

City of Rainier
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
May 16, 2022
Rainier City Hall
6 p.m.

City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Budget Committee Members Present: Mike Avent, Connie Budge, Jerry Cole, Nick Gratzner, Jeremy Howell, Jan Kenna, Mike Kreger, Ethan Pearson, Jan Rich, Levi Richardson, Denise Watson

Staff Present: Sarah Blodgett, Gregg Griffith, W. Scott Jorgensen, Sue Lawrence, Summer Sears

Selection of Budget Committee Chair: Mayor Jerry Cole moved to nominate Nick Gratzner as chair. That motion was seconded by Jan Rich and adopted unanimously.

Public Testimony: There was no public testimony at this time.

2022-23 Budget Message: Jorgensen read the budget message into the record. He added that the budget is built on an assumed 4 percent cost of living adjustment for public works and clerical staff, but union negotiations are ongoing.

Presentation of Proposed 2022-23 Budget: Jorgensen said there are no major changes to the general fund. The fund includes the police department budget, and Police Chief Gregg Griffith gave an overview of that. There are no major changes to that budget. The department requested a new vehicle last year but is not doing that this time. There are no major changes to the debt service fund. Public Works Director Sue Lawrence said that the line items for lab supplies and chemicals in the sewer fund are increased by \$10,000 because the costs have gone up. Jan Spika asked about the seasonal worker position that was included in the proposed budget. Lawrence said that worker would do maintenance around city facilities, such as weeding and mowing. That worker is typically hired through a temp agency. Public works didn't have that position in the current budget because the department hired a plant operator. The worker would be on staff for the summer. There were no major changes to the water fund. Sears said the proposed timber fund budget needed to be adjusted to reflect the most recent timber sale. She suggested adjusting the beginning fund balance to \$1.7 million to add the estimated \$500,000 that the city profited from that sale. It would go under the line reserved for future use. Mayor Jerry Cole said the line for property purchase reserve would also have to be adjusted, as a percentage of the proceeds from that timber sale are required to go towards that line item. Budge moved to adjust the beginning fund balance from \$1.2 million to \$1.7 million. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously. Cole moved to adjust the property purchase reserve line item by adding \$25,000. That motion was seconded by Jan Spika and adopted unanimously. Lawrence said the only major change to the street fund was an increase for street signs. Spika asked about the increase in the overtime line item. Lawrence said that same figure should have been in the previous year's budget. It goes towards covering the costs of responding to emergency calls for events such as downed trees and road sanding. For the special projects fund, Lawrence said it includes improvements to city hall and park facilities. The actual work covered under that will depend on direction received from the city council. It may include new roofing for the senior center and city hall and the public works shop. There's a line item for a new mower. The current one is 18 years old and falling apart. Ethan Pearson asked about the city hall improvements.

Lawrence said they could include a break room for staff, improvements to the council chambers and an emergency exit for administrative staff. For the sewer capital fund, Lawrence said there are still funds relating to the A Street project because the city has not been invoiced for it. Jorgensen said this fund includes some of the federal American Rescue Plan Act allocations that were sent to the city. A second installment will be received and those funds will go towards achieving compliance with the Department of Environmental Quality. Lawrence said funds are budgeted for continued Inflow and Infiltration work, as well as wastewater equipment and upgrades to the SCADA computers. The water capital fund includes a new line item for insurance reimbursement to repair the water treatment plant facility, which was damaged in a fire in the fall of 2021. There are also allocations for system improvements that were recommended under the water master plan update. Those include water line upgrades. For the transportation capital improvement fund, Jorgensen said the city will be eligible to apply for state Small City Allotment grants again. The city had previously received those, and had to spend them on projects before applying for the next round of funding. Those projects have since been completed. Lawrence said she would like to add a \$40,000 line item for vehicle replacement. The department's utility truck is from 1996. That \$40,000 could be offset by reducing the line item for city street improvements by the same amount. Spika asked if that would be enough. Lawrence said it would be \$120,000 total, split between three funds. Public works could also get a mini-excavator. The department currently rents those when they're needed. There isn't currently a fleet replacement fund. Spika moved to take \$40,000 from the street improvement line item and add it to a new line item for vehicle and equipment replacement. That motion was seconded by Pearson and adopted unanimously. Cole pointed out that the \$40,000 for vehicle and equipment replacement is zeroed out in the water capital improvement fund. Pearson moved to take \$40,000 from the water treatment site improvement line item in the water capital improvement fund and put it towards the vehicle/equipment replacement line item. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously. Jorgensen said there were no major changes to the library trust fund. Sears suggested adding an agenda item so public testimony can be taken on state revenue sharing. Committee members agreed by consensus.

Public Testimony on State Revenue Sharing: Candis Forrest testified that she agrees with the city receiving those state shared revenues.

Motion to approve the 2022-23 Budget by the Budget Committee—Kreger moved to approve the budget as amended. That motion was seconded by Jeremy Howell and adopted unanimously.

Motion to authorize a tax rate of \$5.2045 per \$1,000 assessed valuation, and \$503,333 for the Wastewater Treatment Plant debt payment General Obligation Bond—Kreger moved to authorize the tax rate of \$5.2045 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation and \$503,333 for the Wastewater Treatment Plant debt payment General Obligation Bond. That motion was seconded by Levi Richardson and adopted unanimously.

Cole moved to adjourn the meeting. That motion was seconded by Spika and adopted unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Jerry Cole, Mayor

Attested by: _____
W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator