

**COMMON COUNCIL – BUDGET MEETING
CITY OF NOBLESVILLE
AUGUST 27, 2024**

The Common Council of the City of Noblesville met in special session on Tuesday, August 27, 2024 in rooms A213 and A214 at City Hall. Darren Peterson called the meeting to order pursuant to public notice at 4:00 p.m. with the following members present: Mark Boice, Mike Davis, Evan Elliott, David Johnson, Aaron Smith, Pete Schwartz, and Todd Thurston. Megan Wiles arrived at 4:06 p.m.

Also present were City Clerk Evelyn Lees, Deputy Mayor Matt Light, Community Development Director Sarah Reed, City Attorney Jonathan Hughes, Chief Financial Officer and Controller Jeffrey Spalding, Deputy Financial Officer Tom MacDonald, Financial Consultant Michael Reuter, department directors, staff, and Council Financial Consultant Greg O'Connor.

Mr. Spalding stated this meeting is the third and final review of the 2025 budget. He stated Mr. Reuter will present an overview of the Fiscal Plan and a final revenue forecast for 2025. He stated the information is presented at the final meeting because important information is not received until August, and time is needed to incorporate the information into the Fiscal Plan. Mr. MacDonald distributed copies of the Fiscal Plan and Revenue Growth Summary.

Mr. Reuter explained the six-year non-farm personal income factor used by the state to determine distribution of property tax. He stated Noblesville is fortunately growing rapidly enough to qualify for a distribution beyond the non-farm personal income factor. He stated the City has appealed and won the last several years, and it qualifies to appeal again this year. He stated the legislature is re-evaluating property tax in the state, and Senator Baldwin is taking particular interest. Mr. Reuter discussed several possibilities, including a more specific distribution by community. Mr. Boice asked if such a change would hurt or help the City. Mr. Reuter replied the change could hurt the City's distribution compared to the appeals it has won recently, but it would help in the sense that there would be no need to appeal. He stated there seems to be interest in recognizing growth, but not higher housing prices. He discussed a number of possible actions the legislature could take. He stated if property taxes are reduced, replacement revenue streams need to be identified. He reviewed Assessed Value Growth and Local Income Tax collections for the City. He stated the City's revenue for 2025 is strong, but it is difficult to predict 2026 until the next legislative session is finished. Mr. Spalding thanked Mr. Reuter for his work and expertise.

Mr. Spalding reviewed the Revenue Growth Summary for 2024 with projections for 2025.

Facilities Manager David Dale presented the Maintenance budget. He stated the City owns six buildings that his staff care for. He stated they provide maintenance and janitorial services. He stated some buildings require one or the other, and some require both. He stated currently there are eight people in the department. Mr. Elliott stated when he met with Mr. Dale, he was very impressed with his attention to present and future needs.

Mr. Reuter and Mr. O'Connor left the meeting.

IT Director Adam Hedden presented the Information Technology budget. Mr. Elliott praised the IT Department for their work supporting the City.

Human Resources Director Holly Ramon presented the Human Resources budget. She thanked the Council for funding the SmartDollar financial coaching program for employees. She stated in the two years of the program, employees have saved and paid off approximately \$1.2 million.

Mr. Elliott stated some departments have mentioned they are having trouble hiring. He asked what the hiring process is. Ms. Ramon explained the process her department oversees. Mr. Johnson asked how many employees the City has. Ms. Ramon replied approximately 500. Mr. Johnson asked how many openings there are. Ms. Ramon replied there are currently seven civilian openings. Mr. Spalding stated some openings are not funded in the budget, so there are no plans to fill them at this time. Ms. Lees stated she is in the hiring process now, and Ms. Ramon and her department have taken over many of the time-consuming aspects of the process and have provided great help and support.

Ms. Ramon reviewed employee medical insurance premiums for 2016 through 2024 with projections for 2025, along with recommendations. She displayed a chart comparing the City's

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health insurance plan to those offered by Carmel, Fishers, and Westfield. Mr. Spalding commended Ms. Ramon for providing a plan that costs employees less and provides more coverage than neighboring cities. Mr. Light stated the City makes sure job applicants are aware of the City's benefits package.

Mr. Spalding presented the Office of Finance and Accounting budget.

Mr. Spalding presented the Board of Works budget. He explained the budget does not include spending for the Board of Public Works and Safety. He stated the Board of Works budget includes expenses that are miscellaneous and do not fit under any department's purview.

Mr. Peterson paused the meeting at 6:15 p.m.
The meeting resumed at 6:26 p.m.

Mr. Hughes and Paralegal Lindsay Downing presented the Legal Department budget.

Executive Administrative Manager Tera Tietjens presented the Mayor's Office budget. She stated Noblesville is now the ninth largest city in the state, with a population of approximately 75,000 people. Mr. Light commended Ms. Tietjens for her work in reorganizing the budget.

Community Engagement Manager Aaron Head presented a list of recommended public purpose grants. He stated some grants will be paid from the General Fund, and some will be paid from the Downtown Development Fund. He explained not all grants will be funded at the level the grantees requested. Mr. Light provided additional insight into the rationale for the grant amounts. Mr. Peterson stated each recipient organization must present a report to either a Council committee, the full Council, or both. Ms. Wiles stated the budget lists only cash grants, but the City also provides many in-kind donations. Mr. Head agreed. Mr. Elliott asked if any requests for grants were denied. Mr. Head replied no.

Mr. Smith asked Mr. Head to provide a three to five year summary of the commercial Façade Improvement Grant program. Mr. Head agreed to make a presentation to the Council. He stated the City has the most robust façade improvement grant program in the state.

Mr. Light stated the budget is expected to be introduced at the September 24 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

DARREN PETERSON, PRESIDENT

ATTEST:

EVELYN L. LEES, CLERK