

Upon notice duly given under Arizona Revised Statutes, Section 38-431, et seq., as amended, the City Council of the City of Bullhead City held a Special Meeting on Monday, May 9, 2022, in the Council Chambers, 1255 Marina Blvd., Bullhead City, Arizona.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brady called the special meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Council Present

Brady, Brummett, D'Amico, Head, Hecht, Lizarraga, Wegmann

Council Absent

None

Staff Present:

CITY MANAGER: Toby Cotter

CITY ATTORNEY: Garnet Emery

CITY CLERK: Susan Stein

CITY MAGISTRATE: Peter Psareas

POLICE CHIEF: Robert Trebes

FINANCE DIRECTOR: Rudy Vera

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR: Angie Johnson

HUMAN SERVICES DIRECTOR: Jeff Tipton

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTOR: S. Chooniyom

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR: Danielle Marshall

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER: Randy Scheffert

ASSISTANTS TO THE CITY MANAGER: Travis Pruitt, Edigar Kajirwa

FINANCE ADMINISTRATOR: Robert Drexler

BUDGET ANALYST: Debbi Catalfamo

DISCUSSION ITEM(S)

Discussion relating to the proposed City of Bullhead City Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2022, including proposed revenues, expenditures, and programs for all governmental funds.

City Manager Cotter explained the budget process. He said for many years, the top priority of the City Council had been public safety, training, and equipment for law enforcement. He said other priorities were the city's water and wastewater systems, street maintenance, and city parks. He said there had been no cuts this year from last year's budget. He said grants for the paving of Bullhead Parkway in the amount of \$25 million were also included. He said the top asset of the city was the professional city directors and staff.

Finance Director Vera said the city's budget was based on zero-based budgeting for each line item. He said a balanced budget was required by the state with sufficient financial resources for budgeted expenditures and estimated revenues based on current available information compared to expected expenses. He said the Economic Estimates Commission had calculated the expenditure limitation for Bullhead City to be \$55,256,384 for fiscal year 2023. He said there were exclusions and subtractions included in the limit; and said if for any reason in the future, the city could ask voters to approve the home rule option or a permanent base adjustment. He said budgeted funds were like individual checking accounts, and each fund was set up for a specific purpose. He said the general

fund was the primary operating fund, special revenue funds such as the street fund; debt service used for long term debt, capital projects; enterprise for water/wastewater, and internal service accounts. He said revenue sources were local taxes, state shared revenue, grants, fees, and donations. He said the city imposed no property tax. He said city sales tax revenue had increased each year since 2017; and said they expected to receive more this year than \$11.9 million in 2021. He said employee positions proposed were two police officers, transit dispatcher, transit demand response driver, animal shelter manager; utilities inventory specialist, maintenance worker, two mechanics, network engineer, public information officer, and a procurement specialist. He said there would be 335 authorized full-time employees in 2023.

Finance Director Vera said the proposed capital expenditures included: five patrol vehicles (\$350,740 general fund); can-am for park rangers (\$34,000 general fund); two patrol boats (\$248,313 grant funded); and a new van for the BACCUP program (\$52,500 opioid settlement funded). He said the street and drainage improvements included Hancock Road mill and fill (\$2,500,000 grant funded); Landon Drive Roadway extension (\$1,655,000 general fund); Secret Pass culvert extension (\$1,450,000 general fund); Bullhead Parkway and Silver Creek Lighting (1,307,322 street fund/grant funded); and the Bullhead Parkway reconstruction (\$25,000,000 grant funded).

Finance Director Vera said the proposed expenditures for parks and recreation included: Community Park restroom/river walk improvements (\$1,359,235 grant funded); Gary Keith Park improvements (\$650,000 grant funded); Community Park Splash Pad (\$550,000 general fund/grants); Rotary Park pickle ball/tennis court (\$340,000 grant funded); Ken Fovargue playground/shade equipment (\$325,000 grant funded). He said the utility expenditures would be: transmission line north (\$3,000,000 water fund); Section 10 new headworks (\$2,400,000 wastewater fund); new well south (\$2,000,000 grant funded); new well north (\$2,000,000 water fund); LS 18-1 wet well rehab (\$1,500,000 grant funded); and LS 18-2 wet well rehab (\$1,250,000 wastewater fund).

Finance Director Vera said the projected general fund balance for 2023 was anticipated to be \$27.2 million.

City Manager Cotter said this fund was the city's savings account and was not proposed to be touched in this year's budget. He said the balance could grow higher in the current growing economy. He said when he began employment in 2010; the city only had \$3 million in the general fund.

Finance Director Vera said the entire budget and audited financial records could be viewed on the city's website. He said the tentative budget would be adopted on June 7th and the final budget adopted at the June 21st Council meeting.

City Manager Cotter said the bed tax revenue increased 26.7 percent and was expected to grow. He said the building permit, plan review, and building inspection fees had increased due to the expanding economy. He said the city's state shared revenue had increased in every category. He said the revenue increases were a direct result of being in the State of Arizona.

Public Safety

Police Chief Trebes introduced the department staff members present. He said their philosophy was to make sure they were out in the community and listening to the citizens. He said the community oriented policing unit was re-established when he became chief. He said over the last year, they attended 176 community events, including clean ups, and coffee with a cop. He said he made a commitment that he would review the entire department and streamline whatever he could before he asked for more positions. He requested two new sworn police officer positions; and seven part-time social workers, seven part-time medical workers, and one manager position for the newly formed BACCUP (Bullhead Area Community Crisis Unification Program); and three part-time dispatcher positions. He said there was an increase in the beach and river safety patrol program. He discussed the capital improvement requests: five patrol vehicles (\$350,740 general fund); can-am for park rangers (\$34,000 general fund); two patrol boats (\$248,313 grant funded); and a new van for the BACCUP program (\$52,500 opioid settlement funded).

City Manager Cotter said the park rangers' budget moved from the Park and Recreation Department to the Police Department. He said policing and enforcement were becoming more difficult and said it made sense to move the park rangers into public safety. He said the animal shelter budget was moved to the Human Services department and would be better served in the future, and said the volunteers would not need to meet the stringent police background requests. He said animal enforcement would still come under the police department.

Mayor Brady asked about the training of park rangers.

Police Chief Trebes said rangers would be trained with some police equipment, report writing and investigations; and said they would have the tools necessary to do their jobs, as well as having a police radio. He said he would like to have young adults under 21 be trained out of high school in order to use them as an applicant pool for future police officers.

Vice Mayor D'Amico asked if the number of part-time dispatcher positions was enough in order to prevent employee burn out. Chief Trebes said he would like to review the program as proposed through the new fiscal year, and make adjustments if needed in the future.

Council Member Head asked about the body camera program. Police Chief Trebes said the budget included a few more cameras, docking stations, and the program software and document storage cost. He said the expense was included in the Information Technology budget.

Mayor Brady asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak.

Dr. Waheed Zehri said public safety should be the first priority. He commented that the capital improvement budget for police was less than last year and said he saw this as "defunding" the police.

Scotty McClure asked if there was any way the department could get a police dog. He asked if the hours for the animal shelter could be expanded.

Dan Alfonzo asked if the \$558 purchase price for the Glock was an error. He said the rangers would not carry a gun, but wanted to know if they would receive additional law enforcement training.

City Manager Cotter said they were not “defunding” the police, and said over the past few years, they added millions of dollars to the capital improvement program for public safety.

Legal Services

City Attorney Emery said his staff took pride in what they did. He said they were not requesting additional staff again this year, and said they were requesting the replacement of an old and inefficient prosecutor software program.

Mayor Brady asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak. No one from the public spoke.

Municipal Court

City Magistrate Psareas said one of the biggest challenges was integrating the COVID related changes in the court. He discussed the court renovation project (\$525,600) that would improve court security and work flow.

City Manager Cotter said City Magistrate Psareas had a pending retirement in November.

Mayor Brady asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak.

Scotty McClure asked if the inmate work program would begin again after the pandemic. City Manager Cotter said it would be, and said that program’s budget was under the Parks Maintenance section.

Mayor Brady called for a dinner break at 5:00 p.m. He reconvened the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Development Services

Development Services Director Chooniyom said there was a request for two additional permit technician positions. He said they did the best they could to help citizens that came into City Hall, including the building permits, business licensing program and the modular home permitting process. He said there was very little change in this year’s budget, except for the update of the newer building codes. He said \$150,000 was included for dangerous building abatements.

Mayor Brady asked about the demolition of commercial building concrete slabs, especially on Highway 95. City Attorney Emery said the property owner could be asked to remove the slab when the building was demolished, and said the cost was prohibitive. City Manager Cotter said the item would be brought back to the Council for consideration at a later date.

City Manager Cotter said the city’s gasoline cost was budgeted at \$4.25 per gallon. He said more than 1,000 shopping carts had been picked up by Development Services staff last year.

Mayor Brady asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak. No one from the public spoke.

Legislative - Mayor and City Council

City Manager Cotter said this budget was standard from the past few years, and said there were no major changes.

Legislative - City Clerk

City Clerk Stein said the budget had no major changes, and said funds were included for annual election and campaign finance training. She said \$86,000 was included for two consolidated elections in 2022.

Mayor Brady asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak on the last two items. No one from the public spoke.

Finance

Finance Director Vera said a new position of procurement specialist was requested, and said the receptionist position was moved under the Finance Dept. He said the budget increased due to the addition of billing and collections for utilities, and said the uncollectible accounts line item was reduced from \$40,000 to \$20,000.

Finance Administrator Drexler said staff had been working with the Vertex One software company on the migration of EPCOR's accounts. He said the new site looked the same as the city's wastewater online payment portal, and said it was easier to navigate. He said the water and wastewater billing systems would be combined in June.

Finance - Technology Services

City Manager Cotter said security was an ongoing concern and said the demand kept growing. He said Randy's team worked hard every day to keep the systems operational.

Information Technology Manager Scheffert said the city currently had close to 500 terabytes of data and said that number kept increasing. He said they requested an additional network engineer position. He said police department anti-virus and security vault software was requested, and said the capital items (\$734,000) requested were network switches, firewalls, PD data links, mobile rugged units, and fiber optic backbone upgrade.

City Manager Cotter said for the first time, a \$500,000 contingency was included to invest in outside experts to look at security to protect all the systems.

Mayor Brady asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak. No one from the public spoke.

Executive

City Manager Cotter said a public information officer position was requested. He said he once held this job in the early days of the city, and said more time and information was required to communicate to the public since the city took over the water company. He said funds were included for additional marketing efforts and for the needs of TV4.

Executive – Personnel Administration

Human Resources Director Marshall said funds were included for compliance training and risk management. She said there was an increase in the employee medical and dental plans, and a small increase in office supplies due to inflation.

City Manager Cotter said funds were included for property and risk premiums (\$927,530). He said the city's policy was to provide the amount of the COLA increase to employees each year, and said this year's COLA was 5.9 percent.

Executive – Recreation

City Manager Cotter said Parks Maintenance was moved to the Public Works Department. He said \$50,000 was included for the Boys and Girls Club annual agreement. He said funding for recreation programs were included only if there was participation. He said funds were included for snack bar concession sales.

Executive - Marketplace

City Manager Cotter said the Marketplace budget included the expenditures for the retail store at Community Park and the new former Celebration boat. He said this was the business enterprise fund with revenues from paid parking, the retail store, and the boat.

Executive – Special Events

City Manager Cotter said this fund was run as an enterprise fund that included revenue and expenses for events such as the Airshow (\$75,000). He said \$50,000 was included for pop up events this year, and \$25,000 for the December Month of Fun.

Assistant to the City Manager Pruitt said they included a new software program that was more user friendly.

Assistant to the City Manager Kajirwa said staff would be applying for Bureau of Reclamation grants, federal grants for the Bullhead Parkway, and other federal grants to support recreational and other city events.

Mayor Brady said he felt the city did not represent themselves at the APRA and NRPA conferences in the past. He said the NRPA Conference was in Phoenix this year and it might be appropriate to send staff as it was within driving distance. He said he would like to see Parks Superintendent Heath, Recreation Supervisor Williams, and Senior Center Manager Cool attend.

Council Member Hecht asked about the increase in swim pool passes, and asked if the two pool wristband line items (\$350) were a duplication. Assistant to the City Manager Pruitt said staff was expecting more participation this coming year.

Council Member Hecht asked about the number of movies that could be offered for \$900. City Manager Cotter said the license fully complied with the rules, and said the number of movies was not limited.

Council Member Hecht made a presentation to add a kids' summer camp to the budget. She said the Boys and Girls Club was full for summer programming with a capacity of 300, and said all of the other community summer day care programs were completely full. She said there were more than 70 children on the Boys and Girls Club wait list, and there was a great need in the community. She proposed using either the Suddenlink Center or the Bullhead City Middle School to offer summer camp opportunities. She said First Things First would be willing to partner with the city, and Arizona PBS Kids would be willing to provide some special programs. She distributed some proposed financial scenarios and a daily schedule to the Council Members.

City Manager Cotter said this program was not included in the budget. He said it would have to come back to the Council at the next meeting because some of the expense would be in this year's fiscal year budget. He said the Council made policy and said he would need some direction.

Discussion ensued among the Council Members regarding the timing of the program, the amount of funding required, and the availability of personnel. The consensus of the Council was to have staff research the opportunity for this year, and add \$100,000 to the budget to begin a full program next year.

Mayor Brady asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak.

Scotty McClure said he did not agree with giving COLA increases to anyone, and said the Council gave themselves a raise with the COLA.

Dr. Waheed Zehri asked if contract labor could be used to replace some staff time. He said the amount of grant opportunities in this year's budget was much better than in the past. He spoke in support of the summer camp proposal and the after school program offered by the Boys and Girls Club. He asked for the Council to consider funding an additional \$10,000 to the Boys and Girls Club.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Brady declared the special meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct record of the special meeting of the City Council of the City of Bullhead City held on the 9th day of May 2022. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 7th day of June 2022.


Susan Stein, MMC, CPM
City Clerk