

MINUTES

Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee
February 18, 2016 / 4:30-6:00 PM
Water Treatment Plant

In Attendance: Chairman – Keith Nyhan; City Councilors – Mark Coen, Dan St. Hilaire, Amanda Grady Sexton; Mayor James Bouley; City Staff – Tom Aspell, City Manager; Brian LeBrun, Deputy City Manager-Finance; Carlos Baia – Deputy City Manager Development, Katie Graff, Assistant Finance Director; Bob McManus, OMB Director; Denis Maher and Eric Brown from Buxton

Excused: City Councilors Candace Bouchard and Fred Keach.

- 1) Approval of November 19, 2015 Meeting Minutes:** Chairman Nyhan called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM and requested a motion to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2015 meeting. **Councilor Grady Sexton moved to accept the minutes, seconded by Councilor St. Hilaire. The minutes were unanimously approved.**
- 2) Presentation and discussion of electronic budget document:** Deputy City Manager LeBrun spoke about efforts to provide budget documents to City Council and other recipients in electronic format, rather than hard copy; and to produce the Finance Committee agendas in Granicus/I-legislate. This is a logical next step in adding to the Council's electronic agenda initiative, and the Finance Committee agendas will work the same as the City Council agendas.

This will also make it more efficient and will save approximately \$3,200 in hard costs, plus almost a full week's work for the City Manager's Executive Assistant. We believe we can reduce the number of printed books from about 45 to 4, only printing books for the Library (2), City Clerk's Office, and our permanent file (vault). Otherwise, it can be accessed by everyone online/electronically and sent to the City Council electronically.

The Committee discussed the electronic budget and Finance Committee agenda issues and agreed that it makes a lot of sense and is a move in the right direction.

Councilor Grady Sexton moved to produce all budget documents in electronic format, instead of hard copies, and Finance Committee agendas electronically through I-legislate. The motion was seconded by Councilor St. Hilaire. The motion passed unanimously.

- 3) Discuss moving FPAC to 3rd Monday of each month:** Chairman Nyhan introduced the idea of moving FPAC meetings to the 3rd Monday of each month on a trial basis. He noted that he did not want to inconvenience any of the committee members or staff if Mondays did not work. The only conflict would be if there was the need to resume a recessed City Council meeting on that day, which would result in the FPAC meeting not taking place.

The committee discussed this proposal, determined that Monday nights work better for the committee members, and decided to give it a try. The next scheduled meeting will be on Monday, March 21st, at 4:30 PM.

- 4) **Tax Rate Target:** Deputy City Manager LeBrun pointed out Goal J2 to the committee, which states, “Tax rate target – the Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee should consider whether to recommend setting a tax rate target for the upcoming fiscal year budget no later than the February FPAC meeting.” While FPAC has not proposed a tax rate target in the past few years, and instead has instructed the City Manager to present a responsible budget, this is the time to discuss the issue.

City Manager Aspell noted that the recommendation of a tax rate target makes it more difficult for the City Council since they have already given their direction of what the target should be. Without a tax rate target, if the Manager brings in a responsible budget the Council can make decisions to add to or delete from the budget without having previously committed to any specific target.

Deputy City Manager LeBrun noted that the FY 2017 budget already has some built in challenges. For example, wage and benefit increases and pressure on revenues are challenging every year, and the City Manager’s proposed paving plan increases the tax rate each year by an additional .5% for Fiscal Years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

The Committee discussed the issue and instructed the City Manager to proceed as in the past few years and present the City Council with a responsible budget that works towards the adopted Council Priorities and the good of the City.

- 5) **Other:** Councilor Coen spoke about capital needs in some of the City’s enterprise funds, specifically the paving needs of Beaver Meadow Golf Course and the Arena. He spoke about the need to maintain these facilities appropriately and that these enterprise funds are supporting the operating expenses but they are not able to undertake some of the major capital projects that need to be done. He believes the General Fund Capital needs to be used to support some of these projects. He also noted that while these funds are designed to be self-supporting, they are a critical part of the City’s operation and used by many throughout the community and not just the people that pay user fees.

Chairman Nyhan noted that the City has recently made an investment in the Memorial Field parking lot and that the City also should upgrade both the Arena and Beaver Meadow lots/paved areas as part of the good of the City, since they are in such desperate need of repair.

Councilor St. Hilaire indicated that we do not always keep up the enterprise fund facilities appropriately and he would like to see the Manager bring in a plan that studies the capital improvements needed at the golf course and arena so that we are not spending more as a City.

City Manager Aspell indicated that the use of the facilities has expanded to other areas and not just the original intended purposes. For instance, the Arena and the waterfront host Weekend on the Water, which is part of Kiwanis Park; and the golf course has public skating, voting, and cross country skiing. He stated that it makes sense to make the improvements so that the facilities and grounds are presented in a way that the City is proud of. City Manager Aspell said that he will look at including some of the necessary capital improvements, including paving, in the General Fund CIP budget.

- 6) Adjournment: A motion was made by Councilor Coen to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Grady Sexton. A unanimous vote brought the meeting to an end at 5:20 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Brian LeBrun
Deputy City Manager – Finance