

## City of West Columbia, SC

### Council Budget Work Session Minutes

May 18, 2015 at 4 p.m.

#### Members Present:

Joe Owens, Mayor  
Casey Jordan Hallman, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Boyd Jones,  
Eric L. Fowler  
L. Dale Harley  
Temus C. "Tem" Miles, Jr.  
Tommy Parler  
B.J. Unthank, Chairperson  
Teddy Wingard

#### Members Absent:

None

#### Others Present:

Jenny Cunningham, City Administrator  
Justin Black, City Treasurer  
Brain Carter, Assistant City Administrator  
Donna Smith, Director of Economic Development  
Sid Varn, Director of Planning and Engineering  
Anna Huffman, IT Systems Administrator  
Marquis Solomon, Fire Battalion Chief  
Jamie Hook, Sanitation/Streets/Parks Superintendent  
Wyatt Coleman, Fire Chief

Stuart Jones, Building Official  
Dennis Tyndall, Police Chief  
Rick Hodge, Financial Consultant  
Larry Hall, Equipment Services Manager  
Wayne Shuler, Director of Planning and Zoning  
Kelli Ricard, City Clerk

Members of the Public and Press

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#### Agenda Item I – Call to Order

Chairperson BJ Unthank called the work session to order at 4:10 p.m. and noted a quorum was present. *The State, Free Times, Lexington County Chronicle, Cayce-West Columbia News, The Columbia Star, COLADaily.com* and radio and television stations were notified of the work session by e-mail on May 14, 2015.

#### Agenda Item II – Invocation

Council Member Miles gave the invocation and everyone said the Pledge of Allegiance. Council Member Fowler entered the room at 4:13 p.m.

#### Agenda Item III – Discussion of FY 2015-2016 Budget Plans for General Fund and Water and Sewer Fund

Chairperson Unthank recognized City Administrator, Jenny Cunningham, who gave a presentation on the FY 2015-2016 budgets for both the General Fund and the Water and Sewer Fund. Expenses for the General Fund total \$12,710,000 and are balanced to the projected revenues of the same amount. The primary sources of revenues for the General Fund include property taxes, business licenses and fees, state rebates, hydrant fees, permit fees, transfers, grant funds, and sale of assets. The General Fund budget is balanced at 55.279 in operating mills and 6.6 in debt service mills, the same as for FY 2014-2015. The 6.6 mills is collected and earmarked for the debt retirement of the 2010 ten-year general obligation debt to refinance the Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) for the State and Meeting streets property. When the debt is paid off, the 6.6 mill assessment will cease.

Mrs. Cunningham stated the Water/Sewer operating budget is balanced with no increase to water and sewer service rates, no increase to connection (tap) fees, and no increase in hydrant availability (fire protection) fees were requested. The projected FY 2015-2016 transfer to the General Fund from the Water/Sewer Fund is \$2,465,000, which is only a \$25,000 increase from the FY 2014-2015 transfer amount.

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Agenda Item III – Discussion of FY 2015-2016 Budget Plans for General Fund and Water and Sewer Fund  
(continued)

Mrs. Cunningham stated that the proposed budget plan includes funding for up to three percent (3%) merit pay increases for employees to be awarded on the employees' employment anniversary dates, subject to a satisfactory performance evaluation. Also included in the budget plan is a two percent (2%) across the board cost-of-living increase for all employees to be awarded July 1, 2015.

Mrs. Cunningham said that West Columbia joined the S.C. State Health Insurance Plan on July 1, 2011, which is in the Blue Cross/Blue Shield network. She provided a summary of the coverages under the State's standard plan as follows:

Annual Deductible:	\$445 Individual/ \$890 Family
In-network Co-insurance	80/20
Out of network Co-insurance	60/40
Per Occurrence Deductible	\$12 Office Visit
Network Retail Pharmacy	\$9 Generic/ \$38 Formulary/ \$60 Non-Formulary

Mr. Black explained that during the first three years of coverage under the State Health Plan, the city was not experience rated, but paid the same rates as other comparably-sized entities. The next calendar year's premiums under the State Health Plan will be experience rated and will increase by seven percent (7%). Mrs. Cunningham recommended that the city, as in past years, continue to pay the employee's part of the monthly premium for health insurance, which is included in the preliminary budget. Along with this increase to the city, is an increase in the amount employees pay towards the premium as well.

Mrs. Cunningham stated that the cost of fleet insurance, property and tort liability insurance increased minimally and is provided through SC Municipal Insurance and Risk Financing Fund (SCMIRF). The South Carolina Municipal Insurance Trust (SCMIT) is the provider for the city's workers' compensation coverage. She explained the premium for workers' compensation insurance is based upon claims and safety experience and is indexed to salaries. The city's premium for workers compensation coverage will be approximately \$214,000 for FY 2015-2016. Council Member Parler left the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Mrs. Cunningham noted that departmental line item budget requests include equipment/fixed asset requests. Each department head gave a detailed explanation of equipment/fixed asset requests. Mr. Jamie Hook, Sanitation/Streets/Parks Superintendent, requested permission from Council to change the Friday sanitation pick-up day to Wednesday in order to be more efficient and save money. All of Council concurred with the change. These requests total \$12,710,000 for the General Fund and \$12,570,000 for the Water/Sewer Fund. The Water/Sewer Fund Budget does include the new projected sewer treatment rate at \$900,000 annually, which is an increase of \$466,500 over the amount for FY 2014-2015.

Agenda Item IV – Adjourn

Chairperson Unthank asked if there were any changes to the proposed budget and received no response. The Budget Work Session adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelli Ricard, City Clerk