

MINUTES

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

PRE-BUDGET WORKSHOP 2010-2011 BUDGET

COMMITTEE ROOM

ROOM 239, CITY HALL

5:00 P.M., MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2010

MEMBERS PRESENT:

*Mayor Allen Joines
Council Member Molly Leight
Council Member Robert C. Clark
Council Member Dan Besse
Council Member Derwin L. Montgomery
Council Member Denise D. Adams
Council Member Wanda Merschel
Council Member James Taylor, Jr.*

MEMBER ABSENT:

Council Member Vivian H. Burke

Mayor Joines called the meeting to order

Mr. Lee Garrity, City Manager, explained that the City's budget had to respond to the current state of the nation's economy.

Mrs. Ann Jones, Budget and Evaluation Director, introduced the staff from the Budget and Evaluation Department. She presented an update on the projected General Fund expenditures and revenues for FY10-11, as well as the FY09-10 Year End General Fund Balance compared to that of FY08-09.

- Council Member Leight inquired if the City's property tax rate versus other that of comparable cities dictates what it receives in revenue sales tax.
- Council Member Merschel inquired about whether or not employees received performance pay increases in FY09-10. She also asked that during the City Council's proposed April 8th meeting with Forsyth County Commissioner, the issue of ad valorem calculation be discussed. She noted that since Winston-Salem city limits make up 65% of Forsyth County and residents of the city pay city and county taxes, a good argument could be made for recalculation of the ad valorem.
- Mayor Joines noted that percentages should also be included in that discussion.

- Council Member Besse inquired as to why the Solid Waste Budget fund is included under the NCLM control and why the recycling fee was included as an assumption rather than a transfer.
- Council Member Clark inquired about the tax office's procedure for depreciating equipment and whether or not the capital expenditures are budgeted on a cash basis or on a budget amount.
- Council Member Leight inquired as to whom decides whether the taxes are calculated based on ad valorem versus shared basis.
- Mayor Joines noted that the City gets penalized via its sales tax share for keeping its property taxes low and pointed out the importance of staying on the record with facts about the baseball stadium and any impact insofar as ad valorem.

Savings Areas

- Council Member Clark inquired if Kresge is okay with the reduction in the Arts Council amount. He also asked about the difference in the cost for a side loading versus a rear loading trash truck.
- Council Member Besse noted that the Arts Council match may have to be made in lieu of an operating budget. He also inquired about how many temporary positions would be eliminated if the City were to move to curbside trash pickup and the potential savings involved.
- Council Member Merschel requested the annual cost for flowerbed plantings and a list of the locations of those beds.
- Council Member Adams inquired if there had been an issue with customer service since City employees had not received a raise in two years and also expressed concern that there is no way for citizens to "grade" employee customer service. She requested a list of agency grants and information on where the City stands on youth programs. She also requested a report from January on workers' compensation and how the City compares with other municipalities.
- Council Member Montgomery expressed concern about making changes at the Recreation Centers without first knowing potential impact on those centers, as well as impacts on the employees.
- Mayor Joines expressed support for reallocating part of the money from PTRP to WSBI and noted the importance of ensuring there is no gang activating starting up in that area.

Non-Tax Revenue Options

- Council Member Clark inquired about the percentage of parking tickets that needed to be paid. He also noted that there may be liens on the property and inquired as to the laws governing who would need a business license.
- Council Member Leight noted that some citizens have expressed concern about police officers working for private business. She asked about how the City charges for sidewalk repairs.

- Council Member Montgomery asked if the purchase of carts is charged to citizens and what sort of fees are charged by other municipalities.
- Council Member Besse inquired about fees at Winston Lake Golf Course. He expressed concern about discouraging recreation activities.
- Council Member Merschel inquired how the centers will be filled.

Other Gap Reductions

- Council Member Besse noted the importance of letting citizens know that recycling is part of the solid waste operations.
- Council Member Montgomery inquired about what type of additional savings could be realized under Personnel expenses.
- Council Member Merschel inquired about the upfront cost of a Reduction in Force (RIF) as well as where the cuts would possibly be made.
- Council Member Taylor expressed opposition to a RIF.
- Council Member Besse inquired if severance and/or COBRA applies only to full-time status or also to part-time status employees as well. He asked how other municipalities handle those status changes.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:43 p.m.