

Brookville City Council
Budget Work Session
December 5, 2023

The Budget Work Session of the Brookville City Council was called to order by Mayor Letner at 6:00 p.m. on December 5, 2023. The meeting was held in the City Council Chambers and virtually using the Cisco Webex application. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Members Crane, Kristof, Schreier and Zimmerlin; Manager Keaton, Finance Director Brandt, and Fire Chief Fletcher were present. Members Fowler and Wilder; and Police Chief Jerome were absent.

Roll Call by Clerk Duncan.

Motion by Zimmerlin, second by Kristof to adopt the Agenda as presented. All yeas, motion carried.

Manager Keaton thanked City Council, Department Heads, and employees for leading Brookville through a successful 2023. Twenty twenty-three seemed like old times where we saw an increase in income tax, motel tax, local government funds, zoning permits and interest on investment receipts in the General Fund, which is allowing us to increase our 2023 Unexpended Balance, which then becomes our 2024 Beginning Balance. Manager Keaton stated Council will find during the 2024 Budget Presentation that Finance Director Brandt is projecting 4M in income tax revenue, which is an increase of \$500,000 from 2023's budgeted income tax revenue. Manager Keaton stated she is confident that we will hit that projection. If so, it will be the first time in history that Brookville receives 4M in income tax receipts. Manager Keaton advised income tax accounts for 71% of our General Fund Revenue. The City's greatest growth in the city's budget has been in personnel costs, which is the greatest cost to most cities. Payroll and benefits account for 31% of the 2024 Budget. Our capital projects and equipment will be up in 2024, with the purchase of several new vehicles, a mobile lift, radios, pumps for the Wastewater Treatment Plant, the Wolf Creek Water Main Replacement Project, Street Resurfacing and the Hay Avenue Phase II Project. In 2024, Council will find an increase in our transfers out of the General Fund. Council will also find a 5% rate increase in our Sanitary Sewer Fund and a 2% Increase in our Water Fund. These rate adjustments are needed to ensure sustainability of our water distribution and sanitary sewer collection and treatment systems. Manager Keaton announced at this time she will turn the 2024 Budget Presentation over to Finance Director Brandt.

Finance Director Brandt presented a Power Point Presentation of the 2024 Budget. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.

Finance Director Brandt explained the City has 15 Funds. This is one less fund than last year. The FEMA fund has been eliminated as we do not expect to receive any Safer Funds this year.

Finance Director Brandt provided a brief explanation of the General Fund and the projected 2024 Revenues and Expenditures from the General Fund.

Finance Director Brandt reported in 2024, she plans to increase the portion of the revenue from the fire protection contracts that goes into the Fire Capital Fund so we can build up funds for a new ambulance and eventually a new fire truck in the future.

Finance Director Brandt presented the 2024 Police Department Budget.

Finance Director Brandt projected a 7.25% increase over 2023 Appropriations, as the Police Department would like to get back to the staffing they had in 2018. Finance Director Brandt advised it is increasingly difficult to find part-time employees to give the City the police coverage that we need.

Member Zimmerlin inquired if the increase includes adding a full-time Officer and converting one part-time Officer to full-time?

Finance Director Brandt replied that is correct.

Member Schreier inquired if the 7.25% increase includes the employee benefit costs for additional full-time employees?

Finance Director Brandt replied it covers payroll, benefits and insurance costs. Finance Director Brandt advised the Capital Outlay includes a new cruiser and the upfitting that goes along with a new cruiser.

Member Crane inquired whether a camera system is in the budget for 2024?

Finance Director Brandt replied a camera system is not in the 2024 budget. There are more pertinent costs for 2024. She and Police Chief Jerome are in agreement that adding more police personnel is more important at this time. This should help to mitigate crime. If our income tax revenue increases, we can add the cameras into the budget at a later date.

Discussion followed regarding the GM expansion and the need for cameras increasing as that project and the Casey's Market project come to fruition.

Finance Director Brandt presented the 2024 Fire Department Budget.

Finance Director Brandt reported the Fire Department has requested another full-time employee as part-time employees are becoming harder to find. The 27.4% increase over 2023 Appropriations is mainly to cover the salary of a new full-time employee, plus benefits. The employer contribution share of the Ohio Police & Fire Pension for a firefighter is the highest of all the pension systems.

Finance Director Brandt reported another portion of the increase is rehabbing two vehicles in the Fire Department fleet.

Fire Chief Fletcher advised FEMA funds have been diverted to the largest cities in the country that we had anticipated using to purchase a new ladder truck, which is roughly \$2 million. He stated this has caused us to reevaluate and decide it makes more sense to invest in our current fleet. This also allows us to bypass the emission requirements in place for new equipment.

Discussion followed regarding purchasing new equipment and refurbishing existing equipment.

Member Schreier asked how much we had to increase the General Fund to offset some of the additional funding needed for an additional full-time employee?

Finance Director Brandt replied she has made a slight change to the distribution of the fire contract funds from a 75/25 split to a 70/30 split. This will allow us to build up capital for the Fire Department.

Discussion followed regarding fire contract funds and the logistics of hiring an additional full-time employee(s).

Finance Director Brandt presented the 2024 Government and Administration Budget.

Finance Director Brandt reported there is a 19.2% increase over 2023 Appropriations, which includes transfers for debt service payments, transfers the Street Department to purchase several pieces of equipment, increased payroll and pension costs, the City Manager's retirement cash-out and the cost of hiring a new City Manager.

Finance Director Brandt presented the 2024 Service Department Budget. This includes the Street M&R, Park, Water, Sewer, Refuse and Stormwater Funds.

tap into city water and sewer for the proposed church meeting center. Our lowest density residential zoning category is being assigned, which allows for 100-foot lots and a required minimum square footage of 1,800 square feet.

Mr. Brown stated the annexed lots show 7 acres pointing directly to the bike trail. He asked what the property owner has to do with the bike trail?

Law Director Stephan replied the city owns the bike trail from Westbrook Road to the center line of Heckathorn Road. For purposes of completing this annexation, the bike trail was included within the annexed area.

Mr. Brown stated he has maintained that entrance to the bike trail for 23 years, and asked if the City of Brookville is going to take over the mowing and maintenance? Mr. Brown stated the Metro Parks District currently mows that area. If the City would mow there when they mow the other open spaces in the area, it would get mowed more often. Mr. Brown stated as long as he lives there, he has no problem with mowing that entrance. However, he has gone on vacation for several months in the past, and the grass has not been mowed.

Law Director Stephan replied we do have an agreement with Metro Parks to maintain the bikeway. We could certainly take a look at having our Service Department mow it more often.

Mr. Brown commented it is possible down the road that this property could be established as a residential development.

Law Director Stephan replied that is a possibility in the future. However, the property owner has indicated he has no intention of doing that at this time.

There were no other proponent or opponent comments.

Motion by Zimmerlin, second by Kristof to close the Public Hearing.

Motion by Zimmerlin, second by Kristof to go back into Regular Session.

Member Schreier had no report.

Mayor Letner called for a motion to go into Executive Session regarding O.R.C 121.22(G)(1) to consider the appointment of a Public Official.

Motion by Crane, second by Zimmerlin to go into Executive Session regarding O.R.C 121.22(G)(1) to consider the appointment of a Public Official. All yeas, motion carried.

Motion by Kristof, second by Zimmerlin to go back into Regular Session. All yeas, motion carried.

Motion by Zimmerlin, second by Kristof to adjourn. All yeas, motion carried.



Kimberly Duncan, Clerk



Charles Letner, Mayor

