



MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Thursday, May 11, 2023 @ 5:30 p.m.
Foster Community Center

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Wood called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Council Member Carol Wood
Council Member Jeremy Garza
Councilmember Adam Hussain
Councilmember Peter Spadafore excused
Councilmember Patricia Spitzley - excused
Councilmember Brian T. Jackson
Councilmember Jeffrey Brown
Councilmember Ryan Kost

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Office Manager
Joseph Abood, OCA
Emily Linden, Internal Auditor
Diseree Kirkland, Finance Director
Jackson Mills, Finance
Jody Washington
Jane DiSessa, Deputy Mayor
Lucianna Solis, Mayor's Office
Jason Wilkes
Michael Lynn
Erica Lynn
Todd Haywood, City Pulse
Donald Beam
Leslie Arnell
Jodie Washington
Nancy Mahlow
Erika Lynn
Dr. Manu
Robin King-Anderson

Council President Wood outlined the budget process for the meeting. She then noted that budgets are not easy, and the goal of City Council is to answer the questions they hear from the public and do the fiduciary for the public. The meetings are not personal, it is their task to look at the material that is given to them, and make the decisions. The budget will be up for discussion and adoption on May 15, 2023, and City Council is responsible by Charter and state statute to approve budget on May 15th, 2023.

Presentations

Budget Presentations

Ms. Kirkland introduced Mr. Mills to go over the budget presentation. Mr. Mills spoke briefly on the budget process which were due to the Administration by December 2022 and on March 27th a budget presentation was given to Council. As far as City wide budget, a 13% increase due to increasing EDP, higher capital expenditures and the public safety millage. The GF revenues have a main sources of property taxes and income taxes. Regarding the expenditures, they include fringe which includes a 8% increase from the current. Mr. Mills continued outlining the budget as presented to Council outlining capital improvement.

Public Comment

Mr. Beam asked if the ongoing pink tag issue has caused an increase to allocate to the budget allowing the City to put leverage onto the property owners that are not doing the due diligence to fix the properties.

department is doing a top to bottom look at their procedures and fees. There is hopes in the next fiscal year there will be visible changes.

Ms. Arnell spoke on the LEPFA funds the City has provided to them. She provided examples of her neighborhood near the Groesbeck golf course and again asked Council to discontinue providing funds to LEPFA.

Ms. Washington acknowledged the Council for asking the hard questions and asking them to focus on the infrastructure, asking them for serious amendments. Ms. Washington concluded by stating her frustration on the spending on multiple deputy mayors.

Council President Wood stated that there is a Deputy Mayor DiSessa, Deputy Mayor Frayer, and Deputy Chief of Staff Lawrence.

Mr. Lynn stated his concerns on what he considered non-essential staffing referencing HRCS and the Mayor's office. He asked Council to re-evaluate the HRCS budget and the duties in the Mayor's office. Mr. Lynn asked Council to consider budget cuts but not budget cuts for LPD or LFD. Suggestions Mr. Lynn made suggestions for purchases including vehicles, boats and warming stations.

Council President Wood asked for point of order and explained that if the public wanted to acknowledged Mr. Lynn after the meeting, but this is still a public meeting and there is decorum.

Mr. Lynn continued acknowledged the Council.

Ms. Mahlow voiced her concern on the image of wasteful spending in the budget, and frustration with the staffing in the Mayor's office, expecting no deputy mayor but when the mayor is not available the City will be run by the Council President. Ms. Mahlow then spoke on the lack of property equipment for the departments to run their departments. She continued outlining LEPFA projects she asked them to reconsider and the miscellaneous expenses each department has.

Ms. Lynn acknowledged Council for their efforts into looking into all lines of the budget. She then urged them to not just ask the questions but have an outcome with specific action amendments.

Dr. Manu referenced the budget, and suggested outlining the budget with transparency on how the funds are being spent. He voiced his concern that the residents paying more taxes but not seeing the results for what they pay for, providing examples of dilapidated parks, trip hazards on sidewalks and

bad streets. Dr. Manu concluded asking in the future the budgets should show what the funds go for and what revenue is coming in.

Council President Wood explained in the past they have asked for outcomes in the past, but not something the administration has provided in their budget presentation.

Council Member Brown acknowledged the public that are present.

Council Member Jackson acknowledged the public that are present and voiced his interest in any amendments that Council brings to a discussion. Concerned that the deficit was not addressed or there is no plan.

Council Member Kost acknowledged the public for making inquiries. He voiced his concerns with the proposed spending vs revenue, as many of the public are staying to him.

Council Member Hussain acknowledged the public and his interest in accountability and transparency.

Council Member Garza acknowledged the public for attending and those that are not present for contacting the Council members with their concerns. He assured the public that the Council is working together, speaking to departments, and proposing to reduce the Council budget by 10%. He noted that the proposal they are looking at would not reduce LPD or LFD, and when looking at the budget they need to taken into account the responsibilities.

Council President Wood noted for the public that Council Member Spitzley is out of town for business and Council Member Spadafore is out for an illness.

Council President Wood then continued by explaining that Council is taking everything into consideration. She then explained that Council can pass a budget and the Mayor can veto that, but then there would need to be 6 members of Council override that veto. The goal is to come up with a budget that they can all be proud of, and moving in the right direction.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary,

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on May 22, 2023