City of New Castle Delaware
Budget Workshop
1 Municipal Boulevard
Monday, February 10, 2025
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order: 6:30 PM

Roll Call

Present: Council President Suzanne Souder
Councilperson Brian Mattaway
Councilperson Joseph F. Day, III
Councilperson Nermin Zubaca
Councilperson Andrew Zeltt

Also present: Antonina Tantillo, City Administrator
Courtaney P. Taylor, City Clerk/Finance Coordinator
James Whisman, City Treasurer

Council President Souder called the February 10, 2025, City Council Budget Workshop to order at 6:30 p.m. Roll call followed and a quorum to conduct business was declared.

Mid-Year Budget Review and Discussion

Ms. Tantillo gave a high-level report on the status of the City as of December 31, 2024:

Revenues

- Revenues are at 61%.
- Business Licenses are at 65% due to the fact that fees were not due until February 1st and more of that revenue will be reflected in the second half of the year.
- Code Enforcements Cost reimbursements well exceed the expected revenue at $10,002. This was due to a violation from last year that the City recently got back.
- State Courts is at 42% of the budget based on ticketing.
- MSC Appropriations is at 27%. Multiple checks are received during the year.
- Miscellaneous Income General Fund is at $11,251 as the result of a $10,000 donation received via ONCOR from a resident who wished to remain anonymous in anticipation of the City creating the Delaware Community Fund. If the Fund is not established, the $10,000 donation will be reimbursed.
- The Police Pension Supplement shows 0% received; however, a payment of $67,508 was received in January.
- Pay Job Reimbursement exceeds budgeted revenues by 31%.

Expenses

- Shift Differential was budgeted for $0 and $289.99 was spent. This was a carryover from the prior year.

- Health/Dental Expenses/Public Safety is expected to exceed the budgeted amount due to the Delaware Leave Act, which will include overtime pay. The Budget will need to be adjusted next year to account for that.
- Security Cameras / City Wide – An unexpected camera repair was required.
- Vehicle Parts & Repairs is at 93%. Some of that may be reimbursed.
- Street Repairs exceeded the budgeted amount by $1,900 due to required street repairs.
- Storm Drainage is 26% expended
- Advertising/Mayor & Council may go over the budgeted amount.
- Economic Development Activities are at 58% expended. This includes $3,000 that was reimbursed as donations that the Coordinator raised for the Nao Trinidad visit to New Castle.
- Sea Level Rise Task Force shows an overage of $2,387 due to engineering for the Flood Resiliency Committee. More will need to be budgeted next year as this work continues.
- Equipment Purchases was budgeted at $0 and $114 that was spent will be moved to ARPA expenditure for the Senior Center Equipment.
- Software Support includes expenditures for Code Red and the University of Delaware City website project.
- Capital Reserves includes work for the salt shelter and other expenditures are forthcoming.
- City Solicitor shows 70% expended. The City Solicitor's fee increased this year, and this also reflects fees for Sheriff Sale properties. Sheriff's Sale fees will be reimbursed.
- City Architect is 2% over budget.

At the conclusion of Ms. Tantillo's report, she responded to questions from Council members.

- Franchise fees – additional revenues have been received since December 31st.
- Councilperson Zeltt suggested that expenditures for the City Solicitor be broken into two line items: one for Sheriff's Sales and one for legal fees associated with the City in general. It was noted that the solicitor's fee is the same for all attorneys.
- HAC Application fees do not cover the City Architect's fees entirely.
- Councilperson Zubaca suggested that Fixed Revenues and Variable Revenues be broken out.
- Economic Development includes the Coordinator plus a $3,000 donation. Ms. Taylor noted that when the contract was signed there was a portion for salary and a portion for materials.
- Ms. Tantillo further explained the $10,000 anonymous donation via ONCOR.
- In response to a question from Councilperson Zeltt, Ms. Tantillo explained that there are still funds for the Economic Development Coordinator position, adding that the Contract would have to be reworked if Council decides to continue the position. Council President Souder stated that if Council decides to consider continuing the Economic Development

position a Resolution would be required and the position would have to be posted. As the topic was not on the Agenda, there was no further discussion.

- Code Violation Penalties is the result of the Code Enforcement Officer position being vacant for so long.
- Ms. Tantillo is working on an investment policy and expects to be able to speak about this at an upcoming Council meeting.
- The City has been given authorization to proceed with the Federal grant funding received by the City. Ms. Taylor noted that funds for most of the grants received for the Police Department were received in advance.
- Transcription Services – Funds will be reallocated for additional administrative help in the City Office.

Public Comment

Phil Gross – 1301 13th Street

- Mr. Gross opined that because there is no Federal or State funding for New Castle the Flood Resiliency Committee should be put on hold.
- Mr. Gross opined that merchants should take responsibility for any economic development program, and the $40,000 budgeted should be reallocated.
- Mr. Gross opined that no budget line items should be discussed in Executive Session.
- Mr. Gross noted his recollection that the $75,000 for the Playground was not to be spent and was to be brought back into the Budget each year.

Council President Souder stated that the Flood Resiliency Committee met with another Federal Agency this week and there is funding available to perhaps do some small project(s).

Council President Souder stated that the $75,000 for the Playground is seed money for matching grants, and that Council never said they would not spend any of those funds.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion and Vote on Resolution 2025-13 A Resolution to amend the FY 2025 Municipal Budget (Council President Suzanne Souder

Ms. Tantillo explained that the City has been using temporary help in the Office and because not as much has been spent in the Code Enforcement Line, the City is requesting reallocating $10,000 from the Building Code Enforcement salary line to the Salary Line, and the FICA portion from the Public Services Line to the Admin Line. Resolution 2025-13 will not impact the bottom line of the Budget.

A motion to approve Resolution 2025-13 was made by Councilperson Day. Councilperson Zeltt seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business to discuss, Council President Souder called for a motion to adjourn.

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilperson Day, seconded by Councilperson Zubaca, and unanimously carried; and the meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen R. Weirich
City Stenographer

Next Regular Meeting Date: February 18, 2025
Posted: 0203/2025