

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY  
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COEUR D' ALENE, IDAHO,  
HELD AT THE LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM

June 18, 2024

The Mayor and Council of the City of Coeur d' Alene met in a regular session of said Council at the Coeur d' Alene City Library Community Room on June 18, 2024, at 5:00 p.m., there being present the following members:

James Hammond, Mayor

Woody McEvers	)	Members of Council Present
Christie Wood	)	
Dan Gookin	)	
Dan English	)	
Amy Evans	)	
Kiki Miller	)	

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Hammond called the meeting to order and noted that the first item in the agenda is a discussion on the budget concerns for fiscal year 2024-2025.

**FISCAL YEAR 24-25 BUDGET DISCUSSION:** Councilmember Wood opened the budget discussion stating that priority of the budget should focus on public safety, hence the need to support the Police and Fire Department on their equipment requirements. Councilmember Gookin mentioned that given the recent cyberattack, his priority is the increase of compensation for IT employees to a competitive level and the creation of a stand-alone IT Department. He stated that his third priority is the need to reach out to school districts, CDA Tribe, and other agencies to build a relationship of working together. Mayor Hammond shared that there have been three different meetings regarding racial harassment in the community which can be a point of discussion with other agencies and together work on a campaign about "who we are and what we are as a community." Councilmember Evans agreed that it is important to define who we are as a community. She stated that it is important to reach out with other partners such as the Tribe to talk about priorities and projects to work on together. Councilmember Wood mentioned that she was asked to attend a meeting of city leaders from Post Falls, Hayden, Rathdrum, and Coeur d'Alene regarding civility and what we have in common. She suggested that the Councilmembers can take turns in attending this meeting. Councilmember English stated that the creation of a communication position can be tied with filling up the proposed in-house position for media services since Jeff Crowe will not renew his contract. Councilmember McEvers explained that although he agrees with the idea of having a communication position, creating a stand-alone IT Department and increasing the pay, his concern on the budget is more focused on sustainability such as where to get the funding. Councilmember Wood said that she would like to see IT as a stand-alone department with an Administrator. Additionally, her priorities include discussion of employee bargaining contracts and projection on impact to the budget; discussion on the hiring of a part time grant administrator to research and apply for public safety grants or offer incentives to those employees who do this work on their day off; and a discussion on the 10-year plan for

sustainable budget. Mayor Hammond noted that Katie Ebner, the new Finance Director, sent him information from a meeting of the Executive group from the Chamber which illustrated the challenges that the City is facing right now. He explained that the City is collecting 25% revenue of what the City was collecting eight years ago for new growth. He said that it dropped by about 75% while at the same time the assessed value has grown by 125%. Mayor Hammond explained that he asked Councilmembers Gookin and McEvers to review and take a broader look at the budget on the status and where the city will come up short and considering legislative cutbacks. Councilmember Wood suggested that the agenda for the first meeting with other cities and the county in early fall should be the impact of legislation on the cities.

Councilmember Miller stated that she agrees with having a communications position and suggested adding grant research or writing contractor instead of having existing staff doing the work. She pointed out that grant writing with IT will be difficult but grant writing with communications will go hand in hand. She also suggested identifying areas of shortfall in the budget that can be frozen or cut by reviewing events, programs, contracts for leases and projects, potential technology savings, and revenue streams. Lastly, she suggested not adding staff this year except for the communications position. Councilmember Gookin inquired if there are currently funded but unfilled positions, and Mr. Tymesen stated that the Assistant to the Recreation Director is on hold and last year, the unfilled positions were IT and front desk positions. Councilmember Wood reviewed the previous budget objectives and pointed out that despite each department having their strategic plans, there is no overall masterplan that all the strategic plans feed into that the Council can budget in a 10-year plan. Mayor Hammond explained that the 10-year plan is mainly from a revenue point of view although it is difficult to predict legislative actions or city growth, he said that he is concerned with meeting current obligations. In terms of public safety, he mentioned that crime statistics have been going down substantially and there are less fire incidents, which shows that the investment is paying off in making the city a safer community. He said that he is concerned about the city having the financial resources to be able to meet its goals. He added that the Council should look at revenue sources rather than the loss of funds and develop a strategy working with other entities and legislative representatives.

Councilmember Wood asked Mr. Tymesen if there are proposals coming forward to use the fund balance, and Mr. Tymesen explained that the preliminary budget has no exact amount for the medical renewal although there is 3% in the plan, and there's over \$2 Million coming from fund balance in order to fund the operations that will go directly into projects such as the PD building. He added that about half of the General Fund is of concern from cashflow from savings account to fund operations and no increase built in as of the moment to the budget for the negotiations with Fire Department. Councilmember Wood inquired if there are proposals for new positions, with Mr. Tymesen responding that police have positions that are paid from grants but there is a request for an IT position, and there is a request for an administrative assistant position in Parks Department. Councilmember Miller asked if grant funded positions become regular full-time when the grant expires, with Mr. Tymesen explaining that they can be absorbed and there is an exit strategy looking ahead on the probability to have the cashflow to support the position due to possible retirements. He stated that the communications position will be addressed with the non-renewal of the contract of Jeff Crowe. In terms of public safety as a priority, Mr. Tymesen expressed that there are funds allocated for this. He shared that he is looking at filling up the City Accountant position which will be vacated on July 1 and the Administrative Assistant position in