

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
MAY 10, 2017

Mayor Casavant called the meeting to order at 6:21 p.m.

Roll Call: Michael Swanton, John McCurry, Jr., Robert Quattrone, Jr., Bob Mills, Norman Belanger, Michael Ready, Laura Seaver

Stephen St. Cyr and Marc Lessard were excused.

The Committee, and all who were present, recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Committee member Swanton asked about the CIP budget and what the process will be for allocating what will get funded. City Manager, Jim Bennett explained that the Capital Projects Committee will review the CIP requests and amounts and make recommendations on the allocation of the CIP funds, which will then be considered and approved by the full Council.

Committee member Ready thank the City Manager for presenting the proposal for personnel/service cuts, which had been done at the May 8th Budget Committee meeting; however, he is not in support of any of the proposed cuts.

Committee member Swanton agrees with Committee member Ready about the proposed personnel/service cuts and not supporting them. He would, however, like to see the City Manager to continue to work on ways to cut in the personnel and benefits area of the budget for future budgets.

Committee member Belanger stated that he also is not in support of the proposed personnel/service cuts, but in the future, would support a cut back in the vacation buyback policy for employees.

Committee member Ready brought up the Municipal Services budget, which this Committee reduced to the FY16 budgeted amount. At a previous meeting, the City Manager had distributed suggested allocations of those Municipal Services funds, which Committee member Ready does not necessarily agree with. First, he would like to ensure that those agencies and organizations who are going to be affected by the reduction be contacted and informed of the change in allocations. He also suggested that a Committee look at how to allocate these funds and possibly bring recommendations back to the full Council for final approval.

Committee member Ready noted that for the first time, the City budget actually includes costs that support employee liabilities and future sustainability (i.e. retirement payouts; long-term liabilities, etc). He feels that this is a big step for the Budget Committee to have taken.

Committee member McCurry doesn't have a strong inclination on how the Municipal Services allocations are determined; but he would like to see a final recommendation brought before the Council for final approval. He suggested having the Finance Committee make the recommended allocations.

Motion by Committee member McCurry, seconded by Committee member Ready to have the Finance Committee allocate the Municipal Services funds and send recommendations to the full Council.

Vote: Unanimous.

Sewer Budget Discussion:

The City Manager distributed a handout with the proposed changes/increases to the sewer fees. He gave an explanation of the proposal, which included two different models. One proposes a 2.5% increase across the board. The second proposal includes a 'blended' rate.

Committee member McCurry is not in support of any increase in the sewer fees.

Motion by Committee member McCurry, seconded by Committee member Quattrone to reduce the sewer budget by \$80,000, which reflects what the increase in fees would generate.

Vote: 2/5; Committee members McCurry and Quattrone in favor.

Committee members Swanton, Mills, Belanger, Ready and Seaver opposed.

Motion fails.

Committee member McCurry stated that he'd like to see a recommendation on sewer fees come from the Wastewater Management Commission.

Motion by Committee member Belanger, seconded by Committee member Swanton to adopt the "blended" rate proposal as part of the FY18 Sewer Budget.

Vote: Unanimous.

Motion by Committee member Ready, seconded by Committee member McCurry to send the City Government Budget to the City Council.

Vote: Unanimous.

Motion by Committee member McCurry, seconded by Committee member Ready to adjourn.

Vote: Unanimous.

Time: 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carmen J. Morris, City Clerk