

Questions for discussion
May 15, 2024 Budget Committee meeting

1. Do we adjust how Public Works employees' hours are allocated to the General Fund?
 - a. The Budget Committee must estimate how many hours each Public Works employee is expected to spend on tasks related to General Fund activity.

2. Do we keep the \$8,000 budgeted for the salary study or do we reallocate those funds for pay raises?
 - a. \$2,388 is budgeted in the General Fund for the salary study with the remainder allocated to the Water Fund, Sewer Fund, Street Fund, and Building Fund.

3. Do we fund the new public works pick-up truck?
 - a. Removing this will result in \$2,700 in savings in the General Fund.
 - b. Loan proceeds of \$10,500 offset pick-up truck purchase costs that are allocated to the General Fund.
 - c. The \$2,700 is the projected first year payment on a 5-year loan for the truck.

4. Do we implement pay raises, such as a cost of living adjustment, for FY 2024-2025?
 - a. The table below shows how much a COLA at varying levels will increase expenditures in the General Fund.

Cost to General Fund	% COLA
705.00	0.5%
1,401.00	1.0%
2,092.00	1.5%
2,786.00	2.0%
3,476.00	2.5%
4,181.00	3.0%
4,872.00	3.5%
5,569.00	4.0%
6,258.00	4.5%
6,956.00	5.0%

5. Do we keep the recommended cut to eliminate the Oakridge Police Department contract?
 - a. The contract provides for 40 hours of random patrol per month.

- b. Adding it back to the budget will cost an estimated \$38,173 once you account for expected increases for inflation.
6. If we keep the recommended cut to eliminate the Oakridge Police Department contract, do we add some budget for as-needed services?
- a. The Budget Committee must estimate an appropriate level of budget for as-needed services.
 - b. The current hourly rate is \$83.13. It's likely that an as-needed contract will be based on a minimum number of hours to be billed per service order. It's also likely that the hourly rate to be billed will be at time and a half or higher.
7. What are the Budget Committee's thoughts on the recommendation for a local option levy to fund capital improvements related to E. 1st Street?
- a. Options include:
 - i. Recommending that City Council place this on an upcoming meeting agenda for further discussion.
 - ii. Take no action at this time on referring a local option levy to the voters in November. Wait and see how circumstances play out later in the year. In the meantime, evaluate grant and, if necessary, loan opportunities.
 - iii. Some other action.
8. On the proposed master fee schedule, should the city keep or eliminate the out-of-city library patron fee?
- a. According to the Library Director, keeping the fee could make the city more competitive in obtaining state grants. That's because the city would be meeting the State Library's goal to ensure library services in rural, underserved areas. It is not likely, based on the Library Director's feedback, that an out-of-city patron fee would make us ineligible for funding.
 - b. At the same time, charging out-of-city patron fees is a common practice and a way to offset the costs of providing library services.
 - c. Library membership revenue is budgeted at \$7,500, and it's clear that this needs to be reduced.
9. Should water and sewer service rates remain at the levels in the recommended budget?
- a. The recommended budget has a decrease in base and variable rates. Keeping these rates as-is will generate an estimated \$17,874 more in revenues for the Water Fund than what's currently budgeted.
 - b. The recommended monthly sewer rate is at its current rate. An increase from \$68.51 per month per EDU to \$85.06 per month per EDU is necessary for this fund to break even. The Budget Committee may consider an increase somewhere between these two options.

City of Lowell
Personal Services

Proposed for:
Fiscal Year 24-25

FTE Allocations				410	420	430	440	450	460	480	220	230	240	312	314	Total
No	Empee No	FTE	Position	Admin	Parks	Police	Comm Dev	Library	Code	Court	Building	Water	Sewer	Streets	BBJ	
1	102	1.00	City Administrator	0.250	0.050	-	0.050	-	0.050	0.050	0.020	0.250	0.250	0.030	-	1.00
2	104	1.00	City Clerk	0.100	-	-	-	-	-	0.050	0.050	0.400	0.400	-	-	1.00
3	101	1.00	Public Works Director	-	0.050	-	0.030	-	-	-	0.050	0.410	0.410	0.050	-	1.00
4	105	1.00	Lead Operator	-	0.100	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.425	0.425	0.050	-	1.00
5	106	1.00	Lead Operator	-	0.100	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.425	0.425	0.050	-	1.00
6	935	0.00	Operator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	103	1.00	Operator Trainee	-	0.250	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.300	0.300	0.150	-	1.00
8	920	0.50	Library Director	-	-	-	-	0.500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.50
9	930	0.25	Metadata Intern	-	-	-	-	0.250	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.25
10	932	0.25	Public Works Laborer	0.063	0.075	-	-	0.063	-	-	-	0.025	0.025	-	-	0.25
11	950	0.00	Finance Clerk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	0	0.00	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	0	0.00	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	0	0.00	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	0	0.00	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
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99	5410.4	7.00	Total FTE by Department	0.413	0.625	-	0.080	0.813	0.050	0.100	0.120	2.235	2.235	0.330	-	7.001