Personnel and Finance Committee Meeting

November 17, 2025

Attendees: Council President King; Council Members Buxton, Clausen, Fleck, Gray, and Wolfe; Mayor Hazel; Safety Service Director Hitchcock; Auditor Shinn; Media- Bill Kinkaid; Chris Doseck; Jeremy Uhlenhake; Steve Schulte; Wes Harris- Public Works; Craig McConkey- Rec Director; Council Clerk-Kari Fox

CM Clausen called the Personnel and Finance meeting to order at 5:01 pm to discuss the 2026 budget.

Wes Harris, Public Works Superintendent, discussed Capital Expenditures & Budget

1. Capital Expenditures:

Cemetery:

1. Garage Improvements-$20,000

* Planned Work: residing and roofing of garage; internal structure remains good
* Garage is used for storage of: mowers, trucks (winter), flags, and other grounds maintenance equipment
* Garage is not attached to the leased house onsite; garage is maintained by City
* Repairs previously delayed due to funds used for mausoleum repairs; garage repairs now scheduled for 2026

Public Works:

1. Concrete Parking Lot-$50,000

* Material cost for concrete parking lot at the new Public Works Building
* Will be completed in-house by Public Works staff
* Covers main parking area out front, entryway, and turnaround

1. Building Generator-$30,000

* New purchase, not transferring from old building

1. Pallet Racking Shelving-$10,000

* Shop Outfitting: pallet racking and shelving for mezzanine and shop areas to fully equip new building

1. Salt Storage Building-$140,000

* Existing salt storage not relocatable; require a new salt storge for the new Public Works Building
* Proposed Capacity: up to 1,000 tons; currently facility holds approximately 750 tons
* Cost Efficiency: discussion about summer fill program to purchase salt off-season at reduced rates ($20/ton savings)
* Location: tentatively Touvelle Street or possibly new North Street property
* Usage: annually 1,000-1,200 tons of salt in severe winters; 500 tons in mild years
* Funding: $70,000- (222 account) State Highway Funds; $70,000- (228 account) Permissive Tax

1. Resident Sidewalk Replacement-$100,000

* Budget: $100,000 allocated for residential sidewalk replacement (approximately 2,300 feet)
* Target: residential/outstanding properties not complete after prior notification letters; majority residential, minimal commercial
* Enforcement: ongoing challenge with unsold/new subdivision lots and properties where adjacent lots are bought for space, not development
* Discussion: recommendation to set requirement based on percentage of subdivision completion rather than fixed time limit

Parks Department Capital: (Pool Capital discussed in prior meeting by Mike Sudman)

1. Replace Gator-$20,000- replacement of aging 15–16-year-old gator; state has bid and the lowest supplier gets state bid pricing
2. Westview Playground-$400,000- pending Bryson Trust approval
3. Bryson Shelter Houses (2)-$90,000- funded from Civic Foundation (Jerry Andrews Grant)

* One will be located by splash pad/restroom area and the other one will be between the playground and zip lines
* The $90,000 covers the 2 shelter house kits- Public Works staff will install

1. Bryson Park Fencing-$220,000- pending Bryson Trust approval

* Fence will help control geese, keep basketballs from going into channel, and to keep kids safe/wandering
* Fence intended for full park perimeter

Projects (Capital):

1. Havemann/Grand Lake Resurface-$668,000 (Havemann Road TIF)
2. Legacy Lane Extension-$1,615,000 (Staeger Road TIF)

* Extending from end of Legacy Lane to Staeger Road

Public Works & Parks Budget Review:

1. Basic Services-Health & Sanitation

* Includes mosquito fogging, spring trash pickup, weed spraying, leaf/brush & limb collection, demos
* $38,000-$40,000- spring trash pickup (cost varies on weather-wet/rainy)

1. Seasonal Staff Pay (Parks & Cemetery)

* Noted the distinct, physically demanding nature of cemetery versus park mowing positions; consensus to review and potentially increase cemetery seasonal maintenance pay by $2/hour; suggested to revisit seasonal pay Ordinance

1. Full-Time Parks Maintenance

* Budget includes funds for an additional full-time parks maintenance worker to help with increased park maintenance due to updates to parks/future updates (Strength Ordinance will need updated)

1. Tree Plantings & Maintenance

* Annual allocations for replacement of dead trees and targeted plantings for shade around ball diamonds

1. Permissive License Fund

* $70,000 to go towards salt storage (fund currently has $235,000)

1. Street Improvements

* $100,000 for sidewalks (fund currently has $6.4 Million but most of that is being saved for Sugar Street Reconstruction in 2027-2028)

Craig McConkey, Rec Director, Budget Review

1. Baseball, Softball, Soccer Football Programs

* Updating equipment- replace what needs replaced and maintain up to code
* Dynamic Credit Federal Union gave donation at beginning of year for updating equipment

1. Team Officials

* Referees/Umpires- typically are middle school/high school kids for baseball, softball, and soccer games
* Football is setup that the city gives the football booster $2,000 towards football referees (cost going up may need adjusted in upcoming years)

1. Discussed fees for Rec Programs may need adjusted

* Ordinance for all City Fees will be brought to Council at a later time to discuss and to have all fees in one single Ordinance

Tom Hitchcock, Safety Service Director, discussed Administration Building Capital Expenses

1. West Side Brick Repair & Tuck Pointing-$93,000

* Cost is based off the East Side Brick Repair & Tuck Pointing that was completed this year
* We will wait until we get through Springtime to see with rains if this solves the problem for the east side before moving to the west side
* There hasn’t been much rain/heavy rains this year since the east side repairs have been completed

1. Flooring Phase 5-$40,000

* This phase will include the Auditor’s area and old Parks area/office- basically all of the northeast corner of the building
* This does not include the tiled area in the main lobby- possible future phase but not currently budgeted

\*\*5 way split for these projects includes: general fund 58%; electric fund 19%; water fund 10%; wastewater fund 10%; parks fund 3%

Debt Related Payments-$592,929.70 (Total Principle & Interest-$2,829,299.30)

1. 5 Debt Payments:

* Industrial Park Water Tower-$117,581.54
* SR29W Improvement-$12,600
* Water Tower-$24,400
* Water Plant GAC-OWDA-$431,474.90
* Buckeye OPWC-$6,873.26

General Fund Budget Expenses

\*\*Many expenses are split 4 ways: general fund 33%; electric fund 32%; water fund 17.5%; wastewater fund 17.5%

1. Council

* Council Payroll/Council Clerk Payroll
* Pay increase starting in 2026 to $6,000 per year then a yearly increase 1.5%

1. Safety Service Director

* Safety Service Director Payroll- decrease due to Human Resource Coordinator removed; Audit Department now handles these duties

1. Mayor

* Mayor Payroll- increase 1.5% yearly
* Mayor Discretionary- all general fund because this can be spent on anything

1. Engineers

* Engineer Payroll- looks different because Vince Barnhart will be retiring in February and we plan to hire him back as part-time
* Engineer Consultants- varies year to year based on what projects we have coming up

1. Auditor

* Auditor Clerk Payroll- includes 2 positions
* was overestimated last year due to uncertainty what the pay would be for the new person starting; salary now established that’s why it is lower
* Auditor Payroll- increases 1.5% yearly
* Auditor Stat/Incidentals- increased due to taking over Civica- software for payroll and would like to replace computers

1. Treasurer

* Treasurer Payroll- pay increase starting in 2026 to $6,000 per year then yearly increase 1.5%

1. Municipal Court

* Personnel: Chris Wurster retiring end of 2025-his replacement has been hired for training purposes
* Pay Adjustments: Judge- authorizes raises, plus standard contractual increases budgeted
* Court Costs: slight reduction from 2025

1. Community Development Director

* Community Development Director Operations- $3,000 for our Japanese Sister City Program

1. Law Director (George will be available to discuss prior to next Council Meeting)

* Law Director Payroll- increases 1.5% yearly
* Law Director Consultant- will need to check if that needs to be the same as 2025 or is the lower amount ok due to Bryson case no longer ongoing
* Law Director Contractual Assistant- currently has 2 assistants
* Will discuss at next meeting with the Law Director if his case loads have increased, decreased, or stayed the same over the last 5 years

1. Miscellaneous Accounts

* Contingency Fund-$100,000- this is money we have in the budget in case we run short (General Fund)

1. General Fund Cyber Security Measures-$20,452.55 (account lines will need setup)
2. Total General Fund-$10,392,536.52

Total for 2026 Budget-$59,687,642.42

* $50,844,538.59- total budget minusing the capital we are doing outstanding

Additional Discussion:

1. Current Revenue vs. Payroll Needs: noted increasing unsustainability of supporting police and fire payroll with just the 1% income tax; supplemental transfers currently made previously accumulated half percent (temporary) tax- projected to be exhausted by 2027.

* Police/Fire- 77% of General Fund operating expenditures
* Half percent tax reserve anticipated to run out by end of 2027 at current payroll trends

1. Future Issues: Administration and Auditor flagged impending structural deficit by 2028 if capital/temporary funds aren’t reauthorized for operating expenses or tax rates and allocations aren’t adjusted.
2. Commitment to not using half percent for payroll (voter trust), but state auditor allows it if needed; future voter action may be required (potential income tax increase or reallocation).
3. Gather other municipality data for comparison on tax structures and revenue sources.
4. Develop recommendations for sustaining police and fire payroll post 2027, including possibilities for income tax adjustments

CM Clausen scheduled a Personnel and Finance Committee Meeting for November 24, 2025, at 6:30 pm.

CM Clausen adjourned the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Submitted by Kari R. Fox, Clerk of Council