



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

KAREEMAH FOWLER, CITY CLERK

PERSONNEL & FINANCE

SEPTEMBER 7, 2016 5:00 P.M.

Committee Members Present: Karen L. White, Regina Williams-Preston, John Voorde

Other Council Present: Dr. David Varner, Jo M. Broden

Committee Members Absent: Gavin Ferlic

Councilmembers Absent: Oliver Davis, Randy Kelly, Tim Scott

Others Present: City Clerk Kareemah Fowler, Jennifer Coffman, Kathleen Cekanski-Farrand, Adriana Rodriguez, John Murphy, Dr. Fred Ferlic

Agenda: Fire Department
Department of Code Enforcement

Fire Department

Committee Chair White called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Chief Steve Cox introduced Services Chief Todd Skwarczan, who oversees the Services Division, which includes facilities, fleet maintenance, repair, purchasing, and project management. This year the department has had the privilege of working with Dan Cochenour as the fiscal officer. He was recommended by the finance team, and has been a tremendous asset. The Fire Pension secretary is Gerard Ellis, who isn't able to be here today because he is stuck out of town.

Chief Cox explained the Fire Department mission statement and vision statement, which is available along with the full presentation in the City Clerk's Office.

This was part of the strategic plan that was presented to the Council a few years ago. Our vision statement was developed about three (3) years ago, prior to the City coming up with theirs, but it falls in line with the City's vision statement. In the end, we highlighted some of the words that the Mayor pushed out as the City's key values.

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JENNIFER M. COFFMAN
CHIEF DEPUTY/ CHIEF OF STAFF

ALKEYNA M. ALDRIDGE
DEPUTY/ DIRECTOR OF POLICY

JOSEPH MOLNAR
ORDINANCE VIOLATION CLERK

On the next page of the packet, there is an overall budget summary from the Fire Department. On the right hand column, there is a handful of large percentage changes. As we were going through it with the Controller's staff, there was a handful of things that were not in the correct categories, so we moved some payments into funds that made more sense. We have several items that need to be highlighted on that page: Capital Leases in the EMS Enterprise Fund were moved over into the Capital Fund. The Public Safety LOIT was increased because there was an increase in the amount of money there.

Committee Chair White asked Chief Cox to walk the Committee through the Personnel Services increases in terms of looking at the increase in supplies and other services. She asked him to please highlight those areas.

Chief Cox stated the vast majority of the expenses that are accrued in Personnel Services are tied up in salaries and benefits. In Fund (#101), the amount on top equates to that. We had an increase in percentage of salary and healthcare costs this year. The CBA that was negotiated with the Council had a two point two percent (2.2 %) raise for all personnel, and that along with health care costs accounted for the increase on those line items.

Committee Chair White asked if those particular areas were part of the contract agreement.

Chief Cox stated that the health insurance wasn't, but the longevity and percentage increase was, and that contract will continue through 2017.

Regarding supplies, there are different spots where supplies are listed. Supplies under Fund (#288) was switched from a non-reverting capital fund to an enterprise fund to be able to fund as much of our EMS system as much as we could. While it doesn't cover all of the costs associated with EMS, it does cover a significant chunk of personnel costs, which include our billing office, the assistant chief of the EMS, and supplies for EMS as well.

The increases in supplies in Fund (#101) are mainly moving items that used to be funded through Fund (#288) so they are more correctly classified. Fund (#297) is our Capital Fund where you see the big increase under other services, where we moved the capital leases from Enterprise Fund (#288), so that was just an adjustment from moving them over. It was a \$670,000 change.

Committee Chair White stated that she wanted the new Councilmembers to hear that.

Chief Cox stated in terms of overall staffing changes, the Fire Department doesn't tend to have a lot of changes in staffing. However, this year, we presented to the Mayor that we would actually like to increase the number of individuals we have on the Fire Department by six (6). Our goal was to be able to impact some of the overtime costs, using that overtime cost to fund the six (6) extra positions. We've had tremendous success over the past few years in recruitment of minority and female applicants, and we're in the end stages of creating the hiring list that will go into effect for 2017 and 2018. We need to do something different to be able to hire some folks in off of the drop program list, more so than the two (2) we had in the drop for next year.

Committee Chair White asked if they will be bringing any of the new people on board.

Chief Cox stated that the plan is to leave it in Fund (#101). They were anticipating the money budgeted for the overtime cost would cover those six (6) positions, because they are not increasing the minimum staffing.

Committee Chair White asked what overall membership would be next year.

Chief Cox stated it would be two-hundred and fifty-seven (257). Former Councilmember Dr. Fred Ferlic gave us the task of increasing or improving our ISO rating. In 2012, we were at a three (3) on a scale of one (1) to ten (10). One (1) is the best, and we've gone up to a two (2). No fire department in the state is at a one (1), so we are at the highest level in the state, and we were only two (2) points away from being a one (1) and being the first department in the state.

We'll be audited again soon, and we hope to get that up to a one (1) on our next audit.

Committeemember Voorde asked what that takes into account.

Chief Cox explained that there are three (3) categories that are audited. The Fire Department is responsible for fifty percent (50%) of the grading. The water delivery system in the City is graded at forty percent (40%) of the total, and the dispatch center is at ten percent (10%).

We received forty-three (43) points out of the fifty (50) for the fire department, our water works got thirty-three (33), and the dispatch center got (7). We were a little over two (2) points away from the ninety (90) points that we needed for a rating of one (1). We already looked at the audit, and we think we have the wherewithal to be able to impact the numbers to pull that off next time.

The Fire Department is not a diverse department. We've been transparent about that, there has been inadequate recruitment to try to diversify the department for many years. We created a recruitment committee last year of diverse individuals from within the department. We went out into the community, we talked to people in different departments that have had some success in recruitment. At the end of our application process we had seven-hundred and three (703) applications. The most we ever had prior to that was in the three-hundreds.

We're currently in the testing process. We've given the written exam and the physical agility test, and we've narrowed it down to one-hundred and seventeen (117) candidates, thirty percent (30%) of which are minority and female candidates. We have several veterans, although, unfortunately, we were trying to track veterans in that group but since we were the pilot department to run the City applicant tracking system, and we didn't get the veterans piece into the reporting side of the software until we had already started, so we don't have the true numbers. After we finish our interview process, we'll actually have our final list. We'll be presenting that to the Board of Public Safety with the anticipation of hiring those eight (8) individuals into a recruit academy starting on January second or third.

Committeemember John Voorde asked if they run their own academy.

Chief Cox stated that they do run their own academy. We have an ongoing regional fire recruit academy here in South Bend, and we've taken in recruits from other neighboring departments from throughout the region. Michigan City and La Porte send us recruits, and we do have interest from a handful of other departments. Some of that just depends on when they need folks hired and if it correlates with when we are running the academies. There are other departments throughout the state that also run academies, and depending on timing, they might deem it necessary to choose one over the other. We've had success with that, and we are starting a new academy next week with eight (8) of our own recruits from our current hiring list along with five (5) from Michigan City and three (3) from La Porte. Additionally, the state of Indiana sent us money to cover consumables such as plywood, hay, and gas. They've actually funded us as well to help with what we are doing at our training center.

We are also in our second year of running a high school academy in conjunction with the South Bend School Corporation. We started with thirteen (13) students, most were seniors and juniors, and we had a few sophomores in the group. This year we ended with ten (10) students, and one (1) of the success stories out of that ten (10) is that we had three (3) of those students fill out applications in our application process. One (1) of them tested all of the way through. He is still in the process, so that is a huge success. We were trying to create a flow of local students into the department. This year we started two (2) separate classes of high school students, and we're up to twenty-seven (27) high school students now. It is a dual-credit co-op program where the students actually get IVY Tech credit hours along with South Bend School credit hours. When they finish the program they're able to take their state certification exams through the Fire Department.

Committeemember Williams-Preston asked if it was part of the CTE program.

Chief Cox stated yes, and we just started it last year.

Committeemember Williams-Preston asked if they all train together.

Chief Cox said that all of the high schools participate, and they get dropped off either at the training center or the Central Fire Station. We've had tremendous feedback from the parents and the teachers, and the school corporation was astounded and very happy with the program.

Another accomplishment from this past year is our wellness initiative. This year, we are adding work performance evaluations to the physicals to ensure that all firefighters on the department are physically fit. We've created this in conjunction with a private company out of Indianapolis that has worked with several other fire departments and had tremendous success with their programs.

We really wanted to have the same success as the Indianapolis Fire Department. After four (4) years of this program, they reduced sick calls by twenty-five percent (25%), workman's comp claims by about fifty percent (50%), and they had several other things as far as health goes that were phenomenal that translated to lower health care costs. Rob Yeary gave us stats today, and our workman's comp claims are actually down this year.

We've also been working on our five (5) year capital plan. This year we put two (2) pumper trucks out to bid along with one (1) ambulance. We are also in the process of purchasing a new HASMAT truck. Those were all things that fit into our five (5) year capital plan as far as purchasing vehicles goes.

Next year we'll have a ladder truck, vehicle extrication equipment and helmets, which are changed out every ten (10) years by NFPA requirements. This year puts us at about nine (9) years with the current set of helmets that we purchased. We'll also be applying for assistance through the federal government to try to cover the cost of the helmets through a grant. Chief Cox cautioned the Council, because it is a very competitive process, and we apply to AFG almost every year for a piece of equipment that is costly to the department. FEMA looks at the needs and the means of the City, but we are not in as bad of a place as a lot of other cities. Traditionally, we've been passed over because we are in better shape than those other places, but that is not to say that we have not been successful in getting the grants. We've received them in the past, so we're going to continue to apply for them.

We are doing a mobile data terminal upgrade for all of our vehicles, which are basically the laptop computers that sit in the fire trucks and ambulances and other response vehicles. We also have been looking at our long term strategic station relocation program, which does not just include the two (2) stations that we've been hearing about. We are continually evaluating whether or not we have the right resources in the right places in the City.

Additionally, on October 1, 2016, Chuck Steele will have his fiftieth (50th) anniversary as a sworn firefighter for the City of South Bend. To our knowledge, there has never been anyone who has hit this milestone in our department. We'll be having a ceremony that Monday, October 3rd at the Central Station. Chief Cox will be sending an invitation out to the Council soon.

Chief Cox stated that the recruitment committee will continue to improve on its current initiative by collaborating with HR and the new diversity and inclusion officer. Even though they are testing, the recruitment process never ends. They are already working with members of the committee to enhance the success in the next recruitment cycle. Christina Brooks has been fantastic to work with so far, too.

In the wellness and fitness initiative, they completed the first round of work performance evaluations from a fitness perspective. It was performed by an external company, and they took a lot of things into account in terms of age and number of years with the department and used them to validate a time for everyone, so it was not a random number that we came up with.

Committeemember Voorde asked if they ever run into problems in the older fire stations regarding gender diversity.

Chief Cox stated that Station Nine (9) was built in 1926, and women were not firefighters at that time. In that building there are two (2) unisex bathrooms, but there is only one (1) very small common room for sleeping and one (1) locker room, which does not accommodate two (2) sexes. When we rebuild, it will be built to accommodate two (2) sexes so that people have the privacy they need.

Committeemember Voorde asked how many stations there are that are designed to accommodate both sexes.

Chief Cox stated that Station Ten (10), Station Two (2), Station Five (5), and Central are, and Station Four (4) wasn't initially built to house women but will be able to shortly because it has been modified. When we build new stations we have separate quarters with individual rooms. Each shift will share two (2) rooms with a locked facility they can use in between the two (2) rooms.

Brian King from Epic Architecture was also present to represent the firm that is working on the new station.

Chief Cox continued on to the smoke detector and carbon monoxide program. They have secured donations from Lowes, Walmart, Red Cross, and First Response. The department has been going out and installing smoke detectors, and as the program has expanded, they have changed the way they are doing the program. When the one (1) fire death occurred this year, the individual units canvassed the homes in the several block area and handed out eighty (80) smoke detectors within several days following the incident, knowing that there was a heightened interest in that neighborhood in protecting their families from fires.

When we go into a neighborhood immediately following an incident like that, there are more people who are interested in allowing us into their homes to get detectors installed.

We are also continuing to look at challenges and opportunities manifested by the Affordable Care Act. We're evaluating partnerships that will position the department to provide community paramedicine, which is a concept that is evolving the way EMS service is provided to folks before 911 is called. For example, if there is a person you care for that has a chronic condition, who calls the EMS often, in a non-emergent setting, you would check their blood sugar and blood pressure, check their heart on a cardiac monitor and call their doctor, and get them taken care of with Medicare or Medicaid issues.

Chief Meyer, the EMS Chief, is working with several different local agencies and Memorial Hospital to try to get this program up and running, and there has been interest from local organizations to help fund the program. There will probably be more information forthcoming once we have the plan fully developed and actually have paramedics going out into the neighborhoods.

We are also looking at long-term station relocation and replacement efforts. Finishing the Station Four (4) project is the top goal and challenge for 2017. The building there used to house our garage, but after the City merged everything into the Central Services, that building is just huge, and the space isn't used for what it once was designed for. We are working with Epic Architects to design the building, and that process is almost complete.

Neighborhood meetings are anticipated to go over the design plans and explain to the neighbors what the project looks like, then it will hopefully go out to bid late in the fall to be able to start building when everything thaws in the spring.

Additionally, there has been no decision made on Fire Station Nine (9). Chief Cox stated that he knows there has been a lot of opposition, and has spoken to a lot of councilmembers about it. They ended up deciding to work with Community Investment and the Mayor's Office to see if there are some alternate locations. They have also been talking to people at IUSB, but there wasn't property over there that the department would be able to use. However, they have identified two (2) different sites that meet their needs. They are outside of Potawatomi Park, and the Department of Community Investment is currently speaking to their owners about what it would look like if the City would purchase those properties.

He stated that one (1) of the alternate sites is an affordable solution that the Fire Department is confident about. The idea is to work with everybody to come up with a common solution.

Councilmember Dr. Varner asked if one (1) of the pieces of property is across the street from Martin's Supermarket, and Chief Cox stated that it is a very expensive piece of property, and they are not looking at it.

Committeemember Voorde asked if they are looking at Louise and Mishawaka Avenue, and Chief Cox responded no, they are not. It does not fit the needs of the Fire Department. Folks have suggested the Newman Center, the River Park Furniture site, the old school, and the Wooden Indian, and there are many reasons why these sites do not meet our needs.

We need to remain on Mishawaka Avenue, and we need to stay central within the district, so we need to be between Ironwood and Twyckenham.

Chief Cox explained that they also anticipate capturing their efforts of recruitment through diversity and hiring in 2017. They feel like they made a good proposal to the Mayor, Controller's office, and to the Council in order to be able to take advantage of the diverse hiring list that will be in place. We have six (6) women on the list that have passed the physical agility test, which is more than there have ever been. There are fourteen (14) Latino candidates, and typically that number is in the low single digits. There are eight (8) African-Americans, two (2) Asians, and six (6) mixed-race individuals. That equates to thirty percent (30%) of our total candidates who went through this part of the process. We feel really good about the diversity associated with this list, additionally, we've changed our testing process, and we've made the written exam a pass/fail instead of a ranking based on scores. Written exams in public safety are typically associated with disparate impact, so we hired out a private company who gave us a cut-off point that recruits had to reach to pass those courses.

After that, we went back and looked at the interview processes over the past twenty (20) years, and realized that we had very little if any disparate impact associated with our interview process. Now, instead of one (1) interview board, we're using two (2) separate interview boards and taking an average of the two (2) to create their spot on the list, thereby removing as much

disparate impact as we can. We are hoping for a well-spread out diverse list that has minority and female applicants throughout the list, as opposed to having them just at the bottom.

Committeemember Voorde asked if Stations Four (4) and Nine (9) should both be the same.

Chief Cox explained that the properties and the stations would not have all of the same needs, and the footprint of the property will be different, so that will have to be taken into account as the building is designed.

The process still has the peer review stage to go through in the Priority Based Budgeting, however, looking at the FTE costs and how they are associated, it's not a terribly huge surprise to us. A lot of our business is EMS response, fire response and training. So those are the top three (3) items that came out through that process. There were some minor surprises, but we still have more process to go through.

Committeemember Regina Williams-Preston thanked Chief Cox for walking through the process with Station Nine (9) because it was quite dramatic. It was nice to hear that the City was responsive to an important issue.

Committeemember Voorde stated he likes that the department is incorporating neighborhood input.

Chief Cox stated that he believes people will be very happy with the project when it is done. It will create a green space for the neighborhood just south of where the station is that will be open to the neighborhood. We're trying to be good stewards of the space that we occupy in the neighborhoods.

Councilmember Jo M. Broden asked where overtime ended up last year.

Chief Cox stated that last year the department had over \$1.5 million in overtime costs. Typically, overtime costs are driven by minimum staffing requirements, so there are a lot of different ways we can be impacted. Because minimum staffing drops below a certain level, we need to call in overtime by the collective bargaining agreement. When an individual is on FMLA, we have to give them the time off, so we end up with an additional person off, and we have to call in overtime for the entire time they are on FMLA. Also, we work twenty-four (24) hour shifts, so every sick day, vacation day, or FMLA day, is multiplied by three (3). Every day we need to call someone in for overtime, it costs taxpayers around \$750 per day.

The Fire Department covers all of the special events at Notre Dame as well, and those are all firefighters working overtime. Those hours are all reimbursed by contract with the University. We staff other special events that we charge the same hourly rate as we charge Notre Dame, so everyone gets charged the same rate.

We had Dan Cochenour, our fiscal officer, run several different exercises to calculate the costs of new firefighters versus overtime. Instead of calling in a captain on overtime, we would be covering the time with a person who is making the minimum amount. We looked at six (6) new

people. We tested adding ten (10) to see what happens if we realize that the actual end result is cost instead of using overtime. We have four (4) individuals in the drop for 2017, and two (2) that pledge they will be leaving in 2018. We'll bring in the six (6) as an experiment, and then in 2018 if it doesn't work, we'll use attrition to bump our numbers back down to the original level.

Councilmember Dr. Varner asked if two (2) lieutenants were being paid on page nine (9), because there is no number associated with them.

Chief Skwarcan stated that they are accounted for in Enterprise Fund (#288). The verbiage line is there, but not the numerical line.

Councilmember Dr. Varner stated he thinks a lot of people will be happy that they are looking at alternatives to the Potawatomi site.

Chief Cox added that while there has been a handful of outspoken critics, the majority of the people we've spoken to have been in support. We received over one-hundred (100) responses from a survey of the River Park Neighborhood, and sixty-nine percent (69%) were in support.

Committeemember Voorde asked if they had any thoughts on the combined emergency dispatch.

Chief Cox explained that the project is finally coming to fruition. There have been a lot of hang-ups associated with technology, but there was just an operations meeting yesterday, and it is coming together. They will be opening the new center and the staff will be migrating over there in December. We're excited because a lot of the programming that we anticipate using for our department, we were hoping to implement last year. As you're able to use the dispatch programs, we'll be able to respond differently.

The County has purchased those programs, we just need to get the center up and running, and we anticipate that being a good thing for us.

Councilmember Broden stated what the Fire Department has done with its diversity is outstanding.

Chief Cox stated the recruitment committee was acknowledged with a formal commendation. They represented us in many different communities all over the place doing unbelievable work.

Committeemember Williams-Preston asked if they have shared some of the experiences with Chief Ruszkowski in the Police Department.

Chief Cox stated that they speak often, but the Fire Department does not have the same challenges that the Police Department faces.

Committee Chair White thanked the Chiefs for the efforts to diversify the department.

Chief Cox again acknowledged the firefighters that have gone out into the community to work to diversify the department. They aren't doing it to hear that they are doing a good job, they are doing it because it's the right thing to do.

Councilmember Broden stated that the healthcare stuff is great, too and she is excited to see how that evolves.

Committee Chair White stated that the Fire Pension budget hearing will need to be rescheduled.

Code Enforcement

Randy Wilkerson, Director of Code Enforcement, introduced the Code Enforcement staff in attendance.

Mr. Wilkerson began by explaining that the Department of Code Enforcement is made up of three (3) divisions: Neighborhood Code Enforcement, the Neighborhood Enforcement Action Team (N.E.A.T), and South Bend Animal Care and Control.

Cecil Eastman, Department of Code Enforcement, stated that they are looking at a total budget of \$2.279 million for 2017. The most extraordinary number is the services under Animal Care and Control, because there is a twenty-seven percent (27%) increase, due to a change in allocation. Beyond that, the rest of the numbers are keeping in line, and we have made cuts to our supplies numbers.

We only anticipate revenues of \$647,000. We want to make it clear that the Department of Code Enforcement operates predominantly as a service to the community. The vast majority of our expenditures, since they benefit the whole community, are not recovered from the individuals we help directly. Our tradition historically is approximately eight percent (8%) recovery of costs, with hopes to at least maintain that.

Civil penalties and environmental cleanups are expected to go down due to the hope that more people comply. Revenues is defined as what we actually collect, not what we bill. There are many invoices that we issue to people that we are not able to collect for various reasons.

The largest section of collections have been civil penalties so far. We anticipate that will probably stay on track, because civil penalties tend to have a stronger collection rate.

Mr. Wilkerson explained that the vacant and abandoned initiative drove the civil penalties over the last few years. We were aggressive with trying to get people to comply using the civil penalties. We found that it worked, but now people are complying without the penalties kicking in, so we are getting the results we are after.

Ms. Marlaina Johns stated because of the change in the ordinance, they were able to increase the number of tickets and the amount by four-hundred and fifty-seven percent (457%), so there is actually almost \$600,000 in outstanding grass and weed tickets through continuous enforcement.

Committee Chair White asked if those numbers referred to tickets that were issued, not collected, and do we not know at this point the collection status of these.

Ms. Johns stated that is correct, and these numbers are just from 2016 through August 31st. Mr. Wilkerson explained that people have thirty (30) days to comply and pay the invoice, then it gets sent to the Legal Department. We believe the Legal Department holds onto it for about thirty (30) days before they send it to Krisor for collection. We don't know for sure how long they hold it, but what we are trying to do in this case is build up cases and lump them together for individuals that have multiple tickets. Now we are holding them and sending them as a batch instead of sending them individually.

Mr. Wilkerson asked what the Clerk's Office does in terms of batching tickets together.

Kareemah Fowler, City Clerk, stated that there are more invoices for cutting the grass than citations, so pulling them out of the system is a gray area. But we do it similarly, even with parking tickets.

Mr. Wilkerson stated that it could take up to six (6) months before the tickets go to collections.

Committee Chair White asked if they get any feedback from the Legal Department when the tickets have been paid.

Mr. Wilkerson stated that the information comes back to Code Enforcement. Batching the tickets reduces the backlog as well.

Health and Public Safety Committeemember Dr. Ferlic stated it may be convenient, but it is not a good way to collect money. It should be ninety (90) days at most. You can't run a business this way.

Ms. Johns continued that Code Enforcement has beaten their goal in the rates of properties that have been cleaned by owner. We are also using the N.E.A.T. crew to try to track down who might have dumped something so we can go after the owner rather than use it as an uncontrolled dump.

Mr. Wilkerson stated that the Department of Code Enforcement will have staff changes in 2017. They are looking to hire a deputy director and switch to two (2) part-time office positions. We've currently been using one (1) as a temporary part-time employee, and we'd like to make that a permanent part-time position. We're also going to eliminate the full-time Secretary IV from our staff. We are looking at changing the remaining Secretary IVs to Administrative Assistant to Code, a Supervisor II to Supervisor IV in the N.E.A.T. crew, and Animal Control Assistant to a Shelter Operations Manager. This keeps the full-time head count at twenty-eight (28) and part-time at five (5), which is not an increase in the full-time head count at all.

Committee Chair White asked if he will show the Council the financial impact of those changes.

Mr. Wilkerson answered yes.

Mr. Eastman stated that there is a mathematical error in the presentation. The total given is not correct. It is 1.7, 1.8, and 1.9 million going across the page. The individual line for personnel, supplies, and services is accurate. We are looking at a five percent (5%) increase in cost of personnel based on the acquisition of a new deputy. We are looking forward to being able to reduce our supplies cost, and the reduced price of gasoline has helped. We don't expect an increase next year, especially with better economy vehicles. Services are increasing, but that is mostly due to changes in allocation.

Mr. Eastman explained the graphs in his presentation, which is available in the City Clerk's office. \$372,000 in revenues is expected next year in Neighborhood Code Enforcement. Civil penalties have climbed a lot because we've done a lot to beef up our processes. Now the processes are at a stable state, so we don't anticipate that they'll rise.

Mr. Wilkerson continued by explaining their accomplishments. Looking at their processes, they learned that the business license inspections were done poorly in the previous years. Everything has been tightened up, and they are working with other departments to make sure they are more in tune with the ordinance.

This year they inspected eighty (80) applications, taking about three-hundred and twenty (320) hours to do that. This is a good for the community.

We've created educational brochures, which have been published and put on the website. We take them to neighborhood meetings and Mayor's Night Out.

Last year, the Department hired an administrative assistant who is working to build collections cases for us. She is batching up multiple owners and properties, and we are taking people to collections all at the same time. For the collections agency, that is a big win when they can dedicate their time to someone with that much money versus one person with a bill of \$180.

We audited all of our environmental files, three-hundred (300) boxes of paper have been taken out of our office and recycled. We upgraded our office computers, and everything seems to be running quite well.

We are resuming special assessments on properties. We can assess up to \$10,000 per property on their taxes. This year was very effective, but we've backed off this year since property taxes have gone out for the fall. We'll assess a lot more in the spring because it has been effective. People who are paying their property taxes are paying their outstanding fines with us.

Goals for 2016 were to improve efficiency, increase outreach and partnerships, and economic development.

In 2017, goals and challenges are to continue to streamline the business licensing process. We're continuing to improve operational efficiency, streamlining processes every day. By the end of this year, we hope to have our processes all up online so people can see exactly what we are doing.

Other goals and challenges are addressing overgrown weeds and vegetation around street signs and alleys in a new program we're starting. This will be very efficient for the trash trucks driving down the alleys; they'll have less debris to deal with. It will also open up lines of sight in the alleys to hopefully curb some of the dumping.

We are working with the Legal Department to increase collections in our department to improve that process. We are continuing to update our aging fleet with the midsize pickups. We have two (2) on board, and they've worked out well for us.

We are continuing to cross train our staff, which has been great for everybody. We've had a shortage of staff for a couple of months, and everybody knew what each other's jobs were so they could jump in and help out. We regularly attend neighborhood and community meetings whenever we're invited to, including Mayor's Night Out.

This year we are going to assess the condition of commercial structures. We've not really had a chance to do that with the vacant and abandoned commercial structures. We are going to continue to work with Community Investment to address the vacant and abandoned lot issues.

Committeemember Voorde asked Mr. Wilkerson to address the satellite offices.

Mr. Wilkerson stated that the Department of Community Investment did this years ago. They had offices out in the community. We are going to try to set up some locations throughout the City that we can have residents come to us to meet them. We'll set certain times in certain neighborhoods, realizing that some neighborhoods do not have neighborhood groups that get together, so we'll address them one on one. We think that this is part of the public outreach that we've been missing throughout the years.

Mr. Eastman explained the Neighborhood Enforcement Action Team's expenditures. N.E.A.T. was new in 2016. We expect that we'll be able to lower the expenditures as we attain efficiencies of operation. The only thing that will rise at all is personnel, recognizing that the team has grown over the years. We expect supplies to drop, and again, cheaper gasoline and less usage due to better vehicles is a factor.

The largest portion of N.E.A.T. expenditures are services, having to do with allocations to the area, like things we have to pay for. Revenues are anticipated to have a small decrease. We're hoping the people will be more compliant with environmental cleanups. There is nothing to compare as far as year to year revenues, but if you compare the \$139,000 they've collected through June against their 2016 amended budget, they came in slightly better than what was expected, but it won't necessarily be that way next year.

Angelo Logrande, N.E.A.T Supervisor, stated the N.E.A.T. crew is a special program, because we go out and help everybody. After the storm damage, the N.E.A.T. crew cleaned up sixty-eight (68) loads, not including chain sawing. During the last flood, the crew took care of over one-hundred (100) homes that had flood damage, and the N.E.A.T. crew picked up 126,000 pounds of flood damage.

The N.E.A.T. crew is working hand in hand with the inspectors. The iPad has been an asset, because we streamline all of our jobs as they come up from the inspectors. They are put in order by the iPads, so we aren't sending people all over town. We're sending them down one (1) alley at a time. When it comes to collecting tires, we've turned around and sent the lightening loader once every one (1) or two (2) weeks to collect tires around the City of South Bend. We've collected over 540,544 tires, which is about 1,261 cars full of tires just up to this day. Last year we only picked up 4,800.

Committeemember Voorde asked where the tires go after they pick them up.

Mr. Logrande answered that they take the tires to Liberty Tires, and pay \$1 each to get rid of them. We worked out a better deal this year where we pay \$240 for a whole truck load. The truck gets a whole load every day, which is why we only do it a few times a month. It's been a lot easier to pick up illegal dumps and tires due to the iPads.

Our goals next year are to put two (2) trucks into the program after getting rid of two (2) trucks. We've had so many complaints on the cutbacks in the alleys by safety and solid waste, so we are looking forward to that program.

Our goals are always to do a better job and to build relationships with the citizens of the City of South Bend. We try to do a better job every day. Part of that is working with these neighborhood cleanups. We do six (6) to ten (10) of them every year, and we don't give enough credit to the people who put these things together.

Mr. Wilkerson stated they found that it is very time consuming to respond to complaints from neighbors, because we have to stop what we're doing, dedicate a truck, complete the cutback, and take all of the trash to organic waste, so we take that truck and driver out of the cycle of picking up the trash. By dedicating people to doing this, it will be more effective. The plan is to do the cleanup in the first year then go back in the next two (2) years to do additional cutbacks.

If you call us today, one (1) of the inspectors will be out there the same day, and if the call comes in after 4:00 p.m., someone will be there first thing the next day.

Committeemember Voorde asked what kind of equipment is needed to cut the overgrowth.

Mr. Wilkerson stated currently they use chainsaws and pole trimmers. The idea is that we're going to go eight (8) feet from the center of the right-of-way each way, then twelve (12) feet above so we don't get into any power lines. It would be nice to have a tractor with side cutters on it, but that is not in our budget or any budget in the City.

Committeemember Voorde asked if it would be ok after the two (2) year cycle, and if it would be manageable by then, if it would just need maintenance.

Mr. Logrande stated that you have to be careful in the alleys because of the low wires and the fencing, so the pole saws (chain saws on a pole) are safer than having another crew come behind the crew to pick up the remaining brush.

Mr. Eastman explained the expenditures of Animal Care and Control. They are looking forward to no major changes. There is a small increase due to personnel. Supplies costs are expected to drop, and services will increase due to a change in allocation by the IT Department.

Personnel is the vast majority of expenditures of Animal Care and Control.

Committeemember Voorde asked what the eighteen percent (18) drop in the cost of supplies is attributed to.

Mr. Eastman stated that again, changes in the cost of gasoline account for a lot of the drop. Absolutely flat revenues are expected across the board. A small decrease in miscellaneous is expected. When we changed the ordinance a few years ago, the line item for dangerous dogs went away, but it has reappeared all of a sudden, but I don't expect that the \$1,000 will actually materialize.

The majority of the revenues come from pet licenses, followed by adoptions. Midyear revenues are pretty much on track to match 2015's revenues, and on track to fall within our expected budget for the year. Pet expenses are reimbursed revenues from the pet owner who is paying us for us having to pay a vet for the service.

Councilmember Broden asked what a pet surrender is.

Todd Howard, 521 Eclipse Place, Interim Manager/Assistant Manager of Animal Care and Control, stated that a pet surrender is when an owner wants to relinquish their animal because they can no longer care for it, we charge a \$20 surrender fee.

Mr. Howard continued to explain this year's accomplishments. There was an increase in return rates by promoting their Twitter account and working with local social media groups. We've been working closely with South Bend Lost and Found on Facebook. Also, anytime an animal is brought into our shelter as a stray, we post it on our Twitter page. Through that, we've had a seven percent (7%) better return rate of animals than last year. We're hoping that the more this program catches on, the more animals that will be returned to their owners.

We've reduced the cost of veterinary expenses by processing many of the tests in house. Last year we had significant remodeling of our current treatment room. We brought in different testing apparatuses to help us with different testing. In the past, we would have had to send those to a lab or to other veterinarians. This year we worked with 311 to create an online dispatching system, so we're in the process of getting away from paper and getting into the iPads. We hope we will be able to fully dispatch, track, and have better numbers for all of our calls within the same line creating better response time for the citizens. The number of animals sent to rescue and adoptions had increased significantly, especially the number of cats.

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Animal Care and Control was working with multiple rescue groups, which in turn lowers the cost for the City.

Mr. Howard continued that they are working to reduce animal bites. One of our three (3) animal control officers is now also the bite case coordinator. This means that now every time there is a bite, we have one (1) person the case goes straight to. We worked with IT to find out where the bites are occurring, when they are occurring, and who they are occurring to. If there is a high rate of children being bitten by stray animals in a given area, we could send people to those schools so we can teach the children how to approach stray animals and reduce those bitings.

We are transitioning to Accela software and working with the Office of Innovation to find the best match for our dispatching system.

This year we've yet to have a clinic to increase vaccinations and microchips, but we are going to be talking to the humane society of the United States to get a grant for more vaccinations.

Increasing revenue is always a challenge to Animal Control. We will be reevaluating a lot of our processes in the near future, as well as going over the ordinances to see what we can do to increase the revenue. We are having targeted adoption specials to increase adoptions as well.

Next year, we plan to utilize all of the information we have been acquiring to continue to seek ways to reduce animal euthanasia rates. We already have some of the lowest numbers in the area.

Animal Care and Control will also be increasing community outreach and communication. We'll be putting together different pamphlets and brochures and getting as much information as possible up on the website. We want to make ourselves as accessible as possible.

We are going to begin migrating Animal Control vehicles over the next couple of years to the pickup Chassis. Vans tend to be far more expensive, considering that there are cages we can drop on the back of the pickup trucks. Vans also require a different kind of maintenance and more gas, and the new vehicles will be more fuel efficient.

We'll be restructuring management positions to improve efficiency and sustainability, which will be a work in progress over the next year. Once the manager position is filled at the shelter, we'll be working to see what we need to do and who we need to change around here and there to ensure that we can be more efficient.

Mr. Wilkerson stated that the current vans they use are no longer made. If they were to buy vans, our current cages would not fit in them. If we buy the pickup trucks, our cages will work for two (2) generations of pickup trucks. Our kennels are useless if we go with vans.

They are planning to make changes to the current ordinance. On August 1, 2013 the new ordinance was approved, and it has worked out great. There are many parts of it that we are able to utilize. Their enforcement action has gone up significantly since then. We've been able to hold habitual offenders accountable for their actions, we have far more control over the

dangerous dogs in our society. There are many things we think could be streamlined, done more efficiently, and we'd like to get a committee together to reassess what it currently is. We plan to regularly attend Animal Care and Control Commission meetings because we want to start tightening that bond with them. We'll be training and supporting our officers in enforcing City, State, and Federal law. We've been working with the Humane Society of the United States, and they have expressed interest in bringing a training to South Bend.

The man who would come here has done a training in Indianapolis, and it was great. The Police Department is interested in taking part in the training as well. Another goal of the SBACC is to strengthen the bond between the ACC and the Police Department. There are many ways the two (2) departments can work to help each other.

We had one successful prosecution this year of a man who was harboring fighting dogs.

Councilmember Voorde asked if there is any coordination of the groups that were at the Dog Days of Summer DTSB event over the weekend.

Mr. Howard explained that there is coordination, it is the Animal Welfare Coalition. Mr. Howard plans on the department attending it more regularly. They are also trying to work closely with the local humane societies because we are all fighting the same battle, and we are all trying to attend the same trainings. Rather than sending people from each of our organizations to a different area for training, we want to try to bring some of the trainings here.

We do have direct contacts with a majority of the agencies in the area, but we are always looking to expand that further.

Committeemember Williams-Preston asked what the SBACC does in terms of stray cats.

Mr. Howard explained that there is a local group called Meow Mission. If there is a resident who is having trouble with stray cats in the area, they can either start their own colony, or they can assist the residents to make sure those cats no longer congregate in the area. There are laws where if a stray cat is in your yard, we will pick it up. We are looking into possibly some other things the larger cities are doing.

Ninety percent (90%) of cats that come through a shelter are euthanized. We've gotten our numbers to around seventy percent (70%) through working with the rescues in the area. Target Zero (0) is a program that strives to reduce that number to zero (0), but by doing that, we would be spaying or neutering and returning them back out into society, and they could still pose a nuisance.

Committeemember Williams-Preston stated that she would like to learn more about that program, because she would like to share it with some of the neighborhood associations.

Mr. Wilkerson suggested that interested people go to Target Zero's website to learn more about the program.

Committeemember Williams-Preston asked if IT handles 311 and how that applies to Code Enforcement.

Mr. Wilkerson stated that the calls Code Enforcement gets are better served if they go straight to the department, because they can get straight to the problem. Because a physical address is needed in order to respond to issues, it is best for people to be directed straight to Code Enforcement. If we can work with 311 to get us to that address, we could make it work, but a lot of our issues are very detailed, and we want to make sure the transition is going to be successful for us and our staff.

Committeemember Williams-Preston stated she loves the brochures, but a constituent who is a stable figure in the neighborhood called her because he was fined for a bag of trash. He was hurt because he would not leave a bag of trash in the neighborhood he works so hard to keep clean. She asked how they determine who the trash belongs to.

Mr. Wilkerson stated that the inspectors tear open the bags of trash to see if they can find any identifying material, such as mail that is addressed to the owner of the trash or credit cards that were thrown away. We'll work with people who are first time violators, and if we can reduce or waive the fine, we will.

Mr. Wilkerson stated that the Department of Code Enforcement is required to cite the property owner, no matter how the trash got there. If we can prove it is an illegal dump, we will pick it up.

Committeemember Williams-Preston asked if grass fees went up.

Mr. Wilkerson said no, they didn't go up.

Dr. Ferlic stated that an eight percent (8%) collection rate is not appropriate. Dr. Ferlic then asked what percentage of households own a pet, and should you have an animal if you can't afford an animal. He would like to know if we should inflict the costs of owning an animal on the taxpayers that do not own an animal.

Mr. Wilkerson said his dog has a line item in his budget. We tend to reduce the price of dogs and cats, so we have to ask if they are buying them because the price is reduced, or if they can actually afford it. Some people might be able to afford the small amount to purchase the dog, but not the costs that are associated with caring for the dog.

We are also dealing with transient people, so it is not as easy as we would like it to be to collect on these tickets. It's really tough when they keep moving out on us.

Dr. Ferlic stated that if we have a ninety-five percent (95%) collection rate on property taxes, we should have a higher collection rate in Code Enforcement.

Mr. Wilkerson stated that the eight percent (8%) we are talking about is from collections, it does not include any special assessments that are collected.

Dr. Ferlic stated that people don't have as much trouble with homes caving in as they have with yards that go unmowed. He asked how much money was collected just for the yard cutting if there were 1,900 yards under continued enforcement at \$170 per yard.

Ms. Johns stated that \$4,000 was collected from referrals, and the amount of judgements entered on grass tickets referred to legal is \$21,335.

Dr. Ferlic said that 1900 times \$180 is \$342,000, so we are way down. The mayor has not made this a priority, and it is costing tax payers money.

James Mueller, Chief of Staff to the Mayor, respectfully disagrees, stating we've made substantial gains in the efficiency of Code Enforcement.

Dr. Ferlic asked how much money the Clerk's Office has collected from the 1,900 chronic, and the six-hundred (600) first and second time violators, 1,900 at \$250-500 for continuous enforcement, and the first and second time violators for \$25-180.

City Clerk Kareemah Fowler responded that we haven't been collecting on those. They are not always citations. It's a work in progress, but we've come a long way. You'll see the numbers in the next six (6) months.

Committee Chair White thanked Code Enforcement and the other departments. She would like more information on how they plan on decreasing their penalties. Unfortunately, we can't fine our way out of this situation. Hopefully it will bring these two (2) pieces together since you are projecting twenty-three percent (23%).

Mr. Wilkerson explained that previously, they would put a civil penalty of \$25 on someone for showing up at a hearing. Now, we're giving people a chance to make the repairs, and if you make the repairs, you don't have to pay the civil penalty. By holding people accountable to their timelines, they aren't having to pay the penalties.

Committee Chair White asked if the illegal dumping crew is also part of Code Enforcement, and if they are focusing only on that, or if they are doing other things as well.

Mr. Wilkerson stated that they are part of the N.E.A.T. Crew.

Committee Chair White asked Mr. Wilkerson if they are keeping up on the illegal dumping, because there has been an increase in certain areas.

Ms. Johns stated that you also have to keep in mind that a lot of the vacant and abandoned properties have been largely addressed, so you aren't going to see the same amount of penalties anymore.

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Committee Chair White asked Mr. Wilkerson if he has adequate staffing to do what he needs to do. When the Council goes out into the community, they hear a lot about Code Enforcement. I have to ask because of the history of the department.

Mr. Wilkerson stated that they added a deputy director this year, and the idea behind that is to increase community outreach and be more involved with the community while allowing me to run the department and continue to increase our efficiency. We reduced our full-time staff to two (2) part-time people, which is more efficient for us based on how the software is working. Mr. Wilkerson stated he can't answer this question until he knows exactly how the software is working.

Committee Chair White asked if there are enough inspectors in Code Enforcement.

Mr. Wilkerson stated that using the software, they've been able to change the inspectors' areas based on the need in that area, and he believes they are in pretty good shape overall.

Committee Chair White adjourned the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen White, Committee Chair

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