

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN & FINANCE COMMITTEE
OF THE CITY OF SUNSET HILLS MISSOURI

HELD ON SEPTEMBER 28, 2021

BE IT REMEMBERED that that the Board of Aldermen of the City of Sunset Hills, Missouri met via Zoom for a joint work session with the Finance Committee on Tuesday September 28, 2021. The meeting convened at 5:34 p.m.

The meeting began with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Patricia Fribis	-Mayor
Joe Stewart	-Alderman Ward I
Ann McMunn	-Alderman Ward I
Casey Wong	-Alderman Ward II
Christine Lieber	-Alderman Ward II
Cathy Friedmann	-Alderman Ward III
Randal Epperson	-Alderman Ward III
Thompson Price	-Alderman Ward IV
Fred Daues	-Alderman Ward IV
Mark Colombo	-Finance Committee
Mike Fitzgerald	-Finance Committee
Brittany Gillett	-City Administrator
Susanna Messmer	-Finance Director
Gerald Brown	-Director of Parks & Recreation
Bryson Baker	-City Engineer
Stephen Dodge	-Chief of Police

Absent :	Jeff Camilleri	-Finance Committee
	Mike Sawicki	-Finance Committee

Introduction and Budget Overview: 5:30 pm - 5:35 pm

Ms. Gillett gave a brief introduction explaining that the joint work session was born out of the desire for the Board to be more involved in the budget creation process. Ms. Gillett stated the revenue forecasts for 2021 were healthier than expected, sales tax revenues were trending back toward normal levels, and the City added new revenue accounts for use tax and the dispatching agreement with the City of Crestwood. Ms. Gillett stated the City was able to accumulate funds over past 2 years due to project and other expenditure cuts due to Covid. She explained the presented budget was preliminary and throughout the conversation staff would be seeking direction from the BOA and Finance Comm and where they would like to see the expenditures in the coming year. Ms. Gillett stated after the work session staff would make any amendments suggested, present to the Finance Committee in October, and eventually it will come to Board for Public Hearing and First reading in November and would be read for the second and final reading in December. Ms. Gillett turned to floor over to Ms. Messmer.

Revenue review: 5:35 pm - 5:45 pm

Ms. Messmer s explained the various revenue sources provided approximately \$11,377,000.00 annually. She stated after deducting the grants awarded as well as the donations received, the projection was approximately a 7% increase over the 2020 forecast.

Ms. Messmer reviewed the routine revenue received, comprised of taxes (sales, use, property, and utilities), business license fees, court costs, fines and intergovernmental. Ms. Messmer explained that these revenue sources were relatively stable and a good assessment of what the City had to cover normal operating costs.

Administration and Courts review: 5:45 pm - 5:55 pm

Ms. Messmer gave an overview of the expenses involved with the General government and debt service expenditures. She explained the professional fees would increase in the 2022 year due to the hiring of an IT Consultant as well as a Communications Audit that would be required. Ms. Messmer reviewed the Stieren Area donations and project related expenditures.

Public Works review: 5:55 pm – 6:20 pm

Mr. Baker gave an overview of the PW general fund budget and explained it would be similar to the past two years. He explained costs associated with this were consistent as they were for utilities, and standard maintenance and repair items. Mr. Baker explained the County Road and Capital accounts changed from year to year, and reviewed expenditures associated with each.

There was a brief discussion on salaries being budgeted out of the special funds. Member Colombo explained the reason for changing the salaries to the special funds was due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the fact that the expenses qualified for use in each type of fund.

Alderman Epperson inquired about the sidewalk projects for Leebur Dr. Discussion ensued in reference to petitions for and against sidewalk projects. Mayor Fribis stated she felt a letter should go out to residents as well as a possible public meeting to get their input on whether or not they wanted sidewalks. It was decided to send out a joint survey to include the Eddie and Park sidewalk project due to a possible change in the need of the existing residents.

Police and Prop P Fund review: 6:20 pm -7:00 pm

Chief Dodge explained the budget remained similar to previous years. He described some large expenses for the upcoming budget year. He explained a new roof, new surveillance system to replace original installed in 1999, body cameras, replacement bullet proof vests, tasers and new vehicles were the major expenses for the next budget year. He also reviewed the standard annual expenditures.

Ms. Gillett reviewed the Prop P fund. She explained they were looking to the Board for what type of expenses they wanted in the Prop P fund.

Ms. Messmer stated the Prop P projection was modeled after the City of Creve Coeur, and reviewed expenditures allocated to the fund.

Ms. Gillett asked the Board for their input on the proposed expenditures. There was discussion on the percentage of Prop P funds that should be allocated to payroll expenses, in addition to seminars, training, uniforms and supplies.

Additional discussion ensued on how to use the existing unused funds in the Prop P fund, and how that could affect future expenditures. It was stated that a zero-balance fund policy may not be the way to go with this particular fund.

Ms. Gillett asked the Board if they wanted staff to continue building the budget with the scenario Ms. Messmer had drawn up. Alderman Daues stated he felt it should go back to the Finance Committee for a clear recommendation for the Board, Alderman Stewart agreed. He also stated they needed to decide how to exhaust the existing money in the Prop P fund.

Parks review: 7:00 pm – 7:20 pm

Mr. Brown stated the Parks budget was very comparable to the 2021 budget. He stated there were 5 basic areas; Aquatic Center, Community Center, Athletic Fields, Driving Range and the Parks. He explained he felt a significant change in the budget would be pay rate for part-time help. He stated the Parks needed to be more competitive to retain help as seen over the past summer with the shortage of lifeguards. He reviewed some of the larger expenses in the Capital Improvements funds.

Mr. Brown stated items for the Aquatic center included renovating pool locker rooms, replacing strainer baskets for pool, replace gate kickers due to mechanical and software issues, and LED lights for the parking lot. He reviewed various projects outlined for the Parks including Bander Park fishing access, asphalt resurfacing in Watson Trail Park as well as lake dredging which had not been done in 13 years, and basketball court and parking lot resurfacing at Lynnstone Park which had not been done in 20+ years. Community Center expenses included replacing some fitness equipment, updating original lobby furniture, and replacing the obsolete water heaters Mr. Brown also explained he spoke with the Stieren family on direction of how to apply the donated funds.

Mr. Brown continued reviewing additional expenses for the various areas of the park system. Mr. Brown stated they were looking at creating a full-time position to encompass the two full time employees who left in the past month, and looking at contracting out specific services due to staffing issues.

Discussion was had on bringing back some additional projects for Bander Park, including a trail system, replacement bridges and brush hogging. Alderman Lieber brought up hiring of lifeguards and when to start recruiting. Mr. Brown explained they typically start in the fall for the next summer season.

Personnel discussion: 7:20 pm – 7:30 pm

Ms. Messmer reviewed the personnel expenditures for the 2022 budget. She stated the budget increase was \$474,000 above 2021. The increase included additional part time employees and minimum wage increases, the creation of the Assistant Finance Director position, 2 laborer/driver positions previously unfilled due to Covid, stipends for elected officials that were previously waived, and FICA and pension expenses.

There was discussion on mid-year performance review increases.

ARPA funding discussion: 7:30 pm – 8:00 pm

Ms. Gillett explained the American Rescue Plan Act issued Covid payments to local governments. The City had received \$852,241.00 and expected to receive the remaining funds mid-2022. She explained there were 4 categories for the use of the funds; responding to Public Health emergencies, premium pay for essential workers, provision of government services, necessary investments in infrastructure. Ms. Gillett explained the funds had to be spent by the end of 2024 year, and that short term investment was an option for some of the funds.

Ms. Gillett reviewed the proposed outlined expenditures. There was discussion on the expenses related to updating the streaming capability for public meetings, cyber security/server protection, IT equipment for remote employee use as well as reconfiguring City Hall. Projects for sidewalks and park improvements were also discussed.

Ms. Gillett stated they would take the suggestions made and build them into the budget and then present them to the Board.

Alderman Dauess made a motion to go into closed session. Alderman Lieber seconded the motion.

Ms. Gillett stated we could not go into closed session because it was not posted in advance.

Ms. Gillett stated there would be a closed session at the next meeting.

Adjournment

Alderman Lieber made a motion to adjourn. Alderman McMunn seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Lori Stone
Deputy City Clerk