

Library/Recreation Budget Meeting
12/09/2025

Members Present: Chair Clifford, Vice Chair Tadio, Alderwoman Davis, Alderman Whittcomb
Others present: Board President Allaire, Alderman Talbott, Mayor Doenges, Treasurer Markowski, Superintendent Cioffi, Director Dahlin, Shelley Lutz, Director Smathers, Gordon Drischillo, Claire Coppock, Russell Glitman

Meeting called to order 5:30 PM

The recreation department budget and the library budget

Randall Smathers, Library, presented a spreadsheet with the break down of the Library Budget. There was a proposed 5.5% increase. Director Smathers noted no major changes in personnel. Staffing, actual staffing costs at 2.2%, salaries. Cola is 3%. Smathers explained that health care is a big driver on the benefits.

Smathers noted the larger uncontrolled expenses are electricity, fuel, and repairs being the three big ones. The total spending before we get to the building is \$1.4 million, which means we have available to spend on the building this year in \$19,717.00. The library expects to spend about \$90,000, this year. Smathers is budgeting \$10,000 for repairs. He noted that as of the time of the meeting \$7,900 spent this year, and we are not halfway through the year. He noted the library will go wildly over that, but that's by design because every dollar spent on the building that is overspent is going to come out of our reserves that are designed at some point to either repair 10 Court Street or help to move into a different building.

So it's not tax dollars going straight into the building. It's not tax dollars from the other four towns, and they very much want to see a separation between money that they're spending and a city owned building. Alderwoman Davis asked "Can you find a percentage point? Can you come in just a little bit lower?" Every year we draw down from our capital reserves to cover our budget, to make our budget come even.

The library has a contract with Alliance mechanical because the building projects got too big to use the local contractors. we had been using, and they just stopped coming out because we needed more than they could provide in terms of manpower. Smathers answered "yes, but it comes out of it comes out of money that, at some point, we are going to have to spend on our building."

Alderwoman Davis asked "Each town is based on their per capita rate, is that correct? And have we been adjusted due to loss of residence?"

Smathers explained that the ratio has not changed since it was set, and was unsure of the year that it was set. So at some point, the library is going to come to the city and say, we need to bond \$8 million, \$10 million, 12 million.

But I want to ask it because I'm not on the committee, President Allaire asked if Randall could find even a half a percent to bring back on the 18th.

Alderman Davis asked "What would happen to this budget for your services if you were level funded to last year's total?"

Director Smathers responded "We can. So every percentage point is about 11,000, a little more than \$11,000 now in terms of taxes. So level finding would take about \$60,000 out of the budget. So all the savings, the \$60,000, would have to come out of the top line admins, which is personnel. We would have to cut an equivalent number of hours to make up \$60,000.

Alderman Tadio said she would prefer for us to not take anything out of the operating costs for the staff and for their budget.

Alderman Whittcomb "A lot of this line of questioning feels like nickel and diming, but I do want to acknowledge that the taxpayers are in an absolute crisis mode."

Chair Clifford asked if there are any motions from the committee.

Director Smathers noted that the FY 25 actual for fundraising was about \$75,000, and he anticipated being almost \$140,000 in FY 26. That's about an 80% increase in fundraising.

Alderman Davis moved for the approval with the understanding that Director Smather would review the budget and return on the 18th with a 1%-1.5% decrease.

Alderman Tadio said she would vote to move it out of committee, but did not really support a 1% decrease in this budget.

Chair Clifford moved to the Recreation and Parks Department Budget.

Admin line is a 9.28% increase on the salary. This includes Superintendent, three program directors and two program directors that are vacant right now.

Alderman Davis asked April, how Superintendent Cioffi felt about the 37.5 hours vs. 40 hours for the Superintendent position. There was discussion regarding how the administration got to this point, and the Superintendent offer letter was for 40 hours. After much discussion the committee at this time chose to leave the position at 40 hours per the offer letter accepted.

Treasurer asked about the vacant position at this time and if they needed to be replaced.

Superintendent Cioffi explained, yes, unless the goal was to cut services.

Alderman Tadio moved to approve the admin budget in the amount of \$704,810.62.

The motion passed unanimously.

Giorgetti was the next line item. Director Dahlin offered the information that the electricity for Giorgetti is budgeted at \$55,000 for FY27. The electricity has already seen savings this fiscal year of \$5,000 to date, averaging about 52% power usage. Director Dahlin offer to reduce the electricity line to level fund at \$52,000. Mayor stated that the energy savings, that Director Dahlin Tyler's talking about, isn't from the JCI improvement, it's the new chiller system.

Alderman Davis moved to decrease the electricity line item from \$55,000 to \$52,000. Motion passed unanimously.

Alderman Davis moved for the approval of Giorgetti at \$106,168.57. Motion passed unanimously.

The Godnick line was noted by Superintendent Cioffi has an increase in repair and maintenance to partially cover the repair of the front door. No other increased outside of utilities.

Alderwoman Davis moved for the approval of Godnick at \$17,282.93. Motion was passed unanimously.

White Park Superintendent Cioffi noted that the season staffing is up by \$2,820.00 which includes pool director positions to support safe operating the facility. Director Dahlin noted the major increases are the chemicals. Chlorine and Propane costs were increased substantially due market rates.

Alderwoman Davis asked how many seasonal temporary employees are in this line?

Superintend Cioffi responded that it is approximately 28 employees.

Director Dahlin noted the park maintenance staff has learned how to open the pool. So we're doing all of the opening, the chemical balancing, to get the pool up in operational in house.

Alderwoman Davis moved for the approval of White Park at \$175,329.10. Motion pass unanimously.

Community Centers Line

Superintendent Cioffi acknowledged that this budget amount for the staffing at the Community Center was to cover the entire hours of operation with 1 front desk staff. The line proposed was a \$28,000.00 increase.

After much much discussion the line was proposed at a \$14,000.00 increase, which covers 15% more of the hours currently being staffed by full time employees in addition to their job.

Director Dahlin offered to flatline the Repair and Maintenance line at \$35,000.00.

Director Dahlin brought attention to the energy saving due to the weatherization at the Community Center.

Alderwoman Davis motioned to adjust the repairing maintenance buildings, line item from \$36,000 to \$35,000. Motion Passed unanimously.

Alderwoman Davis moved to adjust the Fuel line from \$50,420 to \$48,000. Motion Passed unanimously.

Alderwoman Davis moved to adjust a seasonal employee salary line item to from \$58,000 to \$44,000. Motion Passed unanimously.

Alderwoman Davis motioned to adjust the FICA line from \$6,732 to \$5,661. Motion Passed unanimously.

Alderwoman Davis motioned for approval of the Community Center at \$214,007.10. Motion Passed unanimously.

Alderman Whittcomb made a motion to refer to the recreation committee a review for the community center rates. Motion Passed unanimously.

Maintenance Director Dahlin pointed out that in this line the department is also supporting Pine Hill partnership with two trail maintenance seasonal employees for overall to support the Pine trail system.

Alderwoman Davis moved for the approval of recreation maintenance at \$1,116,007.64. Motion Passed unanimously.

Programs. Superintendent Cioffi stated that there is a reduction in the seasonal employee and program costs due to the loss of the VAC pool for winter swimming programming because of facility damage.

Alderwoman Davis moved to approve programs at \$441,102.16. Motion Passed unanimously.

Alderwoman Davis moved to approve the total recreation budget at \$2,774,710.41. Motion Passed unanimously.

Alderman Whittcomb motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:09PM.

Notes:

According to the transcript:

There was no motion made to adjust the Admin CCC Tax Line from \$6,684.31 to \$6,622.71.

There was not motion made to adjust the Total Admin line from \$704,810.62 to \$704,749.02.

Therefore I would move to adjust the Admin CCC Tax Line from \$6,684.31 to \$6,622.71 and adjust the Total Admin line from \$704,810.62 to \$704,749.02.