



# WHEATON CITY COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP SESSION MINUTES

MAYOR PHILIP J. SUESS

COUNCILMAN MICHAEL BARBIER | COUNCILWOMAN ERICA BRAY-PARKER | COUNCILMAN SCOTT BROWN  
COUNCILWOMAN SUZANNE FITCH | COUNCILWOMAN LYNN ROBBINS | COUNCILMAN SCOTT WELLER

WHEATON CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 303 W WESLEY STREET, WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60187

Monday, November 8, 2021

## 1. Call to Order

The Wheaton City Council Budget Workshop Session was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Suess. The following were:

Physically Present: Mayor Suess  
Councilman Barbier  
Councilwoman Bray-Parker  
Councilman Brown  
Councilwoman Robbins  
Councilwoman Fitch  
Councilman Weller

Absent: None

City Staff Present: Michael Dzugan, City Manager  
John Duguay, Assistant City Manager  
Robert Lehnhardt, Finance Director  
William Murphy, Police Chief  
William Schultz, Fire Chief  
Vince Laoang, Public Works Director  
Betsy Adamowski, Library Director  
Jim Kozik, Director of Planning & Economic Development  
Holly Schultz, Director of Human Resources  
Susan Bishel, Public Information Officer  
Jolanta Moryl, Assistant Finance Director  
Dan Peck, Public Relations Coordinator

### Municipal Band

Ms. Dottie Mackie, Chair of the Band Commission, stated that while 2021 was a return to live performances, there were still significant challenges the Band had to work through such as lowering the number of members participating and not holding try-outs due to COVID restrictions. The Band did provide soloists and ensembles for special events during the year. The Band looks forward to a full complement of band members in 2022 and also the annual concert in Edman Chapel.

Mr. Don Cavalli, Wheaton Municipal Band Business Manager, advised the band's budget was underspent by \$12,000, due to the smaller numbers of musicians used during concerts. He stated that Friends of the Band are covering 23% of the band's budget. He added that a benefactor provided \$20,000 towards the purchase of new marching drums and timpani. Council members stated the Municipal Band performances are a positive and special event that separates Wheaton from other cities.

## I. Library

Library Director Adamowski reviewed the Wheaton Public Library's mission statement, which drives their budget, strategic priorities, and operations.

Library Director Adamowski stated the Library's Strategic Priorities: Enhance Library User Experience, Increase Public Awareness of Library Services, Increase Effectiveness of the Library as an Organization and Improve Planning and Maintenance of Existing Infrastructure. She reviewed the challenges the Library has faced this year and the steps they have taken to continue providing services to residents. Library Director Adamowski stated services provided in 2021 versus 2019 were up in most areas including materials loaned, new resident registration, social media engagement and email/chat reference chatting. Analyzing and comparing this data will guide where the Library goes to provide the best user experience.

Library Director Adamowski discussed current challenges such as hybrid programming considerations, providing drive-up or quick service for patrons, maintaining the aging building and leveraging digital media and technology advances to provide services. Director Adamowski stated that the budget this year is estimated to be underspent by \$176,000 and were asking for an \$80,000 increase in the property tax levy from last year.

In response to questions/comments from Council, Library Director Adamowski stated the Library has made an effort to add to their collection items that represent all residents of Wheaton and since 2014 have made an effort to eliminate certain dated books that have not been signed out for a while or provide dated or non-relevant information. She stated that staff will receive training in areas including diversity, equality, and inclusion.

Library Director Adamowski also stated they are reviewing terminology and practices along with opportunities to provide services to all residents. The Library is back to being open daily and there is currently not a challenge finding employees for entry level positions. She stated the Café vendor, Altiro, is doing well.

## II. **Downtown Wheaton Association**

Tonya Parravano, Board President of the Downtown Wheaton Association (DWA) reviewed the organization's mission, and explained the DWA consists of 16 voting members, 3 staff members, 43 SSA business members, 8 associate business members and 4 community investors. She stated the DWA wishes to grow associate business membership and community involvement, in general. She discussed the DWA's success in 2021 and the events that were well-received. She thanked the City Council for providing resources where businesses could apply for a grant to assist with façade improvements.

For 2022, Board President Parravano stated that the DWA was in the process of evaluating past events, and they would keep many of the successful events with small changes to keep public interest. The DWA plans to have "Reindeers on Parade" again this holiday season and thanked the Wheaton Park District for volunteering to coordinate and manage the Christmas Parade during this period when the organization is without an Executive Director.

Regarding revenue, Board President Parravano discussed an aggressive event plan for 2022. She added the ability to move ahead with the increased number of events is dependent on sponsorships and other collected fees. She stated the DWA requests SSA8 revenue to remain constant from 2021

at \$275,000. The City Council thanked Board President Parravano and the DWA, in general, for their efforts over the past year and in response to the pandemic.

### III. **Budget Overview**

City Manager Dzugan reviewed the proposed budget for 2022, which is to be adopted December 21, 2021. He stated Director of Finance Lehnhardt's Transmittal Letter provides a good summary of the budget. He stated this budget contained no new or increase in revenue and that \$7.5MM excess reserves will be transferred to Debt Service, Building Renewal Fund, Stormwater Fund and Capital Projects. He stated \$4.9MM from the American Rescue Plan Act will be used to fund capital projects and a total of \$14MM in capital project expenditures is planned for 2022. He added there is no increase in the total tax levy for property taxes paid to the City for the third year in a row.

City Manager Dzugan summarized budget changes from 2021 to 2022. For expenses, there is a 3.2% increase in all operating funds, including a 3.4% increase in the General Fund. He stated the budget includes adding two new police officer positions and the grant writer position which was added mid-year 2021. The Library maintains 52 full-time equivalent employees from 2021 to 2022. For revenues, 2022 is the final year the City will receive the additional Rebuild Illinois MFT monies. Also, there is expected to be increases in sales (internet) taxes, income tax and real estate transfer taxes. Money was transferred to the Capital projects Fund from the General Fund (\$2.1MM) and ARPA (\$2.4MM).

City Manager Dzugan stated the Parking Fund will need attention in the coming months. He stated there was a loss of \$300,000 in revenue from pre-pandemic levels. He shared Metra's ridership projections and described the uncertainty surrounding commuting, desire for leased parking and how it all will affect the Parking Fund.

City Manager Dzugan stated that the City would be taking a cautious approach, particularly at the beginning of 2022 due to unknowns related to the pandemic and current inflation. He stated this budget contains 5 frozen full-time and 2 part-time positions that will be reviewed in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2022. These positions add up to \$500,000 in operating expense. He discussed the General Fund as it relates to operating expenses and revenues. While revenues are currently above expenditures, this is something that is constantly monitored.

### IV. **Review of Calendar Year 2022 Draft Budget**

#### **A. Police Department**

##### **i. General Fund**

Police Chief Murphy reviewed the department's accomplishments which included a long-term project to determine the best body-worn cameras for department use. The study involved more than 6 months of work including 3 months of actual street-level testing with officers. The Axon BWC system was recommended and approved.

Police Chief Murphy stated the department hosted a *National Night Out* event for the community to interact with public safety personnel. He stated the department also implemented "neighborhood roll calls" where patrol teams conducted neighborhood meetings to provide relevant safety information, interact with the community and create personal relationships with residents. This supports Strategic Priority 4B: Ensure that city services match community needs.

Police Chief Murphy stated three goals for 2022: Enhance senior services by certifying two additional officers as Elderly Service Officers and partnering those officers with the Social Worker to address senior needs and reduce victimization or fear of victimization. He stated another goal was to increase the number of neighborhood roll calls from 12 to 16 to engage more residents directly in crime prevention efforts while enhancing our community partnerships. This supports Strategic Priority 4A: Promote and preserve Wheaton as a safe City.

The third goal discussed was to initiate a survey system for soliciting and receiving citizen feedback for the Operations and Support Divisions that will be used to determine satisfactory delivery of police services. This supports Strategic Priority 3C: Promote programmatic performance measures and benchmarks and report goals.

The City Council generally complimented the department and particularly the department's efforts to reach out to the community over the past year. In response to Council questions, staff noted the police department staffing per thousand residents is very low when compared to other local communities.

Director Lehnhardt stated the Police Department budget increase \$960,000 (not including pension UAAL contributions).

**ii. Forfeiture Funds**

Finance Director Lehnhardt stated two funds– the Federal Forfeiture Fund and the State Forfeiture Fund, were detailed on page 229 of the Draft Budget.

**iii. Police Pension Fund**

Finance Director Lehnhardt stated this fund details were located on page 397 of the Draft Budget.

**B. Fire Department**

**i. General Fund**

Fire Chief Schultz reviewed the department's accomplishments for 2021, including the remodeling of interior living spaces at Fire Station #38 (Kitchen & Locker Room) with the collaboration of the Foreign Fire Tax Board. He stated Staff re-implemented fire safety and pre-plan inspection program with completion of approximately 500 safety surveys from businesses. He stated a 5-year Collective Bargaining Agreement was negotiated with Local 3706 representatives.

For its 2022 goals, the department intends to complete a formal Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) that meets FEMA requirements. This supports Strategic Priority 4A: Promote and preserve Wheaton as a safe city. Additionally, all personnel will complete mental health first aid training to improve delivery of care to community members experiencing mental health emergencies. This supports Strategic Priority 3B: Improve service delivery through process improvements and data analysis. Lastly, the department will re-implement an annual Citizens Fire Academy Program. This supports Strategic Priority 4A: Promote Wheaton as a safe city. Fire Chief Schultz encouraged the City Council to attend.

Director Lehnhardt stated the Fire Department budget increased \$74,000 (not including pension UAAL contributions).

**ii. Wireless Alarm Network**

Finance Director Lehnhardt stated this fund details were located on page 210 of the Draft Budget.

**iii. Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Fund**

Finance Director Lehnhardt stated this fund details were located on page 223 of the Draft Budget.

**iv. Fire Pension Fund**

Finance Director Lehnhardt stated this fund details were located on page 391 of the Draft Budget.

**V. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**VI. City Council/Staff Comments**

Mayor Suess noted that Ditka's Grille opened on November 2<sup>nd</sup> and welcomed them to the City. He also encouraged everyone to participate in the events related to Veteran's Day on November 11<sup>th</sup>. This includes bagpipes being played daily at 4 p.m. and a remembrance service on November 11<sup>th</sup> starting at 10:45 a.m. led by the American Legion at Memorial Park.

**VII. Adjournment**

The workshop was adjourned at 9:29 p.m.

Submitted by John Duguay, Assistant City Manager