

BILLINGS CITY COUNCIL
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2024
Conference Room, First Floor, City Hall

CM: Gulick, Owen, Rupsis, Apenlieder (remote)
Staff: Zoeller, Pigg, Watterson, Sprock, Kukulski, Dahl, Schexnider, Kolar, Heller
Public/Guest:

Call to Order (9:03 AM - 0:00:00)

Approval of March Meeting Minutes (0:01:30)

Discussion: No discussion

Motion / Second: Owen, Aspenlieder

Vote: All in favor

Public Comment (0:02:00)

No public comment

Topic #1 - Update on City Hall Renovation (0:02:10)

Discussion: Financing closed with State Board of Investments. Working on Part 2 approval with NPS. If/when approval is received, will refinance with FIB and FIB will purchase the tax credits.

Topic #2 - South Park Pool Funding Options (0:04:50)

Discussion: Amazing spreadsheet of options presented. Andy's full analytical skills were on display. Financing options include PD1, GO bonds (voted), limited GO bonds (non-voted), cash savings over time. If entire amount (assumed \$10M) was financed, would cost \$17.18/year for the median residential property owner.

Discussion on the aquatics study. Should be ready to present to Council in May. Original scope of study was related to splash pads; South Park Pool was added to scope given urgency of situation at that facility.

Discussion on what Budget Committee should do in terms of recommendations to Council.

Discussion on ability to expand SBURA to include the South Park area.

Discussion on use of new SID to rebuild South Park.

Question about \$400k allocated in CIP for South Park Pool design and how that fits into this work.

CM Owen in favor of Limited GO bond proposal, GO bond next, PD1 least.

CM Rupsis in favor of PD1, then GO bond, then limited GO.

CM Aspenlieder in favor of GO bond or expanding SBURA.

CA Kukulski would like to explore SID option more.

CM Gulick proposes we take this issue up again on April 24. All agreed.

Topic #3a - Budget Presentations - IT & Finance Charges (missed timestamp)

Discussion: Andy presented information about internal charges and why they're going up. Insurance costs (mix of headcount and experience rating) going up very quickly. Chris added context about history of cost increases. FY22 insurance premium have gone from \$2.1M in FY22 to an FY25 estimated \$3.5M.

Discussion about potential additional self-service options (e.g., business licenses, parking tickets, etc.).

Topic #3b - Budget Presentations - Legal and Court (1:13:30)

Discussion: Courts have increased collections by over past year \$250k (20% increase) through the collection agency.

Legal budget increase of \$1.2M related to public safety levy additional headcount plus anticipated needs for arraignment court. Additional headcount for arraignment court may not be needed depending on how that court is set up.

Discussion about how new police officers drive increased legal and court needs and revenues.

Court budget increases of 1 FTE plus new court requirements. CGL study will describe additional items that may come with new costs. Arraignment court not likely live before Jan 2025.

Legal would like to make one of the new positions a senior/supervisory position.

Request to see settled vs trial counts as part of budget presentation.

Topic #4 - Demo of Cost of Services Study (1:38:40)

Discussion: Presentation of draft model. City divided into 8 regions and revenues calculated for each land type in each region. Expense modeling still underway. Discussion on next steps and how Council may end up using this tool.

Committee Discussion (0:00:00)

None

Discussion of Future Agenda Items (1:56:50)

- South Park Pool Funding
- Department budget presentations (facilities, PCSD, police)

Next meeting April 24 @ 9:00 AM

Adjourned at 11:02 AM (1:59:00)