

City of New Castle Delaware
Budget Workshop
1 Municipal Boulevard
Thursday, May 15, 2024
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order: 7:00 PM

Roll Call

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

Also present: Mayor Valarie Leary
Antonina Tantillo, City Administrator
Courtaney P. Taylor, City Clerk/Finance Coordinator

Council President Souder called the May 15, 2024 City Council Budget Workshop to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call followed and a quorum to conduct business was declared.

City Council Workshop Session to discuss 2025 Fiscal Year General Fund Budget and Grant Fund Budget.

Ms. Tantillo noted an additional grant request that was received from the Community Collaboration of Delaware and reviewed revisions made to the Budget pursuant to recommendations made by Council at the May 7, 2024 Budget Workshop. Ms. Tantillo stated that the budget is not balanced. Taking into account all projected revenues and expenses at this time, the deficit is \$676,868.79. Ms. Tantillo and Taylor responded to questions as the discussion continued.

(Stenographer's Note: Mayor Leary joined the meeting at 7:19 p.m.)

Councilperson Day noted his frustration that Council has still not received a list of items requested in the Bond Bill before it was submitted. Ms. Tantillo will share the list submitted for the Bond Bill.

Revenues and expenses were reviewed by line item to determine where the proposed budget could be adjusted and recommendations were made.

Councilperson Zubaca suggested that contributions be discussed after the budget has been updated.

During discussion, Council President Souder updated the Council on the status of the Flood Resiliency Committee (FRC), noting that Congress has significantly cut funding to the program New Castle was accepted to for flood mitigation.

Councilperson Zubaca revisited his request for funding from ARPA funds for the playground in Battery Park. He noted that he revised the numbers and is requesting \$150,000 for Phase 2 only. He added that he would like Council to consider his suggestion of putting permanent outdoor chess tables and benches in the Market Square; noting that the cost would be between \$2,000 and \$3,000.

Council President Souder recommended that ARPA funds be revisited after the 2025 budget is finalized; particularly if ARPA funds may be required for some of the city's budgetary items. She also reiterated her comments from the previous Workshop that the city has applied for funds for the playground under the Bond Bill; and both the Playground Sub-committee and ONCOR have applied for multiple grants and some of the requests are for duplicate items. Councilperson Zubaca noted that in order to apply for some of the grants matching funds from the city is required.

Mses. Tantilillo and Taylor will work on updating the proposed budget for discussion at the next Workshop. Councilperson Day asked that they come to the next Workshop with recommendations. Councilperson Zubaca asked if grant items could be identified on the budget worksheet.

The next Budget Workshop will be held on June 3rd and additional Workshops were tentatively scheduled. Ms. Tantilillo explained worst case scenarios in the event the budget is not finalized by June 28th.

Ms. Tantilillo noted that she will be exploring new vendors for a number of services to improve service and potentially reduce costs in the future.

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

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and unanimously carried and the meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen R. Weirich
City Stenographer

Next Regular Meeting Date: June 11, 2024
Posted: 05/08/2024