

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Dean Silver [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 4, 2021 6:29 PM  
**To:** Tonya Graham  
**Cc:** City Council; Budget Committee  
**Subject:** RE: BUDGET: Vetting Questionable Items in the CIP

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Hi Tonya,

I agree with the most of your comments, but you seem to have missed the substance of mine.

What I am questioning is the *magnitude* of the design fees that are assumed in the CIP. They're simply unrealistic. If they are wildly inflated, as I believe they are, then rational decisions cannot be made when budgeting for them.

Can you tell me your position on whether CC should investigate the *feasibility* of joining RVSS, as opposed to continuing to maintain the current WWTP? A simple presentation of facts and figures by a representative of RVSS would be an excellent, no cost way start to that process.

If, in fact, joining RVSS would be more cost effective over time, it would make no sense to *proactively* upgrade systems in the current WWTP, as proposed in the CIP. Of course we would have to maintain the plant until a transition to the regional system could be made. Multiple millions could be saved.

I'm also interested in your views regarding building a new WTP as opposed to upgrading the current plant. It's an issue that I have not even begun to look at. But I must say the \$40.7M price tag gives me pause.

Of course the City needs competent technical assistance when dealing with engineering issues, since we don't have that competence in house. But first, we need to decide if the path we are pursuing is optimal. We can't simply rely on decisions that were made ten years ago or more to guide us. They need to be constantly reexamined as circumstances change.

I don't envy Council's job finalizing this budget. Many significant choices must be made. Everyone agrees, I think, that our current trajectory is unsustainable. What I and many others are simply saying is that the emphasis has to shift from revenue enhancement to expense reduction.

Thanks for sharing your thoughts with me.

Dean

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**From:** Tonya Graham [mailto:tonya@council.ashland.or.us]  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 4, 2021 5:42 PM  
**To:** Dean Silver  
**Subject:** Re: BUDGET: Vetting Questionable Items in the CIP

Dean,

I appreciate your perspective that all elements of the CIP need to be vetted carefully. I agree in general, but also recognize that limitation that we come against, particularly for any repairs that are more than a few years out. By necessity, those estimates are much more "ballpark" than the estimates for projects that are going into the immediate biennial budget. The first step for each of these projects is to start the process of clarifying exactly what is needed and what it will cost. Taking those steps for projects that are years down the road would be an inappropriate use of the public purse given how much changes on these systems in just a few years.

In terms of the fact that much of these issues are maintenance, that doesn't mean that whole systems within larger operations don't need to be switched out at various points. When that happens, we need to make sure that the new system is going to work well within the larger operation and that means investing, as necessary, in design. Of course, we need to be asking the right questions and watching this carefully, but infrastructure systems are much more technical than they used to be and that is why we hire experienced engineers and technical consultants to help us determine the best next steps.

Thank you for your engagement in this budgeting process.

All the best,

**Tonya Graham**

Ashland City Councilor

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**From:** Dean Silver [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 29, 2021 4:41 PM  
**To:** City Council <council@ashland.or.us>; Budget Committee <BudgetCommittee@ashland.or.us>  
**Subject:** BUDGET: Vetting Questionable Items in the CIP

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Esteemed Mayor, Councilors, and Citizens' Budget Committee members:

Here is a small but striking example of why the items in the CIP need to be examined very carefully.

The accompanying chart lists the WWTP projects, their total costs, and their design costs and associated portions of the total. Also listed is portion paid for by rates and fees, and a few comments I jotted down for reference. It should be used as a jumping off point for your own investigations. It is an extremely informal, preliminary examination.

Please note that the majority of these projects are for maintenance of current systems. Those items should not require extensive, or often ANY, design costs. Replacing parts is replacing parts. If parts are being replaced with new systems, design requirements should be relatively limited. The basic physical plant is in place. Some of the items are extremely vague and non-targeted. They read like descriptions of projects that are so amorphous that they could not be quantified, e.g., "miscellaneous improvements and upgrades" \$900,000 total, and "headworks process improvements" \$3,760,000 total.

Yet, you will see there are OVER ONE MILLION DOLLARS of design costs. Some of those design costs may be necessary. But the extent of them is should certainly raise questions.

\$400,000 are apparently for design fees for the two projects mitigating the discharge. Assuming \$150/hr for a civil engineer's time, that would pay for 2,666+ hours of design time. Does that sound reasonable?

This chart is not intended to be a definitive analysis, but merely a demonstration of the necessity to vett each and every line item of each and every project in the CIP. You don't have to be an engineer or have any technical expertise to learn enough about a project to be able to ask relevant and intelligent questions.

As you know, two of the goals of the Council are:

- Develop current and long term budget resiliency, and
- Analyze various departments/programs with the goal of gaining efficiencies, reducing costs, and improving City services.

In order to meet those goals, Council must thoroughly vett all projects in the CIP.

Thank you for your consideration.

*Dean Silver*



WWTP Projects from "City of Asland CIP FY 22-27 detail 2022-2040 overview"										
page	proj #	cost \$	fees %	yrs	per yr\$	title	description	when	design \$	comments
Treatment Fund										
63	704100	900,000	90	6	150,000	WWTP Miscellaneous Improvements and Upgrades	non specified equipment fund	every yr	5,000	same as ** why \$5k design/yr? other is "in-house"
64	2018-21	2,091,000	85	25	varies	Water Quality Temperature Trading Program	temp standards/tree planting	every yr	100,000	why \$100k in 22 for design?
65	TBD	1,400,000	85	3?	1,400,000	UV System Upgrades/Replacement	UV upgrades, replacements	all in 1 year?	280,000	why \$280K in 22 for design; refers to upgrade in 2020
66	2013-21	2,500,000	85	3+	varies	WWTP Outfall Relocation Project	outfall relocation	22-23	300,000	why \$300k design?
67	[blank]	3,760,000	80	3	varies	WWTP Headworks Process Improvements	headworks slushfund	22-24	60,000	why \$60k design? Is replacement
68	[blank]	110,000	100	2?	110,000	WWTP Harmonics Upgrade	power treatment	23;all in 1 year	10,000	
69	TBD	795,000	100	2	397,500	WWTP Secondary Clarifier 2 Improvements	upgrade old clarifier	23-24	160,000	why \$160k design? Is replacement
70	TBD	1,200,000	100	every 5	600,000	WWTP Membrane Replacement	maintenance	why 2 yr?	50,000	why \$50k design? Is replacement
71	TBD	250,000	80	1	250,000	Biosolids Treatment Improvements	maintenance	25	50,000	why \$50k design? Is replacement
<b>TOTALS</b>		13,006,000	86%		11,215,350	<--total from fees and rates			1,015,000	design % of total costs--> 8%
Collection Fund										
72	704100	750,000	90	continual	125,000	Wastewater Miscellaneous In-House Replacement	maintenance of pipes	every yr		same as **: why same project # in different Funds???
compiled by Dean Silver 3/13/2021										

[REDACTED]

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**From:** gwen davies [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 30, 2021 2:01 PM  
**To:** Finance  
**Subject:** CBC meeting

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Hello: I know the first budget meeting is this afternoon. My comments: . Do not fund anything we cannot afford. Live within our means which is drastically down. Do not fund anything that is not absolutely the most essential. Prioritize among the most essential for the next 2 years. Use the next two years to overhaul spending and involve the public. Many of us have been requesting this for over 2 years now...and others have requested it for 4 or 5. Do it this time!!!

Do not raise any rates or charges to residents of Ashland this. Cut expenses and many bloated staff, department budgets, projects. Cut CIP projects now. For instance: drop immediately the "Walker st Festival street project"; it is NOT ESSENTIAL and a terrible idea. Drop the 50,000 proposed to study changing the speed limit to 20 through town. Drop it now! Try enforcing the 25 miles an hour speed limit first. This is someone's pipe dream. Go for efficiencies and new ideas to be carefully vetted with full public participation. There are lots of other projects that could be cut too. Remember APRC has many projects that are not essential. Keep that source of taxation and spending well under control...it still comes out of residents' pockets.

Consider hooking up to the valley's waste water system rather than wasting millions on or own. Consider other ideas like if it would be cost effective.....maybe having our utility billing outsourced. Everything should be on the table with quality, efficiency, cost, and benefit to the City central.

I would like to know what efficiencies Shaun Moran and Dave Runkel would identify...and Gina DuQuenne too..and Mayor Akins too. They are the ones I know of who wish to overhaul destructive spending patterns and programs. How do they recommend we dig ourselves out of this hole?

We are at a tipping point. Please take this approach.

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Dean Silver [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 31, 2021 9:37 PM  
**To:** City Council; Budget Committee; Melanie Purcell  
**Subject:** CBC 3/30 meeting feedback

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Hello all,

I was extremely disappointed watching the first CBC meeting. I hope the next three meetings will be more productive.

I trust you all read the entire budget document, as I did, before the meeting. Assuming you had, I think you will agree with me that the two hours you spent watching that Powerpoint was basically a waste of time. It was essentially a presentation of the same material that is in the document.

Your time would have been spent much more fruitfully in general discussion of the budget issues. I realize that was the intent of the PP, but it was presented so fast, so cursorily, with no allowance for questions, that it served very little purpose. You are allocated only 12 hours to meet, a huge job to do, and an awesome responsibility.

So looking forward, may I respectfully suggest: more discussion, fewer long Powerpoint presentations.

Finally, let me echo one of Julie's points: do as much homework as possible. Try to prepare as much as you can outside the meetings. Ideally, you would all know what your duties and responsibilities are before the start of the first meeting. As Dave pointed out, the resources are there on the website for easy access.

I hope your future meetings will be much more productive. The City's financial future is riding on your deliberations and the Council's final decision. The proposed budget you have been presented does not come close to addressing the structural and long term issues facing the City. It's up to you to fix it. We can't afford to kick the can down the road any more.

Thank you for your consideration.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Dean Silver [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 5, 2021 12:33 PM  
**To:** Melanie Purcell; Budget Committee  
**Cc:** Department\_Heads  
**Subject:** RE: benefits inquiry

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Thank you for taking the time, Melanie, this explains quite a bit. I hope it helps others gain a fuller understanding of some of the intricacies, as well. The system you have to deal with is amazingly complex, especially to a person without government accounting experience such as myself.

After working with Opengov recently, as you suggested, I have come to agree with you that it is an excellent tool, albeit with a rather quirky interface. The only problem is that so much is still missing from it. I'm sure that will improve as time goes on, but I fear that much of the historical data will never wind up there. As you probably know, it can be quite challenging to locate much of the older information.

I hope that my questions and comments are also helping to clarify and facilitate the budget process for everyone.

Dean

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**From:** Melanie Purcell [mailto:melanie.purcell@ashland.or.us]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 5, 2021 10:58 AM  
**To:** Dean Silver; Budget Committee  
**Cc:** Department\_Heads  
**Subject:** RE: benefits inquiry

Good morning Dean,

Just catching up on emails. Hope these add clarification:

The Department Head salaries are NOT included in the average salary line. There are salary ranges for each department head position but each individual is hired under a contract approved by the City Council and salaries are usually dependent on qualifications within the salary range. Under the Council- Manager form of government, the City Manager and HR Director would bring the contract to City Council, previously the Mayor did.

The difference between the spreadsheets I've presented and the OpenGov data has two sources: 1) the list of positions includes part-time and temporary positions listed individually and in budgeting, we count Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), hence the fractions, so there are usually more positions listed than FTEs; and 2) the way OpenGov was originally set up included the same position listed multiple times for each portion assigned to a different funding source. We've tried to minimize this in the latest iteration to make it easier for future comparisons and tracking. The current count of funded FTE's, including vacancies, is 245.32. The current staff count is 232.82, with vacancies excluded.

All Councilmembers are eligible for family health coverage and the full cost is budgeted. I cannot break down the actual coverage each member has registered for without violating privacy restrictions. All Councilmembers receive \$350 per year in stipend and the Mayor receives \$500. The City is also required to pay for FICA/Medicare which is 7.65% of compensation.

Hope this helps. Thank you for the vote of confidence; it is greatly appreciated.

Melanie

Melanie Purcell  
Finance Director  
City of Ashland | Finance  
20 East Main Street, Ashland, OR 97520  
541-488-5300 Office | Voice, TTY 800-735-2900 | 541-552-2059 fax

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**From:** Dean Silver [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 02, 2021 10:55 AM  
**To:** Melanie Purcell <melanie.purcell@ashland.or.us>  
**Subject:** RE: benefits inquiry

[EXTERNAL SENDER]  
Good morning Melanie,

That spreadsheet is very useful, thanks again.

I'm unclear on your first paragraph below. Are you saying that the represented group Department Head salaries ARE included in the average salary line?

It appears that the department heads' compensation is NOT part of union negotiations because they are management. Is that correct? How is their compensation agreed upon? Who negotiates with management on behalf of the city, and with whom do they negotiate? Each individual?

I see that the opengov positions report shows 299 lines, but the spreadsheet lists 234.32 FTE. What is the reason for that discrepancy? What's the current accurate count of FTEs?

I notice that the benefits for all of the councilors is identical, so can you tell me how that breaks down? Maybe I just didn't see it. If you could point me in the right direction.

I know this is a very busy time of year for you-- perhaps all year is busy for you! You have certainly inherited a complicated and fraught fiscal situation. Because I have seen you in several meetings now, I have confidence that you have the knowledge and ability to handle it with skill and grace.

Thanks so much for your help,  
Dean

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**From:** Melanie Purcell [<mailto:melanie.purcell@ashland.or.us>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 1, 2021 5:18 PM  
**To:** Dean Silver  
**Cc:** Budget Committee; Department\_Heads  
**Subject:** RE: benefits inquiry

Good afternoon Dean,

Attached is a break-out of the various employee groups including the benefits structures and average salaries. Department Head salaries are not included in the non-represented average salaries but instead are in their respective employment agreements. The salary schedules by position classification for all groups, including department heads, are on the City's website at [Union Contracts & Salaries - Human Resources - City of Ashland, Oregon](#).

Please note Workers' Compensation is calculated on a classification or category basis that reflects relative risk of positions according to the insurance industry. While the City reports the Unfunded Actuarial Liability as part of the overall Personnel Services expenses, it is tied to benefits already earned and is required to be paid regardless of the City's current staffing levels. It is calculated using current salaries by ORS but is not tied to current personnel; it is the accrued obligations already incurred by the City for past services that is not actuarially calculated to be covered by past contributions and ORS interest on investments. Employees are required to make a matching contribution for FICA/Medicare of 7.65% and contributions to healthcare coverage and PERS based on their respective units.

Hopefully, this addresses your request.

Have a wonderful weekend,  
Melanie

Melanie Purcell  
Finance Director  
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**From:** Dean Silver [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 22, 2021 6:41 PM  
**To:** Melanie Purcell <[melanie.purcell@ashland.or.us](mailto:melanie.purcell@ashland.or.us)>  
**Subject:** RE: benefits inquiry

[EXTERNAL SENDER]  
Hi Melanie,

Thanks for helping me with this. I understand that the budget book is the highest priority. I was hoping this would be something that would be easily pulled up.

To be clear, I am NOT interested in any of the individuals' specifics, but rather what is available for the various employment positions in general.

Looking forward to your response next week.

Thanks,  
Dean

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**From:** Melanie Purcell [<mailto:melanie.purcell@ashland.or.us>]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 22, 2021 1:30 PM

**To:** Tina Gray; Dean Silver  
**Subject:** RE: benefits inquiry  
**Importance:** Low

Good afternoon Dean,

Thank you for your interest. I can pull something together in a format that should address your questions. Unfortunately, it will need to wait until next week as we are immersed in getting the budget book put together for the Budget Committee and City Council meeting on Tuesday.

I'll reach out to you later next week with what I have and see if that works.

Have a great week,  
Melanie

Melanie Purcell  
Finance Director  
City of Ashland | Finance  
20 East Main Street, Ashland, OR 97520  
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**From:** Tina Gray <[Tina.Gray@ashland.or.us](mailto:Tina.Gray@ashland.or.us)>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 22, 2021 1:03 PM  
**To:** Dean Silver [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Melanie Purcell <[melanie.purcell@ashland.or.us](mailto:melanie.purcell@ashland.or.us)>  
**Subject:** RE: benefits inquiry

Hi Dean,

I am copying Melanie Purcell, our Finance Director, on this one. I'm not sure if we can break it down the way you suggest. Benefits are specific to the individual, and we may not be allowed to share because it reveals too much about the individual. (The health plan they are on and the number of family members covered, married vs. single, and PERS tier all impact the employee's total cost to the City). We generally use an average of about 45% above salary for benefit and payroll costs. The percentage is often higher for entry-level jobs and lower for higher-paid positions. As an example, for a salary of \$50,000, the City's total cost is going to be around \$72,500 ---with variation by employee.

**Benefit costs include:**

- Medical, Dental, Vision and HRA VEBA contribution
- Life insurance, long-term disability, deferred compensation match – and other fringe benefits by bargaining group.
- PERS Retirement (based on tier and job class) the PERS rate assessed to the City changes annually based on what PERS estimates is needed to fund current and expected retirements; it is not a cost tied directly to the individual employee. (The City has very few active Tier 1 employees).
- FICA (6%) and Medicare (1%) are mandatory payroll costs
- Workers' compensation and unemployment assessments also vary from year to year.

In your example, the City Council only receives \$350/year as a stipend. So, the City's total benefit-cost could be up to \$26,567.28 for full-family coverage if a council member covered their entire family.

For City Attorney, the top of the salary range is \$152,821, so anything above that amount reflects the benefit and payroll cost for the position.

I'm not sure we can show that data in a way that doesn't compromise the individual employees' circumstances. Two employees at the same salary point may have a different total compensation cost to the City.

I hope this helps,  
Tina

Tina Gray, *IPMA-SCP*  
*Human Resource Director*  
City of Ashland  
Human Resource Department  
20 East Main Street  
Ashland, OR 97520

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Fax: 541.488.5311

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**From:** Dean Silver [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 22, 2021 12:17 PM  
**To:** Tina Gray <[Tina.Gray@ashland.or.us](mailto:Tina.Gray@ashland.or.us)>  
**Subject:** RE: benefits inquiry

[EXTERNAL SENDER]  
Hi Tina,

I'm sorry if I wasn't clear. I'm interested in the dollar amount breakdown of benefits for the various positions. For example, I see that the councilors receive \$21,132.06 total benefits annually. How much of that dollar amount is health insurance, any other benefit, etc.? Likewise, the City Attorney receives \$247,242.05 total benefits. How much of that is health insurance, how much is PERS, how much is any other line item in those benefits? Likewise for all city employees.

To be clear, I am interested in the breakdown *per position*, not necessarily for any individual employee. I am also in the breakdown of city vs. employee contribution. I understand that may vary depending on each employee's length of service, so is there a formula that I can see to help me understand?

Is there some place I can find all of these data in tabular form?

I have found the breakdown of the *totals* for each benefit in Opengov, but not broken out by position. Perhaps I just don't know where to look.

Thanks for your help,  
Dean

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**From:** Tina Gray [<mailto:Tina.Gray@ashland.or.us>]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 22, 2021 9:17 AM  
**To:** Dean Silver  
**Cc:** Marisa Lehnerz  
**Subject:** RE: benefits inquiry  
**Importance:** Low

Sorry, just catching back up from weekend emails.

Are you looking for the employee cost-share or more detail about the plans? I have attached the plan details that most of the City currently has. (Police and Fire have a different health plan and cost-share through the end of their current contracts). The remaining groups at the City contribute 7.5%/month, and effective July 1, 2021, the employee cost-share increases to 10%.

The Mayor and Council do not receive a wage. They receive an annual stipend, so the City cannot collect a cost-share through payroll for the City Council. Those on the Council that elect health benefits have 100% city-paid benefits for their service to the community.

I hope this is helpful. Please feel free to reach out if you have other questions.

Sincerely,  
Tina Gray

Tina Gray, *IPMA-SCP*  
*Human Resource Director*  
City of Ashland  
Human Resource Department  
20 East Main Street  
Ashland, OR 97520

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**From:** Dean Silver [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 21, 2021 12:35 PM  
**To:** human\_resources\_division <[human\\_resources\\_division@ashland.or.us](mailto:human_resources_division@ashland.or.us)>  
**Subject:** benefits inquiry

[EXTERNAL SENDER]  
Hello,

I would like to learn the breakdown of the benefits given to our city employees, including the Mayor and Councilors. I have found the total amounts and the summary description, but am looking for the specifics of the individual components.

Please send me a link where I can find that info.

Thank you.



**City of Ashland**  
**Representative Annual Salary and Fringe Benefits**  
**As of July 1, 2021**

Union Group FTE Count	Non-Represented 50.57	Parks 33.75	IBEW Clerical 40	IBEW Electric 17	Laborers 41	Police 22	Firefighter 30
Salary - Average	87,262.00	61,789.00	63,087.00	93,445.00	61,253.00	84,835.00	103,911.00
Overtime - Last Fiscal Average	220.00	346.00	250.00	3,283.00	1,672.00	9,338.00	19,264.00
<b>Subtotal Salary</b>	<b>87,482.00</b>	<b>62,135.00</b>	<b>63,337.00</b>	<b>96,728.00</b>	<b>62,925.00</b>	<b>94,173.00</b>	<b>123,175.00</b>
<b>Legislated Benefits:</b>							
Workers Comp	812.00	645.00	381.00	1,254.00	1,492.00	1,603.00	2,464.00
City Portion PERS/OPSRP (ave 10.07%)	8,810.00	6,257.00	6,379.00	9,741.00	6,337.00	-	-
City Portion PF PERS/OPSRP (ave 15.33%)	-	-	-	-	-	14,343.00	18,785.00
City Portion FICA/Medicare tax (7.65%)	6,693.00	4,754.00	4,846.00	7,400.00	4,814.00	7,205.00	9,423.00
<b>Subtotal Legislated Benefits</b>	<b>16,315.00</b>	<b>11,656.00</b>	<b>11,606.00</b>	<b>18,395.00</b>	<b>12,643.00</b>	<b>23,151.00</b>	<b>30,672.00</b>
<b>Negotiated Benefits:</b>							
Employee PERS/OPSRP (6%)	5,249.00	3,729.00	3,801.00	5,804.00	3,776.00	5,651.00	7,391.00
Health/Dental Insurance	19,495.00	19,584.00	19,495.00	19,495.00	19,495.00	19,495.00	22,350.00
Life Insurance & Long Term Disability	148.00	112.00	112.00	112.00	97.00	123.00	100.00
Mercy Flights	-	-	70.00	70.00	70.00	-	70.00
Deferred comp	600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00	540.00	600.00	600.00
HRAVEBA	1,750.00	1,243.00	1,267.00	1,935.00	1,259.00	1,884.00	2,464.00
<b>Subtotal Negotiated Benefits</b>	<b>27,242.00</b>	<b>25,268.00</b>	<b>25,345.00</b>	<b>28,016.00</b>	<b>25,237.00</b>	<b>27,753.00</b>	<b>32,975.00</b>
<b>Sub-Total Benefits</b>	<b>43,557.00</b>	<b>36,924.00</b>	<b>36,951.00</b>	<b>46,411.00</b>	<b>37,880.00</b>	<b>50,904.00</b>	<b>63,647.00</b>
<b>Total Salary &amp; Benefits</b>	<b>131,039.00</b>	<b>99,059.00</b>	<b>100,288.00</b>	<b>143,139.00</b>	<b>100,805.00</b>	<b>145,077.00</b>	<b>186,822.00</b>
<b>% Ratio of Benefits/Salary</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>52%</b>

Below is a cost related to current positions but not a benefit to the occupant in the position

<b>Legislated Cost NOT a Benefit:</b>							
City Portion UAL PERS/OPSRP (15.15%)	13,254.00	9,414.00	9,596.00	14,655.00	9,534.00	14,268.00	18,662.00
<b>Subtotal Legislated Cost NOT Benefits</b>	<b>13,254.00</b>	<b>9,414.00</b>	<b>9,596.00</b>	<b>14,655.00</b>	<b>9,534.00</b>	<b>14,268.00</b>	<b>18,662.00</b>

Non- Represented Positions	FTE	Parks Positions	FTE	Clerical Positions	FTE	Electric Positions	FTE
ACCOUNTING & AUDIT MANAGER	1	ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST	1	AFN NETWORK TECHNICIAN	1	CONNECT - DISCONNECT	1
ACCOUNTING ANALYST	1	EXECUTIVE ANALYST	1	ASSOCIATE ENGINEER	1	ELECTRICAL WAREHOUSE	1
ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST	4	GOLF CLUB ASSISTANT	1	ASSOCIATE PLANNER	1	ELECTRICIAN	1
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	2	GOLF COURSE MANAGER	1	BUILDING INSPECTOR	2	GENERAL FORMAN	1
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE MANAGER	1	GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT	1	CLIMATE & ENERGY	1	LEAD WORKING LINE INSTALLER	1
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERVISOR	1	IRRIGATON SUPERVISOR	1	CODE COMPLIANCE SPECIALIST	1	LINE INSTALLER/SERVICE	5
AFN MANAGER	1	NATURE CENTER COORDINATOR	1	CONSERVATION SPECIALIST	3	LINE TRUCK DRIVER	1
ASSETS MANAGEMENT	1	NATURE CENTER MANAGER	1	COURT SERVICE CLERK	1.5	METER READER	1
ASSISTANT ATTORNEY	1	OFFICE ASSISTANT II	1.75	ENG PROJECT MANGER	1	METER RELAY TECHNICIAN	1
BAILIFF	0.07	OPEN SPACE & OUTER PARKS	1	ENG TECH III	1	TELECOMMUNICATION TECHNICIAN	3
Band Director	1	PARK TECHNICIAN I	10	ENGINEER PROJECT MANGER	1	TREE TRIMER	1
BUILDING OFFICIAL	1	PARK TECHNICIAN II	6	ENGINEERING TECH II	1	<b>Total Electrical Positions</b>	<b><u>17</u></b>
CERT	0.5	PARK TECHNICIAN III	1	FINANCIAL CLERK II	2		
CITY RECORDER	1	PARKS SUPERINDENT	1	GIS ANALYST	2		
COMPUTER SERVICE MANAGER	1	RECREATION MANAGER	1	HOUSING PROGRAM ANALYST (PARTIAL GRANT FUNDED)	1		
CUSTOMER SERVICES SUPERVISOR	1	RECREATION SUPERINDENT	1	INVESTIGATION SPECIAL	1		
DEPUTY POLICE CHIEF	1	SENIOR CENTER SPECIALIST	1	LEAD COURT SERVICE CLERK	1		
DEPUTY PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR	1	SENIOR SUPERINTENDENT	1	OFFICE ASSISTANT II	1		
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COORDINATOR	1	VOL & EVENT OPS	1	PERMIT TECHNICIAN	2		
DIVISION CHIEF - FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY	1	<b>Total Parks Positions</b>	<b><u>33.75</u></b>	PERMIT TECHNICIAN II	1		
DIVISION CHIEF - FOREST	1			POLICE RECORDS SPECIAL	2		
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	1	PARK DIRECTOR	1	PURCHASING SPECIAL	1		
FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES CORRINATOR	1			SENIOR ENGINEERING	1		
GIS MANAGER	1			SENIOR FINANCIAL CLERK	2		
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGER	1			SENIOR POLICE RECORD	1		
JUDGE	1			UB TECHNICIAN	3		
LIEUTENANT	1			USER SUPPORT TECHNICIAN	2.5		
MAINTENANCE SAFETY SUPERVISOR	1			WATER RESOURCE TECHNICIAN	1		
NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR	2			<b>Total Clerical Positions</b>	<b><u>40</u></b>		
PARALEGAL	1						
PLANNING MANAGER	1						
POLICE SERGEANT	5						
PUBLIC WORKS SUPERINTENDENT	1						
SENIOR ACCOUNTING ANALYST	1						
SENIOR INF ANALYST	1						
SENIOR INFORMATION ANALYST	1						
SENIOR PLANNER	2						
STREET SUPERVISOR	1						
WATER PLANT SUPERVIS	1						
WATER QUALITY SUPERVISOR	1						
WW COLLECTIONS SUPERVISOR	1						
WWWATER REUSE	1						
<b>Total Non Represented Positions</b>	<b><u>50.57</u></b>						
CITY ATTORNEY	1						
CITY MANAGER	1						
DEPUTY CITY MANAGER	1						
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	1						
DIRECTOR OF ELECTRIC	1						
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE	1						
FIRE CHIEF	1						
HUMAN RESOURCE DIRECTOR	1						
POLICE CHIEF	1						
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR	1						
<b>Leadership Team</b>	<b><u>10</u></b>						

<b>Laborers Positions</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Police Positions</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Fire Positions</b>	<b>FTE</b>
CEMETERY SEXTON	1	COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER	1	BATTALION CHIEF - PARAMEDIC	3
LUBE TECH	1	EVIDENCE & PROPERTY	1	CAPTAIN - PARAMEDIC	6
MECHANIC	4	POLICE OFFICER	8	ENGINEER - PARAMEDIC	6
METER READER/REPAIR	1	SENIOR POLICE OFFICER	12	FIREFIGHTER - BASIC	2
SENIOR PLANT OPERATOR	1	<b>Total Police Positions</b>	<u>22</u>	FIREFIGHTER - PARAMEDIC	13
SENIOR UTILITY WORKER	12			<b>Total Fire Positions</b>	<u>30</u>
SENIOR WW TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR	1				
UTILITY TECHN WW	1				
UTILITY TECHNICHIAN	1				
UTILITY WORKER I	4				
UTILITY WORKER II	7				
WATER QUALITY TECHNICIAN	2				
WATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR I	1				
WATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR II	2				
WW TREATMENT PLANT LAB TECHNICIAN	1				
WW TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR	1				
<b>Total Laborers Positions</b>	<u>41</u>				

<b>Non- Represented Positions</b>	<b>FTE</b>
ACCOUNTING & AUDIT MANAGER	1
ACCOUNTING ANALYST	1
ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST	4
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	2
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE MANAGER	1
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERVISOR	1
AFN MANAGER	1
ASSETS MANAGEMENT	1
ASSISTANT ATTORNEY	1
BAILIFF	0.07
Band Director	1
BUILDING OFFICIAL	1
CERT	0.5
CITY RECORDER	1
COMPUTER SERVICE MANAGER	1
CUSTOMER SERVICES SUPERVISOR	1
DEPUTY POLICE CHIEF	1
DEPUTY PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR	1
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COORDINATOR	1
DIVISION CHIEF - FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY	1
DIVISION CHIEF - FOREST	1
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	1
FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES CORR DINATOR	1
GIS MANAGER	1
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGER	1
JUDGE	1
LIEUTENANT	1
MAINTENANCE SAFETY SUPERVISOR	1
NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR	2
PARALEGAL	1
PLANNING MANAGER	1
POLICE SERGEANT	5
PUBLIC WORKS SUPERINTENDENT	1
SENIOR ACCOUNTING ANALYST	1
SENIOR INF ANALYST	1
SENIOR INFORMATION ANALYST	1
SENIOR PLANNER	2
STREET SUPERVISOR	1
WATER PLANT SUPERVIS	1
WATER QUALITY SUPERVISOR	1
WW COLLECTIONS SUPERVISOR	1
WW/WATER REUSE	1
<b>Total Non Represented Positions</b>	<b><u>50.57</u></b>
CITY ATTORNEY	1
CITY MANAGER	1
DEPUTY CITY MANAGER	1
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	1
DIRECTOR OF ELECTRIC	1
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE	1
FIRE CHIEF	1
HUMAN RESOURCE DIRECTOR	1
POLICE CHIEF	1
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR	1
<b>Leadership Team</b>	<b><u>10</u></b>

<b>Parks Positions</b>	<b>FTE</b>
ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST	1
EXECUTIVE ANALYST	1
GOLF CLUB ASSISTANT	1
GOLF COURSE MANAGER	1
GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT	1
IRRIGATION SUPERVISOR	1
NATURE CENTER COORDINATOR	1
NATURE CENTER MANAGER	1
OFFICE ASSISTANT II	1.75
OPEN SPACE & OUTER PARKS	1
PARK TECHNICIAN I	10
PARK TECHNICIAN II	6
PARK TECHNICIAN III	1
PARKS SUPERINTENDENT	1
RECREATION MANAGER	1
RECREATION SUPERINTENDENT	1
SENIOR CENTER SPECIALIST	1
SENIOR SUPERINTENDENT	1
VOL & EVENT OPS	1
<b>Total Parks Positions</b>	<u><u>33.75</u></u>
 PARK DIRECTOR	 1

<b>Clerical Positions</b>	<b>FTE</b>
AFN NETWORK TECHNICIAN	1
ASSOCIATE ENGINEER	1
ASSOCIATE PLANNER	1
BUILDING INSPECTOR	2
CLIMATE & ENERGY	1
CODE COMPLIANCE SPECIALIST	1
CONSERVATION SPECIALIST	3
COURT SERVICE CLERK	1.5
ENG PROJECT MANGER	1
ENG TECH III	1
ENGINEER PROJECT MANGER	1
ENGINEERING TECH II	1
FINANCIAL CLERK II	2
GIS ANALYST	2
HOUSING PROGRAM ANALYST (PARTIAL GRANT FUNDED)	1
INVESTIGATION SPECIAL	1
LEAD COURT SERVICE CLERK	1
OFFICE ASSISTANT II	1
PERMIT TECHNICIAN	2
PERMIT TECHNICIAN II	1
POLICE RECORDS SPECIAL	2
PURCHASING SPECIAL	1
SENIOR ENGINEERING	1
SENIOR FINANCIAL CLERK	2
SENIOR POLICE RECORD	1
UB TECHNICIAN	3
USER SUPPORT TECHNICIAN	2.5
WATER RESOURCE TECHNICIAN	1
<b>Total Clerical Positions</b>	<u>40</u>

<b>Electrical Positions</b>	<b>FTE</b>
CONNECT - DISCONNECT	1
ELECTRICAL WAREHOUSE	1
ELECTRICIAN	1
GENERAL FORMAN	1
LEAD WORKING LINE INSTALLER	1
LINE INSTALLER/SERVICE	5
LINE TRUCK DRIVER	1
METER READER	1
METER RELAY TECHNICIAN	1
TELECOMMUNICATION TECHNICIAN	3
TREE TRIMER	1
<b>Total Electrical Positions</b>	<u>17</u>

<b>Laborers Positions</b>	<b>FTE</b>
CEMETERY SEXTON	1
LUBE TECH	1
MECHANIC	4
METER READER/REPAIR	1
SENIOR PLANT OPERATOR	1
SENIOR UTILITY WORKER	12
SENIOR WW TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR	1
UTILITY TECHN WW	1
UTILITY TECHNICIAN	1
UTILITY WORKER I	4
UTILITY WORKER II	7
WATER QUALITY TECHNICIAN	2
WATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR I	1
WATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR II	2
WW TREATMENT PLANT LAB TECHNICIAN	1
WW TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR	1
<b>Total Laborers Positions</b>	<u>41</u>

<b>Police Positions</b>	<b>FTE</b>
COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER	1
EVIDENCE & PROPERTY	1
POLICE OFFICER	8
SENIOR POLICE OFFICER	12
<b>Total Police Positions</b>	<u>22</u>

<b>Fire Positions</b>	<b>FTE</b>
BATTALION CHIEF - PARAMEDIC	3
CAPTAIN - PARAMEDIC	6
ENGINEER - PARAMEDIC	6
FIREFIGHTER - BASIC	2
FIREFIGHTER - PARAMEDIC	13
<b>Total Fire Positions</b>	<u>30</u>

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Steven Crowthers [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 6, 2021 10:28 AM  
**To:** Finance  
**Subject:** Please increase the budget for recreational opportunities

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

- 1) expand the trails, support running and cycling events to draw tourists here for three days several times a year ( early spring, late fall) to capture the tourists for shoulder season!
- 2) expansion of the trails will increase the city's financial diversity leading to a safer more resilient economy! Fire season and the pandemic have made it abundantly clear we can't rely on Shakespeare and wine tasting. Just look at towns like Moab, Sedona, St. George and Durango: all thriving during this down turn!
- 3) green trails please: health and wellness for all ages and abilities. Not just us who run the sob and pine to palms!
- 4) take a look at the social and financial demographic who tend to value trails that are close to town with good connectivity!!!
- 5) we need a Recreation Center with a pool that is affordable.

Thank you,

Steven Crowthers MSN, CRNA, BSN  
[REDACTED]



**From:** Natalie Thomason  
**Sent:** Friday, April 9, 2021 2:12 PM  
**To:** Holly Wanless Cochran  
**Subject:** RE: Survey errors

Hello Holly,

Thank you for reaching out to us regarding the survey and noticing the errors, I really appreciate the feedback. I have gone ahead and made some changes as you suggested and the survey should now be more user friendly. We unfortunately cannot change or add any answers to the first question you mentioned as the survey has already started, but we have made this question optional in order to better represent the data. In the second error that you discussed we have changed it to better explain what we are asking.

I apologize that such errors were in this survey and again appreciate your feedback.

In regards to your question on the nature of input we are seeking for this week we decided to get some service quality feedback as part of the series of questions. They all provide the Budget Committee and City Council with points of information regarding the success or need for improvement in all service areas. Below is a full list of the questions that have been or will be presented for public input:

- 1) How closely do you follow the news about Ashland City government and the City’s finances including the budget:
  - a. very closely,
  - b. somewhat closely,
  - c. not too closely, or
  - d. not at all?
  
- 2) What do you feel are the three biggest concerns currently facing the City of Ashland? Please choose your top three responses:
  - a. Homeless Services
  - b. Affordable Housing
  - c. Streets or other Infrastructure
  - d. Public safety (Fire and Police Response)
  - e. City finances
  - f. Government and city council oversight
  - g. Parks commission oversight
  - h. Fire prevention/ Emergency management
  - i. Climate Change/ Environmental Sustainability
  - j. Diversity, equity, and inclusion activities for the community
  - k. Local economy/ Business opportunities
  - l. Other
  
- 3) Overall, would you say you approve or disapprove of the job being done by the City of Ashland?
  
- 4) How satisfied are you with the services listed? (Very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, very dissatisfied)

Service	Very satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
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Providing police protection and crime prevention in your neighborhood				
Supporting the development of housing affordable to working families				
Preparing for natural disasters				
Using technology for communication and to improve access to information and City services				
Maintaining public areas like street medians				
Maintaining public parks and related facilities				
Maintaining streets and roads				

5) Would you say you approve or disapprove of the job being done by the City of Ashland in managing local tax dollars?

6) How satisfied are you with the services listed? (Very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, very dissatisfied)

Service	Very satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Providing building code enforcement				
Enforcing traffic laws to protect the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers				
Promoting environmental sustainability; pursuing climate sustainability				
Providing diversity, equity, and inclusion activities for the community				
Providing adequate fire services in your neighborhood				
Providing adequate medical response services in your neighborhood				
Communicating with residents on upcoming changes in the City				

7) In your personal opinion, do you think there is a great need, some need, little need, or no real need for additional funds to provide the level of City services that Ashland residents need and want?

8) How important is it to you personally that the City allocate funding to this service (extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important)?

Service	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not too important
Providing police protection and crime prevention in your neighborhood				
Supporting the development of housing affordable to working families				
Maintaining/ improving streets and roads				
Providing building and other code enforcement				
Enforcing traffic laws to protect the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers				

Preparing for natural disasters				
Maintaining public parks				
Expanding public parks facilities				
Promoting environmental sustainability				
Diversity, equity, and inclusion activities for the community				
Providing adequate fire services in your neighborhood				
Providing adequate medical response services in your neighborhood				
Communicating with residents on upcoming changes in the City				
Using technology for communication and to improve access to information and City services				
Maintaining public areas like street medians and downtown Plaza				

9) Over the last two years, have you had contact with a City department or agency?

10) With which City department did you have contact?

- a. City Administration
- b. Finance Department
- c. Police Department
- d. Fire Department
- e. Public Works (Water, Sewer, Engineering, Stormwater)
- f. Electric
- g. Planning, Building, and Community Development
- h. Ashland Fiber Network (AFN)
- i. City Council/ City Recorder

11) Would you say that overall, you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not too satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the service you received from the City of Ashland?

12) How do you rate the following issues? (Extremely serious problem, a very serious problem, a somewhat serious problem, or not too serious a problem)

Issue	Extremely serious problem	Very serious problem	Somewhat serious problem	Not too serious a problem
Crime in general				
Amount paid in taxes				
Amount paid for utilities including water, sewer, stormwater, electric, and internet				
Cost of housing				
Condition of local parks and recreation facilities				
Waste and inefficiency in City government				
Insufficient homeless services and/or facilities				
Condition of City streets				
Other				

13) Over the past three years, do you think the following have increased, stayed the same, or decreased in the City of Ashland?

Circumstance	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased
Crime, in general			
Homeless activity			
Homeless services			
Property crimes			
Person crimes			
Structure fires			
Medical emergency responses			
Planning/building activities			
Communications from the City			
Value of City services for taxes/fees/charges paid			
Environmental protection activities			
Diversity, equity, and inclusion activities for the community			

14) In your opinion, what is the most important thing the City of Ashland can do to improve City services for the people who live here? (pick top three)

- a. Expand City services
  - i. Street maintenance
  - ii. Homeless shelters and services
  - iii. Law enforcement and crime prevention
  - iv. Fire prevention and response
  - v. Emergency medical response
  - vi. Parks facilities and maintenance
- b. Support the development of affordable housing
- c. Local economy/ business opportunities/ business support
- d. Diversity, equity, and inclusion activities for the community
- e. City government transparency and communication
- f. Environmental impact/ climate change
- g. Reduce services and related taxes/charges/fees

15) Which areas of service do you think the City of Ashland should explore as part of a regional approach? Mark as many as apply.

- a. Parks & Recreation
- b. Fire Protection
- c. Medical Response (Ambulance)
- d. Emergency Management
- e. Law Enforcement
- f. Court
- g. Water and/or Wastewater
- h. None of these
- i. Other

I am hoping this gives you a look at the full spectrum of questions we are trying to get input on.

Once again we really appreciate your feedback and welcome any other questions and comments that you may have, please feel free to reach out to us again.

Thank you,

**Natalie Thomason**

*Administrative Assistant*

*Risk Management Claims Intake*

City of Ashland Finance

20 East Main Street, Ashland, OR 97520

541-552-2012 Direct Voice, TTY 800-735-2900 | 541-552-2059 fax

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**From:** Holly Wanless Cochran [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 8, 2021 11:41 PM  
**To:** Finance <finance@ashland.or.us>  
**Subject:** Survey errors

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

I just answered your very odd survey about the budget process. Someone needs to be more careful about making these survey pages. On this page:

[https://www.ashland.or.us/Page.asp?NavID=13461#peak\\_democracy](https://www.ashland.or.us/Page.asp?NavID=13461#peak_democracy)

a) If you choose "No" for the first option (did not have contact with a City Dept), you are still required to choose a city dept from the next list of options. This will skew your data about which depts are contacted most frequently, unless you eliminate all the No answers up front. Either that list needs to have a "not applicable" option, or it should disappear if the user selects 'No' above it.

b) The last option has this mangled-English question:  
How satisfied are you received from the City of Ashland?

I assume it meant "satisfied with the services" or "satisfied with the response" or something - remember to proofread before going live!

What do either of these questions, which seem designed to measure customer satisfaction on a very gross level, have to do with the budget process? I was expecting questions about budget priorities.

--Holly

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Dean Silver [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 11, 2021 9:58 PM  
**To:** City Council; Budget Committee  
**Subject:** the mystery of the missing reports and unanswered questions

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Dear Mayor, Councilors, and CBC members,

I want to share my experiences dealing with City Hall during the past few weeks with you. Some of you have seen some of this before, but I present it here in a more continuous narrative form. I hope you can do something to help rectify the problems noted below, both internally in City Hall, and in their dealings with the citizens.

I have been attempting to look into the City's finances during this budget season in order to better understand the issues and challenges facing the City during these difficult times. I have run into several unexpected roadblocks that are hard to understand and extremely concerning.

First, essential information has gone missing from the City website. Previously, the taxpayers were able to access a "position report" that lists the job title, salary, benefits, and total compensation of every City employee. On 4/8, I noticed that it was no longer available. I emailed the Finance Director asking for an explanation. This is what she wrote, in part:

"We pulled the report because we found errors and data we had trouble corroborating. We will update it and replace it in the next week or so."

As a former small business owner, I found that answer to be unacceptable. If these errors are so complex that it might take a "week or so" to correct, one could presume that they might be serious. If there are serious errors in payroll information, those errors would necessarily propagate throughout the City's finances. During this time of crafting the budget for the next two years, it is essential that accurate accounting information is available to the Budget Committee, the City Council, and the taxpayers, to say nothing of the Accounting Department itself in order to conduct the City's business. I am grateful that any errors present have been identified, because accuracy in accounting is absolutely essential. I trust that the Finance Director will be able to give the Citizen's Budget Committee a full explanation of what has gone wrong with this data in the Finance Department, and how it has been repaired. It is essential that the Committee has accurate financial data in hand now.

Second, I noticed that the staff directory, which lists all current employees and their positions, was also missing from the City website. When I asked the Human Resources Director about this, she responded, in part:

"... we removed the department lists from our website. As I recall, it was a recommendation from our Risk Management Consultants, and our IT Team fully supported it because of the volume of targeted scam emails to city employees."

This is another inadequate, unacceptable response. This information should be publicly available; these are public employees. If contact information was a security concern, it alone could have been easily removed. Virtually every municipality makes staffing information available. It would appear that efforts are being made to suppress this information from the public.

Finally, because the staff information was no longer available, I requested several items from the HR department on 4/2. The requests were rather complex, and I was told that they would be treated as a Public Records Request. Fair enough. So on 4/5, I modified my request to read exactly thus:

- "1- A list of positions with their corresponding salaries and benefits from FY 2017. Names would be helpful, but are not necessary.
- 2- A list of current employees and their positions. I do not need any personal or contact information, just names and positions."

These are basic reports that any HR department in the world should be able to produce within a few minutes. There is no research necessary. Yet, as of 4/11, a full business week later, I had not received any response to my modified request, nor my original request. I cannot help but wonder why my request has not been fulfilled, or even addressed as a Public Records Request. The implication again is that they do not want this basic public information to be released. I want to know why, or if there is another justifiable explanation.

It is not unreasonable to expect full transparency, accountability and responsiveness from our city government. In fact it should be demanded by every taxpayer.

I hope that in the future, the City will make all public information easily available to the taxpayers so that they do not have to make special requests as I have, sometimes only to have them unfulfilled.

Thanks for your consideration,

*Dean Silver*

[Redacted signature block]

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Ellen Alphonso [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 11:16 AM  
**To:** City Council; Budget Committee  
**Subject:** Fwd: the mystery of the missing reports and unanswered questions - 2

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

FYI, my response. Didn't hit reply all.

On Mon, Apr 12, 2021 at 10:58 AM Ellen Alphonso [REDACTED] wrote:

Mr. Silver,

To clarify, "external" or more officially, independent auditors gain assurance that the financial information provided by the city is accurate within a materiality threshold by performing a combination of procedures, including review of an organization's internal controls (including review of the approvals of source data and the calculation process of final numbers), substantive testing (in which source data is compared, recalculated and tied to final results) and substantive procedures (in which auditors create expectations of what final results should be based on historical data, benchmarking of similar size organizations and comparison of market/economic conditions). At any rate, even if auditor do not "take reliance" on internal controls (what I believe you are deeming an internal audit), auditing standards require the walkthroughs and understanding of the internal control system as part of their planning process. At no circumstance would a prudent auditor take numbers wholly provided by the city without verifying and understanding the internal controls that produced those numbers. Not to editorialize the municipal audit process at the city, but even a systemic error, such as you suggest, would most probably have been revealed either from the internal control walkthroughs, fund transfer testing or Oregon Minimum Standard Testing. The individuals reviewing the internal processes and controls are independent- not within the government staff.

Hope this assists,  
Ellen Alphonso

On Mon, Apr 12, 2021 at 10:15 AM Dean Silver [REDACTED] wrote:

Thanks for reading and taking the time to reply, Ellen. I appreciate your concern.

To be clear, I said nothing and implied nothing about fraud, just anomalies. It could be a simple error that propagated through the system. Anyone can make an error, and often they're not immediately caught. It could be a series of errors that compounded. It could be due to someone misinterpreting a rule. It could even be a matter of incompetence. Or something else that I haven't considered.

I don't know and have no way to find out, not being an experienced accountant and not having access to the data. But if it's serious enough to pull data from public view during budget deliberations, and is expected to take days, not hours, for the finance department to correct, then I suggest it demands scrutiny.

I'm glad that you mentioned auditing. I watched my first Audit Commission Meeting this year. I noticed several things, not the least of which was Melanie's statement that all the funds are "in good health" with the exception of streets and insurance. A different message than the one presented at the CBC meeting.

She also said that the City was shifting from revenue based calculation of fund balances to an expenditure based calculation. I know generally, but not exactly what that means, but I wonder if that could be the source of the "errors and data we had trouble corroborating". I also know that the City is transitioning from the use of the Central Services Fund to Internal Service Funds. Another possible source for errors.

Since you're an accountant, Ellen, perhaps you could explain two questions for me. Another takeaway for me from that MAC meeting was that the audit performed was what I would describe as an "external" audit. By that I mean, the auditors are provided summary numbers corresponding to the chart of accounts that they reconcile, and that those numbers are provided by City staff. This, as opposed to what I would call an "internal" audit, where the source data and calculations that yield those summary numbers are examined. Am I correct in that description? And second, is what I describe as an internal audit ever performed on the City's books, where the source data and calculations are checked for accuracy by someone other than City staff?

Thanks again for your help.

-Dean

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**From:** Accounting [mailto: ]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 7:32 AM  
**To:** Dean Silver  
**Cc:** [council@ashland.or.us](mailto:council@ashland.or.us); Budget Committee  
**Subject:** Re: the mystery of the missing reports and unanswered questions - 2

Dean,

As an auditor, I would caution you from assuming fraudulent activity within a municipal government, particularly within payroll systems and fund transfers. All Oregon governments are subject to annual rigorous audit financial and budgetary testing. Oregon Minimum Standards testing would have easily found anomalies such as you speculate and the results of that testing is available in annual financial reports. Our goals for a financially balanced, transparent budget are the same, and the best tool for that is fact based information and collaborative efforts over the budget.

Sincerely,

Ellen Alphonso

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 11, 2021, at 10:31 PM, Dean Silver [REDACTED] wrote:

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Dear Mayor, Councilors, and CBC members,

First a fact, then a bit of speculation. I trust you will be able to get to the bottom of this and find out what's really going on by asking the right questions at your next meeting.

I just noticed Saturday night that even more data is missing on OpenGov. The Ending Fund Balance information on OpenGov only lists data up to 2018-2019 Actual. Where is 2019-2020 Actual? Where is 2021 year to date? Also notice that it was "updated 15 Apr, 2020". Why a year ago, when some other data on OpenGov is updated as of yesterday?

I'm pretty sure those numbers were there previously, but I can't swear to it. I didn't take screenshots, not expecting data to go missing. And my memory isn't even close to perfect, so I could be mistaken. But regardless, WHY AREN'T THOSE NUMBERS THERE? If we don't know last year's ending fund balances, and current fund balances, we don't have ESSENTIAL information.

I have a theory. It may be totally off base, but it could explain what's going on. It may be that Melanie Purcell, our new Finance Director, has discovered some serious anomalies in the City's previous financial reporting, or in the ways funds have been used, transferred, etc. Therefore she had to pull the compensation info and Annual fund balances until she could figure out what's going on and reconcile the data.

Remember, her statement was "We pulled the report because we found errors and data we had trouble corroborating." And that it would take some time to repost the data. Not an easy fix.

I hope that Melanie is able to correct those errors... and that those errors haven't done any damage to the City's finances. Try to find out, please.

Thanks for helping.

*Dean Silver*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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**From:** gwen davies [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 11, 2021 2:27 PM  
**To:** Finance  
**Subject:** CBC purpose

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

To all members of the CBC committee.

Please read the letter to the editor from Ashland Aces' treasurer Sue Wilson in the Tribune today, Sunday April 11, 2021.. I suspect it has been submitted to you already. She points out the obvious.

Please have all members review the law covering the purpose of the CBC....to submit a balanced budget.

Since all members of the CC and the Mayor are part of the CBC already, they can immediately act to change policies and put us on a path toward financial stability. If some members are struggling with comprehending the responsibilities of the committee they serve on, I am sure there are others who could step in. Perhaps someone in Salem could help orient those members.

My advice: Fund the essentials first. Deal with water security, waste water management and expenses, replacing old sewer pipes, keeping our infrastructure up, replenishing the reserve fund, renegotiating contracts, eliminate the outrageous perks some staff have, and meet our MOST ESSENTIAL NEEDS. Of course I include police, fire, and emergency evacuation planning. Figure out the way to financial health. CC is right there. They can jump into action, change policies or enact ordinances immediately to resolve our crises. Put together a balanced budget that does as much as possible to get us back to financial solvency as soon as possible. Review and reduce the overspending that has put us in this position.

Some have been elected to office because of their dedication to making these course corrections. Listen to them.

Do not assist the Parks Department in setting up a fiefdom. Do not sell or transfer property or other funds that are needed to cover essentials.. Remember we have issues in our Schools too..and although they are independent they are another huge challenge. What we spend on our schools comes out of our pockets too.

Finally, I hear from those who comb the public record, that essential information is disappearing and the public cannot get information they need to be responsible citizens and voters. I hear reports that more and more categories are being removed. This is the critical time for the public to participate and all information needs to be accessible. I would think there are legal issues in this and there certainly are "optics." Return all information so the public can see it and participate in this crucial budget process.

Thank you Gwen Davies



**From:** Dave Kanner [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 10:16 AM  
**To:** Finance  
**Subject:** 4/13/21 Budget Committee Testimony

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Members of the Budget Committee -

I write to you today to express my serious concern about numerous items in the proposed 2021-23 budget. I believe these items deserve serious skepticism, if not outright rejection.

By way of introduction, my name is Dave Kanner. I am a resident of and taxpayer in the City of Ashland. I am also the former city administrator, as well as the former county administrator in Deschutes County and deputy county administrator in Jackson County. That is, I am a resident with much more in-depth knowledge of public budgeting and finance than the average Ashland resident. I also offer the caveat that my comments are based on what I read in the budget message. I've have not delved deeply into the numbers.

1. The projected deficit in the General Fund, in particular the projected decline in revenues in FY '23, should be met with deep skepticism. Projected deficits are not unusual. They are normal. Absolutely, 100% normal. Take a look at any of Ashland's budget documents over the last ten years (or longer) and they will routinely show deep General Fund deficits in the outer years. That's because these projections assume that expenses will rise faster than revenues and that the city will spend every penny of projected expenditure while collecting no more than projected revenue. What happens in fact is that the city under-spends and over-collects and the deficit disappears. (Oregon local budget law actually encourages locals governments to overestimate expenditures and underestimate revenues.) The city is in an unusual position today because the pandemic negatively impacted tourism-related revenue streams, but Ashland will receive \$4.4 million from the American Rescue Plan, at least some of which can be used to backfill tourism-related revenue losses and COVID-related expenses in Police and Fire. What has happened over the past year is a one-time bump in the road, not a long-term structural problem.

2. The projection of a decline in General Fund revenue in FY '23 is very dubious. Major General Fund resources will not decline and in some cases will grow. Property tax revenue will increase by at least 3%, electric user tax will likely not decline and transient occupancy tax should rebound to pre-pandemic levels as the Shakespeare Festival re-opens next year. If I'm reading the budget message correctly, staff is proposing to decrease franchise fee contributions from city utilities next year and dedicate franchise fee revenues to Roads. I believe both of these tactics are extremely unwise, as I will discuss below. Please do not reduce franchise fees and leave all franchise fees in the General Fund. (The argument that franchise fees are payment for use of the right-of-way and should therefore be spent on right-of-way maintenance could have been written by utility industry lobbyists and should be rejected.)

3. The General Fund will also grow under the proposal to eliminate the Central Services Fund and move expenditures and resources that previously went into the CSF into the General Fund. This is a fairly transparent scheme to convert dedicated and restricted revenues into unrestricted

revenues. Unless there is some measure taken to ensure that operating departments will pay no more than actual cost of internal services, this idea should be rejected. Put another way, if this is such a good idea, why doesn't every city do this? (I will acknowledge that there are some cities in Oregon that do it this way, but they tend to be very small and have few employees.)

4. The proposals to funnel 98% of Food & Beverage Tax collections to Parks and to allocate to Parks a fixed portion of property tax collections are horrible, terrible ideas and should be rejected. First, F&B tax. The F&B tax can be used for only three things: wastewater treatment debt, street maintenance (specifically the pavement management program) and parks capital projects ("acquisition, planning, development, repair and rehabilitation" of parks). F&B tax cannot be used for Parks Department general operations, nor should it be. Because the F&B tax sunsets in 2030 with no guarantee of renewal, it should be considered one-time revenue and be used only for one-time purposes, not for ongoing operations. That's Finance 101. I authored the 2016 amendment to the F&B ordinance that directed money to Roads and increased the contribution to Parks. In its original iteration, the ordinance allowed F&B to be spent on operations. The council voted to amend the language to disallow spending on operations and limit it to capital projects. What's more, the ordinance clearly states that F&B can only be used for the three purposes previously stated, "unless other purposes are approved by a Council-adopted ordinance enacted by a vote of the Ashland electorate." Parks may have capital needs, but they are likely not equivalent to 98% of F&B collections. It's also highly questionable as to whether the city should be acquiring and developing new parks if the money is not there to maintain what we already have. A better idea would be to continue to channel F&B revenue to Roads and leave franchise fees in the General Fund, but limit the F&B appropriation to Roads to an amount equal to franchise fee collections. The balance of what's left after that appropriation can be given to Parks capital projects.

Next, the idea of channeling a fixed portion of property tax collections to Parks should be rejected. The city did this from 1998 to 2013 before abandoning it for good reasons that I'll not go into. Parks is, for all intents and purposes, a General Fund department. (I know the Parks Commission will blanch at that description, but Parks is in fact dependent on city General Fund dollars.) Why should it, alone among General Fund departments, get a fixed percentage of property tax collections? Why not Police? Or Fire? Parks should have to make its case for General Fund dollars in each budget cycle, as other General Fund functions do, and then live within the means appropriated by the Budget Committee.

5. While the idea of reducing franchise fee payments from city utilities to the General Fund, presumably for the purpose of allowing utility rates to remain flat for one year, is noble in its intent, the timing is wrong and it will unnecessarily harm the General Fund which is supposedly in an existential crisis. I'd recommend postponing this tactic until FY 2024, when the AFN debt is paid off, thus creating a windfall of sorts in the General Fund and the utility funds that would offset a year with no rate increases. I understand the pressure to do something NOW, but again, the timing isn't right.

In closing, let me say I know all too well that you have an extraordinarily difficult job in front of you. I do not envy you. However, every municipal budget consists of "gotta haves" and "wanna haves." Until or unless the Budget Committee and City Council takes on the difficult task of clearly identifying the wanna haves and cleaving them from the budget, these budget stresses will continue well into the future.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,

Dave Kanner