

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 27, 2017

Mayor Casavant called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

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

Stephen St. Cyr arrived at 6:37 p.m.

Bob Mills was excused.

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

Downtown Improvement District:

City Manager, Jim Bennett gave an overview of what the proposed Downtown Improvement District program is and presented a recently revised budget for the startup of the program. The plan moving forward is that the City will fully fund the first year and initial startup of the program from the plantings, to promotions, to maintenance of the downtown improvements. The full non-profit Downtown Improvement District would not be implemented in the initial year of the program, which will allow the City to facilitate and be a catalyst for the formation of the Downtown Improvement District Commission/Board. The intention is that funding and uses of this program in the FY19 budget would be totally controlled by the new DID Board of Directors.

Committee member Lessard further explained that the Downtown Improvement District is not typically a program that the City would fully fund – especially when there are so many other projects and CIP items that need allocations. However, he feels strongly enough about this program to support the full funding for the startup and first year of this program. It is his expectation that the downtown building and business owners will be onboard to invest and support the DID and make it truly their own.

Committee member McCurry agrees with Committee member Lessard's comments and without downtown business support, he will not support this program after the initial startup and first year.

A few building and business owners offered their thoughts about the proposed Downtown Improvement District. Overall, they voiced reservations about their own investment in this program and they worry about their rental rates becoming unaffordable.

Again, it was explained that the City is not asking the downtown building and business owners to pay into the DID program in the first year. The City is willing to initially fully fund the program; and is also willing to work with the building and business owners on the specifics of the plantings and other improvements.

City Manager Comments:

Jim handed out a revised budget meeting schedule, which includes additional Budget Committee meetings in the month of May.

As was discussed at the April 26th Budget Committee meeting, Jim is currently working with the City's Management Team to come up with proposed cuts in City services/staffing.

Jim is also still working on a proposal to increase the sewer use fee.

He announced that Wednesday, May 10th has been set as the date for the Public Hearing on the School budget only; as well as the 1st Reading of the School Department budget.

Lastly, Jim handed out a "Running Total" worksheet which is intended to assist the Committee to track where they are in terms of budget cuts and transfers thus far.

Budget Committee Deliberations:

Motion by Committee member McCurry, seconded by Committee member Lessard to move \$166,000 from the CSO back to the General Fund.

Motion was withdrawn until more information can be obtained.

Motion by Committee member McCurry, seconded by Committee member Ready to move \$200,000 from the Industrial Park Fund into the General Fund; with the caveat that the proceeds from the Pate Property sale will be put into the Industrial Park Fund.

Vote: Unanimous.

Motion by Committee member McCurry, seconded by Committee member Lessard to increase the Rotary Park Impact Fund by \$13,965 for the paving of the entrance road into Rotary Park.

Committee members McCurry and Lessard revised their motion to change the increased fee to \$21,894, as per the recommendation of the Public Works Director to pave the Rotary Park entrance and further to the right-hand driveway leading to the ball fields.

Vote: Unanimous.

Motion by Committee member Ready, seconded by Committee member McCurry to postpone the implementation of the lease vs purchase policy, which results in a reduction in the CIP of \$434,450.

Vote: Unanimous.

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

Vote: Unanimous.

Time: 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carmen J. Morris, City Clerk