are estimated at \$420,000. She stated their personnel costs are about 40% of the budget. Councilmember Rhodus asked Mr. Bell to send attendance rates for Marsh Fishing Lake. Council and staff discussed the positive response to concessions at the Golf Course. Mrs. Hopton explained we have monthly audits that they give the figures on and we provided those to our insurance company and our liquor liability did not increase this year. She stated the auditors are very pleased with the controls in place. Mrs. Hopton stated personnel makes up 55% of the Golf Maintenance budget and highlighted the decrease in utilities such as gasoline and supplies. She commented the recreation activities account was primarily used for contractors that taught the classes and now a salary line item has been added in the budget to cover fees for program support personnel that are now considered part-time employees rather than contract. Mr. Bell explained this is based upon federal law. Council and staff further discussed the employees versus contractors. Mr. Bell further explained that these are at-will employees. Councilmember Meyers questioned whether the Community Arts Center will ever be self sufficient. City Manager Pizzano explained when the pro-forma was done; it was not intended to be self sufficient. Councilmember Meyers commented he does not think it will ever be self sufficient. Councilmember Rhodus commented it is a quality of life thing.

Fire Levy Fund

Mrs. Hopton stated we have a slight decrease in revenues and that is really a function of the property taxes; however, our EMS billing has proved more fruitful than projected, which has pretty much offset a large chunk of what we have lost in property taxes. She commented within the county our property tax delinquency rate is one of the lowest, so we are collecting more up front. She further commented we have personnel costs that are 89% of the budget with decreases to travel and training, gas and supplies. Chief Don Bennett commented salary and wages are contract driven. He discussed the use of part time personnel, when fulltime personnel are off work and the cost savings that has resulted. Chief Bennett stated this was done with the support of the union and has been a recruitment tool in part time selection and a change in the shifts has also helped the city stay competitive. He discussed the \$11,000 reduction in travel & training. Chief Dickey commented on the management succession program and the upcoming accreditation process. Chief Bennett briefly discussed the new cap fittings on the fire hydrants.

Public Utilities

Mrs. Hopton discussed the decrease in the revenue based on the consumption during the wet summer. She commented the rate structures for water and sewer will be reevaluated. She discussed the personnel cost of 63% for the personnel budget and the reduction in insurance and supplies. She stated for water pumping and treatment 42% of the budget is personnel related. She stated there is a reduction in the sludge disposal, which Public Utilities Director Dave Crouch explained that the reduction is credited to staff having developed the means to test the chemicals that come in so that we make sure we get what we are paying for through weighing the product that we use and if it doesn't meet our criteria we send it back. Mrs. Hopton explained why the salaries are split between water and sewer for administration because it is an enterprise fund. She discussed that sewer revenues are up because credits are down. She stated expenditures are flat at 6.1 million, but the fund balance will be up slightly from last year. She explained that sewer supervision is largely personnel costs. He explained when he show that our facilities are maintained well and our sewer system is not backing up it helps our insurance costs. Mr. Crouch discussed the real time power program for Wastewater. He explained that he is not handling the Customer Service Manager calls now, most departments have picked these up internally. Councilmember Rhodus commented on the in-house construction work completed by this department for cost savings. Councilmember Rhodus asked about the water main breaks on 127. Mr. Crouch discussed the number of breaks that ran under the road from the church. He explained he will be starting a critical needs assessment for water main replacement schedule, even though we are well below the industry standard for main breaks. Mr. Crouch discussed the Big Ike generator and others throughout the city. Mrs. Hopton stated the General Service account is kind of the catchall for anything that does not allocate out to a specific department. She explained that it has been reduced by 4.1% in the form of travel and training, solid waste disposal, professional and contractual services, insurance, reduction in equipment supplies to maintain equipment, tax refunds, and grants. She explained increases were seen in transfers to other funds. City Manager Pizzano highlighted under professional and contractual services, the amount of \$25,000, which is the front end of a proposal that he solicited for training to assist staff in taking it to the next level in terms of measuring their work product as discussed in the goal setting session. He briefly discussed the individual he has contacted regarding this project, his qualifications and the proposal he has received. Council discussed the grant proposals, and distribution of funds to the five non profit organizations that requested funds. Council decided to grant \$35,000 to Partners in Prime; \$17,500 for the Community Foundation; \$7,500 for the Summer Theater; \$0 for the Riverbank Poetry; and \$5,000 for the Hamilton Fairfield Symphony Orchestra.

Law Director John Clemmons discussed the unique situation upcoming in the Regular meeting in which both the Mayor and Vice Mayor will not be in attendance. He explained the Rules of Council say in the absence of the Mayor and the Vice Mayor, the majority must vote to appoint someone to run the meeting as president pro-temp. He briefly explained the process and motion needed during the Regular Meeting.

Adjournment

The Council/Manager Briefing adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela Johns
Clerk of Council