

City Council Work Session

5:30 PM

Hybrid, Billings Public Library Community Room and Zoom

May 18, 2021

ATTENDANCE:

Mayor/Council (please check) ✓ Cole, ✓ Shaw, ✓ Yakawich, ✓ Neese,
 ✓ Ewalt, ✓ Joy, ✓ Choriki, ✓ Purinton, ✓ Ronning, ✓ Boyett, ✓ Brown

CM excused: ALL COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT

ADJOURN TIME: 8:51 PM

Agenda

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| TOPIC #1 | FY2022 Departmental Budget Presentations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Library ▪ Building / Facilities ▪ Information Technology ▪ Administration ▪ Human Resources ▪ Mayor / City Council ▪ Finance ▪ Parks and Recreation ▪ General Fund Recap |
| PRESENTER | |
| NOTES/OUTCOME | |

- **Gavin Woltjer, Library Director:** gave a PowerPoint presentation and overview of the amount of items checked out, utilization of space, and curbside service. He reviewed the ways the Library had served the community during COVID and the FY22 revenue, expenditures, and cash reserves.
- Mayor Cole: asked about the fine or overdue policy. Woltjer: currently no fining overdue items, but still require payment for lost items. Can't say if behavior changed due to policy. 4 state libraries have gone fine free.
- **Jessica Iverson, Facilities Manager:** gave a PowerPoint presentation and overview of the Facilities Building Division mission, and highlights. She gave an overview of the Building Division permitting and inspections departments, highlights of the department, revenues, expenditures and goals for FY22. She reviewed the Facilities Department functions and services, operations and maintenance, highlights. She reviewed the FY22 Facilities revenue, expenditures, challenges, and BOC revenues. She stated Facilities was partnering with the Fire Department to provide a comprehensive condition assessment survey, asset inventory, preventative maintenance and replacement plans, vendor contract management, work order ticketing systems and budgeting and capital planning.

- **Yakawich:** why more space? **Kukulski:** huge space issues at City Hall, last attorney placed in old safe. Center for Public Safety Management report stated huge inefficiency of operating from multiple locations.
- **Ewalt:** don't know where City Hall will be. Better to bring back as budget amendment? **Kukulski:** got number from NAI. They gave an assessment of the property needed.
- **Ewalt:** what is increase of \$3 million? **Iverson:** hail claims paid by insurance. Will be spent next year on repairs.
- **David Watterson, Information Technology Director:** gave a PowerPoint presentation and overview of FY22 IT budget, FY 21 highlights, budget overview, GIS highlights, sample of other GIS on-line maps on City Website. He reviewed FY22 expenses, Mitel central telephone services, expenditures, budget savings, IT challenges: cyber security, and staffing.
- **Mayor Cole:** ransomware issue. Would mock drill benefit the City? **Watterson:** IT does a lot of work preparing for situations.
- **Ewalt:** will IT be able to handle body camera program support? **Watterson:** IT is prepared to support Police department body camera needs.
- **Chris Kukulski, City Administrator:** gave a PowerPoint presentation and overview of FY22 Administration budget, Mayor and City Council increase in compensation and contingency funds.
- **Andy Zoeller, Finance Director:** gave a PowerPoint presentation and overview of FY22 General Fund and Non-Departmental and Law and Justice Center.
- **Karla Stanton, Human Resources Director:** gave a PowerPoint presentation and overview of Human Resources operational chart, average age and years of service, and expenditures. She reviewed the costs of health and dental insurance plan, liability and property program, accomplishments, and challenges.
- **Mayor Cole:** reimburse Council for expenditures, travel, education, meetings with constituents? **Kukulski:** \$1,350 for Councilmembers and \$3,000 for Mayor included in budget. Encourage training and education.
- **Joy:** how confident in Property tax number? **Zoeller:** use sale data, building permit to make estimates of growth in each tax class. **Kukulski:** under or overestimate possible. Use Department of Revenue number in August.
- **Joy:** how will high homes sale prices affect City? **Zoeller:** based on value of homes in January 2020. Confident in current number.
- **Purinton:** employee retention issue? **Stanton:** wages, and retirements.
- **Purinton:** Pension plan changes? **Kukulski:** City is not self-funded for their pension plan, part of State retirement system. Police and Fire is very well funded. City adjusted and employee percentage went up to fund plan.
- **Ewalt:** what happens to Council reimbursement amount if not spent. **Kukulski:** rolls into reserves.
- **Ronning:** status of bill to prohibit Council from lobbying? **Kukulski:** uncertain of status. Limited to ARPA fund use.
- **Ronning:** public information officer (PIO) critical need.
- **Kukulski:** having an additional FTE training position for reasonable suspicion of alcohol use and how recreational marijuana law will change how the City operates.

- **Neese:** budget for outside negotiator for teamsters, etc.? **Kukulski:** no, currently in negotiations with staff.
- **Mike Whitaker, Parks and Recreations Director, Mike Pigg, Parks Superintendent, Kory Thomson, Recreation Superintendent:** gave a PowerPoint presentation and overview of Parks Department significant accomplishments, operational accomplishments, challenges, major projects currently underway, community infrastructure investments. Gave an overview of the department, and their mission. Reviewed the map of parks located in the City, maintenance, 2019 events in parks, focus, current challenges, proposed budget, operating and capital funds.
- **Purinton:** review Park Maintenance District increase? **Whitaker:** Park Maintenance Districts (PMD) assessments to cover costs and save for replacements costs. **Zoeller:** increase based on taxable value growth. Currently at 1.4%.
- Council discussed the percentage of PMD increases and various options.
- **Neese:** motion to set amount at 3%, seconded by CM Ewalt. **Mayor:** based on speculation of legislation, may be premature.
- **Kukulski:** encourage Council not to look at only added growth.
- **Boyett:** may help to see example of amount on average home.
- **Shaw:** do not have enough information to support motion.
- **Neese:** withdraw motion, Ewalt also withdraws 2nd.
- **Ronning:** Parks Foundation update? Indoor facility needs? **Whitaker:** have informal relationship with Foundation and work together on projects. List of current projects on their website. Meeting with SBURA soon for update.
- **Neese:** update website? **Whitaker:** yes, there are funds in upcoming year for website.
- Discussion about existing partnerships, fund raising options and City relationships with outside partnership.
- **Kukulski:** impressed by projects getting completed. Legislation was frustrating. Implied PD 1 assessments not used for Park projects. Inaccurate.
- RECESS: 7:50 PM
- RECONVENE: 7:57 PM
- **Ewalt:** national average spent on parks is \$6,200 per acre. Billings averages \$3,200 per acre. Lutheran Park over \$8,000 per acre and nothing there except garbage cans.
- **Kukulski:** averages are references, cannot pull one park for an average.
- **Pigg:** long distance of travel, lawn care, maintenance, etc.
- **Brown:** costs being adjusted if park is natural parkland? **Kukulski:** direct association with maintenance needs for assessments. **Pigg:** no natural parks are in PMD. Staff tracks time at each park to allow direct park tracking.
- **Purinton:** on site buildings could reduce staff travel time.
- **Andy Zoeller, Finance Director:** gave a PowerPoint presentation and overview of FY22 budget. Recommended General Fund changes, additional staffing,
- **Kukulski:** driving costs in General Fund/Public Safety (GFPS). What is missing? PIO, Deputy Fire Marshall and Logistics, Additional PS resources, Paralegal,

Public Records/bodycam position, additional Parks, Trail and Recreation resources. How to address additional resources-use reserves, PS Levy, Park District 1 and Parks levy.

- **Brown:** PD1 levy in November? **Kukulski:** possible but not practical. Need to educate community and may be overwhelming. Would like a few months between.
- **Ronning:** advocate for PIO, could help with recruitment, retention issues. Help write grants, etc.
- **Mayor:** research if PIO could be paid out of various departments.
- **Choriki:** 6.4% include positions added? **Kukulski:** phase it over 3 years.
- **Mayor:** median home price higher. **Kukulski:** used \$217,000 for median home value based off data received last August.
- **Neese:** how much Zoeller: around \$20 million - CARES Act expenses freed up \$19 million. **Kukulski:** ability to move projects up list of capital improvements. Waiting on ARPA rules, will not be as flexible.
- **Boyett:** estimated cost of Law and Justice center? **Kukulski:** in discussions, appraisals, etc. being completed.
- **Ewalt:** \$3 million to get water and sewer out to Alkali Creek. Could use money for that project. **Kukulski:** backbone infrastructure for Inner Belt Loop is priority. Meeting with County Commissioners.
- **Public Comment:**
- **Ed Gulick, 3015 10th Ave. N., Billings, MT,** VP of High Plains Architects, stated Building Division is most pleasant to do business with. Recently had ransomware attack. Stated a Public Information Officer for City was necessary.

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| TOPIC #5 | Council Discussion |
| PRESENTER | |
| NOTES/OUTCOME | |

- **Yakawich:** Library is amazing, great resource. Kudos to cleaning staff, IT Department, Ms. Maddox, Ms. Stanton and Parks Department.

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| TOPIC #6 | Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda |
| PRESENTER | |
| NOTES/OUTCOME | |

- **Tim Warburton, 3444 Lucky Penny Lane, Billings, MT,** stated that during COVID he appreciated the ease in which to participate in Council meetings via Zoom and public comment telephone line. Work force issue needs to be a focus. He stated public safety issues were important and decency mattered. Focus on Public Safety, don't muddy waters with Parks issue.