

**City of Hood River  
Budget Committee Meeting #2  
Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget**

**Wednesday, May 5, 2021  
City Council Chambers, 211 Second St.  
The meeting will begin no earlier than 6:00pm**

**Present:** Kate McBride, Mark Zanmiller, Megan Saunders, Tim Counihan, Jessica Metta, Erick Haynie, Gladys Rivera, Ross Brown, Dave Bick, Grant Polson, Gary Reed, Rudy Kellner

**Staff:** City Manager/Budget Officer Rachael Fuller, Finance Director/ACM Will Norris, Public Works Director Mark Janeck, City Engineer Wade Seaborn, Police Chief Neal Holste, Planning Director Dustin Nilsen, Fire Chief Leonard Damian, City Recorder Jennifer Gray, GIS Jonathan Skloven-Gill

**Absent:**

1. CALL TO ORDER – 6:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – April 28, 2021

Mayor McBride made a motion to approve the minutes of April 28, 2021 Reed second the motion. – Motion passed.

3. GENERAL FUND DISCUSSION

Norris presented an introductory PowerPoint on the General Fund. The PowerPoint was added to the record. The General Fund focuses on basic governmental services, things that may have their own program revenues to some extent but are largely dependent on general property tax revenue for their operations. Norris covered information that addressed questions received since the last meeting from committee members. Norris covered the concept of budgeted versus anticipated ending fund balance, and why you often see fund balance drop in the budget year that is being reviewed, dropping by 17% from \$3.2 million to \$2.7 million in the 2021-22 budget specifically. The General Fund summary is on Page 24 of the budget document. The annual budget is one piece of the life cycle for the financial documents. He spoke about how it is monitored, why multiyear forecasting is important to pair with the annual budget process, and why staff produces quarterly financial reports, with yearend estimates. One of the quarterly reports will be at the next meeting and why they true up the budget to the audited financial report, when it comes out in December or January. It is in the City's policies that the audit is reviewed, and changes made, so they align budget to actual beginning fund balances once the audit is known. Right now, they are projecting what the ending fund balance will be in July.

Norris covered inter-departmental charges (vehicle replacement/maintenance and administrative overhead) and how they are calculated. Managers do not have any control over the calculations. See PowerPoint for calculations. Norris explained the calculation formula for mechanic time was simplified.

Administrative services formula get even more simple. This is not new, it predates Norris. It allocates management, finance, human resources, some information technology and legal. This gets broken out against all departments, based on a three-year average of expenditures. This keeps it moderately stable, and it is consistent with administrative charges City wide; between 4-5% of total City expenditures.

a. Police Program

Chief Holste explained the past year has been unique with the pandemic. He wanted to show in his PowerPoint the view of a police office that works for City; day to day activities and what they have done during the pandemic. In an average year, they do 40+ community activities. Before COVID, the department started their community activities as normal. They did grade school activities and partnered with Safe Space Advocacy Center. During COVID, the department did tours of the station with a local playgroup. The department made a movie showing their day-to-day activities for students. The students that viewed the movie, met with officers through a Zoom meeting to ask questions. Holste explained, since COVID they arrest and incarcerate for fewer crimes now. This year they had a lot of crimes they would normally take the person to jail but due to COVID and sheriffs restrains, they were given a citation and told to appear in court. This year they seized 53 firearms due to criminal activity. Holste shared photos of identity theft, guns, weapons, and drugs that were taken during traffic stops that led to arrests. 171 drug charges since January 2020. This number will go down due to Measure 110. Holste stated several months ago, the City looked at the use of force in law enforcement and Eight Can't Wait. Eight items to make sure local law enforcement were meeting. A Council Pledge was created and adopted.

There was discussion regarding space needs at the Police Department for interrogation and the storage and testing area of hazardous drugs and ventilation. A specialized facility would be needed to address these needs. A commercial/retail space cannot be used. The security, proximity to the Police Department, and ventilation needs to be considered. It is a very technical type building use, with very specific needs. It needs to be built from the ground up. Holste stated the department does the best they can do with what they have, and they do a good job. The safety and welfare of employees is highest priority.

There was discussion and further expatiation on several line items.

b. Fire Program

Chief Damian stated the Hood River Fire Department provides both fire and EMS services to the City, as well as EMS services in Hood River County (up to Odell) and Wasco County (to Mosier). In 2020 the station responded to 1700 incidents. 80% of calls are medical related, and 20% of calls are fire related.

Damian reviewed outcomes from last year: utilizing the GIS system. This has helped improve their response and recovery. It also helps target certain hazards as well as develop pre incident plans. When COVID started they developed response procedures. The department was awarded a FEMA grant. It was nearly \$600,000 to replace aging air packs for the entire county. During COVID. They distributed the air packs and collected payment. Like the Police Department, the Fire Department participated in school Zoom calls with students.

The Fire Department had first cases of COVID in March 2020. During last year, there were two significant spikes in cases (July and December). As of to date, they have taken care of 118 patients that were COVID positive. That does not include COVID or suspected COVID patients. Damian spoke about the difficulties the department had obtaining PPE during the pandemic and how the community came together to help protect staff, until the major supply chain was back up and running. Hood River County EOC applied for a grant. As a result, Hood River Fire received three Powered Air Purifying Respirator's suites. They wear them when they are with suspected COVID patients. They received these in November, before the large spike in December. In December staff were one of the first groups to receive a vaccine. It came at the perfect time when the largest surge of cases happened in the County.

The Fire Department is working on community health, as well as behavioral health partnership with local entities. There will be a change in their reporting software which will be able to communicate with Epic, which is the major hospital language. In turn, they will be able to track things better. Those who oversee helping the most vulnerable population will be able to know their activity, as well as identify places where they can partner, share this information, and improve delivery of services.

There was questions and discussion regarding EMS transfers, revenues and having it self-supporting financially. Damian stated transfers have increased. There have been improvements with the billing company which reduced fees. GEMT has allowed them to bridge the gap which gives them around \$50,000 a year. At the end of the month, Oregon is having a meeting at the state level about a different reimbursement level. He will monitor to see how that goes and how it will make it different in the future. Fuller noted the EMS system will be reviewed further this year. It is part of the continuous improvement model.

There was discussion regarding the elevated wildfire danger. Damian spoke about state level discussions that have happened in the past year. He should be hearing soon about staff that have been hired to manage areas that are at risk. Hood River and Wasco County have been identified as one of those areas. There would be a State effort and focus on fuel mitigation and other aspects within the urban interface. Hood River County is overdue for a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). They are only a few years past due, but the County has had some challenges. For the City specifically, they work hand in hand with the Building Official to improve building code building materials, roof coverings and fuel away from homes in high-risk areas. The

Planning Director is also working on this. The State is working on having a notification system that will work statewide.

There was discussion regarding community trust programs, updates to wildland protective equipment and contract costs.

#### c. Planning

Nilsen stated the Planning department plays an integral role in shaping the long-term character of the City, through the development and implementation of the City of Hood River Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code, and other long-range planning efforts. The Planning Department is one of the three pillars of the land development aspects of the City, along with Engineering and Building. They often serve as the first stop for customers in the land development process, which often at times is the most discretionary, public facing and controversial. On the operational side of things, they are the primary City staff for a lot of the housing efforts.

In 2020, the Planning Department continued the current review and workload of application materials. They made significant progress in some of the longer-range planning efforts including the Middle Housing Zoning Code updates. Transportation System Plan and fee in lieu parking regulations were also revised. They also executed some historic building conversion regulations that not only provided opportunities to reuse building, but also made an opportunity for affordable housing or housing opportunities within the commercial zones in the City. The Planning Department were members of the performance improvement and process improvement process through the City, looking at development codes and how they execute and work through active applications. They supported the development and approval of the Parks Master Plan and implemented an expedited land division process. They permitted the first three multi-family developments in the last 17 years. These tasks being done during a pandemic required some new approaches to collaboration and workflow with other City departments, agencies, and citizens.

Looking forward to 2021, the Planning Department will continue to work on the Heights Urban Renewal project. As Phase 1 wraps up, Phase 2 will begin which will lead into the design and some of the regulatory reviews. They will continue with the Cascade Avenue, project with ODOT looking forward to the redevelopment of that street and the advance of the Historic Columbia Highway regional trail. Staffing will be committed to the housing production strategy. They will also continue to work on the Rand Road housing project.

#### d. Other General Fund Programs


#### e. Non-Departmental

Non-Departmental is the program area where all non-department specific General Fund revenues are recognized. The expenditures are those strategic projects that also cannot be discretely assigned to a department. Norris reviewed some of the things placed in Non-Departmental: citywide communication work, restarting the hydroelectric project, partnership with CAT for passes and purchase of a trolley, equity and inclusion

assessment contract work, continued contribution toward the Hood River County Energy Plan and continued support for the warming shelter. There are some monies that are not assigned or programmed. This helps if there is a need for contract work not planned, to allow flexibility.

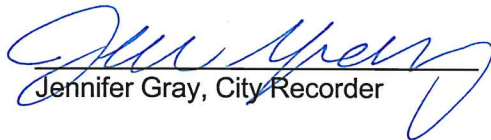
Norris reviewed funds for City Council, Municipal Court and Parking.

5. RECESS/ADJOURN – 8:02 p.m.



---

Grant Polson, Chair



---

Jennifer Gray, City Recorder

*Approved by Budget Committee on May 12, 2021*