

**July 20, 2018 Budget Session**

The City Council of the City of Idaho Falls met in Special Council Meeting (Council Budget Session), Friday, July 20, 2018, at the City Council Chambers in the City Annex Building located at 680 Park Avenue in Idaho Falls, Idaho at 3:00 p.m.

There were present:

- Mayor Rebecca L. Noah Casper
- Councilmember Thomas Hally
- Councilmember John B. Radford
- Councilmember Jim Freeman
- Councilmember Shelly Smede
- Councilmember Jim Francis
- Councilmember Michelle Ziel-Dingman (by telephone)

Also present:

- Pamela Alexander, Municipal Services Director
- Bryce Johnson, Police Chief
- Steve Hunt, Police Captain
- William Squires, Police Captain
- Andi Anderson, Dispatch Supervisor
- Dave Hanneman, Fire Chief
- Kathy Hampton, City Clerk

Mayor Casper called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. with the following:

**Opening Remarks:**

Mayor Casper briefly reviewed the agenda as well as the tentative July 24 meeting schedule.

**Proposed Public Safety Package Review:**

Director Alexander reviewed the proposed Public Safety Package as follows:

Description	Cost
Additional Police Officers	\$273,612
Additional Patrol Vehicles and Up Fit	220,000
Additional Police Officer costs	57,965
Records Clerk (1 position)	52,707
Communications Specialists (3 positions)	164,905
Animal Control Officers (2 positions)	109,269
M-Vac System	34,516
Mini Scope Light Source	12,925
Smart Ray SRV X-ray System	57,000
Crime Scene Trailer	16,000
Fire Department Turn Outs	162,000
Total	\$1,160,899

Beginning foregone balance	\$6,311,570
Total cost of package	\$1,160,899
Less amount covered by Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grant (one year)	(\$205,209)
Amount of foregone to request	\$955,690 (15.14%)
Remaining foregone balance	\$5,355,880

*Additional Police Officers* – Director Alexander stated there is an opportunity to apply for a COPS grant for four (4) officers. The grant would cover 75% of the cost the first year, 50% would be covered the second year, 25% would be

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covered in the third year. It would be the City's requirement to keep officers for the fourth year. Chief Johnson stated in 2014 a staffing needs assessment was performed with the recommendation of 99 sworn police officers and 30 dispatchers. 1.8 is the average ratio of police officers to citizens in cities with a population of 50,000-100,000. Per a similar assessment, he believes there should be 102 officers within the Idaho Falls Police Department (IFPD). Chief Johnson stated the IFPD performs two (2) main functions – patrol/detectives and other. He believes the IFPD is currently reactive, although he prefers the IFPD to be proactive, especially within certain neighborhoods, as a presence in schools, regarding internet crimes against children, and cold cases. He stated the four (4) proposed officers would be assigned to the most pronounced problem areas. He believes this is a good idea with or without the grant, although the grant would help offset the costs. Chief Johnson stated in the event the grant is unsuccessful, only one (1) sworn officer position would be filled. He indicated there are currently 90 sworn officers, two (2) officers are deployed full time at the airport. Brief discussion followed regarding School Resource Officers (SRO).

*Additional Patrol Vehicles and Up Fit* – Chief Johnson stated vehicles, along with additional equipment, are needed for the officers. Due to the timeframe of hiring and training officers, the purchase of vehicles could be delayed until the following fiscal year.

*Records Clerk* – Captain Squires stated the Records Division provides more services than any other comparable City. There is currently one (1) supervisor and three (3) staff members to perform these services. Brief comments followed regarding the Records Division.

*Communications Specialists* – Chief Johnson stated the current dispatch levels were set in 1996. He indicated the recommended number of dispatch is 30 staff members, there are currently 23 staff members. He stated as dispatch is one of two 24/7 operations, there is a tremendous amount of overtime which is burning people out. The additional dispatch operators will help retain the current staff. Chief Johnson believes a multi-year approach (one (1) per year for the next three (3) years) would be appropriate if necessary. Chief Johnson and Chief Hanneman reviewed the formula and number of calls for dispatchers within public safety. Brief discussion followed regarding reducing the Communications Specialists from three (3) to two (2) positions.

*Animal Control Officers* – Chief Johnson believes the animal ordinance calls are not being enforced as needed. He noted there is not a current evening Animal Control Officer. The requested additional Animal Control Officers would reduce the burden from other Police Officers.

*Mini Scope Light Source* – Captain Squires stated the mini scope light source would be used for crime scenes. He stated the current system is approximately 30 years old and many times the light source is borrowed from Bonneville County or Idaho State Police.

*Smart Ray SRV X-ray System* – Captain Squires stated the x-ray system would be a portable device used for the bomb squad. The current x-ray system is not dependable. There is anticipated 50% cost sharing with Bonneville County.

*Crime Scene Trailer* – Captain Squires stated this item has been requested for at least three (3) previous years. The current crime scene vehicle is a retired ambulance. The vehicle is not driven on a regular basis, therefore, maintenance (jump start and/or towing) is regularly required.

*M-Vac System* – Chief Johnson stated the M-Vac System is a cutting edge system, Idaho Falls would be the only department in the State of Idaho with this system. This system would assist with the high-profile unsolved cases regarding the collection of DNA. The system could be utilized by other agencies as well. Brief discussion followed regarding the Municipal Equipment Replacement Fund (MERF).

*Fire Department Turn Outs* – Chief Hanneman stated the requested Idaho Falls Fire Department (IFFD) turn outs would be acquired over the next three (3) years at a cost of \$162,000 per year. This proposed item would provide the recommended second set of turn outs for firefighters. The turn outs would also be included in the MERF for a ten (10) year replacement cycle. Brief discussion followed regarding the useful life and care of turn outs as well as workman compensation claims.

Chief Hanneman requested five (5) vehicles be included in the Public Safety Package for Fire Prevention, logistics officer, training chief and officer, and the Public Information Officer (PIO). These vehicles would be utilized for daytime or nighttime response. Fire vehicles = \$265,000. Councilmember Radford believes the Fire vehicles may need to be acquired in multiple years. Councilmember Dingman concurred.

Mr. Hagedorn reviewed property tax comparison from 2017: base = \$30,072,649; growth = \$506,645; 3% statutory = \$902,179; and, foregone = \$0. He also reviewed proposed scenarios for 2018 including: no increase in levy; growth

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only; growth + 3% statutory; growth, 3% statutory and various foregone amounts; the levy rate; the Public Safety Package option including growth, 3% statutory, and foregone; and, projected property tax rates for residential and commercial properties for each scenario.

Mayor Casper indicated the administration was hopeful to keep any proposed foregone amount less than 10%. She requested Council review the proposed requests and determine if any requests could be achieved over the next several years. She expressed her concern for the tax impact to residents although she recognized the multiple departments that offer City services. She believes there could be several implications of utilizing foregone (for public safety). Councilmember Radford concurred although he noted Idaho Falls is not the first City to take foregone money. Councilmember Hally also concurred with Mayor Casper regarding the foregone implications.

**Additional Budget Priorities, Goals and Concerns:**

Councilmember Radford believes the ambulance fees are not comparable to the actual costs, these fees are being subsidized by the General Fund. He believes ambulance fees should increase 30% versus the 10% proposed increase. He noted the 30% would increase revenue by approximately \$200,000. Mayor Casper believes this may be a risk with privatizing ambulance services. General comments followed, including Medicare. Councilmember Hally prefers a 15% ambulance fee increase with adjustment to the proposed foregone in the amount of \$750,000. Following additional discussion, there was consensus to leave the ambulance fee increase at 10%. Councilmember Smede stated she values the IFFD but she believes the police station should be higher priority. Councilmember Dingman concurred. Councilmember Francis is in favor of the Public Safety Package minus the IFFD vehicle request. Brief discussion followed regarding vehicles, the ambulance fund, IFFD turn outs, and, the foregone amount. Councilmember Radford believes there is a benefit in taking foregone for public safety. Councilmember Francis believes foregone is not a good way to take reserves. However, he also believes with the current economy, now is the time to take foregone monies. Councilmember Freeman concurred. Councilmember Hally believes there is cost savings during a recession. Councilmember Radford believes portions of foregone should be used for the next 6-7 years. He prefers adding one (1) IFFD vehicle at \$53,000. Following additional discussion, there was consensus to reduce the number of Communications Specialists to two (2) positions; reduce the amount of the Smart Ray SRV X-ray System by 50% due to cost sharing with Bonneville County; and, include one (1) new IFFD vehicle (including light and technology package) with a cost of \$53,000. Total amount of proposed foregone = \$925,222, or 14.66%. Councilmember Radford requested \$2m as a valuation capacity/contingency to be included in the ceiling budget amount. There was also consensus to allocate \$194,000, as discussed/requested at the July 17, 2018 Budget Session, from the health insurance savings account. It was determined the tentative meeting scheduled for July 24 was not necessary.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

s/ Kathy Hampton \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY CLERK

s/ Rebecca L. Noah Casper \_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR