

**MINUTES  
ST. CLAIR SHORES CITY COUNCIL BUDGET HEARING  
MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2023**

City Council Budget Hearing, held in the Council Chambers, located at 27600 Jefferson Avenue, St. Clair Shores, Michigan

Present: Mayor Kip Walby, Council Members John Caron, Ronald Frederick, David Rubello, Candice Rusie and Chris Vitale

Absent & Excused: Council Member Peter Accica

Also Present: City Manager Dustin Lent, Assistant City Manager Michael Greene, City Clerk Abrial Barrett, Interim Finance Director Renae Warnke, Directors Rosemary Orlando, Bryan Babcock, Denise Pike, and Henry Bowman, Deputy Director of Parks and Rec Rob Spinazzola, Assistant Library Director Stephanie Fair, Chief Judge Joseph Oster, Court Administrator Andrea Strassburg, City Engineer Chris Liebert, Fire Chief James Piper, Police Chief Jason Allen, Jason Harms, Tom Mehl, Matt Hubinsky, and City Attorney Robert Ihrle

**1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Walby called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. Ms. Barrett, City Clerk, called the roll, noted that Mr. Accica asked to be excused, and a quorum was present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Motion by Council Member Caron, seconded by Council Member Frederick to excuse Council Member Accica.**

Ayes: All – 6  
Absent: Accica

**OVERVIEW AND PROJECTIONS**

Mr. Lent said that there is no millage increase and he provided an overview of the proposed budget noting it is approximately \$116 million in revenue and \$114 million in expenses. He explained that there are account changes due to the state chart of accounts going into effect. The Clerk's Department has been divided into two separate accounts, Clerk's and Elections. The Community Development Department will also be divided into a few different accounts.

Mr. Lent said outside of the state mandate there are other account changes. The Recreation Department is back into the general fund except for Golf and Kyte Monroe Park has been added to the Park's budget. In order to be transparent of the budget, any account that generates revenue has been added to the expense page for everyone to see.

Mr. Lent noted that there are large increases to the Motor Pool and IT Departments. He said Motor Pool is calculated in three different ways and the third formula for the depreciation of vehicles has changed due to inflation. There will be a 5% increase to certain departments to cover inflation. Another change they made, is making sure vehicles are being charged to the proper department.

Mr. Lent said the IT Department will now have phones and computers combined. He indicated that Munis and IntelliTime are moving to the IT fund. This will be divided up based on computers and employees in each department and this will allow each department to be charged for services. The Street fund will now be put into either the Local, Act 51 Local or Act 51 Major account instead of using the transfer fund to get real time information.

Mr. Lent thanked Ms. Warnke for doing a great job on the budget.

**40<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT COURT**

Ms. Strassburg said they are continuing to provide new ways of services for the public. She noted that the E-file initiative is in place and the judges on the bench are now paperless for civil filings. Recently they have started their online dispute resolution program for civil infraction tickets. She said the budget allows for operations to continue as normal but they are trying to keep up with the times and they strive to provide innovative services to the community. They received a grant from MMRMA for security cameras and they have just joined purchasing for supplies, which is working with other courts to save money by purchasing in bulk.

**POLICE & DLEF**

Chief Allen indicated that they have partnered with Care of Southeast Michigan that helps people with opioid addictions and partnered with Macomb County Community Mental Health Department to help with mental health issues. He noted that the body cameras are now in service. He said the budget is similar to last year but there are some increases due to inflation and they have made some cuts where they could. The SERESA costs have gone down due to the county wide 911 cell phone surcharge that went into effect in May 2022.

**POLICE & DLEF cont'd.**

Mr. Caron noted that the fringe benefits for the second lieutenant listed on the personnel page are not in line with the others listed and he asked for this to be looked into.

**FIRE**

Chief Piper said with the rising costs, they made changes where possible. He said some of the increases are due to contractual, inflation, and the IT and motor pool changes. They need to replace all of the SCBA air packs so they have the current universal connector. They are changing how they are doing the capital outlay purchases. He said Instead of doing a percentage for different items, they will purchase one item as a whole and then something else the following year. In the Motor Pool, there is a rescue truck replacement and an ambulance. He said they have an ambulance on order for this year and then they plan on ordering another one for next year. These types of vehicles are taking years to come in. They also need training equipment and an update to the hose dryer.

Mr. Ihrie arrived at 7:18 p.m.

**COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Ms. Pike said there are increases for the non-owner-occupied inspection services and the sidewalk program. They have included additional training for three professionals that require certification maintenance and they are adding S & A training for their administrative staff. She mentioned looking at third party plan reviews to help in getting plans done faster and they are looking at starting a hoarder program. She said that CDI is now supporting the DDA and they are assisting with TIFA and Brownfield Authority.

**DPW, UTILITY FUND, MOTOR POOL, STREETS**

**DPW Administration** – Mr. Babcock noted that one of his clerical employees has been promoted to the office manager position. He said lawn cutting is a new line item and they have added additional funding to pave the parking lot.

**Sanitation** – Mr. Babcock said there are no significant changes. The household hazardous waste day is on May 13, 2023, at the DPW. There is no cost to us or the residents.

**Water Department** – Mr. Babcock said the lawn cutting has increased due to the water reservoir property at Ten Mile and Harper. There is a decrease in the lead service lines as there are only a few that still need to be replaced. He noted that there are some local water main projects coming up.

**Sanitary Sewer** – Mr. Babcock said there was a \$25,000 reduction for the in-house repair cost. He said the sewer repairs, televising the sewers, and the follow behind for repairs are still included in the budget.

**Storm Sewer** – Mr. Babcock said they added grass cutting. There are projects for the Alexander relief drain and the Eight and half Mile relief drain that need cleaning and inspections and there is a storm sewer that will need repairs. He indicated we received a \$250,000 grant from FEMA for the pump station at Masonic and Jefferson for flood prevention.

**Motor Pool** – Mr. Babcock said operating supplies were increased by \$10,000 due to installing a new treatment system for operating fuels with ethanol. They increased diesel, fuel, and unleaded fuel due to cost and they increased their repairs and maintenance due cost of parts.

**Streets** – Mr. Babcock explained the split between local and major due to the Act 51 money.

**LIBRARY**

Ms. Orlando said they received a \$1.5 million grant award for renovations at the Library. They have reduced the Library material and put that money towards online resources. There are increases in IT and computer services and they have reduced the temporary wages. She mentioned they received a \$181,844 donation for a genealogy room. They also received a \$10,000 donation for a new circulation desk as part of the renovation and the Historical Society received a \$10,000 donation.

Ms. Fair said in an effort to get people back into the Library they are offering more adult programs. They are having a notable book author come into the Library. She said the toddler dance was a success. Social media has helped and they are trying different techniques than they have in the past.

**PARKS & RECREATION**

Mr. Bowman mentioned all of the enhancements, activities, and programs they have accomplished this past year.

**PARKS & RECREATION cont'd.**

Mr. Lent said that they combined Kyte Monroe with the Parks budget. He noted in the administration section that there is an internal allocation that was assigned to administration for their responsibility across each of the departments. This number is for transparency to show how much it costs to run the facilities and programs.

**Parks & Recreation Administration** – Mr. Bowman said there are not a lot of changes in this section.

Mr. Lent noted that the farmers market budget number looks like an increase but last year's budgeted number was low. Mr. Lent said going forward there are changes on how the events budget will be documented.

**Arena** – Mr. Bowman said they are moving forward with the new compressor at the Wells Arena.

Mr. Lent noted there is a lot going on at Civic Arena and they are in need of an office manager. He also noted that we need someone to clean just the arena. Due to the complexity of the arena, it is too much for our current cleaning company to handle along with the other buildings.

**Aquatics** – Mr. Lent said the pump house price will be about \$1.5 million and is not included in this budget, it will most likely come out of the general fund balance.

Mayor and Council agree that the pump house should be done as an amendment and not come from the general fund. It needs to be accounted for that the proceeds from the Jefferson property sale will be going towards the pump house cost and then the remaining amount can be budgeted.

**Parks and Recreation** – Mr. Spinazzola said they are combining Kyte Monroe into the Parks and Recreation budget due to using the same resources. He said grass cutting was moved into services and the services increased due to contract assistance. They looked back at the last three years and this number better reflects what they have been spending on getting assistance.

Mayor Walby would like to have red clay at Brys Park baseball diamonds.

Mr. Lent said we could replace the new van listed for \$40,000 with a used van and then add the fields to the budget.

Mr. Mehl noted that the zero-turn field groomer listed has been put on hold due to budget limits.

**Senior Activity Center** – Mr. Hubinsky said there are not too many changes. He said we are getting more from the County for the meal program and the block grant stays the same.

Mr. Caron asked if the CDBG funds for the parking lot will be an adjustment to the budget.

Mr. Lent said yes, the revenue and expense for the parking lot is in the CDBG allocation.

**Golf Course** – Mr. Spinazzola indicated the increases are due to product costs and credit card fees going up. The water utility account increased by about \$15,000 due to being charged for a sewer pump out fee.

**GENERAL GOVERNMENT AND ALL OTHERS**

Mr. Lent shared a brief overview of departments that have not already been discussed. Focusing on the departments that have changes to their budgets.

**Attorney** – No changes

**City Council** – No changes

**Boards and Commissions** – Mr. Lent said there is a description of the committees with their balances and expenses.

Council asked if the money that the City transfers to the committees can be separated so they review those allocations for each committee.

**City Manager** – No changes

**Finance Department** – There is a decrease due to moving out Munis and IntelliTime.

**City Clerk** – Mr. Lent said they are separating Elections from City Clerk.

**GENERAL GOVERNMENT AND ALL OTHERS cont'd.**

**Assessing** – Ms. Socia said there are not a lot of changes.

**Communications** – Mayor and Council asked if we can look into the cost of printing paper calendars.

**General Government** – Mr. Lent said the miscellaneous account is for any potential issue that may arise that we have to fix.

Council would like to merge contingency and miscellaneous together instead of them being separate accounts.

**Building Maintenance** – No changes

2. **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (5 MINUTE TIME LIMIT)** - None

3. **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Council Member Caron, seconded by Council Member Frederick to adjourn the meeting at 10:44 p.m.**

Ayes: All – 6  
Absent: Accica

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KIP C. WALBY  
Mayor

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Abrial J. Barrett  
City Clerk

(THE PRECEDING MINUTES ARE A SYNOPSIS OF A CITY COUNCIL MEETING AND DO NOT REPRESENT A VERBATIM RECORD.)