

City Council Work Session

5:30 PM
Council Chambers
May 7, 2018 (Budget Only)

ATTENDANCE:

Mayor/Council (please check) X Cromley, X Yakawich, X Brewster, X Ewalt, X Joy, X Friedel, X Gibbs, X Ronning, Clark, X Brown.

CM excused: Clark

ADJOURN TIME: 10:05 PM

Agenda

TOPIC #1	Budget Overview
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Denise Bohlman, City Clerk – introduction to the new Council chambers technology.
- Mayor: congrats and thanks on the Earth Day celebration.
- Brewster: attended and compliment the Arbor Day celebration.
- Mayor, Joy and Ronning: reports on Allentown trip.
- Steve Arveschoug, BSED Director: Economic Development week. Report on planning agreement. Redevelopment, investment and infrastructure necessary for economic success. Lessons from the trip. Hammes Company knows what they're doing. Work starts when the plan is completed and it needs to be implemented.
- **Budget presentations**
- Bruce McCandless, City Administrator: PowerPoint overview of budget. Expenditure numbers, reminder that numbers do not include STEP increases. Reduction due to removal of franchise fee. Overview of departmental budget. City mainly relies on property tax for income, overview how dollars are used. Employee turn-over rate of 9%. Researching recruitment and retention ideas.
- Joy: reserve projection? About 3-4 years. Need to see an increase in revenues.
- Ronning: would like to see more State legislatures come to meetings or meet with Councilmembers. They should see what occurs in City business.
- McCandless: 10 out of 15 are urban legislators. Urban centers around State have not banded together. Smaller cities to be healthier financially.
- Brown: how much adding to reserves or how much can we spend? FY18 should break even. Afterwards, losing about \$2.5 million in franchise fees, adding \$1 million maximum tax levy, imbalance of \$1 million.
- Mayor: tax revenue? Can send certified tax value numbers, 5 mils below maximum. Mils changing, difficult to say but can do some analysis.

- Yakawich: Facility Master Plan? Completed in 2015, expand evidence building (\$3.5 million/FY19 project) and consolidate City Hall offices (FY20) into single location are 2 main issues. Council stripped out both projects. Staff will bring back alternative options. Evidence building will be priority, consolidated City Hall more expensive. Yakawich: would like to put City Hall options back on table and look at Stillwater Building.
- Joy: Public Information Officer (PIO) information? Administration Department, main focus to communicate City message to public, requires extensive training. Timeline depends on priority placement.
- Mayor: public would probably like to see other improvements before City Hall.
- Ronning: clarify State tax on casinos. Casino pays State 15% of gambling revenue.
- Councilmembers – want to see a multi-year projection of Public Safety costs and revenues, help with planning Public Safety levy election, etc.
- **Public comments:**
- Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, Montana: some City assessments reward vacant land, deterrent to infill. Good if we could find a financial incentive to develop property. Aquatics underserved, PRPL supported its agenda at the last SBURA meeting.
- Nelson: Hanser plan dismissed, Park improvements vetoed, substituted their ideas. Shelter at Optimist Park. Public relations problem.
- Yakawich: Park employee did a fine presentation. Neighborhood accepts what can't or shouldn't be done because the city has to do things in a particular way.
- Friedel: similar experience as Nelson. PRPL has public relations problem. Should allow residents to direct more of the improvements.
- Brown: have expressed a hard line on what can be done, maybe need to communicate differently.
- Ewalt: Parks Department employee could have reframed based on what Hanser suggested. Park equipment won't be here until fall. Not much flexibility.

TOPIC #2	Police
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Police Chief St. John: address elephant in the room. Not fair to paint all of department with the same brush. Don't condone the officers' behavior. Privacy issues that can't speak about. Discipline is guided by various rules and documents. Have to follow policies and laws in order to reduce litigation. Followed policies and best practices. Important how issues are dealt with. Investigated complaints, applied the right discipline. Look at the Annual Report; office of professional standards investigates everything and more complaints are generated from within the department vs. from citizens. Ranges of discipline that can be used.
- Brown: who is doing the oversight on the department? Command staff, Union representative, Legal, HR and Mr. McCandless. Can't make unilateral decisions.

- Ronning: confusing that behavior won't be tolerated vs. statement that there are good officers who made a mistake. Police officer has a much different standing than Finance clerk. Different standing in public.
- St. John: mischaracterizing the events. Discipline partially based on the officer's whole record. Received complaint, investigated and took action. Only department that will discipline for off duty behavior.
- Friedel: integrity needed. Other officers and families suffer, not the violators.
- Cole: policies publicly available?
- St. John: will start up additional ethics training. Policies are public records except for tactical info about officer deployment. Can post on website.
- Joy: sexual relationships can turn into claims about sexual harassment, especially when there is a power differential between parties.
- Brewster: used to have more complaints against department than all other cities combined and that doesn't happen anymore with this Chief.
- Ronning: why do we know the female's name and not the males? Mistake, only explanation: thought the officers' names would be released to.
- Gibbs: handled it well given policies and procedures in place.
- St. John: budget presentation. 2 officers for Billings Clinic and 8th SRO officer. Total of 153. Fully staffed clerically, only 7 for Animal Control.
- Cole: recruiting seems more difficult than it used to be. Recruiting Native Americans, people of color and women? St. John describes blind hiring process.
- Yakawich: community outreach more important now than used to be?
- Brown: 7 Animal Control department members an increase? No.
- Ronning: blind hiring process – what does the first level of recruiting look like? 2 levels before interviews; application, written tests, interview panel. Never been challenged for discrimination.
- Ewalt: why are revenue from fines and forfeitures is down. Fines and forfeitures are from court action, law change on asset forfeitures changed numbers. PD does not get money from tickets, goes to General fund.....Andy Zoeller could clarify.
- Mayor: bad things happen when cities use traffic violation money to balance budget. Traffic patrol generates more money for General Fund than patrolman costs, correct? Traffic officers very active, most likely covers costs.
- **Public comments:**
- Tom Zurbuchen, 1747 Wicks Lane, Billings, Montana: Chief said that he's been at full staff for a while. Last quarter, personal services shows 72% spent. \$640k higher next year. Andy Zoeller, Finance Director: Fire Department will show savings instead of increase even though the 2 departments added people at the same time.
- Cole: want to see info and projections on personal services for FY 18; compare budget with actual. How many can get steps next year? Approximately 50% eligible.
- Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, Montana: if possible, hire more traffic patrol officers. Noise discussion – person lives near Squire Lounge complained to him, frustrated by noise. Use social media to advertise that the PD is going to enforce noise limits.

Recess 8:12 pm. Reconvene 8:20 pm.

TOPIC #3	Fire
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Fire Chief Bill Rash: Fire Department objectives and budget by division. Reduced budget because last year was larger due to replacing SCBAs.
- Brown: what is our region? Still have small increase if SCBA money eliminated? Yes.
- Ewalt: notebook shows different department total than the PowerPoint.
- Rash: don't know why and will check.
- Friedel: which departments use 800 mhz? Ann Kindness, 9-1-1 Supervisor: will get the number of users. Explains how expenses are distributed. Will have to ask the departments who don't use the system and about why they don't. Parks and Public Utilities use small devices, perhaps radios were too large. PD is encrypted, Sheriff can be linked to City system.
- Mayor: encrypted? Fire is, uncertain of other departments.
- Brown: do 800 mhz charges include internal staff? Rash: no, but have a shared radio system.
- Rash: Fire responses increasing approximately 4%.
- Ewalt: increase in transient calls downtown? Significant challenge but need to respond.
- Friedel: want to know how much transients impact increased response numbers from Station 1. 2016 had increase downtown, business alarms, etc.
- Cole: 2-1-1 system usage? Rash: staff/resource limits.
- Questions about Haz-Mat operations and resources.
- Jason Banfield, Engineer: 6 regional teams available, on call through activation by Governor. Decreased funding due to Legislation in 90's.
- Ewalt: State does not have monetary requirements? Correct.
- Ronning: Billings burden of personnel? 18-20 of Haz-Mat technicians, partner locally. Bozeman is sister team, so work together.
- **Public comments:**
- Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, Montana: 3 fire trucks pass through downtown, respond to call across street from his house. Consider using smaller vehicles. Too costly to continue operating this way. Extrications increasing because City is a racetrack.
- Ewalt: defends using big trucks. The engines are their offices and crews can't split.
- Friedel: number of calls that don't allow return to station in between calls. Maybe 15%-20%.
- Brown: don't like "underserved" statements that started with the facilities report. Rash: will try to do better with terms.

TOPIC #4	Council Discussion
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PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Joy: balance point in budget without additional revenue is difficult. Allentown trip instructive. PA Legislature more willing to allow local governments to generate revenues.
- Yakawich: next week will present initiative for \$15,000 Council Contingency funds for the USS Billings commissioning.
- Ronning: reminder of photograph next week before the meeting. Gifts from Allentown from candy producer, Just Born.
- McCandless: reminder of budget Work Session on Tuesday, May 15, 2018.
- Ronning: request from City Administrator. Are some departments having more discipline issues than others? Is report possible? McCandless: could come up with report. Report could review if hiring process OK?

TOPIC #5	Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, Montana: property acquisition cost for the King Ace Hardware is not properly disclosed and there is another conflict of interest with the realtor representing King and Steve Ziere.