



October 28, 2020

CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS
Budget Workshop
City Hall
474 Broadway
6:00 PM

6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

SALUTE TO FLAG

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD / 15 MINUTES

PRESENTATIONS

CONSENT AGENDA

MAYOR'S DEPARTMENT

ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

1. Discussion: 2021 City Budget

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

SUPERVISORS

ADJOURN



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CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS
Budget Workshop
City Hall
6:00 PM

PRESENT: Meg Kelly, Mayor
Michele Madigan, Commissioner of Finance
John Franck, Commissioner of Accounts
Anthony Scirocco, Commissioner of DPW
Robin Dalton, commissioner of DPS

STAFF PRESENT: Lisa Shields, Deputy Mayor
Deirdre Ladd, Deputy Commissioner, Finance
Maire Masterson, Deputy Commissioner, Accounts
Joe O'Neill, Deputy Commissioner, DPW
Eileen Finneran, Deputy Commissioner, DPS

Vincent DeLeonardis

RECORDING OF PROCEEDING

The proceedings of this meeting were taped for the benefit of the secretary. Because the minutes are not a verbatim record of the proceedings, the minutes are not a word-for-word transcript.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kelly called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Kelly said the public comment period is limited to a total of 15 minutes and individuals are limited to two minutes.

Mayor Kelly opened the public comment period at 6:01 p.m.

Sam Brewer of Saratoga Springs stated the Council should look into forming a tax authority to come up with ways to increase revenues. The City can't borrow indefinitely and maintain current spending.

Mayor Kelly closed the public comment period at 6:02 p.m.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Discussion: 2021 City Budget

Commissioner Madigan stated this is the third budget workshop of 2020. Time is set aside for Civil Service and the Department of Public Safety. She reviewed the budget process as done at the beginning of each Budget Workshop from the call letter to vote. She also reviewed the revenue stream, or lack thereof, for 2020 and the expected 2021 revenue stream. COVID has crippled the 2020 revenue stream and expects it to do the same in 2021. Revenue projection is \$12 million less than the adopted 2020 budget. Revenues for 2021 are estimated to be \$6.8 million less than the adopted 2020 budget.

Civil Service

Commissioner Madigan advised the Civil Service Department is included in the mayor's budget but is controlled by the Civil Service Commission. The department requested \$139,000 for 2021. The school district contributes towards the Civil Service Department budget on a yearly lag.

Civil Service Commission Chairperson Coccozza presented along with Corissa Salvo. Mr. Coccozza advised a half time clerk is necessary to keep the commission flowing. They function by all paper, as there is no software to assist. There are no benefits associated with this position and the salary would be \$14,000 annually. If this position is approved, they can remove their request for help with testing on Saturdays. The school district funds about 45% of the annual budget.

Corissa Salvo advised her department serves 1,700+ employees throughout the City, school district, housing authority, and library. They are looking to increase exam fees, as this is their only revenue source. She has administered exams to over 600 candidates in 2019.

Mayor Kelly asked if the 45% reimbursement is negotiable.

Corissa Salvo advised that is a set reimbursement.

Mayor Kelly stated she appreciates all Corissa does.

Commissioner Madigan stated the department operated well with the constraints. This is a bad year for an 'ask' but hopes to hear something from the feds.

Commissioner Scirocco stated it is a big job. His department works a lot with Civil Service. People don't realize this department covers the entire school system. He would like to see them be able to give Civil Service at least the half person to assist.

Commissioner Franck asked if Corissa could get an estimate for the number of exams expected to be given in 2021.

Corissa Salvo reminded the Council she does not get comp time or overtime. She is required to flex her time in the following week after an exam and the office remains vacant when that happens. Having the half person would mean the office would be empty less often.

Department of Public Safety

Commissioner Madigan advised the total proposed 2021 budget is \$25,512,580. This is \$1,940,000 less than 2020 and includes a 10% across the board salary reduction. Police officer, lieutenant, investigator, and sergeant wage and social security lines are reduced by 10%. The appropriations for personnel lines are further reduced by another 15%. Firefighter, lieutenant, and captain wages and social security lines have been reduced by 10%. The appropriations for personnel lines are further reduced by an additional 15%. The assistant chief position is currently vacant and will not be filled.

Commissioner Dalton stated they are looking at a \$4 million dollar deficit in their budget. The Public Safety Department is made up of police, fire, code enforcement, parking enforcement, animal control, and emergency management.

Andy Krupski of the Traffic Maintenance Department presented for his area of the department. The department currently maintains 46 traffic signal, 8 warning signals, 8,935 traffic control sign assets, and pavement markings. He reviewed the level of staffing and the services they cover. (copy of presentation attached)

Commissioner Madigan stated she realized the department is impacted by new things (i.e. Complete Streets) the Council likes to implement. They do an amazing job.

Mayor Kelly advised she appreciates the fast follow-up.

Chief Shane Crooks and Assistant Chief John Catone presented for the Police Department. They have reviewed the current staffing including horses and canine. They have 77 positions and have 75 sworn police officers. They have 12 dispatch positions and currently have 11 dispatch positions filled. They have saved the City \$420,000 in overtime for this year. It took the department 10 years to recover from 2010 staffing cuts. In order to meet the dollars cut in the 2021 budget, over 40% of the workforce. If 30 officers were laid off, the contractual payout benefits would cost the City over \$293,000. He has never seen the department staffed with all officers available for duty. The loss of 30 officers will require a complete restructure of the department, increase overtime and decrease services. They continue to train their officers but the proposed 2021 comprehensive budget will prevent them to do as much training as they would like. Police services are essential services.

Commissioner Dalton stated this is basically a doomsday presentation. She can't imagine how it felt putting this together.

Commissioner Madigan thanked the chief for his presentation and stated she is not pleased with the impact this budget is going to have on their department. We don't want to lose our investment in our police officers. They do have to act within their fiduciary responsibility and public safety is a tough area because they are essential services.

Commissioner Scirocco stated it is an incredible number of officers to lose. The Council needs to re-think this budget.

Commissioner Dalton stated that with these kind of cuts, there is no way to guarantee public safety in Saratoga Springs.

Mayor Kelly thanked them for showing the numbers. The impact is big and they know that. The Council has to come together and get the budget where they can operate as a City. It doesn't make any sense to make that type of investment and then lose it.

Commissioner Madigan stated they need to manage their way through this, as it is a temporary situation. She appreciated their presentation but doesn't feel it really comes to 30 officers. There are other options to be put on the table such as retirements and seeing what New York State does with retirements.

Commissioner Franck stated it is too inefficient to have these types of cuts with the police and fire. Have discussion happened regarding moving money from other lines to the payroll line?

Assistant Chief Catone stated he has gone through every line in the budget. It is all driven by staffing.

Fire Chief Joe Dolan and Battalion Chief Aaron Dyer presented for the Fire Department. Chief Dolan advised this presentation is based upon the proposed comprehensive budget and has many of the same

impacts from this budget. He provided information on how the Fire Department played a role during the pandemic including him acting as the incident commander. He is being asked to save or cut \$1.4 million from his budget, which can only be done through personnel cuts. They have 63 sworn personnel and would have to cut 20 firefighters to reach proposed comprehensive budget number. With this cut, every fourth day is going to create overtime. This will also create a change in ambulance service by not having enough staff to cover a second ambulance. They will be there to provide the care needed but there could be a delay in transport. There are 230 fire inspections required in 2021, which is the limit an engine can do. If they were to cut staff like this, it will result in \$984,102 in overtime.

Commissioner Scirocco stated they can't let this happen. The council has their work cut out for them.

Mayor Kelly stated we can't take ambulances away, they are revenue. We have to keep looking at this. We are looking at a third firehouse. She commended the fire and police departments on their work through the pandemic.

Commissioner Madigan stated she sees the focus was to show the impact on the departments with this comprehensive budget. She hopes there are on-going discussions with in their own departments and union contracts. That includes staffing models, retirements, etc. We are in a bad fiscal situation. The staffing models no longer work and she didn't create this. She was hoping they would come away with good ideas and hear ideas of working with the revenues we have. The entire Council is going to be required to work within those revenues.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Kelly adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Ribis
Clerk

Approved:
Vote: