

**BUDGET COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
140 WEST PINE STREET
MISSOULA MONTANA
April 18, 2012 2:45-4:45 pm**

Members present: Marilyn Marler, President; Caitlin Copple, Ed Childers, Alex Taft, Adam Hertz; Jason Wiener; Dick Haines; Mike O'Herron, Dave Strohmaier; Jon Wilkins; Bob Jaffe.

Members absent: Cynthia Wolken.

Others present: John Engen, Rob Chaney, Denise Alexander, Brentt Ramharter, Bruce Bender, Doug Waters, Scott Paasch, Dee Andersen.

I. Administrative Business

A. Approve committee minutes dated: [April 11, 2012](#)-approved as submitted.

B. Public Comment on items not listed on the agenda-NONE

C. Announcement: Marilyn Marler said that on May 16, 2012 time will be set aside for strategic planning for the budget process and reminded Council to mark their calendars.

D. An ordinance on the proposed city fee increases in the engineering, business licensing, fire inspections, cemetery and planning divisions and of the city. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Brentt Ramharter) (Referred to committee: 04/16/12) **HOLD FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION AS PART OF THE BUDGET DISCUSSION PROCESS.**

MOTION: The committee recommends the City Council set a public hearing on May 7, 2012 to consider proposed city fee increase's in the engineering, business licensing, fire inspections, cemetery and planning divisions of the City.

Marilyn Marler and Brentt Ramharter discussed setting the public hearings and leaving it open until the budget is adopted in June 2012.

Mr. Ramharter said the 4% increase in most fees except cemetery, is an attempt to retain full recovery of the cost for services provided, with the exception of the planning fees which are targeted for a 50% recovery. The last time the cemetery increased their fees was in 2005. Mr. Waters, Cemetery Director is trying to get them as close to market as possible, which is difficult for a City-owned cemetery.

Alex Taft asked why we have lost funds for certain City police officers.

Mr. Ramharter explained that the original funding for those officers came from federal grants. The understanding of accepting that grant money was when the funding goes away, we would have to retain the officers on staff for a year or two.

Ed Childers said he has been having discussions on the sidewalk inspection fees. He questioned the price increments and no one seems to remember why it was set up that way. It appears that the answer was to help out the people who had a small sidewalk repaired. It seems to him to have a per foot charge for that. He would like them to figure that scale out.

Mr. Bender said there will be a presentation on that.

Jon Wilkins questioned the cemetery fees and stated the increase is not 4%.

Bruce Bender said those fee increases are based on what it would cost to provide the services in relation to market rates and the rest are 4%.

Mr. Wilkins wanted to know if these prices were for one burial.

Mr. Waters said the fees are for individual graves. They only prepay for the grave and at the time of burial they pay for a vault or liner.

Mike O'Herron moved the public hearing for May 7, 2012

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor John Engen suggested getting through the new requests in total before taking any questions.

The FY13 [new requests](#) were reviewed.

Adam Hertz wanted to know if the misdemeanor probation program is it set up to be self sufficient and wont cost the tax payer's additional money.

Mr. Bender said the whole program would be funded by fines and fees set forth by the Municipal Court.

Mr. Hertz said he understands the courts are being well managed –and asked if the revenue that pays for this program is coming from these offenders

Mr. Engen said it will not be one for one, but we will come as close as we can.

Mr. Wilkins said the county has been doing this for a few years, and the Missoula County Correctional Program has invited Council to tour the facility and have lunch.

Bob Jaffe said there was an email from Mr. Ramharter with an attachment that outlined the costs to the offenders.

Mr. Bender said the court has been unable to collect those fees. In order to continue to collect these fines they need this program and staff.

Jason requested the cost of the workman's compensation premiums.

Mr. Ramharter said he would provide that after the meeting.

Mr. Jaffe questioned the new enhancement for trees and the salary increase for the lobbyist.

Mr. Bender said he asked Mr. McDonald to track his time and this is what it cost to fund the services we receive

Mr. Jaffe suggested combining our legislative efforts with the County or other municipalities to save money.

Mr. Engen said we are taking advantage of those economies now. Last session there were Missoula issues at legislature and we needed someone there to pay attention. This would be John McDonald's 3rd session- he knows us and our issues.

Mr. Taft stated that he would rather see trees funded instead of the aquatics system that is already in good shape.

Mr. Bender explained the situation with aquatics. When the facility first opened we hadn't created an enterprise account. The first few years they made way more than their costs. In reality, they should have been able to use those revenues to maintain and enhance the facilities. This was the investment the City gave to the old pools. We are moving it back to the way it was when it first started.

Caitlin Copple supported the lobbyist. She suggested giving him the same increase as the non-union employees. She asked how long it had been since the non-unions had an increase and how the Administration arrived at the 3%.

Mr. Engen explained that there was a small increase last year but not the year before.

Mr. Bender said the union contracts are all in the 3% range. It is an effort to maintain our increase to be in line with theirs.

Ms. Copple offered an alternative by suggesting a wage freeze for employees over a certain dollar amount.

Mr. Bender said the Department Heads did take pay freezes for two years. We were the only city in the state did that. He said treating the unions different than the non-union employees is unfair. We still have some non-union supervisors who are supervising union employees who make a higher wage than they do.

The committee discussed the request from the Missoula Symphony for \$100,000. It was stated that it was a request only and has not been approved. However, the City does fund the Choral Festival, which brings in tourism and even the City Band.

Dick Haines expressed concerns regarding the proposed salary increase for the lobbyist. He is opposed to this expenditure. He wants to know who this person is talking to and a detail accounting of his time.

Mr. Engen said he would be happy to provide that information.

Ms. Marler suggested this item be placed on the [tickler list](#) for Mr. Haines.

The committee and the Administration discussed work comp costs, hiring a consultant and how it could assist in keeping costs down. It was stated that the City does take advantage of the safety training that the state offers, but there is more that can be done.

Mr. Hertz wanted to know what a vehicle transfer is.

Mr. Bender said Mr. Stuckey, Vehicle Maintenance Superintendent, brings older vehicles from building inspection into a department like parks, where they have lower use instead of purchasing a new vehicle.

Mr. Hertz supports exploring Ms. Copple's ideas on salary savings. He also suggested increasing the Municipal Court fines.

Mr. Jaffe said he would like a better understanding of our tax base; are we growing or are we shrinking?

Mr. Wiener stated the estimated market value has almost doubled in the last 10 years and the tax base has grown by only 30%. He said he can understand why we need someone in Helena.

Mr. Childers requested the Health Department new requests be placed on the [ticker list](#).

Mr. O'Herron requested the \$20,000 for trees be placed on the [ticker list](#).

- E. Approve the preliminary budget for Fiscal Year 2013 inclusive of the Fiscal Year 2013 capital improvement program, the TBID and BID budgets and work plans, Park District #1 and Road District #1. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Brentt Ramharter) (Referred to committee: 04/16/12)
HOLD FOR CONTINUED DISCUSSION

MOTION: The committee recommends the City Council set a public hearing for May 7, 2012 on:

- **A resolution fixing the annual appropriations and the capital improvements program for the City of Missoula as set forth in the fiscal year 2013 budget.**

- **The Tourism Business Improvement District work plan and budget for fiscal year 2013.**
- **The Business Improvement District work plan and budget for fiscal year 2013.**
- **The Park District 1 work plan and budget for fiscal year 2013.**
- **The Road District 1 work plan and budget for fiscal year 2013.**

Mr. O'Herron moved the public hearings for May 7, 2012.

Mr. Wiener supported the motion.

Upon a voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

II. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Dee Andersen,
Administrative Secretary