



City of Muscatine

MINUTES

Saturday, February 3, 2024

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Present: Lampe, Osborne, Brockert, Lewis, Conard, Gordon, Jindrich. Mayor Dr. Brad Bark, City Administrator Carol Webb and Administrative Secretary Cinda Hilger were also present.

3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. City Council Budget Review

Iowa Legislatures

Legal Services

City Administrator

Human Resources

Risk Management

Finance

Information Technology

Police Operations

Animal Control

Library Operations

Cablevision

Art Center

Fire Operations

Ambulance

Following the call to order, Mayor Bark turned the meeting over to Finance Director Nancy Lueck for an overview of general information regarding the 2024/2025 projected budget.

City Administrator Webb shared information regarding the new state tax policy regarding elderly and military exemptions and the rollback policy and how they work.

Finance Director Nancy Lueck shared an overview of the General fund Statement and compared the changes FY 23/24 to 24/25.

Ms. Webb and Ms. Lueck shared information that led to the decision of the proposed .63% tax increase.

Councilmember Lampe asked if there was a way to get the tax rate to remain the same.

Ms. Webb stated the council could make choices to reduce the tax increase and also shared the option of using the franchise fee to possibly reduce the tax rate. Ms. Webb stated that the elderly tax exemption would double next year so we don't want to use up all of our possible tools this year.

Councilmember Jindrich stated he would like to see staff be creative to find ways of providing the same services with less cost.

Council had question about using part of the fund balance to balance the budget.

Ms. Webb stated that the city should not lower the fund balance too much as it could affect rates for bonding.

Ms. Webb suggested the possibility of moving a couple Capital Projects to next fiscal year.

Mayor and City Council:

City Administrator Webb reviewed the recent accomplishments to Council goals to include: renovations to the council chambers, pet data software implementation, demolition of multiple dilapidated buildings and award of multiple grants

Legal Services:

Finance Director Nancy Lueck gave an overview of the projected Legal Services Budget and stated that the budget was over \$50,000 in this area.

City Administrator Webb stated this included both the City Attorney and the use of the County Attorney. Ms. Webb stated the major expenses occurred for; Nuisance abatement program, contract negotiations with City Administrator, Law enforcement facility and Open records laws.

Ms. Webb stated that all legal fees other than HR related ones are paid through this fund.

City Administrator:

Finance Director Nancy Lueck, gave an overview of the projected City Administrator budget.

Ms. Webb reviewed recent accomplishments (Muni Code implementation, reengaging with Merge, Destination Iowa Grant, Ragbrai, Business Expansion Tifs for Kent and Musco) and goals for the upcoming year (Succession planning, contract negotiations, changes to boards and commissions, railroad merge

Human Resources:

Finance Director Nancy Lueck, gave an overview of the projected City Administrator budget.

Human Resources Manager Stephanie Romagnoli gave an overview of who is in the Human Resources Department and what they do. Ms. Romagnoli stated some of the accomplishments this year included implementing a new online hiring process, updating mission statements and values, streamlined payroll process, online store for uniform orders and completion of compensation study.

Ms. Romagnoli stated that goals for the upcoming year include better process for time tracking of payroll, online performance evaluation software and anti harassment training for all employees.

Councilmember Conard suggested discussing with local companies on what software they use for time tracking.

Councilmember Lewis asked how much time could be saved with the implementation of automated time tracking.

Ms. Romagnoli stated it would have to be tracked by each department as they all spend different amounts of time depending on time of year and number of employees.

Councilmember Lewis had questions regarding the mission and value statements and if it was a requirement for all employees to sign.

Ms. Romagnoli stated the employee handbook is almost completed and each supervisor will present employees with communication contract and they will be required to sign at that time.

Risk Management:

Finance Director Nancy Lueck gave an overview of the projected Risk Management budget.

Stephanie Romagnoli shared information regarding the City Insurance coverage and stated that the workers compensation experience rating had dropped to .69.

Ms. Romagnoli stated over the past year risk management has coordinated multiple opportunities for safety training and employees were given the opportunity for an ergonomic assessment. Many employees were able to get new chairs and improvements to their work stations after the assessment.

Council had questions regarding a list of insurance claims and how they were handled post claim that were addressed by Ms. Romagnoli.

Council had questions about near misses and if they were recorded.

Ms. Romagnoli stated she was working on an incentive to encourage members to turn in near miss information and what could have been implemented to avoid the near miss.

Finance:

Finance Director, Nancy Lueck gave an overview of the projected Finance

Department Budget.

Ms. Lueck stated over the past year the Finance Department has implemented new finance software, completed ARPA annual reports, managed the state revolving fund loan, implemented ION Wave bid software and worked on TIF for Kent Pet and Musco Sports Lighting.

Ms. Lueck stated goals for the upcoming year include implementing more GSAB accounting standards as they become effective and updating purchasing manual and other policies.

Councilmember Gordon stated she would like to see more push for ION WAVE usage. She stated this was an expensive program and it needs to be utilized to its full potential.

Information Technology:

Finance Director Nancy Lueck gave an overview of the projected IT Dept. Budget. IT Manager, John Kreuzenstein, shared accomplishments made over the past year to include Key Card Entry System for City Hall, Public Works and Public Safety facilities, upgrades to computers as needed, and addition of security cameras (stationary and body cams).

Mr. Kreuzenstein states that he has one staff member that works with him that spends a majority of his time at the library making sure to keep the library and library patron's information safe.

Mr. Kreuzenstein stated he did not ask for it this year but coming soon he will be requesting additional staff.

There was discussion regarding the possibility of having a full time IT employee at the Library.

Councilmember Gordon had questions regarding the possibility of contract services to help out when necessary (example of when IT personnel are on vacation).

Mayor Bark asked if there were records kept of the potential cyber attacks and if the numbers were growing.

Mr. Kreuzenstein stated the numbers are not growing but are getting more targeted. He stated there are over 100,000 threats/ day stopped by the security software.

City Council had questions regarding succession planning and stated the city needed to have another IT person that could potentially take over when Mr. Kreuzenstein retires.

Councilmembers had questions regarding policy on computer upgrades vs. replacement and which is more cost/time effective.

Mr. Kreuzenstein stated it depends on what needs to be done to the computer. He stated on average a computer is good for 5 years depending on what the computer is being used for.

Council stated they would rely on the City Administrator to bring back the staffing issues with the IT department if it becomes necessary to look at another

staff member sooner than later.

Police Operations-Animal Control

Finance Director Nancy Lueck gave an overview of the projected Police Department Budget.

Chief Tony Kies and Assistant Chief Snider were present to share information about recruitment and retention and the Police Dept. They stated the Police Department has been fully staffed for over a year. Mr. Kies presented some of the activities that were presented by the Police Department to include: Shop with a cop, Ragbrai Security, National Night Out, Junior Police Academy, Code Blue Program and Implementation of the Pet Data System.

Councilmember Brockert had questions regarding the Juvenile Diversion Program.

Chief Kies stated the program is still ongoing but it has been moved to an online format.

Councilmember Brockert had questions about the amount of gang activity within Muscatine.

Chief Kies stated at this time a lot of the prominent gang members are locked up, keeping the gang activity at this time to a minimum. Chief Kies stated the weather also plays a role in gang activity and with warmer weather in the spring there will be more activity.

Mayor Bark had questions about who pays for the ammunition for the officers when they practice shoot and if they are paying for their own would it be possible for the City to supply the practice ammunition.

Chief Kies stated the Department covers the cost during organized training events but not for individuals practice shooting on their own. He stated he would not mind supplying the ammunition but does not want it to become a way for them to stock up their stash at home.

City Council asked what it would cost to supply the PD with ammo for training and City Administrator Webb stated she would look into it and get back with numbers.

Councilmember Lewis had questions on the next vehicle purchase for the PD and how long it would take to get the vehicles once ordered.

Chief Kies stated there is a 2 year set back currently on getting vehicles.

Councilmember Osborne had questions regarding renewal of City vendor contracts that were addressed by Chief Kies and Asst. Chief Snider.

Library Operations

Nancy Lueck gave an overview of the projected Library Budget.

Robert Fiedler, Library Director share statistics from the library for the past year to include: 120,000 patrons visited the library, the library collection doubled in size in both print and electronic media, 186,000 items were circulated, 8,000 residents used the meeting rooms, 395 programs organized with 12,800 in

attendance, update to policies, moved to fine free model, and a complete review of library goals.

Mr. Fiedler stated looking forward the library will need more staffing and would like to discuss options for replacement of Channel 5 hardware or working with the private sector for video production.

Art Center.

Nancy Lueck gave an overview of the projected Art Center Budget.

Melanie Alexander, Art Center Director stated the Art Center relies on support from their friends foundation. Ms. Alexander shared information regarding past and upcoming exhibits and programs.

Ms. Alexander recognized the Art Board that were present for the meeting.

Ms. Alexander shared Art Center statistics and discussed the completed Japanese Garden.

For the upcoming year, Ms. Alexander stated the Art Center would be working with Lorde Cultural Resources to develop a building and facilities plan.

City Council had questions regarding the management of collections that were addressed by Ms. Alexander.

Cablevision

City Administrator Webb reviewed the cablevision contract with MCC and stated the contract is valid from 2023-2026.

Fire Operations

Finance Director Nancy Lueck gave an overview of the projected Fire Operations Budget.

Chief Jerry Ewers, and Assistant Chief Mike Hartman and Battalion Chiefs Timmsen, Hillard and Ronzheimer were all present to present to City Council.

Chief Ewers reviewed accomplishments from the past year to include working on succession planning, the use of ARPA funds for Conex containers for training purposes, Recruitment and Retention of staff, changes to night time ambulance transfers to Iowa City, continuation of explorer program for kids, Leadership training (both through HR, and in house), and changes in hiring requirements from Paramedic to EMS.

Mr. Ewers gave an update on department vehicles and stated that there is a two year wait on getting any vehicles at this time because of supply issues.

Assistant Chief Hartman shared the goals for the upcoming year including: Implementing an inspection program, working on station 3 apparatus plan, implementing a mentor program for new staff, creating an internal safety committee and making safety a priority.

Mayor Bark had questions about the policy for the fire department going out of town on calls.

Chief Ewers explained the Auto Aid and Mutual Aid policies with surrounding

areas.

Councilmember Conard had questions regarding Fire Station #3 and when it would be considered.

City Administrator Webb stated it is on the 5 year plan and has been in process at the DOT site and stated she would forward the meeting minutes regarding the fire station to all councilmembers.

Ambulance:

Finance Director Nancy Lueck gave an overview of the projected Ambulance budget.

Chief Ewers shared recent accomplishments including: fire prevention training, Stop the bleed training and CPR training.

Gary Ronzheimer shared upcoming goals that included more more focus on pediatric care, placement of AEDs (Riverfront Park, Kent Stein and Soccer Complex) and continue working with local hospitals on best procedures for both.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Osborne moved the meeting be adjourned at 02:32 PM.