

Hiram Village Council Public Hearing Minutes on the Proposed 2024 Budget

July 11, 2023

The following Members of Council were present: Mrs. Greenwood, Mr. McCreight, Mr. Smith, Mr. Spencer and Mr. Szell. The following were also present: Mayor Lou Bertrand, Solicitor Tom Reitz, Fiscal Officer Susan Skrovan-DeYoung, Village Administrator James McGee, Assistant VA Steven Schuller, Police Chief Brian Gregory and Fire Chief Bill Byers.

Others: None

Mayor Bertrand called the public hearing to order at 6:51 pm.

Fiscal Officer, Susan Skrovan-DeYoung, provided to Council the final updated budget and explained any minor changes that were made to it including the Police Department's budget. The Police Chief and Susan went over some of his budget numbers because Brian wanted to move more into his personal services lines so we made cuts to some of his operating budget. Susan had already increased the number in the Hiram Township personal services to account for the increase in hours requested from the Township following our discussion at Finance. Hiram Township hours went from \$15,000 to \$22,800. The only line item that was increased was for part-time personal services on page four from \$27,500 to \$30,600; an increase of \$3,100 plus \$500 in increased OPERS and Medicare. About \$3,600 total was cut from the police operating.

The other funds have not changed. Susan sent the entire budget to Council members electronically but she believes she also must provide it to Council in paper form, which she did tonight.

Chief Brian Gregory said with what was adjusted in his personal services, that will not even cover any vacation time or training coverage! Brian said there are 168 hours in a 24/7 workweek. This will only cover about 108 hours; we are still short 60 hours a week! Fortunately, we have the Township; that helps us out.

Paul Spencer spoke about visiting Chagrin Falls and the problems with a pay-by-phone parking system! If we are going to put in a parking system with a phone app, maybe we should look at putting in parking meters or pay by credit card. That is still a possible revenue option. Or, we cut more hours. Brian said there is no more hours to cut. Paul said we may have to just run one shift a day and turn the rest over to the Sheriff's department. Brian said that is a huge liability for this Village! Especially with Hiram College. Brian spoke about personnel shortages and the ability to get them trained when he does have them, it is frustrating!

Paul asked if we are contracting with the College for services? Brian said the Mayor has reached out to the College; he does not get a response. Paul asked whether we were charging them for services? Brian said they have not asked for anything at this time. They stopped asking after the second basketball game! They went the entire season of basketball, men's volleyball and baseball without having us there or having campus safety there! Paul does not know why we do not put something in legislation that requires onsite security after 50 or 60 people. Solicitor Tom Reitz said we don't do that because Council has not asked him to do it. Paul said he is going to ask Tom to do that. Brian said until we get some more officers to work; there is no one to work the details right now! David Smith spoke about Blossom Music Center and their security. It is a great revenue stream if you have the staffing in place. More discussion. Paul said if we put an ordinance in that requires them to pay for a service. Chris Szell said you are not specifically saying they have to pay the Village for security service; they just have to provide security at their events. Paul said we can put it in place and then they can decide whether they want to use the Village security or someone else's service.

Chris McCreight asked if there were other ideas that Finance considered to increase revenue? Chris Szell said not anything that you have not already heard about. Chris McCreight asked where we stand on the radar speed cameras? Chris Szell said he was going to have a couple companies come in August to our Finance meeting and speak with us. More discussion about hand held and pole mounted options and our Local Government Funds being at risk. Brian said the officer has to be there with it in his hand.

Paul Spencer asked Brian if he could wave a magic wand, what he would need for his department. Brian said basically, what we lost from the College contract, \$75,000! This does not include any capital purchases. More general discussion on ways to create new revenue streams.

Susan wanted to note with the 2024 budget, she did add the cost of our bi-annual audit costs in the General Fund and the medical insurance she figured a 10 percent increase for next year. She put this in her footnotes. These are just anticipated expenditures; she will be working with all the department heads on their final appropriations for next year either as temporary or permanent.

A motion to close the public hearing on the 2024 Budget was made by Mr. Szell and seconded by Mr. Spencer. The result of the voice vote was 5-0 in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:13 pm.

These minutes are pending approval by Council.



Mayor Lou Bertrand

ATTEST:



Fiscal Officer Susan J. Skrovan-DeYoung