
2020 BUDGET HEARING – WRITTEN RESPONSES TO COUNCIL QUESTIONS

Budget Hearing #6: September 4, 2019 Code Enforcement & Animal Resource Center

Unanswered Council Questions

- Can we give a list of industrial buildings / commercial structures in need of demolition and where we are in the process of attempting to remedy those structures (i.e. are we reaching out to the owners, what are next steps, etc.). Can we check whether MACOG can provide resources to help with this? Can we get IDEM in to address some of the concerns about these structures?
 - We will need help from the Controller, Council, anyone else who may be able to assist us with obtaining the money needed to address commercial demolitions. We have a preliminary meeting set for this, and will certainly keep Council abreast of the results of that meeting and the priorities going forward.
 - If we were able to prioritize vacant and abandoned commercial properties Code would need to assess commercial properties throughout the City to get a more concrete number of properties in need of attention.
 - Currently there are 13 commercial or industrial properties on the demolition list. We can safely assume that many of these properties will have special considerations to consider that will cause the cost of demolition to be higher (ex: made of brick, potential for large amounts of contaminants, connected to neighboring property, etc.).
 - We do know where they are, we are working with EPA to address the Wilson Shirt Factory and with IDEM to address Drewery's. We are pleased to share that IDEM is involved. 90-day deadline given from the date of Aug 27, 2019, with a 40-day inspection to check on progress.
 - We need the funds to go through and do the inventory and prioritize these.
 - The 2019 bids for removing the demo debris at Drewery's gives us a good indication of the bids we may see for demolition costs. The low bid for Drewery's was \$1.6 million. If we divide that \$1.6million by the 5 buildings I believe were demolished that comes in at \$320,000 per building to dispose of the debris. Added cost needed to perform the demolition work.
 - We also have an emergency demolition of a commercial structure at 1824 S Franklin that isn't very large and the cost for that demolition is near \$167,000 in 2019.
 - Demolition of the Fat Daddy's building was \$540,000 in 2019.
 - Brownfields Coalition) disbanded, no longer an option. MACOG is an option only to the county, does not include South Bend.
- How much was allocated for the Illegal Dumping Program that was instituted several years ago? How is the program doing? What challenges have there been? What areas are seeing the highest levels of illegal dumping?
 - Clarification: "Illegal Dumping" is the NEAT program. The 2020 budget for NEAT is \$544,158
 - Illegal dumping typically takes place in areas that are hidden from public view. We share tips for reducing public dumping in our flyers, website and KBA page. Some tips include keeping vegetation cut back, adding extra lighting to low visibility areas, and owner/manager checking on their property on a regular basis, especially for vacant lots, or on lots with structures that are not being visited often.
 - May help to make it easier for residents to have their trash removed. Ensure that special pickups are easy to schedule and happen quickly. That it doesn't matter if it a tenant or landlord calls for the pickup. This would need Solid Waste's attention.
 - Code Enforcement should have access to special pickup requests in the field, so inspectors know not to cite these properties. This would require the assistance of IT and has been mentioned as a want from Code in the past.
 - Potentially adding trash fees to taxes so that it is covered without a monthly payment. Owners could bill back to tenants if needed. Goal is to avoid dumping.
 - We have installed "No Dumping" signs in public areas that have been frequent illegal dump areas.
 - We are working with Legal to enhance our option for writing tickets against persons believed to have illegally dumped.

- How much of Allocation is going to IT?
 - Ron answered: \$80k **CORRECTION: Actual increase for IT Allocations for final round is \$104,905 – See the last page of this document for Allocation increase/decrease breakdown**
- \$54,000 for SVDP tenant relocation - In update to Council, we want to know how much money has gone toward this.
 - **2019 YTD \$3,891.46**
- When were the salaries last raised for the Director, Deputy Director, and Manager of Animal Resource Center?
 - **Aside from standard yearly increases (2%), the last time the Director, Deputy Director, and Manager of Animal Resource Center were adjusted are as follows:**
 - **Director of Code Enforcement:** This position was given a 7% raise in 2014 (from \$70,623 to \$75,567)
 - **Deputy Director of Code Enforcement:** This position was created in 2017 with a salary of \$75,000 and received a 2% increase in both 2018 and 2019
 - **Manager – Animal Resource Center:** This position was created in 2014 with a salary of \$47,501 and has received a 2% increase in every year since.

Questions from the Public

- Why are microchips going down 17%, was hoping that chip and tag program would come back?
 - **-17% represents projected revenue (aligned with prior years actuals), expenses for microchipping have not been reduced. Revenues go down due to making it more affordable for people to have their pets chipped.**
- How much would it take to actually address the illegal dumping.
 - **The current budget is sufficient. Code Enforcement can continue to give residents tips to prevent people from dumping on their properties, education on how dumping negatively impacts neighborhoods, issue tickets as deterrents, and remove dumped debris. VPA can continue to place signs that warn of potential fines for dumping.**
 - **However, it is a community issue. The community needs to come together to change attitudes and behaviors in the neighborhoods and help spread the understanding of the negative impacts of dumping. It is not something that Code can address on its own.**
 - **Owners of properties need to step up and be more responsible for their property(s). Whether that means repairing their properties, demolishing their properties, keeping them clean and the yard mowed, or maintaining them in a way that prevents dumping or other activities that negatively affect our neighborhoods. Residents need to help change attitudes and behaviors in the community.**
- What is the % of civil penalties issued on the west side? Can Civil penalties be shown by zip code?
 - **We are currently working on this. Simply displaying the number of Civil Penalties per zip code does not accurately tell the story. We are working to include the age of the case, the number of times it has been to a hearing and whether it is owned by a business or a private entity. This is a large project that means merging information from multiple software programs. See attachment for the info we were able to compile.**
 - **There have been 2,926 hearings since January 1, 2017. In that time, 555 civil penalties were assessed.**
 - **Over 40% of civil penalties are issued on properties where Code was unable to contact the owner of record – the owner may be deceased, a dissolved LLC, or have used the property address as the mailing address despite the property being abandoned.**
 - **The zip codes with the most penalties were 46628 (136) and 46613 (116). While 46628 has a high number of households with extremely low incomes, it does not have a high percentage of families living in poverty. The second-highest zip code for civil penalties is 46613, which has a higher percentage of families living in poverty, but lower absolute numbers of families with extremely low incomes.**
 - **Most properties receiving a civil penalty have already been to a hearing. For the 2 zip codes above, over a third of properties receiving civil penalties are owned by a business, including LLCs, banks, and retirement funds.**
- Can we document properties based on ownership?
 - **We have repeatedly requested a way to track ownership issues in our software program. Currently that is not something we are able to do with our Accela software. With new software we want to be able to track deceased owners, vacant houses and vacant lots.**

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- Neighborhood cleanup: We need more resources from Code regarding Neighborhood cleanup
 - We are happy to work with any community organization, neighborhood, business on neighborhood cleanups. It is up to these groups to promote the event and gather the volunteers- we push for a minimum of 20. Code Enforcement provides the supplies, i.e. trash bags and gloves, and then we collect the bags of trash from the volunteers and dispose of the trash. With the larger cleanups we are happy to also provide personnel as needed.
- Can we put more pressure on the property owners to clean up their own sites?
 - We utilize local ordinances and state statutes to apply increasing amounts of pressure for continued non-compliant owners.
 - The property that had bids come in at \$1.6 million has been taken to hearings 7 times with the current owner, had multiple Civil Penalties issued, multiple tickets issued, and multiple opportunities to provide a plan to Code Enforcement. We do everything we can as ordinance and statutes are written to obtain compliance from negligent owners.
 - If we can find a way to help push legislation through that would prevent so many LLCs from forming or allow municipalities to pierce the corporate veil more easily, we would likely have improved compliance from investment owners. Financial penalties don't work against LLCs when they can continue to dissolve and create new LLCs to avoid payment.

INTERFUND ALLCOATION COMPARATIVE WORKSHEET
CODE ENFORCEMENT
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 AND 2019

second round

2020	DIVISION				TOTAL
	230.1201	230.1207	221.1208	230.1209	
adm	92,978	36,362		20,365	149,705
print shop	6,088	1,751		66	7,905
it	472,357	64,867			537,224
Liab ins	36,059	13,257		788	50,104
payroll		76,927			76,927
fac mgmt		887			887
TOTAL	607,482	194,051	-	21,219	822,752

2019	DIVISION				TOTAL
	1201	1207	1208	1209	
adm	61,977	32,974		31,542	126,493
print shop	7,205	2,025		130	9,360
it	356,410	75,909			432,319
Liab ins	58,325	5,046		953	64,324
payroll		73,304			73,304
fac mgmt					-
cent stor	4,488	6,491		2,268	13,247
TOTAL	488,405	195,749	-	34,893	719,047

2020 Change	DIVISION				TOTAL
	1201	1207	1208	1209	
adm	31,001	3,388		(11,177)	23,212
print shop	(1,117)	(274)		(64)	(1,455)
it	115,947	(11,042)		-	104,905
Liab ins	(22,266)	8,211		(165)	(14,220)
payroll	-	3,623			3,623
fac mgmt	-	887			887
cent stor	(4,488)	(6,491)		(2,268)	(13,247)
TOTAL	119,077	(1,698)	-	(13,674)	103,705
	119,077	(1,698)	-	(13,674)	- 103,705