

MAYOR
Jude Hehman

CITY ADMINISTRATOR
Sharmili Reddy



CITY COUNCIL
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Dennis Zahler

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of City Council and Department Heads
From: Mayor Jude Hehman
Date: May 31, 2016
Subject: Budget Message

You have previously received a draft copy of the original budget for fiscal year ending June 30, 2017. Please allow this memorandum to serve as the Mayor's Budget Message.

My vision for the city as it relates to the budget first and foremost is to protect the life and health of our residents. In order for the city to provide essential police and fire protection, it is important to have top-quality staff and adequate shift coverage.

Well planned economic development, city beautification and infrastructure improvements are also key goals of this budget. Planned and conscientious development will ensure that Fort Mitchell will continue to be one of the most desirable place to live in the Greater Cincinnati area.

With these goals in mind, I hope that you will support this budget moving forward so we can work towards implementing our collective vision for the City of Fort Mitchell

General Fund

Revenues

General Fund revenues are budgeted to increase approximately 3.9% over last year's amended budget. Real estate taxes are budgeted to be the **same real estate tax** rate as last year.

General & Administration Department

To improve managing costs, the building utilities, insurance and safety committee expenses have been consolidated into the general and administrative department's budget. The administration department's budget includes funds set

aside for economic development and business retention. These funds will be used to develop economic and tax incentives programs to attract new businesses to the area. We will also continue to promote and encourage the redevelopment of the Drawbridge site and revitalization of our downtown area, in addition to monitoring and studying the impact of traffic within the City.

Police Department

The City is aiming to fill the police chief position by July 1st, 2016 and the budget includes a full year of salary and benefits for the new chief. This position has been vacant since February 2015 due to injury. The budget includes pay increases for our officers that are making less than officers with comparable experience at surrounding cities, so that we can retain our qualified staff.

Body and cruiser cameras are under consideration to improve officer safety as well as provide accountability to the public.

Fire Department

The main priority of the fire department's budget is focused on maintaining adequate staffing. The number of volunteers continues to decrease, so an additional part-time medic staff position will be added into the shift rotation to enable both ambulances to be able to make emergency medical runs 24 hours per day. Also, funds have been budgeted to cover physicals and fit-for-duty training for employees and volunteers. This will benefit employees and volunteers, while protecting the City from liability.

Public Works Department

The public works department's budget includes all maintenance related to the City building, waste collection services and streetscape beautification in strategic areas of the City.

Recreation Department

The new recreation coordinator has been working diligently with the recreation committee to reevaluate and freshen our recreation program. The focus is to maximize quality programs while minimizing the costs by avoiding duplication of Beechwood's programs and using volunteer staffing when possible.

Municipal Road Aid Fund

We have budgeted for normal road maintenance and snow removal, as well as, Burdsall Resurfacing project in conjunction with the Water District. Also, funds for the Bromley-Crescent Spring's road and Orphanage Road sidewalk projects have been preserved.

Park Fund

The park board is currently looking at plans to improve General Ormsby Mitchell Park with a full size soccer field and track. This project will require substantial investment from the City when constructed. The first step however is to assess public interest and support for the project. Funds have been budgeted to educate the public on the different possibilities and gather input from residents.

Road Tax Fund

The City has secured \$250,000 from the State to pay for a study and design plan for a Buttermilk-Orphanage realignment. The cities required match is \$50,000. This alignment plan would reduce dangerous traffic situations that currently exist while allowing for well-planned business and residential development. The budget also includes the reconstruction of Burdsall-Allentown and other small road projects.

Capital Fund

The Capital Replacement Fund includes purchases of two police vehicles, a dump truck, a public work's pickup truck with plow, and an ambulance that all need to be replaced. This City must continue to plan for future capital purchases and annually contribute to the Capital Replacement Fund to keep the city fiscally strong.

Conclusion

The City has been vigilant in building up a healthy fund balance (3-6 months) and this year is no different – there is a full 6 month reserve as recommended by our auditors as well as some additional reserve funding, so that the City can better deal with economic down turns and unexpected expenditures. As a city, we provide services that are of the highest quality that makes Fort Mitchell one of the most desirable cities to live in. I am presenting a fiscally responsible budget that allows us to strengthen our community through targeted investments while balancing that with other sources of funding. Thank you for reviewing and considering the information and issues contained in my report. I look forward to discussing the budget with you.

Respectfully,

Jude Hehman
Mayor