

BUDGET COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, August 13, 2013 @ 4:45 P.M.

PRESENT: Julius Alsandor, Chairman, Blair Briggs, Reginald Tatum, and Jacqueline Martin  
ABSENT: None

1. Discussion regarding the fiscal year 2013-2014 budget. Alderman Julius Alsandor read the minutes of the August 7, 2013 Budget Committee meeting noting that the meeting started at 4:30 p.m. instead of 4:00 p.m. A correction was made to the proposed budget amount for Code Enforcement. It was incorrectly stated in the minutes as \$343,000 but should be \$555,824. Ms. Karen Frank, City Clerk, gave an overview of the adjustments to the fiscal year 2013-2014 budget based on the suggestions made at the August 7, 2013 Budget Committee meeting. She stated that the Marshal's budget would change due to the purchase of two (2) vehicles with equipment and the 2 ½ percent increase. Street Department's ending fund balance will change due to projects that were in this fiscal year's budget will not be completed until next fiscal year's budget. Ms. Frank stated that she also submitted an estimated difference on raises between the current and proposed. She pointed out that these figures may go up based on overtime because she cannot estimate the amount of overtime. Ms. Frank also provided a financial statement as of today and it shows that the Fire and Police Departments will go over this fiscal year's budget. She stated that this financial analysis does not reflect the check run for July and August nor does it reflect the two other payrolls that will be included in this fiscal year. Ms. Frank pointed out that the employee raise for the 2012-2013 fiscal year will not be paid until the next fiscal year and therefore she will not know how it affects the budget until the end of September or early October. The projections show that the City is looking at going over by \$316,000 next fiscal year which will decrease the fund balance to \$840,914. They are projecting the fund balance of \$372,564 for this fiscal year. In the event that a couple of the departments go over as predicted, then this amount will go down. Alderman Blair Briggs asked about the recommendation that was made to cut the Spice Festival. Ms. Frank stated that the revenues last year for the Spice Festival were \$21,385 and the expenses were \$24,407 showing a loss of approximately \$3,000 on this event. Ms. Frank stated that to say they want to take it out this fiscal year and it is already in the process, it would be difficult to take it out this year. Alderman Briggs stated that in past years he knew that the Spice Festival had cost the City much more money. Alderman Alsandor stated that in the past, the Festival was three days but last year it was only a day and a half. City Planning's budget will include Civic Center expenses. Alderman Alsandor wanted to make sure that it was clear that this proposed budget does have the 5 percent increase for municipal employees and the 2 ½ percent increase for all employees including Fire, Police, City Marshal, and City Court. Alderman Briggs stated that the City needs to find \$316,000 before approving this budget. He pointed out that it is not balanced. Ms. Frank stated that she had explained that they may have more expenses than revenues but it is legal to adopt a budget as it is presented as long as the ending fund balance is not negative. Alderman Briggs stated that, legal or not, he just does not think it is the right thing to do. Ms. Frank pointed out that the

balance would not have been as negative if the street projects from this year would have stayed in last fiscal year, but it increased the fund balance for last fiscal year by doing this. Ms. Frank stated that they were not going to find anywhere to cut \$316,000 unless they start cutting employees. Alderman Tatum referred to the lawsuit regarding the non-civil service employees. Ms. Frank stated that some of those employees have been here a long time and those positions would still have to be filled under Civil Service. Alderman Tatum stated that some of those positions are not needed. Ms. Frank stated that the judge ruled that those employees needed to go through Civil Service to be in those positions. She stated that Ms. Balthazar is working toward filling those positions through Civil Service. Alderman Alsandor stated that the Civil Service Chairman, the City Attorney and Mrs. Linda Walker have been working with the administration to rectify this situation. He stated that none of them disagree that there are some positions that should not be employed by the City right now. He stated that this issue is behind them and now they have to address the issues at hand. Alderman Briggs stated that additional cuts need to be made. Chief Perry Gallow requested a meeting with Ms. Frank to go over the projected overages in his budget. Alderman Tatum questioned Ms. Melanie Lebouef about the Spice Festival. She estimated expenses to be about \$10,000 because most of the expenses were offset by grants. Alderwoman Jacqueline Martin suggested that the Spice Festival be a one-day event. Chief Lee Cahanin asked for clarification on the 2 ½ percent and 5 percent increases. Ms. Frank stated that the Fire Department will receive ½ percent for last fiscal year because they already received the 2 percent from the State but those who did not receive the State-mandated 2 percent will receive the 2 ½ percent from the City and 5 percent for the new fiscal year. Mr. Clarence Watson addressed the Board regarding the North Park swimming pool. He stated that he needs seven employees and the equipment and supplies to maintain and service the pool. Alderman Tatum suggested that he get his information together on what he needs and present it to the Board before the next council meeting. Ms. Frank stated that, if he could not get the information together before the next meeting, he could come before the Council at any time to have his budget amended for that line item. Mrs. Margaret Doucet stated that, in years past, Code Enforcement has gone out in the community and solicited funds and she would like to have that money transferred into her budget for the new fiscal year. Mr. Wilbert Levier asked the Fire Chief what other fringe benefits they are receiving in their department. Mr. Levier stated that he had not received any answer to his question. Ms. Frank asked if he was talking about supplemental pay. Alderman Tatum asked why the Fire and Police Departments are paid supplemental pay. Chief Cahanin stated that it is based on the fact that they do hazardous work. He stated that this is money the State provides that the City does not have to pay. Alderman Alsandor pointed out that a public hearing would be held at the Regular Council Meeting on Thursday, August 22, 2013, at 5:00 p.m., to adopt the budget.

On a motion by Alderman Blair Briggs, seconded by Alderman Reginald Tatum and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.