

City Council of the Mayor and Council of New Castle
Budget Workshop
Town Hall – 201 Delaware Street – New Castle
Thursday – May 19, 2009 – 6 p.m.

Present:

Council President William Barthel
Councilperson John Cochran
Councilperson John Gaworski
Councilperson Ted Megginson

Also Present:

City Treasurer Janet Carlin, City Administrator Cathryn Thomas

Budget Workshop to discuss 2009-2010 Budget

● **Public Services**

Administrator Thomas presented the draft public services budget. She indicated her approach to the budget was to sharply cut spending where she saw opportunities in following the guidance from City Council to avoid raising taxes.

Administrator Thomas pointed out the salary line for supervision would see a savings of \$60,000 in the event that City Council decides not to fill the position of Public Works Director, which is vacant. In addition, the unfilled position of Building Code Tech I, which was budgeted for in the FY 2009 budget, would reflect a savings of \$35,500, if, as expected, it is not filled in FY 2010.

Administrator Thomas said in reducing budget amounts she looked at the amount spent to date in FY 2009 and how much has been spent annually over the previous four-year period.

The line for postage expense was increased in part to reflect the higher postal rates, which are rising 4.4 percent. The City Council could look at consolidating its leased postal systems.

The net decrease in the personal services section of the draft public services budget for FY 2010 is \$101,000.

Administrator Thomas said she budgeted for lower fuel costs in FY 2010 than a year ago, when gas prices were near \$4 a gallon, but left some cushion in the event that gas prices rise again.

There is a net \$30,000 decrease in the contractual services section of the draft public services budget.

Councilperson Megginson said that at the Trustees of the New Castle Common meeting in May, two Eagle Scouts talked about projects that would involve improvements to City parks.

Councilperson Cochran asked about a program where businesses donate money as a sponsor for work done on roadways and parks. Administrator Thomas explained the City does do that for the parks, with current sponsorships in Bullhill Park, Dobbinsville Park and Buttonwood Park.

Councilperson Cochran suggested a renewed effort to solicit businesses to sponsor work in the parks.

Administrator Thomas said the public services department capital budget is proposed to be reduced by \$10,000 because of no new capital needs for FY 2010.

Councilperson Gaworski said the Public Works Department in the following year's budget (FY 2011) would be looking to replace No. 2 garbage truck.

Administrator Thomas said a garbage truck costs about \$150,000. The City Council made a request this year for some funding for the truck from the Trustees of the New Castle Common. The request was not granted.

Councilperson Cochran said the City Council needs to think about starting to put money away in a "rainy day" fund or a capital reserve fund.

Councilperson Megginson pointed out that with revenues still slumping it makes it difficult to put money into savings.

Councilperson Cochran said he would like to take a look at raising the permit fees, which are much lower in the City than surrounding areas.

The next budget workshop is at 7 p.m. on May 21. The focus is on the Mayor's Office; Recreation; Committees and Commissions.

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Dickinson
City Clerk