



LEBANON BUDGET COMMITTEE AND URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY BUDGET COMMITTEES MEETING MINUTES

April 29, 2024 at 12:00 PM

Santiam Travel Station – 750 3rd Street, Lebanon, Oregon

MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Lebanon is dedicated to providing exceptional services and opportunities that enhance the quality of life for present and future members of the community.

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 12:04 PM.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Kenneth Jackola
Kim Ullfers
Dave Workman
Jeremy Salvage
Michelle Steinhebel (12:09 PM)
Rebecca Grizzle
Lance Caddy (left at 2:55 PM)
Robert Waterhouse

ABSENT

Wayne Dykstra
Carl Mann
Jeffrey King
Dominic Conti
Tom Wells

STAFF

Interim City Manager Ron Whitlatch
Finance Director Brandon Neish
Community and Economic Development Director Kelly Hart
City Recorder Julie Fisher
Information Technology Brent Hurst
Library Services Director Kendra Antila
Senior Services Director Kindra Oliver
Chief of Police Frank Stevenson
Public Works Director Jason Williams
IT Administrative Assistant Erin Gomez

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made to approve the FY 2023-24 Budget Committee and Urban Renewal Agency minutes by Grizzle, Seconded by Ullfers.

Voting Yea: Jackola, Ullfers, Workman, Salvage, Steinhebel, Grizzle, Caddy, Waterhouse

Motion made to approve the 2024-04-03 Budget Committee and Urban Renewal Agency minutes by Ullfers, Seconded by Workman

Voting Yea: Jackola, Ullfers, Workman, Salvage, Steinhebel, Grizzle, Caddy, Waterhouse

PRESENTATIONS: Interim City Manager - Ron Whitlatch
City Recorder/ Mayor & City Council - Julie Fisher
Community Development - Kelly Hart
Engineering - Ron Whitlatch
Finance - Brandon Neish
Human Resources – Brandon Neish
Information Technologies - Brent Hurst
Library - Kendra Antila
Linx Transit - Kindra Oliver
Non-Departmental - Brandon Neish
Police - Frank Stevenson
Public Works -Jason Williams

Dala Johnson and Chris Beechers representing the Lebanon Downtown Association presented the goals of the organization which included to be self-sufficient. They hired a part time Executive Director and highlighted many of the events they will be hosting. The LDA requested support from the City from the Motel Tax funds which can only be used to promote tourism. Their request was \$30,000.

Following the presentation from the Lebanon Downtown Association, Finance Director Brandon Neish introduced the Department Heads one by one, who gave an overview of their departments budget.

Interim City Manager Ron Whitlatch presented the City Manager's department which oversees the day-to-day operations of the City. Due to the vacancy of the City Manager position, there is only 6 months budgeted for the position in hopes that it is filled by January 2025. The City has entered into an agreement with Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments to help with grants.

Julie Fisher, City Recorder reported the largest change to the department is the Deputy City Recorder's hours will be reduced to 20 hours per week. In addition to the City Recorder's Department, the City Council funds were also discussed with no significant changes.

Community and Economic Development Director Kelly Hart reported on the Community and Economic Development and Building funds. It was reported the Economic Development Catalyst position will not be filled. CEDD Hart provided a staffing analysis that compared the department staffing levels to those of comparable cities. Lebanon is able to provide excellent service with limited staff. In addition to staffing, the contract for Building Services and Building Services Fees were discussed. CEDD Hart stated regional partners such as OCWCOG will be utilized to help offset staffing reductions when possible.

Finance Director Brandon Neish presented the Finance Funds which include Payroll, Utility Billing, and Municipal Court. The department will not fill one vacancy. There was an increase in the Audit Contract. Finance Director Neish also reviewed the Non-Departmental Funds which include the NW Urban Renewal District, Emergency Management, Santiam Travel Station and City Hall alarm and securities and utilities.

Finance Director Neish reviewed the Human Resources Department which oversees benefit administration, hiring system, employee trainings and negotiations. The Department will not fill the HR Generalist and Safety Coordinator positions.

Information Technologies Director Brent Hurst provide a report on the IT Department noting that the City currently contracts IT support to the Fire District and will continue to do so with some contract modifications. The department is also working on the City's website upgrade project. The City Council Chambers relocation using ARPA funds will be another project the IT department will focus on in 2025. IT will also be updating the SCADA programs at both the Water and Wastewater Treatment Plants. The department will reduce personnel by .2 FTE.

Library Services Director Kendra Antila reported to reduce strain on the General Fund, the library is closing on Friday, reducing hours open to the public to 37 hours per week. One FTE position will also not be filled. There is a 15% reduction in the collection budget and in programming for adults. All programming for youth will remain.

Senior Services Director Kindra Oliver reported an adjustment in the funds to more reflect actual staff time for both Senior Center and LINX transit. No ride fares have been collected since the COVID pandemic and studies have shown the amount collected from fares take more staff time to process than they bring in. LINX continues to operate with grant funding.

Police Chief Frank Stevenson reported many challenges including an increase in personnel costs, wages, and PERS. The jail has closed and there is lack of resources necessary for it to reopen. The overall crime rate has increased. There is a rise in calls such as mental health and related to the unhoused which are labor intensive calls. The Lebanon Police Department is operating with staff less than Best Practice Standards which are 2.4 officers per 1000 population. The City is currently at 1.2 officers per 1000.

Public Works Director Jason Williams reported on Parks, Streets, Storm, Water and Wastewater Funds. He also addressed Building Maintenance. PWD Williams explained the cost related to the high turbidity drawdowns of Green Peter Reservoir and the effect it is having on the plants. Costly Infiltration of rainwater into the system was a concern for the Wastewater Fund. Two FT Park Maintenance employees maintain 371 acres - 83 acres are improved. There was concern about trail improvements and maintenance with current staffing levels.

Interim City Manager Ron Whitlatch who also serves as the Director of Engineering, presented the budget report for Engineering. It was noted that there are 4 staff that work primarily in Facility Planning and 2 in Parks and General Services. The staffing has been reduced from 6.8 FTE to 6.0 FTE. Director Whitlatch spoke to the \$350,000 for the Sewer Lateral Program, and the \$328,000 for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Consultants. The Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments will partner with the City to help find and secure grants for Water and Wastewater projects.

Motion made to amend the agenda to allow the Finance Director to give a high-level view of the General Fund by Workman, Seconded by Steinhebel.

Voting Yea: Jackola, Ullfers, Workman, Salvage, Steinhebel, Grizzle

Voting Nay: Caddy, Waterhouse

Finance Director Neish presented the 5-year Budget Forecast with fund summaries and general fund projected balance. It was noted that PERS is a significant driver in hurdles moving forward and part of the reason for the projected deficit ending fund balance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

None

NEXT SCHEDULED BUDGET MEETING: April 30, 2024 at Noon.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:50 PM.