

**MINUTES**  
**CITY COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP**  
**CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 30, 2023 AT 5:30 P.M.**

**MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mayor Ashley Brady	Councilman Fred Gause
Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt	Councilman Donny Gerald
Councilman Ronald Atkinson	Councilwoman Tassie Lewis
Councilman Michael Baker	

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Alan Ammons, City Administrator	James Brogdon, City Attorney
Patricia Brown, City Treasurer	
Lakesha Shannon, City Clerk	

**1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ashley Brady.

**2. WORKSHOP FOR PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024**

➤ **Hospitality Tax Budget**

Mayor Brady stated that the proposed Hospitality Tax Budget is very similar to last fiscal year’s budget and includes a few carryover projects. The proposed project includes:

- Replacement of the heat pump and upgrading to LED lights at CD Joyner Auditorium
- Green Street Sports Complex Maintenance funding of \$25,000

Councilman Fred Gause asked if there would be any upgrades at Grice’s Recreation Center. He stated that it was brought to his attention that the

bathroom stalls need to be replaced. Administrator Alan Ammons stated that these upgrades can be included in the Recreation Department budget.

Mayor Brady stated that the total proposed Hospitality Tax Budget for fiscal year 2023-2024 is \$453,500.

➤ **Stormwater Budget**

Mayor Brady explained that the Stormwater Budget is funded by a monthly stormwater fee of \$5.00 for residential users, and \$6.00 for commercial users. This is an enterprise fund and the revenues are used to cover the salary of the vacuum truck driver, and the payment, maintenance and supplies on the vacuum truck and mini excavator which helps to keep the storm drains clean.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson asked if the city can look into installing stormwater liners.

Mayor Brady stated that the total proposed Stormwater Budget for fiscal year 2023-2024 is \$191,000.

➤ **General Fund Budget**

Mayor Brady highlighted items from the proposed fiscal year 2023-2024 General Fund Budget to include:

- A 3% cost of living increase for city employees, with the exception of employees that recently received an increase.
- Sanitation rate increase due to fuel surcharge fees
- Health Insurance rate increase of 3.7% starting January 1, 2024
- Property/Liability Insurance increase of 5%

**Sanitation Rates**

Council had a lengthy discussion on the proposed sanitation rate increase and 3 options were presented:

**Option #1** includes a \$4.00 increase for rollout carts, and 15% for dumpsters which would generate an additional \$206,478 in revenue.

**Option #2** includes a \$3.00 increase for rollout carts, and 20% for dumpsters which would generate an additional \$191,304 in revenue.

**Option #3** includes a \$4.00 increase for rollout carts, and a 20% increase for dumpsters which would generate an additional \$257,304 in revenue.

Mayor Brady stated that Capital Waste Systems (CWS) will likely increase their rates; however, that amount has not been provided as of yet. Following discussion, Council agreed to implement Option #1 for the 2023-2024 sanitation rate increase.

### **Millage Rate**

Mayor Brady explained the proposed millage increase and stated that 1 mill for the city would be worth \$15,058. City Treasurer Patricia Brown noted that the city can go up a maximum of 10 mills which is 8% CPI. Mayor Brady suggested a 5 mill increase which will generate \$75,290. Following discussion council agreed to implement the 5 mill increase for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Mayor Brady stated that \$590,382 in savings would be needed to balance the budget. He noted that that none of the savings was used over the past 2 years to balance the budget due to excellent budget management by the Treasurer and department heads throughout the year.

### **Public Safety Salary Increase**

Mayor Brady explained the proposed base salary increase for police and fire employees. The starting salary for fire/police employees out of the academy will be \$38,574. All other fire/police salaries will be increased as follows:

- Employees at \$38,574 - \$39,999 will receive a 7% increase

- Employees at \$40,000 - \$49,999 will receive a 5% increase
- Employees at \$50,000 and up will receive a 3% increase

### **Facility Rental Fees**

Council discussed proposed changes to the city facility rental rates. Mayor Brady recommended a \$100 increase across the board for rentals of CD Joyner Auditorium and the Opera House. He commented on the high cost of lighting, heating and cooling these facilities as rentals have increased significantly. Following a lengthy discussion of proposed rental fees, Mr. Ammons was asked to present an updated rental fee schedule at next month's meeting.

### **Grant Funding**

Mayor Brady updated council on some recent grant funding the city received which includes:

- Stormwater Project Grant - \$572,930 with a \$188,000 match
- Healthcare Partners Grant for lighting at the Green Street Sports Complex - \$412,000 payable at \$82,500 over 5 years
- Catfish Creek Cleaning Project – there is \$1 million up to \$11 million in funding available with \$100,000 match. Still awaiting actual award amount.
- Fire Department Grant for radios - \$346,450 with a \$16,000 match
- Safer Grant for Fire Department - \$528,000
- Duke Energy Grant - \$10,000 for swift water rescue gear for the fire department

Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt requested to further discuss employee compensation at next month's council meeting.

**3. SET DATE FOR PUBLIC HEARING**

Council agreed to schedule a Public Hearing for the 2023-2024 fiscal year budget on Thursday, June 29, 2023 at 5:30 pm.

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no further business, ***a motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and seconded by Councilman Donny Gerald to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.***

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Mayor Ashley Brady

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Lakesha Y. Shannon, City Clerk