

BUREAU OF COUNCIL
Molly Bundrant, President
Carl Sizer, Vice President
William James
David Koerth
Taylor Galaska



Robert Fiscus, City Manager
William J. Madden, City Solicitor
Daphne Parrish, City Clerk

SHARON CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

Meeting Held in Council Chambers
Wednesday, November 29, 2023, at 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER AT 6:00 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Council:

President Bundrant

Mr. Sizer

Mr. James

Mr. Koerth

Mr. Galaska

Robert Fiscus, City Manager
 Attorney Madden, City Solicitor
 Daphne Parrish, City Clerk

News Media:
 The Herald

Department Heads:

Jason Tomko, Finance Director

Edward Stabile, Chief of Police

David Tomko, Director of Code Enforcement

Mark Settle, Public Works Director

I.) **LEGAL NOTICE** – *The City of Sharon will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, November 29, 2023, at 6:00 PM in City Council Chambers to present the City of Sharon’s 2024 Budget.*

II.) The purpose of the hearing is to discuss the proposed 2024 Operating Budget.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The proposed 2024 budget was reviewed by Section and Line Item. The following line items were discussed:
Expenditures:

- 411-000 – Fire Wages – Mr. Sizer asked about the approximate 7 percent increase in Fire Wages from 2023 and if the amount is due to the Firefighters hired under the SAFER Grant. Mr. Fiscus said the increase is due to step increases of the more recently hired Firefighters. Step One Firefighters start at 55% of the full Firefighter salary and receive step increases each year until they reach full Firefighter rate.
- 411-110 – Pension – Mr. Sizer asked about the approximate \$130,000 decrease from the 2023 budget. Mr. Fiscus said the decrease is due to the funding levels of the pension plan and the MMO. There are assumptions used in the calculation of the MMO that Firefighters will retire at age 53; many are staying longer. Mr. Tomko said there is also the carryover of the amortization of prior Firefighters and the losses we amortized have gone away. Mr. Fiscus said this number fluctuates every year and it could increase next year.
- 411-750 - Community Risk Reduction – Mrs. Bundrant asked about the increase from 2023. Nicholas Samson this increase will be used for two things: 1) since the hiring of Steve Thompson as City Fire Inspector, he has required a variety of additional resources not needed in prior years; 2) funds

will be used for a more robust fire protection program and public education at events, including materials such as coloring books and hats. Mr. Fiscus said fire prevention and community risk reduction is something usually neglected in Fire Departments. The hope is more robust fire prevention will reduce the number of fires and offset these costs.

- 411-140 – Turn-Out Gear – Mr. James asked why the large increase from 2023. Mr. Fiscus said Fire Turn-Out Gear expires on a 10-year basis. In the past we have taken the funds from the capital budget; this year it was decided to put the funds in the general fund budget and budget for it each year. Mr. James asked if there was a grant received for the gear. Mr. Fiscus said the grant received was for SCBAs.
- 414-200 - Zoning Solicitor – Mr. Sizer asked if we are confident the Zoning Board’s bank account will cover upcoming costs. Mr. Tomko said he is confident it will cover costs in 2024; after 2024, we may need to revisit it.
- 427-050 - Roll-Offs - Mrs. Bundrant asked about the \$9,000 savings. Mark Settle said we increased the pick-up from three to six, and then he discovered we had roll-offs for Waterfire that were not being utilized and completely overseen. He negotiated with Tri-County and the roll-offs were brought to the garage and used when we needed them rather than paying for additional roll-offs..
- 431-120 – Lawn Equipment/Maintenance and 431-130 – Snow Equipment/Maintenance – Mr. Sizer asked about the plans for these budgeted amounts. Mr. Settle said there is a lot of mowing; repairs for the equipment was coming out the Vehicle Repair line item. These line items were created to keep track of what is being repaired.
- 437-000 - Garage Wages – Mr. Sizer asked if this line item is for Mechanic wages. Mr. Tomko said yes. Mr. Fiscus said the position is currently vacant.
- 485-100 – Litigation – Mr. Sizer asked if the amount budgeted is sufficient. Mr. Tomko said the amount decreased for 2024 as there are no scheduled negotiations upcoming in 2024.
- 490-800 - Special Events – Mrs. Bundrant asked why there is no funds budgeted for 2024. Mr. Tomko said since everything is being shifted to the CDC, they will be covering the costs.
- Liquid Fuels – Mr. Sizer asked if the projects budgeted for mirror the grants approved by City Council. Mr. Tomko said that is correct.

The meeting was opened for citizen comments or questions on the expenditures portion of the proposed 2024 Budget:

- Dave McLaren, 1113 Haig Street; Mr. McLaren said at the last meeting he made a comment about items not being included in the Council Meeting Minutes. He was wrong and apologized.

Line Item 463-000 – Economic Development Director – Mr. McLaren asked if this individual is receiving a 33 percent raise. Mr. Fiscus said funds are being transferred to the CDC who will hire a director and provide benefits with those funds. In prior years money was budgeted separately for wages and benefits. With the new arrangement, there is a minimal cost difference.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:19 PM