

City of Bristol
Regular Board of Finance Meeting
April 19, 2023

A regular meeting of the Board of Finance was held on Wednesday, April 19, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in City Hall West Meeting Room 1 and via Zoom. The following were in attendance: Chairperson John Smith, Vice Chairperson Marie O'Brien, Mayor Jeffrey Caggiano (left 7:05 p.m.), Commissioners Craig Kazemekas, David Maikowski, Jon Mace, Ron Burns and Mark Whitford. Glenn Heiser was absent. Also present from the Comptroller's Office: Diane Waldron, Robin Manuele and Jessica Pilgrim.

1. Call to order

Chairperson Smith called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m.

2. Public Participation

None

3. Discussion regarding the 2023-2024 budget.

Diane reviewed the proposed expenditures as of the April 3 workshop, proposed expenditure adjustments, proposed revenues, mill rate, road improvements fund and open items. The proposed adjustments include eliminating the TIF funding of \$300,000, reducing the Road Improvements Fund transfer to postpone the James P Casey/Clark Avenue projects of \$180,000 and reduce the revaluation reserve by \$75,000. This would bring the new expenditure total for the General Fund to \$223,309,585.

The other adjustments for discussion included removing Police Special Services from the General Fund, as the BOF created the Police Private Duty Fund so all related expenses will be accounted for in that fund. Health Insurance numbers were just received today and the recommended us of health insurance reserves needs to be discussed.

There had been discussion of increasing revenues such as Building Permits and Conveyance Tax, but at this time that has not been put into this budget.

The proposed budget of \$223,309,585 would request \$164,903,200 of tax revenue at 30.35 mills.

Commissioner Whitford expressed his concerns on areas of the budget such as the BOE and Library. He requested the actual paid for health insurance, which Robin Manuele stated that can be found on the expenditure side of the health insurance budget.

Diane reviewed the estimated tax increases with revaluation for a single family with the 30.35 mill rate. Tom Denoto had previously discussed the impact of revaluation at length with the Board, and Diane presented the average tax increase which would be approximately \$494 or the median of \$477. Discussion was held on the shift of the burden to the homeowners from commercial property. The Top 10 Taxpayers List went down \$4 million. Commissioner O'Brien reiterated discussion held at the last meeting, there are many brand new single family homes being built with values close to \$400,000 to help balance and mediate the expenditures required to run the City.

Commissioner O'Brien questioned where is the state legislation is on the State. Budget. Diane stated it's been very quiet, and Mayor Caggiano stated the picture is a little rosier there in that they seem to be adding to their budget instead of cutting.

Mayor Caggiano stated a mill rate at 30.35 will continue to attract businesses as other large cities have a higher mill rate. If any Board of Finance Commissioners have suggestions to modify or reduce the budget, they should send them directly to the Comptroller's Office by Friday, April 21st.

Commissioner O'Brien stated she looked into phasing in revaluation but since the Chairman and Mayor already did and determined it was not worth it to save a few dollars.

Diane stated that approximately \$2.8 million of the City budget increase of \$3.6 million is related to fixed costs such as salaries, fleet, fuel, communications upgrade and IT security maintenance, and one new park maintainer position.

Commissioner Maikowski requested that each Department that has charges for services provide what have they been charging for past five years and when there were any increases.

Commissioner Whitford expressed his concerns over the underfunded OPEB Contribution, as the City is only contributing \$1.2 million of the \$2.8 million the actuarial states the City should contribute. Commissioner Kazemekas stated he wants to put another \$1 million in OPEB. Discussion was held on the OPEB contribution.

Diane stated the Unfunded Accrued Liability is \$72.7 million based on the July 1, 2023 projections. At July 1, 2025 it will be \$64.4 million.

Commissioner O'Brien suggested to reject Craig's recommendation due to fact the City is facing a major revaluation and each department head was asked to accept additional cuts as well as other decisions made to keep the mill rate reasonable. She would like to support a working group to look at this as a long term multi-year solution, rather than a one year solution, and put it into a policy frame work.

4. Any other matter to come before said meeting

None.

5. Adjournment

Commissioner O'Brien made a motion seconded by Commissioner Mace

"To adjourn at 7:40 p.m."

Following a voice vote in which there was no opposition, the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

Attest:



Diane M. Waldron
Board of Finance Clerk