

**WORK SESSION MINUTES
FORT MADISON CITY COUNCIL**

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

Mayor Matt Mohrfeld presided with Council members: Rebecca Bowker, Tom Schulz, Rusty Andrews, Donna Amandus and Mark Lair present. Kevin Rink arrived at 4:08 P.M. and Chad Cangas arrived at 4:16 P.M.

City Manager Varley presented the proposed 2021/22 budget and revised 2020/21 budget to Council. He noted this is a balanced budget with no increase in the property tax levy. He reported the first franchise fee revenues should be received in July. The General Fund working capital is still low but will be increasing

Accomplishments for the revised 2020/21 budget include the completion of a dog park, SRF parking lots and Avenue H from 2nd to 6th Street.

Capital projects for 2021-22 include: Replacement of bridges in the 1600 block of Avenue F and on 27th Street between Avenues I and J, Amtrak passenger platform completion, completion of Reconstruction of Avenue H from 6th to 10th Street, completion of Phase III of the PORT Trail, completion of the FMCH-GRHS Community Foundation Trail and the yearly asphalt/seal coating projects.

Amtrak Passenger Platform – This project will require a \$176,500 transfer from the general fund.

Emergency tax levy includes a new vehicle for the fire chief, replacement bunker gear for the Fire Department and two replacement police cars.

Highway 61 fund includes Avenue H projects: 2nd to 6th Street will be finished this spring and the 6th and 10th Street section will be bid in February. Council will need to evaluate and possibly apply for more grants before proceeding with the One-Way Pairs project as there will not be enough funds to complete the entire stretch of highway.

Sales tax receipts increased in 2020-21 but it is believed this is due to COVID and the number of persons ordering online. A conservative estimate has been prepared for 2021-22.

Quality of Life Bond. The last remaining funds will be used to rehab the swimming pool filter house. The filters and plumbing need to be replaced. The estimate for the repair is approximately \$145,000. Varley noted there was \$32,000 to rehab the tennis courts as requested by the Parks Board. He removed this and added that amount to filter house rehab. Public Works Director Mark Boussetot said the \$32,000 would re-stretch the surface and make the court usable for another 10 or 15 years. Council members noted

Holy Trinity and the public school allow the public to use their courts when they are not in use by the school. It was pointed out the tennis courts have small citizen usage and high maintenance. Bowker said the lights could be moved from Victory to one of the high schools. A splash pad or flat concrete pad marked for pickleball were suggested to replace the tennis courts at Victory.

Hotel/motel receipts are currently down 40%. Varley is projecting receipts will be down during 2021/22 also.

Old Fort Madison is hoping revenue will be higher this year with 31 scheduled stops by the riverboats. Signs are being made so persons can go through on a self-guided tour.

Marina: The Marina has seen a decline in rentals. A Marina Committee was formed by the Mayor to review possibilities for the Marina. The concept the Committee came up with will be presented to Council on Tuesday.

Airport: The Airport Commission has several projects they are working on using FAA and COVID relief funds.

General Fund balance will increase to approximately \$714,000 at the end of FY2021/22. Ideally the fund balance needs to be \$1.5 million. Transfers from the GF include: \$100,000 to streets and \$22,140 for the swimming pool.

Policy and Administration will increase by approximately \$19,000. Notable expenses include \$9,000 for SEIBUS and \$31,500 for Economic Development.

Planning and Development's revised budget and proposed budget shows increases for nuisance abatement and beautification efforts. This money comes from the revolving loan fund reimbursement.

Parks Department includes items from the Parks Board proposed five-year improvement plan.

Water, Road Use and Solid Waste funds are in good shape. Mohrfeld said Public Works Director Mark Boussetot was previously tasked with bringing a five-year street plan to Council based on roughly a \$300,000 a year budget.

Wastewater is in poor shape and needs more revenue in order to separate the remaining four combined sewers.

Storm water utility mandates also exceed revenues.

The Police Department has not had a full complement of police officers since Rohloff started in September 2019. It has been very difficult to find qualified persons wishing to be police officers. An officer will be forced by Civil Service rules to retire this spring. Rohloff has suggested holding off on filling that position for one year and hire a Community Services officer. This officer will assist with many police jobs – parking, animal control and will also help the Planning Department with nuisances. At the end of a year, this position would be reevaluated. He looked to utilize an officer who is being forced to retire. This officer would not have arrest authority but could issue citations. He estimated this officer could assist with 22-31% of the current calls such as callbacks, road closures, parking, fingerprinting, nuisance complaints and animal issues.

This would be a full-time position that would not be civil service. The salary would be less than an officer. It was noted this officer would not be part of Municipal Fire and Police Retirement System but would be part of IPERS. The City pays 26% of wages for Municipal Fire and Police Retirement and only 9.44% for IPERS. Council was in agreement with moving forward with this request.

In commenting on the proposed budget, Bowker asked if it would be possible to receive quarterly reports from staff on the status of nuisances or dilapidated buildings and streets. She felt this would show the progress and assist Council in making educated decisions.

Mohrfeld felt this budget was driven more from a mission standpoint.

The Budget Work Session ended at 5:43 P.M.