

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN
BUDGET DELIBERATIONS SESSION
APRIL 29, 2024**

The Board of Aldermen resumed its budget deliberation session regarding the Board of Finance's recommended budget for fiscal year 2024-2025, on Wednesday, April 29, 2024. Chairman Vetro called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. asking those present to join in saluting our flag and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Roll Call

Board Members

M. Arciuolo, II
B. Bevan
M. Casey
J. Federico
P. Healy
A. Fowler
J. Jenkins
S. Marlow
H. Mulrenan
R. Pacelli, Jr. @ 7:25 p.m.
W. Smith
P. Vetro
R. Vitali

Also Present

Mayor Anthony S. Giannattasio
P. Erodicti, Finance Director
J. Rosen, Chief of Staff

Excused:

E. Beatty
W. Willis

Chairman Vetro welcomed everyone to the 2024-2025 budget deliberations. He stated tonight's meeting was the departmental portion of the budget process.

Ald. Healy and Ald. Casey made and seconded a motion to come out of recess. Motion carried unanimously.

City Clerk (p.22)

City Clerk, Karen Fortunati, stated the budget is less than the prior year due to restructuring within the office.

Registrar of Voters (p. 15)
Elections (p. 14)

Kerri Rowland, Registrar, provided a schedule showing additional voting days. She stated the office is working on best practices for early voting. Ms. Rowland stated additional funding in seasonal and overtime accounts has been requested for Registrar staff due to extra hours for early voting. She discussed the need for staff training and requested that the department request be restored in order for staff to attend training. Ms. Rowland discussed the need for a fire safe file cabinet. Ms. Fellenbaum discussed early voting and the impact on the department budget. Chairman Vetro asked how many polling places are involved. Ms. Rowland stated there are 9 polling places for state and federal and 8 for municipal. Ms. Fellenbaum discussed the deficit in the overtime account to pay deputy registrars during early voting for the primary. Ald. Marlow asked if there is state reimbursement for early voting. Ms. Rowland stated there was a one-time grant of \$10,500. She stated the payroll for the 4 days of early voting was approximately \$32,000 for 4 days early voting and primary election day. Mr. Marlow asked if the tabulator and ballots are under elections or registrar. Ms. Rowland stated the tabulator and ballots come from the elections account. Discussion ensued concerning early voting and estimating turnout. Mr. Marlow asked if the tabulators are maintained and certified. Ms. Rowland stated they are serviced annually. She discussed issues with aging tabulator machines. Discussion ensued concerning staffing and early voting. Ald. Jenkins asked how many poll workers are needed at each location. Mr. Rowland reviewed the number of poll workers and the roll of each. Ald. Arciuolo asked if the fireproof file cabinet is not provided will the office be in violation of state law. Mr. Rowland stated the office will be able to store in accordance with state law but is concerned with the turnout for early voting and storage becoming an issue. Ald. Arciuolo asked if the Registrars are present at the polls on election day. Mr. Rowland discussed the work performed by the Registrars on election day. Ald. Jenkins asked if the salary is the same for all poll workers. Ms. Rowland stated salary is based on the responsibility of the poll worker. Ald. Federico asked for an explanation of the requested increase for regular hours. Ms. Rowland discussed the extra hours required due to early voting. Discussion ensued concerning the hours worked by the Registrars. Ald. Federico asked if the fireproof safe request is based on an actual quote. Ms. Fellenbaum stated it was based on an estimate. Ald. Healy asked if the budget would fulfill the statutory requirements for this year. Mr. Rowland stated it will be very close provided there will not be an August primary. If there is a primary there may not be sufficient funding for overtime or seasonal staff. Discussion ensued concerning staffing polling places. Ald. Bevan what happens to fund not expended. Mr. Erodici stated it would go back to the general fund balance.

Human Resources Department (p. 41)

Director, Tania Barnes, provided an overview of the Human Resources Department. She discussed training and team building provided to staff and departments. Ms. Barnes stated seasonal temporary increase request for a paid intern during the summer. She discussed requested increase to medical/dental for independent medical exams required for disability pension requests. Ms. Barnes discussed increased costs of medical and professional fees for pre-employment physicals and DOT required drug testing. She discussed the increased cost of advertising for posting open positions. Ald. Vitali asked for an explanation of the work performed by the summer program. Ms. Barnes discussed implementing the intern position for students going into the human resources field. Ald. Federico asked for an explanation of the additional position for HR projects manager. Ms. Barnes

discussed the work and projects performed by the projects manager. Ald. Healy asked if special services could be used for the project manager position. Ms. Barnes stated the special services provide EAP service for employees.

Public Works Office (p. 63)

Highway/Parks (p. 65)

Building Maintenance (p. 69)

Engineering Department (p. 72)

General Garage (p. 74)

Solid Waste (p. 76)

Wastewater (p. 101)

Sewer Commission (p. 98)

Chris Saley, Public Works Director, provided a brief overview of the Public Works Department. Ald. Healy asked if the funding allocated will meet all contractual obligations. Ald. Marlow asked if the master mechanic position is reflected in the budget. Mr. Saley stated it is reflected in the budget. Ald. Marlow asked if having a master mechanic will eliminate the need to outsource repairs. Mr. Saley stated it will not entirely eliminate the need to outsource. He discussed the benefit of an in-house master mechanic. Ald. Marlow asked if all Public Works vehicles are repaired in-house. Mr. Saley stated some repairs are outsourced. Ald. Marlow asked if the current infrastructure will be able to handle the new apartments being constructed around town. Mr. Saley stated it will not be sufficient. Mr. Saley discussed the sewer system and issues that may arise overtime. Ald. Federico noted the increase in City waste disposal and asked for an explanation. Mr. Saley discussed the increased costs of recycling and municipal solid waste disposal. He discussed the services provided by the public works department. Mr. Saley stated over the past 8 years the waste disposal account was not properly funded. He discussed estimated costs for recycling and solid waste based on prior years. Mr. Erodici stated each year the waste disposal account required transfers to cover costs. Discussion ensued concerning disposal costs. Ald. Federico asked for an explanation of the transfer station fee. Mr. Saley reviewed the fee schedule. He stated the vast majority of users are small business owners. Mr. Saley stated that pickups and commercial vehicles are charged for use of the transfer station. Ald. Arciuolo asked why electricity was reduced under Building Maintenance. Mr. Saley discussed fuel cells and purchasing futures. Ald. Mulrenan asked if automotive mechanics have been eliminated to allow master mechanics. Mr. Saley stated the positions were changed to master mechanics. Discussion ensued concerning the ability to fill vacancies. Ald. Vitali asked how many electric vehicles are in the City. Mr. Saley discussed the number of vehicles and discussed the recent purchase of Ford Lightning vehicles. Discussion ensued concerning electric vehicles and the benefit to the City. Ald. Arciuolo asked if non-residents can use the transfer station. Mr. Saley stated any non-resident using the transfer station will be charged a fee. Ald. Healy cost for bulk waste. Mr. Saley discussed issues with bulk waste and alterative options for bulk disposal. Discussion ensued concerning bulk waste. Ald. Vitali asked if \$12,000 is for one computer or multiple computers. Mr. Saley stated it is for in-field devices and technology.

Mayor Giannattasio asked the Finance Director to clarify the overall increase on the City side. Mr. Erodici stated the City side of the budget increase on the Mayor's proposed budget is 0.77% and Board of Finance recommended budget is 0.79%. Ald. Vitali asked what the increase represents in mils. Mr. Erodici stated it represents 1.55 mils. Ald. Mulrenan asked last year's increase. Mr. Erodici

stated last year's increase was 0.52 mils. Ald. Vitali asked if the 1.55 includes the City and Board of Education budget. Mr. Erodici confirmed the 1.55 includes both the City and Board of Education budget.

Ald. Pacelli and Ald. Casey made and seconded a motion to recess. Motion carried unanimously. The Board recessed at 9:10 p.m.

Chairman Vetro announced the Board would stand in recess.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Toni Jo Weeks", written over a horizontal line.

Toni Jo Weeks
Recording Secretary