

City of New Castle Delaware
City Council Budget Workshop at Town Hall
201 Delaware Street, New Castle
Thursday, June 13, 2019– 6:00 p.m.

Call to order: 6:00 pm

Roll Call

Councilperson Suzanne Souder
Councilperson Russell Smith
Council President Linda Ratchford
Councilperson Valarie Leary
Councilperson Michael Platt (6:05 P.M.)

Also present:

William Barthel, City Administrator
Kathy Walls, Finance Director
Janet Carlin, City Treasurer

City Administrator Barthel addressed questions from the previous meeting, as follows:

- Range Supplies for the Police Department; the full \$8,000 is needed for recruits going through the Academy, as well as quarterly range shoots.
- Radar and Radios for the Police Department; the \$5,000 is needed. Expenses may exceed the \$5,000, but grants will be looked into. A warranty will be purchased, to help cover some of the miscellaneous repairs. The radar needs to be certified each year.
- Seasonal Uniforms; The same clothing has been used over the past few years. The number provided is an accurate number. Some of the additional expenses, related to both equipment and uniforms, are for bike repairs related to the bike patrol for which a grant was received.
- Mr. Barthel provided a spreadsheet of Public Works trucks costs for the past year.

The numbers related to the above items did not change from the previous meeting.

Canine Supplies was reduced from \$5,000 to \$3,000.

After the last meeting, discretionary spending was at \$20,350.

Mr. Barthel provided a handout, and reviewed items as follows:

- The \$32,000 savings reflected in the current meeting packet is due to a Police Officer who will be retiring in July. The officer will be replaced with a recruit.
- Projected health insurance increase of \$7,545.
- Projected increase in dumping fees of \$12,000, for the street sweeper, based on the costs after the first month of street sweeping with the new sweeper.
- \$190 added for HR person to join an HR organization.

After the above adjustments, the discretionary spending sub-total changes to \$32,715.

Referring to the handout, Mr. Barthel advised that projected revenue from violations was increased by \$15,000, and projected franchise fees were increased by \$10,000.

The above revenue adjustments increase the discretionary spending sub-total to \$47,715.

Mr. Barthel explained the added expense of \$10,000 for a feasibility study which he proposes, on the potential economic, efficiency and security improvements from the City of New Castle combining facilities with MSC, at 100 Municipal. MSC would contribute another \$10,000 toward the feasibility study.

There was discussion related to details of how such a move would work, as well as potential pros and cons. However, Mr. Barthel reiterated that the \$20,000 would be for a feasibility study only, to determine whether such a move would be economically feasible, and if so, how it would work.

Another addition was \$4,000 for cyber-security improvements. MSC would contribute an additional \$4,000 to this project.

The \$14,000 adjustment described above reduces the discretionary spending sub-total to \$33,715.

Mayor Quaranta requested that Council consider the following:

- An RFP related to trash, recycling and yard waste, given that truck replacement costs are approximately \$200,000 each.
- Raising per-unit fees for multi-family, and other rental housing fees from \$50 to \$75, to assist in offsetting costs related to inspections and emergency services.

The likelihood of the Fire Department moving from volunteer to fully paid over the next 15 years or so, and how that might be funded, was discussed.

There was general discussion about whether or not taxes and/or fees should be raised as part of this budget process, as well as overall use of the discretionary fund. It was decided to continue with this current budget based on existing revenue, with a commitment to study ways to increase revenue, particularly in the areas of taxes and fees, in the future, after this budget is passed. By mid-fiscal year, the comprehensive plan will be completed, so that consideration can be given to what expenses the city might need to take on to move forward with it.

The need to look into the process of re-establishing the Mayor's Court, as well as costs and revenue related to it, was discussed.

Back to the topic of the current budget, Council members brought up several items, including:

- Staff training
- More signs, including street cleaning signs, directional signage, etc.
- Approximately \$10,000 of the projected discretionary fund will be set aside as a reserve for such things as signage, professional development, etc., leaving approximately \$23,000 for grants/contributions.
- Consideration of having the Fire Department be its own line item at some point in the future, rather than being included in general contributions.

- The Fire Department has hired for a third position, with duties including back-up driver.
- The Fire Department has received CTF grant money for equipment in the past year and a half, at \$23,575 and \$22,714. This money comes from a “bucket” of funds for which communities may apply. Although the city could have applied for those funds for another use, such as streets, the likelihood of the grant being improved was increased by devoting the funds to the Fire Department.
- If/when recipients of services from Goodwill Fire Company, such as ambulance services, are unable to pay, or their insurance does not cover, the Company does not pursue payment beyond sending the first bill.

Requests from the various organizations are as follows:

- Beautification; no request, but \$1,000 is projected
- Arasapha; \$1,000
 - The city’s in-kind contributions to Arasapha total around \$3,500 to \$4,000
- Senior Center; \$5,000 for two exercise classes
- New Castle Community Partnership; \$2,600 for brochures (\$850 graphics and \$1,750 printing)
- Public Library; \$5,000 for computer supplies and programming supplies
- Historical Society; \$11,000, of which \$8,500 is for the Visitor’s Center and \$2,500 is for exhibits
- Goodwill Fire Company; \$30,000 for overall financial support

The above requests total \$55,600.

Council agreed to the following contributions:

- Beautification; \$1,000
- Arasapha; \$1,000
- Senior Center; \$3,000
- New Castle Community Partnership; \$1,750
- Public Library; \$3,000
- Historical Society; \$5,000
- Goodwill Fire Company; \$9,000

Kathy Walls briefly reviewed the handout that was provided, related to grants. This details what the city is projecting to apply for and what is typically approved. \$730,000 worth of grants are included. When it comes to grant funds received, revenue must equal expenses. Grants must be included in the budget resolution that is voted on.

A resolution will be put together for the next meeting, based on everything that was discussed at this meeting

After a motion and second, the meeting was adjourned. Council adjourned at 7:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Whitaker Clerk of the City of New Castle