



Winston-Salem

CITIZENS' BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL

Annual Work Plan Report – Fiscal Year 2023-24

May 2024

Staffed by: Budget and Performance Management Department

CITIZENS' BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT ON FY 2023-24 WORK PLAN

Introduction and Work Plan

The Citizens' Budget Advisory Council (CBAC) met monthly between November of 2023 and June of 2024 to review information and formulate recommendations for review by the Mayor and City Council related to their FY 2023-24 work plan. That work plan included items related to the City Fire Department's operations and staffing and the budget development process for the FY 2023-24 operating and capital budgets.

Fire Operations and Staffing Review – The CBAC's work plan included a review of the City of Winston-Salem's Fire Department operations. This consisted of a review of staffing levels and performance goals, including a review of peer comparisons. Fire Department staff provided analysis of strengths and areas of need for the following branches:

- Administration
- Operations
- Safety & Training
- Logistics
- Fire & Life Safety
- Behavioral Evaluation and Response (BEAR)

FY 2024-25 Operating Budget Development – Each year, the CBAC reviews the City Manager's operating budget recommendations as provided to the Mayor and City Council. For FY 2024-25 there were several strategic investments and policy decisions within the budget recommendations. The CBAC's work plan included a review of the following areas related to the FY 2024-25 budget:

- Operating Budget – Taxes, Personnel, Fee Increases, Non-Personnel Expenses

Meetings and Information Review Summary

The CBAC met a total of six times to review specific areas of the Fire department and review research conducted by staff, as well as engage in a tour of Fire Station #7. CBAC was also given a briefing on the proposed FY 2024-25 budget that was presented to the Mayor and City Council. Brief summaries of the meetings are outlined below. Minutes from the meetings can be found in the appendix to this report.

November 29, 2023 – CBAC Members were greeted by Budget Director Scott Tesh, who introduced Fire Chief Trey Mayo. CBAC reviewed the fire department's requests for additional staffing in previous fiscal years. Chief Mayo provided a presentation which overviewed fire services in the City of Winston-Salem, as well as details on the six branches: Administration, BEAR, Fire & Life Safety, Operations, Logistics, and Safety & Training.

January 17, 2024 – Chief Mayo began discussing the history of the training branch as well as its current challenges. The challenges pointed out were lack of recruitment budget, lack of city dedicated training facility (currently share with County), no burn or medical simulation lab, and lack of funding for recruit classes. Chief Mayo then discussed the logistics branch and compared staffing with other jurisdictions and discussed the condition of several facilities starting with the apparatus maintenance facility – CBAC had

previously toured this facility. Chief Mayo showed pictures of the space and storage needs and detailed the lack of centralized storage for the various equipment and gear the Fire Department is responsible for maintaining, which can lead to inventory issues. There are also several antique pieces of Fire equipment that are in storage that are not being displayed.

February 21, 2024 – Fire staff provided introductions and a presentation on the Fire & Life Safety Branch and Operations. During the presentation on Fire & Life Safety, the role of the branch in the community was explained as well as the responsibility and challenges with Fire Inspections, specifically past due inspections. The presentation on the Operations Branch discussed current staffing needs and the challenges historic staffing levels have presented when compared to preferred service standards. Fire staff presented data and maps on gaps in the current coverage areas with a focus on two areas: Fire Station #7, which houses only rescue apparatus and the Meadowlark area due to significant development in recent years. See attachment A for the fire coverage map of western Winston-Salem and development along the Meadowlark corridor shared with the CBAC. Fire Department staff showed current response times to the Meadowlark area detailing first due and full response times outside normal ranges experienced in other parts of the city. Fire staff also presented information on Public Protection Class, which is an insurance rating assessed by the Fire Suppression Rating Schedule. This schedule takes into account factors such as communications, water supply, and fire department capability. The City of Winston-Salem Fire's lowest score was in fire department capability factors, which are comprised of elements related to fire apparatus location, staffing, and equipment. Winston-Salem is a Class 2 Fire Department on a scale from one to ten, with a Class 1 being the best rating. The presentation included how other like-sized and smaller jurisdictions are currently ranked.

March 20, 2024 – Fire Chief Mayo provided a presentation on the Administration branch of the Fire department, discussing the branch's role in Fire Department operations, its responsibilities, and challenges currently faced. The Fire Chief provided reviewed all Administration positions and their primary day-to-day responsibilities. Questions were asked by the CBAC on accreditation and the effects of an ISO rating change. Fire staff responded generally that a change in ISO Class could lead to a change in insurance premiums. BEAR Division Director Kristin Ryan provided an overview of the Behavioral Evaluation and Response Team, which consists of one director and six crisis counselors. The BEAR team provides a non-law enforcement response to calls for service where mental and behavioral health issues are identified. She provided an overview of the response and follow-up responsibilities of the BEAR team as well as their program outcomes. Questions were asked by the CBAC committee on BEAR team dispatching, call types, transportation, and how the program compares to peer jurisdictions.

April 17, 2024 – The CBAC had an opportunity to tour Fire Station 7, which houses Rescue 1. During the tour, questions were asked regarding the different types of rescue apparatus, the call volume differences between stations, how overtime affects team culture and response effectiveness, and design standards for fire stations.

May 15, 2024 – The CBAC met to review outstanding questions on personnel and benchmarking performance data. CBAC also reviewed potential recommendations for incorporation in the final report.

June 5, 2024 - The CBAC met to adopt the final report for presentation to the Mayor and City Council.

Fire Department Services Recommendations

The CBAC, after reviewing research performed by staff, having conversations with City staff during their regular meetings, and having robust conversations about the topics between the members, provide the following recommendations related to Fire Department services:

Fire Department Equipment Recommendations

1. Align fire apparatus replacement schedule with best practices and include increased lead time for custom built apparatus.
2. Replace the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) that are used to provide firefighters an autonomous supply of breathable air in unsafe environments. These items were previously replaced in 2015 and have reached the end of their useful life.
3. Replace general equipment, including turn-out gear and radios, on a standardized schedule to ensure gear and equipment used meets firefighting safety standards.

Fire Department Facility Recommendations

4. Replacement of the fire apparatus maintenance facility should be a capital priority for the City due to both age of facility and size constraints – the facility is undersized for modern fire apparatus.
5. Identify resources to increase response coverage in the Meadowlark corridor, which has experienced substantial growth in recent years and has longer response time compared to other areas of the city.
6. Perform a facility needs assessment to identify stations in greatest need of renovation and align replacements and renovations with operational needs for service delivery.
7. Build a more-centrally located fire skills enhancement facility and review for inclusion a burn and medical simulation lab to increase training opportunities for City response personnel.

Fire Department Staffing Recommendations

8. Additional fire inspections personnel should be included in the budget to meet State requirements for inspection timeliness and to manage the increased workload due to the growing business environment in the City.
9. Increase overtime funding and/or increase Operations Branch personnel to reduce reliance on overtime and meet daily minimum staffing needs.
10. Increase the number of fire response personnel to lower response times, which could include a combination of new companies and/or additional authorized staffing at current stations. Operations increases should positively impact ISO rating schedules, which could lead to a reduction in residential home insurance premiums.

See the table below for estimated one time and ongoing costs of the above recommendations. The table also includes whether the recommendations are included in the FY 2024-25 proposed budget.

Rec. #	Recommendation	Estimate One-Time Cost	Estimated Ongoing Cost	In FY 25 Budget
1	Scheduled Fire Apparatus Replacement*	\$0	\$3,100,000	No
2	Replace Aging Breathing Apparatus	4,082,320	0	Yes
3	Scheduled Equipment Replacement	unknown	unknown	No
4	Fire Apparatus Maintenance Facility	9,000,000	100,000	No
5	Meadowlark Response	8,850,000	1,050,000	No
6	Facility Needs and Renovations	unknown	unknown	No
7	Fire Skills Enhancement Facility	6,000,000	200,000	No
8	Add Fire Inspectors	100,000	260,000	Yes
9	Fund OT/Personnel for Current Level of Service**	0	2,400,000	Yes
10	Increase personnel (75)	750,000	4,691,250	No

*Ongoing costs decrease over time as current vehicle leases are paid off.

**One-time costs would be incurred for additional positions added at roughly \$10,000 per position.

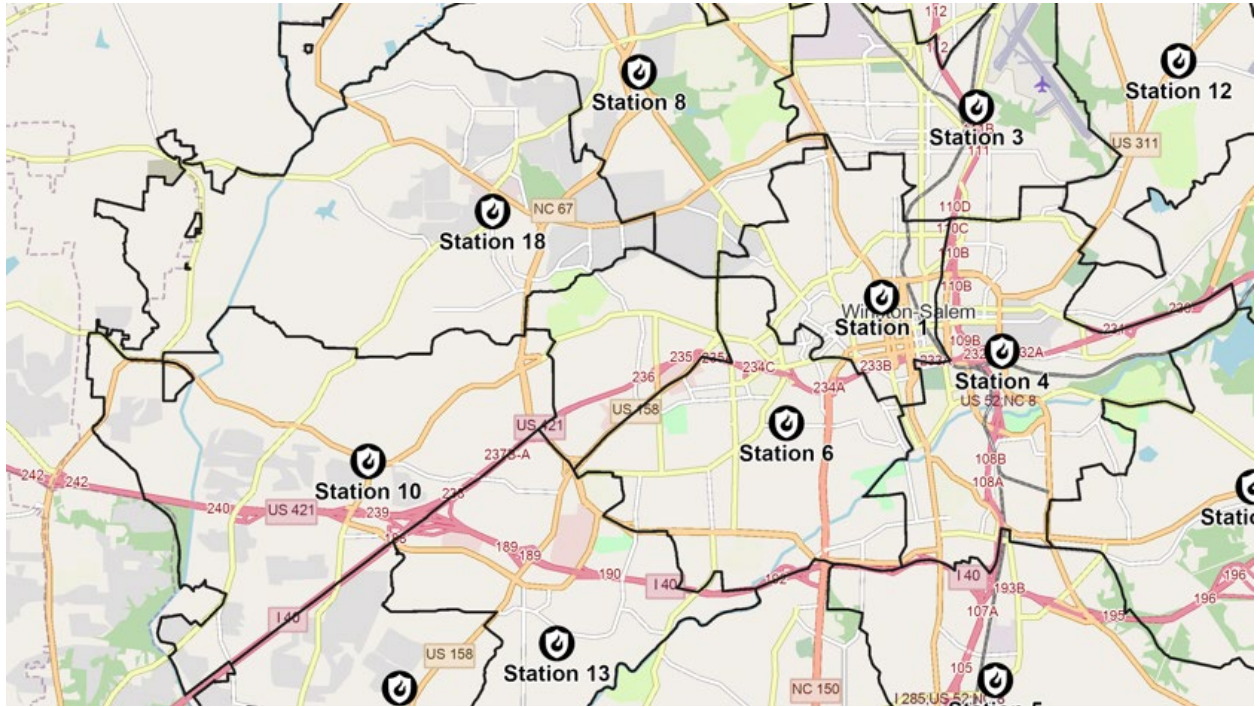
Budget-Related Recommendations

11. While increases in property taxes and fees are not ideal, CBAC supports the justifications included with the FY 2024-25 budget. Further, the CBAC understands potential additional revenue sources may be required in FY 2025-26 and encourages city management to mitigate future tax rate and/or fee increases by reviewing operational efficiencies.

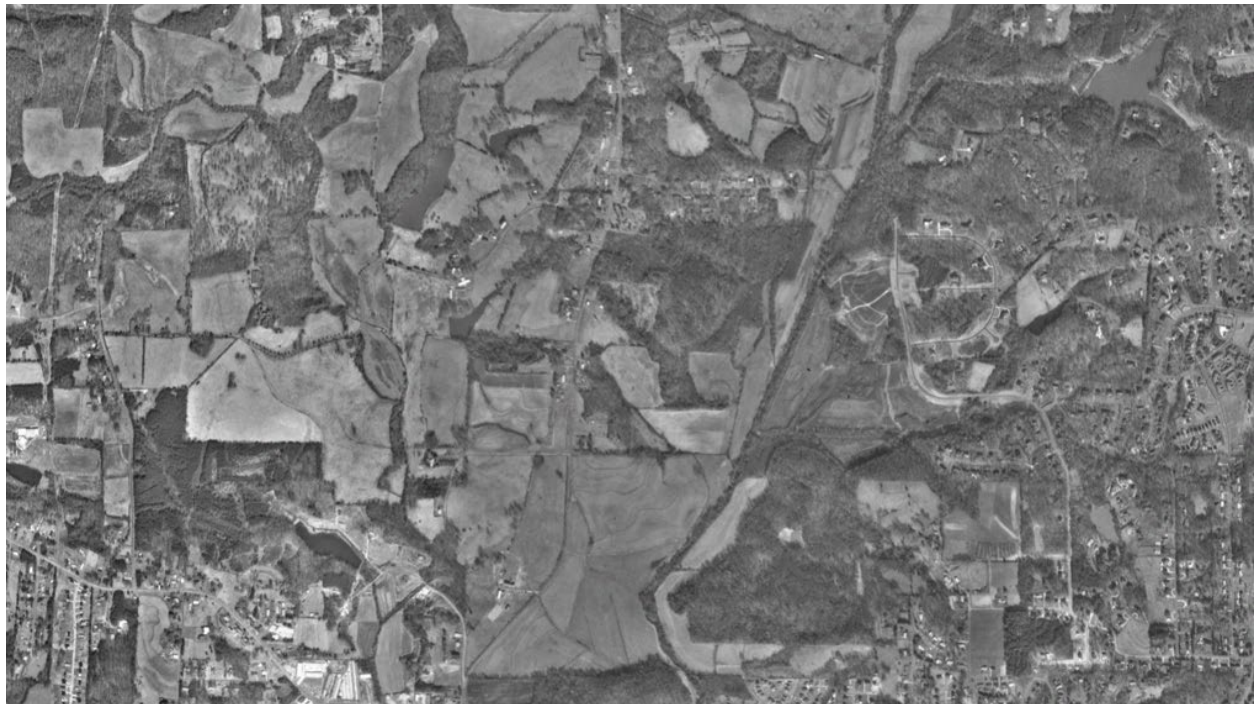
Conclusion

The CBAC concluded its work on by adopting the recommendations in the report. The CBAC thanks staff from the City's Fire Department for providing professional presentations and opinions on the conditions and needs within each branch. The CBAC hopes that these recommendations present sound advice in furthering discussions about fire service to create better, more efficient fire services for City residents. The Chair of the CBAC, Fred Salsbury, will be available to present the recommendations noted above at the June 11, 2024 budget workshop of the City Council's Finance Committee.

Attachment A: Fire Department Coverage Map for Western City Limits



Meadowlark Corridor 1993



Meadowlark Corridor 2023



MINUTES

CITIZENS' BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL

November 29, 2023; 9:00 A.M.; Held Virtually via Zoom

Members Present: Shelia Garcia, Ross Griffith, Anthony Piacenza, Freddie Salsbury, Haysetta Shuler, Jamesina Woodyard

Members Absent:

Staff: Scott Tesh, Meredith Martin, Sarah Coffey, Rene Williams, Jean Libunao, Janice Hillanbrand, Trey Mayo

1. Welcome

Meeting started officially at 9:04am.

2. CBAC and Staff Introductions

Introductions by CBAC committee, Budget Staff, and Trey Mayo (Fire Chief)

3. Overview of Proposed Work Plan for FY 2023-24

Review of Fire Department – have been requests for additional staffing previous fiscal years for the Fire Department. Members have requested to look at those requests in more detail. Will keep committee apprised of budget development process. Have a new City Manager – Patrick Pate – former City Manager of Manassas, VA. Dudley Watts has also announced his retirement as well so will have turnover in Leadership at both City and County.

Chief Mayo presentation on overview of Fire Services in the City of Winston-Salem as well as details on the six branches: Administration, BEAR, Fire & Life Safety, Operations, Logistics, and Safety & Training. Showed where Fire Stations are located in the City. City is broken up into 4 battalions with five departments per battalion. Showed where geographic weaknesses are in terms of fire station location. Showed vehicles for engine company, ladder company, heavy rescue, BEAR team, and special operations units (technical rescue, water rescue, fire rescue, hazardous materials). Answered questions on new station development, station location, personnel, response, and recruitment. In future meetings, Fire will return and provide a higher level of detail on each branch of the Fire Department.

4. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Chair – Fred Salisbury

Vice Chair – Tony Piacenza

5. Setting of Dates/Times for Future Meetings

Maintain virtual format and 9am on Wednesday meeting slot. Will send out meeting dates for the rest of the year. Will try to arrange a site visit for a future meeting.

6. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:54 am.

MINUTES

CITIZENS' BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL

January 17, 2024; 9:00 A.M.; Held Virtually via Zoom

Members Present: Shelia Garcia, Ross Griffith, Anthony Piacenza, Freddie Salsbury, Haysetta Shuler, Jamesina Woodyard

Members Absent:

Staff: Scott Tesh, Sarah Coffey, Rene Williams, Jean Libunao, Janice Hillanbrand, Trey Mayo, Jerry Hardison, Edward Duffield

1. Welcome

Meeting started officially at 9:02am.

2. City of Winston-Salem Fire: Safety & Training/Logistics Presentation

Chief Mayo began discussing the history of the training branch as well as its current major weaknesses. The significant weaknesses pointed out were lack of recruitment budget, lack of city dedicated training facility (currently share with County), no burn or medical simulation lab, and lack of funding for recruit classes. Chief Mayo then discussed the logistics branch and compared staffing with other jurisdictions. Chief Mayo then went to discuss the condition of several facilities starting with the Apparatus Maintenance Facility. CBAC has previously toured this facility. Chief Mayo showed pictures of the space and storage needs. Chief Mayo detailed the lack of centralized storage for the various equipment and gear the Fire Department is responsible for maintaining, as well as showing pictures of the current storage methods and condition of facilities. The concern is that lack of centralized storage makes it easier for items to be misplaced and damaged, as well as more difficult for small logistics staff to track. There are also several antique pieces of Fire equipment that are in storage that are not being displayed and used to their full potential. CBAC committee asked further questions on the state of facilities and improvements that could be made.

3. Discussion of Data Points and Further Research/Benchmarking

Scott Tesh elaborated on previous studies conducted for the City's Fire Department, as well as potential measures such as response times that could be brought before the committee at a future meeting.

4. Next Meeting: February 21, 2024 at 9am

a. Operations/Fire & Life Safety

5. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:17 am.

MINUTES

CITIZENS' BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL

February 21, 2024; 9:00 A.M.; Held Virtually via Zoom

Members Present: Shelia Garcia, Ross Griffith, Anthony Piacenza, Freddie Salsbury, Haysetta Shuler, Jamesina Woodyard

Members Absent:

Staff: Scott Tesh, Sarah Coffey, Rene Williams, Jean Libunao, Janice Hillanbrand, Trey Mayo, Jerry Hardison, Bobby Wade

1. Welcome

Meeting began at 9:02 a.m.

2. City of Winston-Salem Fire: Fire & Life Safety/Operations Presentation

Fire Staff provided introductions and a presentation on the Fire & Life Safety Branch and Operations. During the presentation on Fire & Life Safety, the role of the branch in the community was explained as well as the responsibility and challenges with Fire Inspections, specifically past due inspections. Operations discussed current staffing needs and the challenges historic understaffing has presented. Operations also discussed gaps in the current coverage area with focus on Fire Station 7 which houses no fire rescue apparatus and the Meadowlark area due to significant development in recent years. Fire showed current response times to the Meadowlark area and how they are poor compared to areas in the rest of the City causing significant risk in that area for cardiac arrest and building fire calls. The last piece presented in the Operations portion was Public Protection Class. This is an insurance rating assessed by the Fire Suppression Rating Schedule by looking at factors such as communications, water supply, and fire department capability. City of Winston-Salem Fire's lowest score was in fire department capability which looks at factors such as fire apparatus location, staffing, and equipment. Winston-Salem is a Class 2 Fire Department. The presentation included how other like size and smaller jurisdictions are currently ranked.

Questions were asked on how many inspections are completed per year, the current state of the fire inspection back log, how many inspections for commercial housing go uncomplete, what is included in the average leave per staff member and are these leave levels significant when compared with other fire departments, why water is ranked lower in public protection class, and cost difference for ISO rating specifically cost difference to residents and commercial businesses.

3. Discussion of Data Points and Further Research/Benchmarking

Will look into having a field trip to a Fire Station for a future meeting.

4. Approve Meeting Minutes

Motioned for approval by Jamesina Woodyard, seconded by Ross Griffith and passed unanimously.

5. Next Meeting: March 20, 2024 at 9am

Will focus on Fire Department Administration and the BEAR program.

6. Adjournment

Adjournment at 9:58 a.m.

MINUTES

CITIZENS' BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL

March 20, 2024; 9:00 A.M.; Held Virtually via Zoom

Members Present: Shelia Garcia, Ross Griffith, Anthony Piacenza, Freddie Salsbury, Jamesina Woodyard

Members Absent: Haysetta Shuler,

Staff: Scott Tesh, Sarah Coffey, Rene Williams, Jean Libunao, Janice Hillanbrand, Trey Mayo, Kristin Ryan

1. Welcome

Meeting began at 9:03 a.m.

2. City of Winston-Salem Fire: Fire & Life Safety/Operations Presentation

Fire Chief Mayo provided a presentation on the Administration branch of the Fire department, discussing the branch's role in Fire Department operations, its responsibilities, and challenges currently faced. The Fire Chief provided a description of all of Administration's positions and their main day-to-day responsibilities. Questions were asked by the CBAC committee on accreditation and the affects of an ISO rating change.

BEAR division director Kristin Ryan provided an overview of the Behavioral Evaluation and Response Team which consists of one director and six crisis counselors. She provided an overview of the responsibilities of the BEAR team as well as their future needs and goals. Questions were asked by the CBAC committee on BEAR team dispatching, call types, transportation, and how the program compares to peer jurisdictions.

3. Discussion of Data Points and Further Research/Benchmarking for Next Meeting

Staff will work on putting together a review of organization charts and a history of positions in the Fire Department. We will also show comparison performance data with other City Fire Departments from the NC Benchmarking Project. For the BEAR team, a review of future grant funds and the future impact to the general fund.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from February 21, 2024 meeting

Meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

5. Next Meeting: April 17, 2024 at 9am

6. Adjournment at 10:01am.

AGENDA

CITIZENS' BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL

May 15, 2024; 9:00 A.M.; Held Virtually via Zoom

Attendance: Ross Griffith, Anthony Piacenza, Freddie Salisbury, Haysetta Shuler, Jamesina Woodyard
Staff: Scott Tesh, Sarah Coffey, Rene Williams, Jean Libunao, Janice Hillanbrand, Trey Mayo, Chaz Browning, Andrew Gray, Jerry Hardison,

Members Absent: Shelia Garcia

1. Welcome at 9:03 AM
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 20, 2024 Meeting
3. Overview of Tour of Fire Station 7
Scott Tesh shared pictures and provided overview of tour.
4. Position History and Benchmarking Data
Scott Tesh provided a ten-year history of personnel changes; budgeted positions have increased from 343 to 391. The presentation also included performance data from the NC Benchmarking project on approved firefighter FTEs/population, land square miles/FTEs, response time for the 90th percentile, dispatch time for the 90th percentile, and firefighter injuries per fire reported.
5. Discussion of CBAC Recommendations to Council
A list of initial recommendations related to staffing, facilities needs, and equipment was shared with the CBAC committee. Further recommendations were made on emphasizing inspections staffing, reviewing resources needed for and timing of recruit classes, lowering insurance premiums, and adding service maps as context to the CBAC report.
6. Next Meeting: TBD
7. Adjournment at 9:49 am

AGENDA

CITIZENS' BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL

June 5, 2024; 9:00 A.M.; Held Virtually via Zoom

Attendance: Ross Griffith, Anthony Piacenza, Freddie Salisbury, Haysetta Shuler, Jamesina Woodyard

Staff: Scott Tesh, Sarah Coffey, Rene Williams, Jean Libunao, Janice Hillanbrand

1. Welcome at 9:01 AM
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from May 15, 2024 Meeting
3. FY 2024-2025 Proposed Budget Discussion

Scott Tesh shared the FY 2024-25 manager's proposed budget. He shared the major revenue assumptions focused on proposed increases in property tax, water and sewer rates, stormwater rates, and the motor vehicle privilege tax. Also shared was other privilege fee changes including in fire, engineering, and planning and development. He shared the main drivers for the increases in the general fund, focusing on the compensation and classification study, the additional personnel for Fire, the new transit contract, and equipment and leasing costs that include four new fire trucks.

4. Discuss and Approve CBAC Report

Scott Tesh and Janice Hillanbrand received questions and comments from the CBAC members on the draft report of recommendations shared. Suggestions from the CBAC Board to add to the recommendations included changes in the order of the recommendations (putting equipment and facilities before personnel), adding cost estimates and clarify what is already included in the budget, and estimates on insurance rates if the ISO rating changes. The CBAC draft was approved subject to changes to recommendation structure and addition of cost estimates for recommendations. Motion to approve the draft report was moved by Fred Salisbury and seconded by Ross Griffith – the motion passed unanimously.

5. Membership Turnover

Former member Shelia Garcia resigned position on CBAC on May 15, 2024. That leaves a total of four vacant seats currently to be filled before the next session starts in the fall. In addition there are three members (Ross Griffith, Anthony Piacenza, Freddie Salisbury) whose first terms are expiring. Confirmed two (Ross Griffith and Freddie Salisbury) of the three for second terms and will confirm with the third (Anthony Piacenza) via email.

6. Next Meeting: TBD

Next meeting will be the start of the next session in the fall. Will send the finalized report, presentation from today's meeting, and the minutes.

7. Adjournment at 9:59am