

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

1/17/2025 at 3:00 pm

Budget Committee Members Present

Nash Shook, Chairman
Jackie Hoevenaar, Kevin Pierre, Kirk Leff

Absent

Nate Davenport, John Evertson

Also present: City Manager Rick Rudometkin, Finance Technician Heidi Peacock, Public Works Supervisor Phil Price, Chief of Police Travis Grim, City Clerk Yolanda Quiceno

1. Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum

Committee Member Shook called the meeting to order at 3:15pm
City Clerk Yolanda Quiceno confirmed a quorum

2. Citizen Comments – no citizen comments; Committee Member Shook made a statement that the Budget Committee’s job is to make recommendations to the Council based on the information provided. And if there isn’t enough information available, it is the committee’s responsibility to request or acquire more.

Committee Members Davenport and Evertson were absent from the meeting
Committee Member Leff made a motion to excuse the absences of Committee Members Davenport and Evertson
Committee Member Hoevenaar seconded by motion, which passed unanimously

3. Approval of Minutes – August 2, rescheduled to August 23, 2024

City Clerk Yolanda Quiceno stated that the minutes would be provided at the next meeting
Committee Member Pierre made a motion to accept that the minutes would be provided at the next meeting
Committee Member Shook seconded the motion, which passed unanimously

4. Agenda Items

a. Discussion on Millage Increases

- City Manager Rudometkin discussed the main topics for the meeting.
- City Manager Rudometkin requested a millage increase of 0.60 mil to provide a solution for the Orange County Fire Department increase of \$622,000, capital improvements that have not been budgeted, the deficit in the Stormwater Fund of \$147,000, and Visionary projects like \$15M for new/improved City Hall
- City Manager Rudometkin stated that there will be a Commissioner’s Workshop in February/March 2025 to discuss locations and/or options for City Hall: build at current site or look at other sites
- The 4 acres located at Conway Rd and Judge Rd/Daetwyler Dr would be expensive to mitigate because of the water conservation, but there could be options to use it.
- A sunset clause could be considered, which would provide a temporary millage increase to achieve the funds for the project
- City Manager Rudometkin moved on to the Fire Department increase, in which he met with the Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, and Union President. They stated that there hasn’t been an increase in 17 years, there has been annexation of 60,000 acres, and the department needs to expand to meet the increase in population and improve apparatus. The new contract commences in 2025 for 3 years, and could increase after the 3rd year, but is “unforeseen”
- The City of Belle Isle has the options to hire a separate company, or to combine services with Edgewood and neighboring municipalities. The option for creating a separate department would not be recommended based on Belle Isle being a smaller municipality, the call for service would be the same and based on the formula of appraised value

- City Manager Rudometkin recommended concentrating on replenishing the reserves that were depleted during Hurricane Ian by increasing the millage rate by 0.60mil to recover approximately \$650,000.
- FEMA funds have not been received due to lack of documentation. An internal investigation is underway to provide supporting documents. Approximately \$1.62M could have been recouped. The expectation is that there is a 90% chance that a portion of the funds will be recouped, but there is no estimation of the amount until the investigation of the documentation is complete.
- City Manager Rudometkin mentioned that there would have to be a 1mil increase for the city improvements over the next 2-3 years.

b. Discussion on Revenue Stream Options

- City Manager Rudometkin stated that annexation is an option, a planning agreement would assist so that the City would be prepared when something comes available
- Other options could be millage increase, stormwater increase, annexation, maybe write a letter to Elon Musk

c. Discussion on Storm Water Fee Increase

- There is a current deficit of \$147,000.
- City Manager Rudometkin gave a reminder that there was an agreement for a \$5 per household increase each year for a 5-yr period. The 5-yr period is ending. The current rate is \$140 per ERU
- Changes could include billing differently for each type of residence (ie. single-family, mulit-family, etc)
- A plan to incrementally increase the rate was suggested.
- The plan can cover anything with drainage and increase to approximately \$170-\$190.
- A point noted is that Orange County doubled the county storm rate this year

d. Road Show to Residents

- Committee Member Leff asked if a separate line item can be added to the tax bill, titled "Fire Department" for transparency for the community
- Committee Member Shook asked if a workshop has been scheduled for the Fee increases. City Manager Rudometkin stated that there is only a workshop scheduled for the municipal complex location

e. Audit Committee Information and Schedule First Meeting

- The Financial Audit contract is expiring, so there will be requests for proposals for services
- There is a recommendation of 3 quotes, if possible, and the Budget Committee is asked to transition to the Audit Committee for this process
- Commissioner Partin will be sitting with the committee during the proposal process
- A meeting will need to be planned

5. Next Meeting Schedule

- City Clerk Quiceno stated that the meetings will be predetermined as the 3rd Friday of each month at 3pm. She will be providing the exact dates.

6. Adjournment

Committee member Hoevenaar made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Committee member Pierre, and the meeting unanimously adjourned at 4:15pm