

**BUDGET COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
140 WEST PINE STREET
MISSOULA MONTANA
May 9, 2012 1:05-3:00pm**

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

Members absent: Ed Childers, Cynthia Wolken, Jon Wilkins.

Others present: Mayor Engen, Tina Schmaus, Brentt Ramharter, Scott Paasch, Dee Andersen.

I. Administrative Business

A. Approve committee minutes dated: [May 2, 2012](#)-approved as submitted

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

II. Regular Agenda

A. 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)

Tina Schmaus, Municipal Court Administrator, discussed her departments new budget requests for FY13. The first request is for a legal secretary to serve both judges in the new way that Municipal Court does business. There is a lot of correspondence and they need someone who not only understands the legal process but can write orders and make decisions based on statute and format legal documents correctly.

Bob Jaffe asked why one of the current clerks could not move into that position.

Ms. Schmaus said it's a matter of training; we don't have anyone currently who has this knowledge. We would have to send that person to school and don't have the time and budget for that. We are dealing with a ten year back log in court cases, which we are reviewing and quashing many warrants. We are attempting to advance technologically by implementing online payments and scanning documents to reduce the amount of paperwork and to give the City Attorneys Office access to our database.

Mr. Jaffe asked if they have the space for the new person.

Ms. Schmaus said they would make it work.

Jason Wiener asked if this will reduce the lines in the hall.

Ms. Schmaus said she would like to see no lines in the hall. Her clerks spend a lot of time with people. Once someone sees the judge a great deal of paperwork is generated, it can often take up to 20 minutes with each person.

Mr. Wiener has heard from local attorneys who have expressed that the court's operation has not matched the court calendar. He suggested a twitter feed for attorneys.

Ms. Schmaus said unless he could provide her with specifics she couldn't address it.

Mr. Haines asked why so much paperwork is necessary.

Ms. Schmaus said partly because their record retention is 75 years. The state may be changing that however.

Mr. Haines offered assistance from Council as he hates to see the judge's effort side railed by paper work.

Ms. Schmaus said the second new request is for an additional Court Clerk. They need someone to review the warrants before quashing. A quality assurance position so to speak. She said they are touching up to 200 files per day.

Mr. Jaffe said it sounds like both positions are temporary once you get caught up with the back log they wouldn't be needed.

Ms. Schmaus stated that as people retire in the department she would not refill those positions. In fact recently we had a part-time clerk leave and that position will not be filled.

The committee discussed the strategic budget planning session scheduled for May 16, 2012 and how to make it most productive. Each Council member identified their priorities. It was decided that they would like to review this year's budget, as well as a long range perspective on the needs of the City.

Public Comment:

Steve Mauer encouraged the Council to invite public comment on the budget. He said people are not excited by the budget and suggested announcing something exciting and inviting the Missoulian.

III. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned 2:05 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Dee Andersen

Administrative Secretary