

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Syracuse City Council held on February 12, 2016, at 2:00 p.m., in the Council Conference Room, 1979 West 1900 South, Syracuse City, Davis County, Utah.

Present: Councilmembers: Andrea Anderson
Corinne N. Bolduc (arrived at 3:03 p.m.)
Karianne Lisonbee (arrived at 2:40 p.m.)
Dave Maughan

City Manager Bovero
City Recorder Cassie Z. Brown

Absent: Mayor Terry Palmer and Councilmember Mike Gailey

Staff Present: Finance Director Steve Marshall
City Attorney Paul Roberts
Fire Chief Eric Froerer
Deputy Fire Chief Jo Hamblin

2:39:32 PM

1. Meeting Called to Order/Adopt Agenda

Upon the presence of a quorum, Second Mayor Pro Tem Maughan called the meeting to order at 2:40 p.m. as a special meeting, with notice of time, place, and agenda provided 24 hours in advance to the newspaper and each Councilmember.

2:39:45 PM

2. Fire Department budget discussion

City Manager Bovero used the aid of a PowerPoint presentation to provide an introduction to the Fire Department budget discussion. The Budget is a legal document that serves as a government entities' financial operating plan.

- A reflection of policy priorities
- A tool for communicating with constituents how tax money is spent.
- Allow citizens an opportunity to be heard by their elected officials.

A major responsibility of local elected officials, especially town or city council members, is to "by resolution or ordinance adopt a budget for the ensuing fiscal period for each fund for which a budget is required..." -- (Utah Code 10-6-118)

The presentation discussed fund based accounting as follows:

- General Fund
 - Every city maintains general fund. All revenue belongs to the general fund unless specifically earmarked for another fund.
- Capital Project Fund
 - Temporary funding set up for the purpose of implementing capital projects.
- Special revenue fund
 - Funds used to account for special or specific revenue sources, for example grant funds or revenue legally restricted for specific purposes.
- Enterprise Fund
 - Used for services which charge a fee, fund handled like a business organization (golf courses, Salt Lake City airport, sewer or water utility).
 - Proprietary Funds (Utility Funds)
 - Internal Service Funds (Information Technology Fund)
- Expenses must equal revenue, except in enterprise funds where you can have a profit and/or a loss.
- All unexpended funds, except capital improvement funds, lapse to respective fund balances on June 30.
- One-time money should only be spent on one-time expenditures.
- A city's general fund balance must be between 5% - 25% of city's fund projected revenue.

Mr. Bovero then noted the following terms will be used throughout all budget presentations:

- Appropriation –
 - A specific amount of money authorized by the City for the purchase of goods and services.
- Balanced Budget –
 - A budget in which planned funds available equal planned expenditures.
- Budget Officer –
 - Every city has a budget officer. The finance director is the budget officer in for Syracuse City.
- CAFR (Comprehensive Annual Financial Report) –
 - The City's annual financial statement prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices.

- Capital Equipment –
 - Equipment with an expected life of more than 1 year and with a value greater than \$5,000.
- Expenditures –
 - The spending of money for programs or projects approved in the budget.
- Fiscal Year–
 - Utah municipal FY runs from July 1st to June 30th
- Franchise Tax –
 - Energy tax imposed on all sales of public utility services, including electricity, gas, water, sewer, telephone, cable.
- Revenue –
 - Monies received or anticipated by the city from either tax (sales, property, franchise) or non-tax sources (fees, licenses, grants).

Mr. Bovero's presentation concluded with a review of the budget process as follows:

- Administration prepares draft budgets for each department and works with City Council on budget discussions and schedule.
- Tentative Budget is presented to the public by the 1st Council Meeting in May.
- Public Hearing is scheduled, budget hearing held after at least 48 hours advertising.
- Budget is presented for discussion and approval at 1st Council meeting in June.
- Budget adopted no later than June 22 (if no truth in taxation process occurs) or 1st council meeting in August (for truth in taxation hearing).

He then noted that the Fire Department's budget accounts for 18.5 percent of the City's total General Fund budget.

A staff memo from Fire Chief Froerer explained the mission statement of the Fire Department is "To provide quality, affordable services for its citizens, while promoting community pride, fostering economic development, and preparing for the future." Under the mission of the City, the Fire Department has reviewed the fire and EMS services provided by the City and created a draft budget that outlines the resources to provide the services effectively. In drafting the budget, Fire leadership followed the guidelines discussed in the November Council Retreat and the following vision statements adopted by Council:

10-Year City-Wide Vision Statements

- *We are a City with well-maintained infrastructure, including roads, utilities, and parks.*
- *In preparation for the West Davis Corridor, we will make provisions for interchanges to accommodate commercial businesses to serve the residents' needs and to support economic stability of the City.*
- *We are a financially stable City, balancing the cost of services with the level of services that we provide. The City will have minimal or no debt.*
- *The City will incorporate improvements, events, and services that create an overall feeling of connection and pride in the City by its residents.*

Fire/EMS Vision Statements

- *Syracuse firefighters and EMS providers are professional, well-trained, and courteous.*
- *The Syracuse FD/EMS has the equipment, training, and personnel to respond quickly.*
- *Syracuse firefighters and EMS providers are part of the community and respected by the public.*
- *The City is prudent with the finances of the FD, and minimizes debt associated with providing fire/EMS services.*

The memo then provided the following overarching discussion points.

- **5-10 Year Plan:** Over the next year, the Administration would like to work with the City Council to adopt a 5-10 year level of service and staffing plan. The plan would serve as an advisory document that outlines the level of service deemed acceptable to the Council. It also would evaluate the proper staffing levels for the FD in order to maintain the acceptable level of service. Finally, the plan would outline measures and triggers that indicate when staffing levels need to be increased or reduced based on service demands.

- Additional Cost: \$0 In-House staff time and minor ancillary costs
- Eliminate Call-Back Program: When the FD receives a call, a call-back is issued to all off-duty firefighters to respond to the station in preparation of a potential second call. This program costs approximately \$30,000 per year (2015 numbers) in wages.
- This program provides extra back-up service to the City, however it has a negative effect on recruiting, and is no longer a common practice in Davis County and other Wasatch Front Communities. Most cities have gone strictly to one crew per station, and then rely on mutual aid partners for second and third calls. Recruiting has suffered because of the irregularity of hours due to the call-back policy. Firefighters can find regular, predictable schedules with other cities, which tends to fit better with their personal lives.
- After careful evaluation, Chief Froerer feels that the call-back program is hurting the department more than it is helping it, and proposes elimination.
- 5-Man Staffing Crew: Currently the FD operates with a scheduled 4-man staffing crew. Rather than describe the entire operation in a memo, Chief Froerer will explain the details of a 4-man versus 5-man crew at the meeting, along with the pros and cons. In summary, however, a 5-man crew allows the City to respond to two calls requiring medical transport. To transport a patient in the ambulance, two firefighters are needed to lift the patient. To transport a patient in the transport engine, three firefighters are required. With a 4-man crew, the two firefighters in the engine can still respond to a call, but they cannot transport the victim safely.
- With the capability of responding to two transport calls, we estimate the FD could also collect an additional \$10,000 per year on average in medical transport billing. In addition, if an employee becomes ill and cannot work, the FD will not have to call in a replacement, thereby saving additional money. For example, with a 4-man crew, the FD cannot operate safely with only three firefighters, should someone call out sick. Consequently, they need to call in a replacement, which costs extra because the City is paying the paid leave plus the replacement's working hours. This situation occurred 27 times in 2015, costing an additional \$15,552. With a 5-man crew, the FD can still operate safely if they only have four firefighters, should one call out sick.
- Financially, the impact of a 5-man crew looks like this:
 - Additional medical billing revenue: + \$10,000
 - Savings in unplanned leave: + \$15,552
 - 5th Firefighter staffing 24/7, 365 days: - \$116,000
 - 5th Firefighter equip, uniform, etc.: - \$20,000

Net - \$110,448
- The 5-man crew comes at an estimated additional cost of \$110,448. The value consideration of this proposal for the Council is to determine whether the added benefit to the residents is worth the additional cost. We desire to receive the Council's input on this issue.

The memo concluded the draft budget proposal includes a line-item operation budget proposal and a capital replacement budget for Council consideration.

Chief Froerer reviewed his staff memo.

[2:50:37 PM](#)

There was brief general discussion among the Council and staff throughout Chief Froerer's presentation, the purpose of which was to help the Council gain a clearer understanding of the operations of the Department. There was a high level focus on staffing and equipment budgetary needs, with Councilmember Lisonbee suggesting that capital replacement be addressed in phases; a portion of the City's current general fund surplus could be set aside to cover capital replacement, with similar action taken in the next fiscal year to allow the Fire Department to proceed with equipment purchases in 2017. Discussion then shifted to addressing staffing needs in phases as well rather than proceeding with the entire expenditure all at once. Councilmember Lisonbee asked Fire Department leadership to provide alternate proposals for the capital outlay and staffing needs that may be less costly. Councilmember Maughan stated one way to possibly reduce equipment purchase costs may be to review and rewrite the specifications for vehicles to eliminate things from the equipment that may not be necessities. Such cost savings could be reallocated to other needs, such as staffing. Finance Director Marshall provided the Council with multiple funding options for capital purchases, one of the options being a lease program that has been used in other Departments that have been very successful.

[3:45:49 PM](#)

Chief Froerer and Deputy Chief Hamblin then facilitated a discussion regarding the line-item budget for the Fire Department. The Council offered high level suggestions regarding cost savings, such as ordering books or other subscriptions

in electronic version wherever possible; rotating training opportunities through employees; scaling down the copy/fax/scanner used in the Department and transitioning to digital fax; pricing mattresses; consolidating exercise equipment available for employees throughout the City or offering gym memberships in lieu of providing exercise equipment; and updating communication equipment.

[4:42:56 PM](#)

Chief Froerer stated that he understands that he is asking for a lot in the coming budget year and he thanked the Council for their attention. He revisited capital purchasing and stated that his top equipment replacement priority this year would be the replacement of the 1986 brush truck, with his second priority being the engine replacement.

[4:48:53 PM](#)

Councilmember Anderson inquired as to how Administration will present the requests of all Departments to the Council. Mr. Bovero stated that he can provide a document that includes requested and Administration recommended budgets or he can simply provide a summary of all requests from all Departments. Councilmember Maughan stated he would like to understand the difference between absolute needs and items that may simply just be nice to have. Mr. Bovero noted that each Department was instructed to propose the minimum budget necessary to accomplish their goals; however, there may be some items that can be completed in phases. Councilmember Lisonbee stated the term 'absolutely necessary' can be subjective. Mr. Bovero agreed and stated that is the reason for the budget meetings; City Administration and the Council can meet in a final meeting after all budgets have been presented to determine the appropriate way forward. The Council engaged in a discussion about the manner in which they should provide feedback to City Administration regarding budget proposals, with Councilmember Lisonbee stated she is willing to provide her feedback throughout the process, but she would like to have information about all funding options before providing concrete answers regarding any budget request. Councilmember Maughan stated he would like to provide firm direction throughout the process. Councilmember Anderson stated she feels she needs the whole picture before being able to provide firm direction. Councilmember Maughan stated he would simply like to develop priority lists throughout the process to provide direction to staff, but that direction can change at the end of the process based on weighing requests from Departments against one another. He stated he would like information from the Fire Department about the items that absolutely need to be funded in order for them to continue to operate at the current level at service. After discussion of this request, the Council indicated they would be comfortable receiving a document that provides different tiers for budget requests; the first tier being absolute needs, the second being important items, and the third tier being wants.

[5:07:34 PM](#)

In conclusion, Mr. Marshall stated that as a next step after the budget process, he would like to work with the Council to develop a City wide staffing plan and benchmark data to identify the triggers that will necessitate increasing staff levels in various Departments of the City. Mr. Bovero agreed. Councilmembers Anderson and Bolduc stated they like that suggestion as well. Councilmember Maughan stated he understands the request, but there is also a point where public outcry must be addressed since the Council is supposed to support the residents. Mr. Bovero stated he does not want to disregard the public, but he would suggest considering objective measures that can be measured with public outcry.

[5:10:48 PM](#)

Councilmember Maughan thanked Chief Froerer and Deputy Chief Hamblin for their presentation; he believes they are men of character and they have represented their Department well.

[5:11:05 PM](#)

At 5:11 p.m. COUNCILMEMBER LISONBEE MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN. COUNCILMEMBER ANDERSON SECONDED THE MOTION; ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Terry Palmer
Mayor

Cassie Z. Brown, CMC
City Recorder

Date approved: March 8, 2016