

**BUDGET COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
140 WEST PINE STREET
MISSOULA MONTANA
June 24, 2009 2:35pm**

Members present: Ed Childers, President; Stacy Rye, Marilyn Marler; Renee Mitchell; Pam Walzer; Jason Wiener; Dick Haines; Lyn Hellegaard; John Hendrickson; Dave Strohmaier; Bob Jaffe.

Members absent: Jon Wilkins.

Others present: Brentt Ramharter, Dee Krevey, Don Verrue, Mayor John Engen, Brian Hensel, Bruce Bender, Krystal Aucutt.

I. Administrative Business

A. Approve committee minutes dated: [June 17, 2009](#)-Approved as submitted

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

II. Regular Agenda

III. A. Resolution fixing the annual appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2010 budget ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Brentt Ramharter) (Referred to committee: 04/20/09)**HELD IN COMMITTEE**

Building Division Budget Cuts Discussion:

Don Verrue, Building Official, said the drop in revenue that his department has experienced over the passed year has leveled out now and they are staying a float. He explained his budget cuts came at the cost of staff members. The staff reduction began last year when they eliminated the file clerk position and laid off one building inspector. This year, another inspector transferred into Traffic Services and two permit specialist transferred into the Finance Department. He pointed out that although he has lost some employees, the quality of services has been maintained.

He said since they have only 2/3 of their original staff, he has reduced their supply budget by 1/3 and they have delayed vehicle replacements. He said their goal has been to regain 50% of the monthly revenue compared to last year, and in the past four months they have achieved a little higher than that. He said they are planning to build up surplus revenue going into next year.

Bruce Bender, Chief Administrative Officer, added that their FY10 budget is 70% of what is was last year.

Bob Jaffe commented that the monthly building report indicates the project dollar amount seem to be reduced by 50-60 percent compared to last year, yet the associated fees seem to be only reduced by 20% how are we maintaining that.

Mr. Bender clarified that the number of permits being issued is relatively high, but the dollar amount of the construction costs are lower.

Mr. Jaffe noticed that project turn around time has increased substantially and asked for the reasons behind that.

Mr. Verrue replied that they have expedited the process, but pointed out, that if there are incomplete plans or zoning issues, it tends to slow things down.

Stacy Rye noted that one of her constituents highly praised Mr. Verrue for assisting her with her building project.

Street Division Budget Cuts Discussion:

Mr. Bender said he would like to discuss the Streets Division budget cut item 345. He said it was the garbage cost for hauling the waste asphalt to the landfill. We don't pay to haul that anymore as we have found ways to have it removed free of charge. We can offer that \$7000 up for Council to allocate as they wish.

Renee Mitchell asked what the cost of metered water is now to clean the streets compared to the flat rate. She said she was disappointed that the order to transfer from flat rate to metered was by action of the City. She added that it was going to be very expensive.

Mr. Bender explained that it was not by action of the City, but by order of the Public Service Commission for Parks, Waste Water and Street Cleaning.

Brian Hensel, Streets Division Superintendent, said it was \$574 per year now it will be \$ 8-10,000.

Mr. Ramharter responded that we will save nearly \$500,000 on fire hydrants but the street cleaning will go up significantly.

Marilyn Marler suggested we all strive to conserve water.

Mr. Jaffe asked for clarification on the use of recycled asphalt.

Mr. Hensel explained that he uses recycled asphalt in the alleys, but the large chunks they can't use. What he did in the past was to hire a contractor to grind it up and make it small enough for reuse. He said he would usually allocate \$10-12,000 a year for this service. For the last few years Allied Waste has been using the chunks to pave their interior landfill roads, but he doesn't feel that will last forever, and he will need to have it ground up and suspects the crushing costs have increased as well, but for the time being he said he took advantage of a way to save money and use the materials.

Tickler List Discussion:

Mr. Childers stated that there is \$7000 that has been freed up and available to allocate to Parks as the tickler list requests, he asked if anyone would like to comment on that.

Ms. Rye moved to allocate the \$7000 to parks and said she would like to hear from Donna Gaukler to see what her priority would be.

Jason Wiener pointed out that Ms Gaukler has reprioritized her list.

Ms. Rye said she would like to see that money split between Parks bathrooms and Youth Court coaches.

Ms. Walzer commented that it's too early in the process right now, and there may be additional savings later on to add to the programs they want to fund.

Ms. Rye agreed.

Mr. Childers suggested taking the \$7000 and put it in a pool to fund things on the tickler list in priority order.

Ms. Rye asked who would track the pooled funds, and she requested her 2 items on the tickler list regarding urban forestry be removed.

Jason Wiener noted that his items on the tickler list are prioritized correctly and added that he is not ready to decide on the Missoula Art Museum Janitorial Contract at this point.

Ms Walzer requested that the Urban Forestry items be kept on the tickler list under her name.

Bob Jaffe showed interest in reorganization and budget savings in regards to Urban Forestry.

John Hendrickson agreed and would like to see a change in the way we are handling Urban Forestry and suggested that we might save money if we put it out for bid and get a better price.

Mayor Engen suggested Mr. Hendrickson make a referral to begin that discussion.

Mr. Childers stated that all the items on the tickler list combined are \$100,000 and feels optimistic that they will have that amount available to fund the items on the list, when the numbers arrive in September.

Ms. Walzer expressed concern that if Council waits to allocate the money for Parks bathrooms, their busy season may be over and we have gone through a whole summer with dirty bathrooms.

Marilyn Marler suggested it would be a good idea to start a Citizen Tree Committee.

Ms. Rye there is a group of us that recognize the need to water the boulevard trees, we have an old urban forest and a lot of trees are dying.

Mr. Childers said it occurred to him that Council is not doing much more on the budget, and asked if the preliminary budget included salary increases. He suggested adopting the FY10 Budget, and amend any items later if needed.

Mayor Engen stated that if our revenue numbers come in lower, we will be recommending additional cuts.

Mr. Childers asked if there was any benefit to waiting to adopt the final budget.

Mr. Bender answered that there are no problems with adopting now; you can amend if needed later.

Mr. Childers said he would like to adopt the FY10 budget.

Ms. Walzer asked for some time to think it over.

Mr. Childers agreed, and stated that in two weeks from now, we will schedule a one hour BCOW meeting to discuss adopting the FY10 Budget.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Dee Krevey
Administrative Secretary
Finance Department