

WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL
Work Session Minutes
October 5, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Scribner called the virtual meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Councilmembers Yazmin Bahena, Riley Clubb, Myron Huie, Ted Koehler, Steve Moss, Susan Nakonieczny, and Mayor Tom Scribner.

Absent: None

City staff in attendance: City Manager Nabel Shawa, Finance Director Jean Teasdale, Police Chief Scott Bieber, and City Clerk Kammy Hill.

2. ACTIVE AGENDA

- A. 2020 budget status report and update of 2021-2022 budget planning.

Finance Committee Chair Clubb reviewed the numerous Finance Committee meetings to date regarding the 2021-2022 budget and commended staff's response to addressing the fiscal impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Staff provided an overview of:

- Total 2019-2020 revenue by fund.
- Total 2019-2020 expenditures by fund.
- Total 2019-2020 general fund revenues projected at \$76,545,850.
- Total general fund expenditures for 2019-2020 projected at \$76,557,400.
- Revenue impacts of COVID-19 on the general fund.
- Expenditure reductions in the 2020 general fund budget.
- The 2021-2022 biennial budget:
 - Public process requiring budget hearings.
 - Mandatory balanced budget.
 - Providing a balanced program of municipal services, addressing the needs of the City in a sustainable fashion.
 - Developing a sustainable general fund budget with the following goals:
 - Target on-going expenses equal to or less than on-going revenue.

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- General fund balance goal of fifteen percent.
- Maintain a ten percent fund balance for utilities.
- Must be adopted by December 31, 2020.
- The 2021-2022 Budget Calendar:
 - October 5 – Preliminary budget overview.
 - October 19 – Budget workshop.
 - October 28 – 2021-2022 budget released to the City Clerk and budget hearing with public comments.
 - November 4 – Property tax hearing and adoption and budget hearing with public comments.
 - November 9 – Council Work Session with public comments.
 - November 18 – Budget hearing with public comments.
 - Additional budget hearings/presentations, as necessary.
 - December 2 – Final Budget hearing and adoption.
 - December 16 – Final 2020 budget amendment.
- Major operational funds in the budget.
- Budget Process:
 - Strategic planning retreat.
 - Budget assumptions:
 - Will enter COVID-19 level 4 reopening in June or July 2021.
 - Revenue will continue to be impacted by COVID-19 in 2021.
 - No new positions.
 - Revenue estimates:
 - Sales tax for 2021 is based on 2019 revenues; 2022 includes a six percent increase in 2021.
 - No property tax increase in 2021; A one percent increase will be banked.
 - No new taxes or fees.
 - Estimated expenditures:
 - Vacant positions.
 - Reduce travel.
 - Reduce supplies.
 - Delay some projects.
 - Budget review process:
 - Departments develop their budget requests.
 - Budgets are reviewed by City Manager, Deputy City Manager, and Finance Director.

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- The City Manager, Deputy City Manager and Finance Director meet with the Finance Committee to review the proposed budget.
- The Finance Committee and staff have met several days a week since September 14 and will continue into October.
- Continue to refine the budget until it is adopted in December.
- Draft general fund 2021-22 budget summary.
- 2021 – 2022 Police Department budget overview:
 - Vacant positions: 4 police officers (2 vacancies from 2020 & 2 anticipated in 2021); 1 parking enforcement position (intend to keep vacant through 2021).
 - Reduction in travel and supplies.
 - Delay in purchases.
 - Differential call response:
 - Proposed to research differential call response programs such as CAHOOTS, over the next 12-24 months before any permanent reductions in core police services.
 - Beginning with 2021-2022 budget it is proposed to create a separate program budget in the Police Department that enumerates current social service activities that may contribute to differential call responses. These currently include:
 - Domestic Violence
 - Crime Victims Advocate
 - Crime Prevention
 - Code Enforcement
 - Body and dash camera costs over a five-year period. These costs are not currently in the proposed budget and would require either further cuts to the General Fund or reduction of projected reserves.
 - Police Department staffing:
 - Vacancies – 4 police officer positions projected to be vacant in 2021 (due to attrition).
 - Current budget assumptions do not fill these positions in 2021 and 2022. This will result in a reduction from 48 to 44 commissioned police officers.
- The October 19 budget Work Session will include a review of revenue and expenditures; Fire Department and Ambulance budgets; Public Works overview; and lodging tax overview.

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There was discussion on:

- Differential call response study.
- Whether body and dash cameras should be included in the proposed budget.
- If filling vacant police officer positions is a high priority as revenues become available or holding these positions vacant while studying differential call responses.
- The current Civil Service hiring list has bilingual/bicultural applicants within the top five candidates. Expanding the diversity of commissioned police officers has been a priority. Council indicated support for hiring a replacement bilingual/bicultural officer from the current Civil Service list.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.