

**Budget Committee Meeting
Agenda
May 6, 2009 6:00pm
Civic Center Council Chambers, 1175 East Main Street**

CALL TO ORDER

The budget meeting was called to order at 6:10 pm on Wednesday, May 6, 2009 in Council Chambers at 1175 East Main Street, Ashland Oregon.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Stromberg was present. Committee members Chapman, Douma, Everson, Gregorio, Heimann, Jackson, Navickas, Silbiger, Slattery, Thompson and Voisin were present. Boenheim and Lemhouse were absent.

STAFF PRESENT: MARTHA BENNETT, CITY ADMINISTRATOR
LEE TUNEBERG, ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES/FINANCE DIRECTOR
ADAM HANKS, PROJECT MANAGER/STRATEGIC PLANNING
BILL MOLNAR, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
MIKE BROOMFIELD, BUILDING OFFICIAL
BRANDON GOLDMAN, SENIOR PLANNER
TERRY HOLDERNESS, POLICE CHIEF
GAIL ROSENBERG, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
COREY FALLS, POLICE LIEUTENANT
BRYN MORRISON, ACCOUNT REPRESENTATIVE
MELISSA HUHTALA, ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of Minutes from previous meeting dated:

4/23/2009 Budget Committee Meeting

Everson/Douma ms to approve the minutes. All Ayes.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, CDBG PAGE 3-101 through 3-110

Community Development Director Bill Molnar was joined with Building Official, Mike Broomfield, Senior Planner, Brandon Goldman and Project Manager/Strategic Planning, Adam Hanks to present the Community Development budget presentation.

Mr. Molnar discussed the budget over time. The overall budget for Community Development Department is 11.5% reduction from what was adopted last year (see attached). There is a proposed reduction of 17% in the Building Division and a 9% reduction in the Planning Division.

Mr. Molnar explained the break down of 48% salaries and benefits and 52% materials and services for the proposed 2010 budget (see attached). Due to block grant funds Community

Development gets an annual entitlement of \$200,000 a year. Community Development rewards the grant money to projects however; when a project is commenced the monies are carried over. There is a line item in materials and services for community development block grant funds and have two years of allocations that has been carried over. Mr. Molnar does not anticipate that the money will be given out this year.

Mr. Molnar gave an overview of the upcoming work for 2010 (see attached). The Croman Mill Site Redevelopment plan resulted in a detailed master plan which needs to be refined. The Completion of Clay Street affordable housing projects has two phases. Phase one involves the 16 unit housing authority project. The second phase is 1.2 acres that the city housing division will look at and create designs for that piece of property. The Riparian and Wetland Ordinance projects are pending until passed by Council. For the Transit Oriented Development Overlay Community Development is looking at a zoning technique. The Develop Implementation Strategy for the 20 acre Railroad Property. The master plans are still being looked at.

Mr. Molnar went over the trends for 2010 (see attached). New residential and commercial development is forecasted to remain slow. Building activity has picked up over the last six weeks there has been an increase in permit activity. Long term developments are secure based on the overall quality of the community. There is interest in promoting green development and green building practices.

Mr. Molnar discussed Community Development's matrix analysis (see attached). Mr. Molnar stated that the matrix was divided by division. In the planning division most programs are related to state and local codes and regulation mandates that Community Development is required by state law to process planning actions and make sure the comprehensive plans are updated by state requirements.

The Committee questioned what the materials and services charges were for the planning division. The materials and services charges and fees are \$300,000 which is 60% of the division's materials and services. Mr. Molnar answered the miscellaneous charges and fees are central service charges, AFN debt, and debt on the Community Development Building.

The Committee questioned why housing programs are listed as one of the highest criteria's. Mr. Molnar stated that it is a federal requirement. Community Development will be responsible to monitor projects for the future. The Committee continued to discuss the criteria ranking for the housing program, some felt that since it is a federal mandate then it should be highest priority, others felt it should be lower.

Ms. Bennett explained that there will be disagreements regarding the matrix and it is good to have discussion about it.

Mr. Molnar continued with the matrix. Support for local economic health was the focus. One key factor heard from local businesses that were planning to expand had concerns in the availability of housing. He explained that when dealing with Ashland's economic health the long term planning is crucial for the quality of life in Ashland. He stated that the environmental protection in Ashland is above mandated levels, Ashland is a culture that looks for standards above the minimums. A local compliance program is necessary.

The Committee questioned what the thresholds are for low income housing on an individual and family basis. Mr. Goldman answered that affordable housing ranges from a family of four making \$20,000 a year or less or an individual making \$16,000 a year or less. If a household is paying more than 30% of their income on housing costs then that is considered over burdened.

Mr. Molnar discussed significant budget changes (see attached). Community Development has made. In January a building inspector position was eliminated. He explained that the Community Development Department has been working with other departments to try and redistribute responsibilities due to the staff decrease.

The Committee questioned if Community Development feels that the budget process is adequately flexible and if the demand on the planning department grows fast enough that the Community Development Department will be able to get adequate staff within a year. Mr. Molnar answered that if there is an influx in permits Community Development will be able to get the Building Department to leverage some part time help. Mr. Molnar stated that Community Development has the ability to adapt.

The Committee stated that there is a huge demand for public process whether it is long range or immediate applications. The levels of expectations are high in Ashland.

Mr. Molnar stated that if planning applications steadily start coming in Community Development has the ability to respond. Long-range projects will have to be revisited and possibly add staff.

The Committee questioned reductions made. Mr. Molnar discussed the reduction in planning activity that happened in February; about 6 commercial projects have been reduced. Overall planning activity in general is consistent in smaller commercial projects because of the historic district we live in. The smaller projects still tend to take a large amount of staff time to evaluate. He stated that Community Development could look at additional staff reductions but it is important to maintain current development activities and work on the long term projects that will help the City in the long run.

The Committee stated that it is hard to know how much staffing is required for Community Development to preserve the quality of the Community. It is a difficult balancing act. Long range planning is very important.

Public Input-none

POLICE

PAGE 3-43 through 3-54

Police Chief, Terry Holderness presented the Police Departments Budget. Chief Holderness discussed budget over time (see attached). There have been significant increases in the budget since FY 2006-07. Since then there has been money saved due to salary decreases. He stated that 34% of budget is materials and services about 4% of that is controllable such as consumables, trainings and travel. 66% of budget is salaries and benefits.

Chief Holderness discussed the Police Departments challenges and goals for next year (see slide). One goal is to reduce completion time for cases assigned to the investigations unit, the Police Department gets a lot of complaints due to the time it takes for an investigation to be completed however, there are only 3 detectives assigned to the Police Department which is not enough. He stated that the Police Department would like to maintain or reduce priority one

response times with fewer officers. Currently the Police Department is three officers short. A way to reduce response time is by implementing GPS on all marked vehicles.

Chief Holderness discussed the completion of reaccreditation process. This is important to complete to insure that the Police Department is consistent in Department practices. This is done every three years. Accreditation has the potential to reduce liability.

Chief Holderness went over the Police Department matrix (see attached).

Chief Holderness discussed significant budget changes (see attached). The Police Department reduced overtime by \$35,000. The replacement time for vehicles has been extended to four years opposed to three years.

Chief Holderness explained other changes for the Community Service Officer (CSO). Subpoena service is a high priority because if subpoenas served papers are not filed. This function will now be done by the Community Service Officer, which will free officer's time to do more important things. Another high priority is missing person follow up which is required by state law. The CSO will now be handling the paperwork. Code compliance issues will also be handled differently. Abandoned vehicles on roadways and private property will be taken care of promptly if a safety issue is involved.

Chief Holderness discussed that records will maintain or increase coverage at the Contact Station. There has been a reduction in crime by 47% in the plaza partially due to the Contact Station being downtown. Records clerks will remain at the Contact Station so an officer can be on live duty.

The Committee questioned if volunteers could be used at the contact station. Chief Holderness answered yes, and the Police Department is looking at a grant to put someone at the contact station.

Chief Holderness explained that the Police Department will no longer take cases on misdemeanor part two crimes that have a low probability of solving the cases. The Police Department will also stop investigating non criminal non injury traffic collisions.

The Committee questioned the priorities for reinstating the School Resource Officer (SRO). Mr. Holderness stated that the Police Department is working with the district to find ways when there is adequate staffing so using overtime will not be an issue to get an officer to the schools once a week. The Police Department has put in for a Federal Grant to gain another officer.

The Committee questioned what would be involved in adding staff to get the grant? Chief Holderness answered that it would involve adding an additional person and get the person trained which would take a year.

The Committee questioned how some of the proposed state cuts in mental health could affect the ability for responses to those cases. Chief Holderness answered that the Police Department will spend more time dealing with mental health issues of the City.

The Committee questioned how much money is spent dealing with drug issues. Chief Holderness stated that it is not as much money as one would think. The Police Departments does not spend a lot of time looking for marijuana. The Police Department Regionalizes all major narcotic investigations.

The Committee questioned how the City will know when no more law enforcement can be cut. Chief Holderness explained that if crime goes up that's a bad sign if clearance rate goes down then too much has been cut. Also response time goes up then cuts have gone too far.

The Committee questioned what constitutes an emergency. Chief Holderness answered that an emergency is a call where if they do not respond immediately someone is at risk of injury and property is being damaged or stolen.

The Committee questioned the process of a new hire. Chief Holderness stated that Ashland is competitive when hiring people. Two years ago the Police Department went through 2 processes and couldn't find anyone that met the standards. In Oregon the DPS will not accept a person unless hired by an agency.

Public input-none

FIRE

PAGE 3-55 through 3-66

The Committee thanked Interim Fire Chief Langston for his presence and service.

Interim Fire Chief, Larry Langston, was joined with Division Chief, Greg Case, and Division Chief, Margueritte Hickman, to present the Fire Departments Budget.

Chief Langston discussed the Fire Department's budget over time (see attached). Langston referred the budget as a maintenance budget. The budget met the goal of 3% reduction. Langston went over the budget distribution (see attached). The contracts that are 4% of the budget are the requirements from OSHA on testing ladders, hose, and also radio contracts.

Chief Langston stated that the budget met the needs of the department for important maintenance aspects. The Fire Department has no reserves built in the budget.

Chief Langston stated that OSHA conducted an inspection and found that the quality of equipment is in good shape.

Chief Langston discussed the upcoming work for 2010 (see attached). The Fire Department will aim to meet performance objectives of the standards of cover. The Fire Department will be on location 90% if the time within 8 minutes for Emergency Medical Service (EMS) in the city of Ashland and be on location within 5 minutes 90% of the time for fires.

The Committee questioned life threatening emergencies if a 4 minute response rate is necessary for there not to be brain damage why the 8 minute response rate and questioned how this type of situation is addressed. Langston answered that in cardiac arrest situations there is a time element that is critical from the time that the heart stops which is 8 minutes before brain damage could take place. In Ashland there is a 4-5 minutes time period to arrive on the scene. Good goal in Ashland would be on location 5-6 minutes 80-90% of the time.

The Committee questioned the statistics in relation to the goal of 5 minutes or less. In May and August there was a lower performance rate. Langston stated that there could have been unavailability of an engine, could have had 3 units out at the same time while a 4th call came in, or it could have been a statistical issue.

Chief Langston explained that the Fire Department will be applying for federal grants. If the Fire Department receives grants the money will be used to replace an engine in station two which will then be sold and will use the money to replace equipment. Some equipment that needs to be replaced is imaging cameras.

Chief Langston stated that the Fire Department has not been officially notified yet but may have received a \$55,000 title 3 grant to reduce fuels in the watershed.

Chief Langston discussed the significant budget changes (see attached). In order to make the department more efficient the Fire Department cut out a lot of dual engine responses.

Chief Langston discussed the matrix analysis (see attached).

Chief Langston went over service impacts for the Fire Department (see attached). He stated that if firefighters are reduced by 2 positions daily staffing would also be reduced from 7-6.

Chief Langston discussed what would happen if the CERT coordinator was eliminated. The CERT program would not be sustainable. No new volunteers could be trained and the program would die within the community. The Fire Department would keep the grant position which is a half time position to try and coordinate as best as possible. This program could not be run with just volunteers.

The Committee questioned if the CERT program would work with half time position. Langston answered that it would be better than total elimination but over time not sure if it would be sustainable. He stated that Ashland has really benefited from the CERT program.

The Committee questioned what the current cost for the CERT program is. Langston answered that the CERT coordinator cost is \$77,000 including salary and benefits the rest of the program is grant funded. The grants totals come to \$17,000, \$35,000, \$44,000, \$50,000, \$75,000. The grantors want to support a program to a City that has made a commitment.

The Committee questioned what the Fire Department gains from having a CERT program. Langston answered that there is not a direct benefit on an everyday basis. In readiness emergency planning there is a definite benefit. Lucy Edwards added that there are anecdotal benefits.

The Committee questioned if there was a half time paid CERT position would it be sufficient to maintain the grant funded second half position. Langston is not sure. Lucy Edwards responded that CERT would not lose the grant. The challenge would then be managing the program.

Chief Langston discussed the organizational chart (see attached).

Chief Langston stated that the Operations Chief has not been staffed and has not been funded since 2006. Minimum staffing for the Fire Department is 6, right now it is at 7. Currently there are 7 firefighters on duty including the Captain with a reduction in staffing the Fire Department the Captain would have to drop off as the command and control role and go to a primary unit. This would be a critical loss to the department and overtime would go up. This reduction will make a difference in safety on scene.

The Committee questioned how this will affect insurance rates. Langston answered that the insurance company looks at water supply and staffing. The ISO that is current has a

rating that was built on the assumption that staffing would remain at the current staff level. If staffing is dropped the Fire Department may down grade to another class and insurance rates could rise.

Chief Langston stated that the Fire Department is already close to the FTE level changing the policy. Losing 2 more will make it worse due to people being sick, injured or on vacation.

The Committee questioned what would happen if the Fire Department was able to keep 1 position filled instead of 2. Langston answered that it would help and would have to adjust staffing accordingly. He stated that from an outside point of view with a new Fire Chief coming in and seeing the level of staff without any command and control 24 hours a day is very nerve racking situation.

Chief Langston explained that OSHA requires 2 in and 2 out the Fire Department can not make an interior attack on a fire unless there are 4 people on location. The exception to that is if it can be determined with certainty that someone is in the building.

The Committee questioned the possibility of volunteers joining staff. Langston answered that it is a challenge for Ashland to have volunteers, it is very time consuming to get them trained. There is a 50% turnover in Oregon for volunteers. Langston stated that for the future a team of volunteers should be looked at to do medical transports.

PUBLIC INPUT

Valerie Maroke spoke representing several CERT volunteers who were activated last week to staff the phone banks upon emergency operations of requesting help. They have also been activated for emergency shelters. Many volunteers are ready to step forward at a moments notice. There are over 200 active CERT volunteers in Ashland and over 400 have been trained since the beginning of the project. Stated CERT works as a good team with the paramedics because of the CERT coordinator and assistant. Grants that come into the city that help strengthen the City. Without the coordinator CERT can't have the tracking and monitoring of grants. Training is also something required by the coordinator. Stated she does not want to see the City tear it down.

Laura Doherty spoke to keep CERT coordinator position and the fire fighter positions. Has lived in Ashland for 27 years and only left to serve in the Navy. Stated medical response is very important. Stated that we need the firefighter positions and the CERT position without them we will be in trouble. Feels appalled that we even have to talk about this the City needs to keep these positions.

Deb Bayles with the Oregon action spoke in support of the CERT program (see attached letter). Do not cut the funding for this position.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The Committee stated that CERT training is important. Lucy Edwards explained that in the past 2 years to deal with attrition CERT has made sure to have some new trained members and increase the skills to maintain the members.

Lucy stated that most communities don't have the resources to train volunteers. CERT members make sure they maintain their training because they know the risks in this town.

The Committee thanked and stated appreciation for Lucy Edwards.

ADJOURNMENT

This meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Huhtala