

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

April 18, 2024  
Conference Room #119  
6:08 P.M.

Present: Commissioners: Chairperson Robert Coughlin, Betsy Artz, Maurice Groce, David Moore II, Clarkston Morgan, Jessica Ann Tyson (8:45) and Mayor Stephen C.N. Kepley. Also present: Finance Director Keyla Garcia, City Clerk Dan Kasunic, and City Deputy Administrator Shay Gallagher.

**COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR REGARDING THE PROPOSED GENERAL FUND  
BUDGET.**

Mayor Kepley stated many code changes with many items being moved to different department codes. Mayor Kepley stated the Property and Building Fund transfer had reduced this year over prior years.

Finance Director Garcia provided an overview and noted there will be a recommended adoption to the City Commission of the proposed FY 2024-2025 budget with the final approval at a May meeting. She stated the budget reflects an assumption the Police and Fire Millage passed. She noted the Drain Fund is empty and general funds will be transferred in to reflect costs involved with drains and the City will be a pass through for ARCH grant money for the schools.

The Committee reviewed the following departmental budgets with their representatives.

Library-Kiosha Jeltema.

- Noted a need for replacement of chairs and tables.
- spoke of their translation serves for the many languages used.

Planning-Community Development Director Terry Schweitzer and Lisa Golder.

- implementation of the crosswalk program.
- discussion with representative for development of Patterson Farm 140 acres.
- Needing a housing assessment study done for next year's Planning Commission Master Plan. This item is under the EDC budget.

City Assessor-Andy Johnson.

- the department has gone paperless, with all record cards being digitized.
- E-filing for personal property. (only a few municipalities in the state)
- adding certification for verifying addresses within the city.

Human Resources Director- Heather Visco.

- noted high turnover rate.
- continue implementing IDEA items.
- explained the RX program for expensive drugs and the saving.
- reviewing software for time-attendance to move away from BS&A.

-will be looking for input of the Wellness Program.

Engineering & Inspections-Jim Kirkwood.

- Noted the addition of a Rental Inspector, who has reduced the non-compliant properties to 165.
- continue to work on finding properties using it as short-term rentals and correcting the violators.
- averaging 33 inspections a day.
- R-O-W permits have doubled over five years ago.
- two interns will be working over the summer on stormwater items.
- spoke of designs for Paul Henry Trail and traffic circle for Shaffer and 36<sup>th</sup> Street.

Parks & Recreation Department-Director Val Romeo and Deputy Director Spencer McKellar.

- Staffing change with the posting for a Business Development Manager in May.
- receiving a 4% administrative fee for pass through of the ARCH Grant Program.
- will begin the Capital Campaign for fundraising for the Community Center.
- the department runs 400 programs and 55 events a year.
- postage will be tracked for the department.

Treasurer-Laurie Sheldon

- contractual services will increase because of armor service.
- increase for education and training.
- Kentwood will do the striking process for all of Kent County.

Information Technology-Matt Anderson.

- No staffing changes.
- upgrades in VMWare and servers.
- obtaining a consultant for the phone servers.

Court-Judge Amanda Sterkenburg and Court Administrator Michele White.

- possible decrease in revenue because of state law changes affecting collections.
- added newly created Domestic Violence Court with grant approval.
- Sobriety Court is grant funded and continues to have increased need.

Fire-Chief Brent Looman and Deputy Fire Chief Mike Hipp.

- if millage passes, staffing and salary, wages will change.
- continue to receive smoke alarms from the state.
- will begin to change from gas powered tools to electric.
- increase in cost of turnout gear.
- increase in contractual services to be NFPA compliant for physicals.
- adding tablets and I-pads for efficiency.

Police Department-Police Chief Litwin.

- Continue to fill vacancies, noting having added 13 new officers, and promoting 4 new Sergeants, and one new Captain.
- spoke of state funding for tuition and wages.
- adding a staff services manager if the millage passes.

-continue to recruit.

DPW- Director Chad Griffin and Deputy Director Jim Wolford.

- four new certifications for safe drinking water, three certifications for fertilizer application and three certifications for Arborist.
- high increase in Miss Dig requests.
- change over to battery powered chain saws.
- proposed staff increase of three FTE, two for custodial for Justice Center to be in-house. One for change of supervisors from one to two for street drains, parks and grounds.
- increase in budget for cleaning with being in-house.

City General –Keyla Garcia

- Big shuffle of accounts with only certain items remaining in the general account, such as: legal, cable franchise, phone MML.
- account 101-101 will be only for City Commission expenses.

City Clerk Office/Elections- City Clerk Dan Kasunic.

- Passport application were over 3000
- Elections added nine-days of early voting.
- reimbursement for the Feb Presidential Primary election.
- grant for election equipment from the state.

Executive- Mayor Kepley and Deputy Administrator Shay Gallagher.

- dollar shift on contractual services.
- litigation on many fronts.
- working on the Police and Fire Millage.
- discussed the deer issue in the county.

Finance -Finance Director Keyla Garcia.

- fee study is complete and will be implemented on May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Implemented Post-Employment Administrator position.
- hired a part-time purchasing assistant.

Special Revenue Funds -Finance Director Keyla Garcia.

- funds for the Opioid settlement (payment over a 18–20-year time frame)
- transfer of funds into the Drain Fund for accounting of expenses.
- transfer of funds into the streetlighting Fund for accounting of expenses.
- Landfill Remediation Fund Letter of Understanding with county on the county accepting 100% of the cost.
- Brownfield Redevelopment Fund, Housing Commission Fund, Parks & Recreation Millage Fund and Police and Fire Millage Fund all kept separate for accounting.

Requested action tonight with a public hearing as the next step and the final approval at the May City Commission meeting.

Motion by Tyson, seconded by Morgan, to recommend approval by the City Commission of the FY 2024-25 General Fund and Special Revenue Funds Budgets and to make appropriations therefore, and City Operating Millages

Motion Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 P.M.

Dan Kasunic  
City Clerk

Robert Coughlin  
Mayor Pro-Tem