



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

City Council

Monday, May 21, 2018
5:00 PM

Work Session

Conference Room
1A/1B
Columbia City Hall
701 E. Broadway

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 pm.

Budget discussions - including any FY2017 savings.

Attachments: [Council Budget Work Session Packet](#)

City Manager Mike Matthes stated that the discussion tonight would be focused on the budget, in particular the use of any potential fiscal year 2017 savings and what the Council may wish to do with their half of the general fund savings as well as the department half. If time allows they will review the ten year trend manual, resignations by tenure, and salaries.

Mr. Matthes stated there is approximately \$1,454,983 allocated to council from FY17 savings. He suggested uses for those funds including an additional fire station (not including land costs) at \$2,500,000, continued development of the next Strategic Plan at \$50,000, and a performance audit at the minimum estimated amount of \$750,000. Mr. Matthes suggested other items to consider including a police take-home car program, house down payment assistance program for police, a Dignity In Work Day Labor program, and a Peer to Peer Naloxone program. Mr. Matthes stated that the idea tonight is to get a better idea of how Council would like to use these funds so that these allocations can occur this fiscal year. These would not be a part of the upcoming budget process.

Mr. Skala suggested we focus on projects specifically related to the Strategic Plan and social equity in particular. Mr. Thomas asked if there was a savings from FY2016 and how much it was. Mr. Matthes stated that it was more than this year and recalled it was \$2.2 million. Mr. Thomas felt that these funds could have assisted the transit program. Mr. Matthes reminded that these are one-time funds, so the assistance would be used for things like the purchase of buses, not for continuing operations. Mr. Thomas felt that the best way to fund a fire station would be through a development fee of some kind. That way it's funded by the growth instead of existing taxpayer dollars. Mr. Matthes noted that the last CIP ballot did not make enough money to fund the fire station that was proposed at that time. Mr. Trapp asked if we could staff a new station. Chief White stated that one company would move to the new station. This would spread some areas a bit thin, but would more adequately cover the community and new hires could begin to fill in the lower staffed stations. Mr. Skala asked there is fallout from the new legislation on Boone County Fire District. Mr. Matthes stated that there are some unclear areas including fire codes, who is providing service, etc. This new legislation is still being looked into.

Mr. Trapp commented that a Take-Home Car program would be an increased benefit to officers that live in the city. In the second ward, there is an officer in the strategic plan

neighborhood that was granted a take home car and many residents there have commented that just having the police car present has been helpful. He suggested two cars per ward be considered for a take home program. When vetted on the campaign trail, it was found to be positively received. Mr. Matthes added that this was done here some time ago, but the recession hit and this program was cut to save costs. There would be insurance issues to look into with this program. An equipped vehicle costs about \$54,000 each. Mayor Treece suggested this be discussed in the collective bargaining process. Some officers may not want to participate in this program for various reasons. Mr. Pitzer added that his suggestion of down payment assistance was intended to be for both police and fire. Encouraging them to put down roots here brings many benefits. He suggested \$5,000 for 5 years, \$10,000 for 10 years and additional incentives for purchasing in the Strategic Plan neighborhoods. Mr. Pitzer felt that if Council wanted to look into this further, they should have Mr. Matthes provide a suggested structure for this program. This could be established as a pilot program. Other incentives could be provided to officers already owning homes in the city, such as a utility incentive. The idea would be that the employee would be required to pay back the incentive funds if they left before the agreed upon terms.

Mr. Trapp explained that Albuquerque started a day labor program for the homeless community there and he suggested doing something similar here. If there is work that could be done by our own community members in need as opposed to outsourcing a targeted RFP process. He referenced an example of the project to wash the historic bricks. That was quoted at a rate of \$200,000 and that is work that could be done by day laborers. This is another program vetted on the campaign trail and was shown a lot of support. Mr. Pitzer suggested a partner program of some kind, to work with Job Point to get job training and case management. Mr. Skala felt that this pairs well with the Strategic Plan and could also save money and should be considered further. Mr. Matthes added that a partnership program is appealing as they could allow other local organizations to also utilize a day labor program.

Mr. Trapp explained that we have done great work on getting Naloxone to emergency responders thus far, but he understands that 85% of Naloxone doses are administered by other users. The Health Department has an employee that does outreach on this, and a program like this could be housed there. Mr. Matthes indicated that he will list \$50,000 on this as well as the day labor program as a starting point for this conversation.

Mr. Pitzer stated that he would like to add another idea not on the list. The idea would be to use flex transit service for City Council meetings, to make the meetings more accessible since current service don't run during Council meeting hours. A user would need to reserve a ride to and from the meeting. Mr. Thomas suggested adding ParaTransit to that as well since they don't have late hours either. Mr. Matthes will add \$20,000 in funds to try this for a one year pilot. This is an estimate of funds.

Mr. Matthes asked for a suggested dollar amount for the utility assistance program for officers. Mr. Pitzer was not sure of an amount, it would depend on the proposed structure. He suggested rolling this in with the other incentive program for public safety, which was \$500,000. Mr. Matthes agreed to look into a few structures for this program that may be considered.

Ms. Nix reviewed a few of the departmental savings funds and the proposed uses. Suggested uses included travel and training, starting a revolving loan fund for energy efficiency improvements, temporary help, equipment, accreditation, fleet replacement, opioid peer recovery support, ADA upgrades, electronic medical record system upgrade, health campaign supplies, facility improvements, and vacation and holiday payouts from

City General for retiring employees.

Mr. Pitzer asked if these include past savings. Ms. Nix stated there is \$4.5 million unspent across all departments and includes Council allocations. Those funds have been appropriated, but not spent. Ms. Nix added that about 80% of savings is due to turnover and/or the 45 day hiring hold. There is also prudent spending.

Mr. Matthes stated that the 10 Year Trend Manual is on the city site. Indicators show positive, neutral or negative trends. Ms. Nix stated that community trends are as expected. She reviewed the trends that have "warning" indicators, in particular median household income and poverty rates. The poverty rate by race gap has come down, but there is still a gap. Mr. Matthes noted that jobs in the community have dropped due to retail and university staffing changes. Ms. Peveler reviewed general fund trends noting a very troubling decrease of sales tax and total revenues. Total tax revenues have gone down 19% and make up 51% of all general fund revenues, so that is a very concerning indicator. Ms. Peveler stated that expenditures are also not growing and she reviewed a few departmental lines noting the changes. She added that as the end of 2017, there was \$4.8 million above the cash reserve target. The group briefly discussed police services. Mr. Matthes noted the police response time is directly related to our growth rate. The overall feeling of safety in the city is going down. Ms. Peveler reviewed other departmental trends noting they are not keeping up with expenses and people and that will show in citizen survey results as satisfaction rates are going down. Utilities are in a better situation since rates can be set to keep expenses we need in order to provide good services. Even in this area, employees per 1,000 have not kept up.

Mr. Matthes reviewed resignations by tenure noting that this is not a great market for employers as there are not a high number of job seekers. This is something to keep in mind as positions become open.

Ms. Nix explained in regard to a previous question about what happens to utility rates when bonds are paid off, that paying off a bond doesn't directly impact rates at the time it's paid off. It will indirectly affect them over time. When a bond is paid off, there is no longer a non-operating expense incurred by the utility. This means revenue from the utility can be spent on operating expenses going forward and the need to raise rates to cover operation costs over the long-term is lessened.

Mr. Thomas added that we don't adequately charge for the cost of growth. He felt that a study should be done for transit and public safety and how to adequately charge for new growth. In areas where there are no fees to help with expenses, there is a burden.

II. ALL OTHER ITEMS THE COUNCIL MAY WISH TO DISCUSS

None.

III. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:52 pm.