



# OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

## BIANCA L. TIRADO, CITY CLERK

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### PERSONNEL & FINANCE

SEPTEMBER 25, 2024 5:30 P.M.

#### Committee Members Present:

Sheila Niezgodski, Canneth Lee, Ross Deal,  
Karen White, Rachel Tomas Morgan, Sharon  
McBride (*Arrived Late*)

#### Committee Members Absent:

Troy Warner, Angela Smith

#### Councilmembers Present:

Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers

#### Councilmembers Absent:

Dr. Oliver Davis, Sherry Bolden-Simpson

#### Others Present:

Bianca Tirado, Matthew Neal, Samuel Turck,  
Talia Thorton, Bob Palmer, Sherry Bolden-  
Simpson

#### Agenda:

Mayor's Office — City Clerk's Office —  
Diversity, Compliance, & Inclusion —  
Citizens Review Board

Members marked with an asterisk (\*) are in virtual attendance.

#### **Please note the attached link for the meeting recording:**

<https://docs.southbendin.gov/WebLink/0/edoc/385924/Mayors%20Office%20Diversity%20%20Inclusion%20-City%20Clerk%20Common%20Council%20Budget%20Hearing.mp4>

#### **Please note the attached link for the meeting presentation:**

<https://docs.southbendin.gov/WebLink/0/fol/385664/Row1.aspx>

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski called to order the Personnel & Finance Committee meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski provided information regarding the 2025 Budget Overview process. Additional questions about this meeting or the budget hearing can be emailed to the Personnel and Finance Committee Chair, Sheila Niezgodski, at [sniezgodski@southbendin.gov](mailto:sniezgodski@southbendin.gov), and they will be directed to the appropriate department. The Final Budget Hearing is scheduled for October 14, 2024. The Human Rights Commission's budget presentation has been moved to October 3, 2024.

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Elivet Quijada-Navarro  
CHIEF DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Matthew Neal  
DEPUTY/ DIRECTOR OF POLICY

Samuel Turck  
DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL OF PROJECTS

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## **2025 City Clerk's Office Department Budget Presentation**

City Clerk Bianca Tirado, who has offices on the 4th floor of the County-City Building, presented the 2025 City Clerk's Office budget. The City Clerk's Office aims to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the City records and serve as the liaison between the Common Council, City administration, and South Bend residents, fostering those relationships for the common good. The City Clerk is the administrative arm of the Common Council. The City Clerk's Office fulfills these goals by empowering the community and advocating for an open, transparent government. The City Clerk has four (4) staff: Chief Deputy Clerk/Chief of Staff Elivet Quijada-Navarro, Deputy City Clerk/Director of Policy Matthew Neal, Executive Assistant/Director of Special Projects Samuel Turck, and a Public Relations Intern position which is vacant. The Chief Deputy Clerk/Chief of Staff is the direct report in the absence of the City Clerk and manages the City Clerk's day-to-day operations. The Deputy City Clerk/Director of Policy reviews all legislation, ensuring it has been filed correctly. The Executive Assistant/Director of Special Projects oversees the minutes and technology in the Council Chambers. The City Clerk's Office is forward-facing, serving Councilmembers and residents alike. Establishing relationships in the community is essential for the City Clerk's staff. City Clerk Tirado has instituted Fireside chats with the City Clerk's staff featuring community members. Following an audit, the current administration discovered two hundred and twenty-six (226) minutes that needed completion from the previous administration. The City Clerk's Office used the vendor Minutes Solutions to draft two hundred and eleven (211) of these minutes, which were reviewed and finalized by the City Clerk's staff. These minutes are now completed and available to the public online. As of September 25, 2024, the City Clerk's Office has filed three (3) special resolutions, ten (10) special proclamations, twenty-nine (29) resolutions, and fifty-nine (59) ordinances. A special proclamation is read in the community, while a special resolution is read in the Council Chambers during a meeting. The City Clerk's Office has a new logo representing how they serve the residents through their services. In 2025, the office will release some storytelling pieces that highlight the history of the City Clerk's Office. The supplies budget will increase by thirty-six point-eight percent (38.6%). Due to cleaning needs, other services & charges will increase by six-point-seven percent (6.7%). Printing & advertising will grow by ten-point-five percent (10.5%). This is due to the increased advertising of public hearing ads and the need to pay to process and certify bills. The total budget will increase by three-point-seven percent (3.7%).

Citizen Member Ross Deal asked if the office is where it needs to be in terms of technology.

City Clerk Tirado stated that the office will be where it needs to be in terms of technology after the move to the new City Hall. City Clerk Tirado noted that she is working with Information and Technology (I&T) to ensure the new Council Chambers are appropriately equipped for the Common Council and residents' needs.

Committee Member Karen White thanked City Clerk Tirado for the presentation and made suggestions regarding planning for the technology needs at the new City Hall. Committee Member White asked how the Fireside chats were envisioned.





City Clerk Tirado stated that one (1) Fireside chat happened in early 2024. The Fireside chats allow the City Clerk's staff to learn the history of the office so they can understand why they do the work they do. City Clerk Tirado stated that she has been a part of the office since 2017.

Committee Member Canneth Lee thanked the City Clerk's Office for their work on the Minutes Project and asked how the office can keep the Councilmembers updated on community events.

City Clerk Tirado stated that a master calendar has been planned for 2025.

Committee Member Tomas Morgan thanked the City Clerk's Office for their work on the Minutes Project.

Committee Chair Niezgodski opened the public hearing.

Sue Kesim, 4022 Kennedy Drive, South Bend IN 46614, suggested that the history of the office be added to the City Clerk's website and that the office institute a list serve for minutes. Sue Kesim asked how the office would use artificial intelligence (AI) to improve its efficiency and the quality of the Committee meeting minutes.

City Clerk Tirado stated that AI has guidelines on how local government should use it. The City Clerk's office is working with I&T to implement AI properly. The off-site meetings are challenging due to the lack of technology at these locations. It will take an investment in the proper technology package to improve the audio quality of off-site meetings. City Clerk Tirado stated that Deputy City Clerk/Director of Policy Matthew Neal is working to create a plan to improve the audio quality of those meetings.

Committee Chair Niezgodski thanked City Clerk Tirado for working well with the Council.

### **2025 Mayor's Office Departments Budget Presentation**

Allie Dolz-Lane, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Mayor, who has offices on the 14th floor of the County-City Building, presented the 2025 budgets for the Mayor's Office. The Mayor's Office has eight (8) staff members. The Administrative Assistant is the forward-facing team member that receives residents as they enter the office. The Executive Assistant/Director of Special Projects is the Mayor's scheduler. The Director of Communications manages media relationships for all departments besides the Fire Department, Police Department, and Public Works Department, which have their own media staff. The Director of Community Outreach meets with different community groups and residents to foster cooperation in the community. The Project Manager handles other more complex meetings with the public. The Chief of Staff manages all City Departments, as well as the day-to-day operations of the Mayor's staff. Salaries & wages will increase by the cost-of-living adjustment of three percent (3%). Fringe benefits will also increase, but all other line items will remain flat from 2024 to 2025.

Committee Member Tomas Morgan asked if the office's interns' salaries were included in this budget.

Allie Dolz-Lane stated that they are, and the interns are paid the City's minimum wage unless they decide to trade payment for College Credit.



Committee Chair Niezgodski held the public hearing, and nobody spoke.

**2025 Citizens Review Board Office Departments Budget Presentation**

Allie Dolz-Lane, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Mayor, who has offices on the 14th floor of the County-City Building, presented the Citizens Review Board's (CRB) 2025 budget. The total budget is increasing by thirty-eight point-nine percent (38.9%). The total budget is one hundred and thirty-nine thousand, ninety-five dollars (\$139,095). One (1) full-time employee in this office staffs the board. All board positions are currently filled, which accounts for the increases in education and training, travel, other services & charges, and supplies. The five-point-eight percent (5.8%) increase in salaries & wages is due to the cost-of-living adjustment and the residency incentive bonus.

Committee Member White asked if this department would require additional staffing to help with administrative tasks.

Allie Dolz-Lane stated that the Human Rights Commission and the CRB would share an administrative assistant after the move to the Layton Building.

Committee Member Lee asked how much training the board needs to function correctly.

Allie Dolz-Lane stated that all board members must participate in the Citizens Police Academy, which the Police Department operates. Allie Dolz-Lane noted that the Director of the Citizens Review Board, Pastor Charles King III, will provide the Council with more information about training in writing.

Committee Chair Niezgodski opened the public hearing.

Sue Kesim asked for clarification regarding the travel, supplies, and other services & charges line items.

Allie Dolz-Lane stated that she did not have that information readily available. Those line items are commensurate with other departments' travel to conferences for training.

Committee Chair Niezgodski stated that it is commensurate with other departments within the City.

**2025 Diversity, Compliance, & Inclusion Board Office Departments Budget Presentation**

Cynthia Simmons Taylor, The Officer of Diversity, Compliance, & Inclusion, with offices on the 14<sup>th</sup> floor of the County-City Building, presented the 2025 Office of Diversity, Compliance, & Inclusion (ODCI) budget. ODCI's key tenants are integrity, diversity, compliance, inclusion, equity, and fidelity. This office has three (3) positions: the Officer of ODCI Cynthia Simmons Taylor, the Manager — Inclusion Project Bianca Jones, and the Contract Compliance Administrator, which will start on October 7, 2024. ODCI's purpose is to create a more inclusive and equitable business environment, to ensure fair access to government contracts for small and diverse businesses, to enhance cultural competencies within the city's workforce, and to build robust and sustainable growth opportunities for Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) and Women Business Enterprises (WBEs). Supplier Diversity is run based on the Disparity Study





conducted from 2015 to 2019. Doing a Disparity Study every five (5) to seven (7) years is recommended. In 2025, the City is due for another disparity study. ODCI has a Small Business Assistance Suite. The Internal Workforce Cultural Competency is ongoing and operated by ODCI and the Human Resources (HR) Department. ODCI is focused on increasing the participation of MBEs and WBEs in City contracts, providing guidance and resources to help these businesses navigate the procurement process, and setting goals for prime contracts to engage more with diverse subcontractors. The Small Business Assistance Suite aims to assist small and diverse businesses become certified to compete for City contracts. Cynthia Simmons Taylor stated the Inclusive Procurement and Contracting Board (IPC Board) works with ODCI, and the only spending that matters to that board is the certified spend. The Small Business Assistance Suite provides business development assistance with legal, accounting, and coaching resources. Marketing training will be added to this program. Cultural competency allows ODCI to focus on building a culturally competent and inclusive workforce within the city's departments. ODCI provides training, resources, and strategies to improve diversity and inclusion, as Executive Order *No. 01-2016* outlines. ODCI aims to support departments in assessing and implementing diversity and inclusion strategies. ODCI's accomplishments in 2024 are partnering with many excellent local organizations to develop a business ecosystem, hosting workshops for adults and youth, and identifying and increasing the number of certified firms the City does business with. In the middle of 2023, there were seventeen (17) accredited firms. In 2024, there are sixty (60) certified firms. There have been workshops to certify MBEs and WBEs in 2024. Working through that process takes forty-five (45) to ninety (90) days. These workshops are hybrid meetings. The workshops are held at night and on weekends so as not to interfere with the business owners' work schedules. The Thought Leadership Conference was targeted at youth participants who were interested in the trades. Trades workers are needed in the City. In 2024, ten (10) businesses successfully achieved Indiana Department of Administration (IDOA) Certification. ODCI identified over fifty (50) businesses that the City has done business with that could qualify for MBE/WBE Certification. ODCI assisted forty-two (42) businesses through the Small Business Assistance Suite. Many spends are ineligible to be considered for MBE/WBE spending. ODCI has taken a full-service approach versus the one (1) or two (2) vouchers that individuals were offered in the past. Supplier Diversity will continue in 2025 with workshops teaching MBEs and WBEs how to get certified and bid for contracts. The Mentor Protégé Program will start in 2025, pairing MBEs and WBEs with business owners who are experts in their respective industries. The Internal Cultural Competency training assistance will encompass internal, cultural-inclusive competency to ensure city employees feel a sense of belonging. The increase in salaries & wages is due to an intern position being filled. Supplies increased from one thousand dollars (\$1,000) to two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500). Education and training will remain the same as in 2024. Other services & charges include membership fees to IDOA and We Bank to access MBEs and WBEs. Printing and advertising will increase in 2025. Professional services will increase by (25%) in 2025. Cynthia Simmons Taylor stated that we should continue to promote programs and policies that enhance diversity compliance, equity, and inclusion within the district; we will continue to ensure that all residents have a voice.



Councilmember Gooden-Rodgers thanked Cynthia Simmons Taylor for the presentation and asked if ODCI has considered sending brochures to local churches. Councilmember Gooden-Rodgers asked how many black-owned businesses have made it through the certification process in 2024.

Cynthia Simmons Taylor stated that ODCI plans to distribute materials to churches and other community centers in 2025, run radio ads, and attend community events.

Committee Member Lee thanked Cynthia Simmons Taylor for the presentation and asked for clarification regarding the total eligible spend for 2022 through 2024.

Bianca Jones stated that the City's total eligible spending is the funds made available for private companies to bid on. Out of Goalsetting projects with Public Works in 2022, point six, three percent (.63%) went to MBEs and WBEs. This percentage grew to one point one percent (1.1%) in 2023, or one million eight hundred thousand dollars (\$1,800,000). The total spend for 2023 was one hundred fifty-two million dollars (\$152,000,000).

Cynthia Simmons Taylor stated that the city's marketplace includes Indiana and Berrien County, Michigan.

Committee Member Lee asked about the barriers to connecting with MBEs and WBEs.

Cynthia Simmons Taylor stated that it is difficult to connect with these businesses. ODCI has reviewed records from the Building Department that mark whether a woman or a minority owns a building. Growing skilled tradespeople is a top priority through programs like the Thought Leadership Conference.

Council President Sharon McBride asked if there are challenges at the state and federal level in getting these businesses certified and stated that some MBEs and WBEs accredited with the state were denied contracts due to being outside of city limits. Council President McBride invited the ODCI team to present the updated Disparity Study.

Cynthia Simmons Taylor stated that the application process does not include a test but can be difficult. That is why ODCI has implemented workshops to help these MBEs and WBEs through the application process. Cynthia Simmons Taylor stated that MBEs and WBEs can receive contracts even if they are outside of the City. ODCI is building relationships in the business community because many MBEs and WBEs have lost faith in the City government. Another barrier to getting businesses certified is the insurance and bond requirements. Executive *No. 01-2016* allows for assistance from the City in paying these insurance and bond requirements out of the Department of Community Investment (DCI).

Councilmember Gooden-Rodgers asked if the Councilmember could be provided a list of the minority-owned businesses in the City.

Cynthia Simmons Taylor stated that ODCI is still compiling a list of all minority-owned businesses in the area and that she will share that information after the meeting.





Committee Member Tomas Morgan stated that she is on the IPC Board and that getting these businesses certified is incredibly important. Committee Member Tomas Morgan noted that many companies are currently awaiting approval in the application process.

Cynthia Simmons Taylor stated that prime contractors must give MBEs and WBEs a chance with City contracts.

Committee Chair Niezgodski opened the public hearing.

Sue Kesim, 4022 Kennedy Drive, South Bend, IN 46614, asked for a breakdown of the registered MBEs and WBEs and what contracts the City has awarded them in the past five (5) years. Sue Kesim stated that this program benefits state and federal grants to offset taxpayer dollars and what drives the professional services line item.

Cynthia Simmons Taylor stated that the Small Business Assistance Suite, legal payments, and business coaches are paid for through professional services.

Committee Chair Niezgodski thanked Cynthia Simmons Taylor for the presentation and highlighted the shortage of tradespeople in the City.

### **2025 Common Council Departments Budget Presentation**

Council President Sharon McBride, who has offices on the 4th floor of the County-City Building, presented the 2025 Common Council budget. Some key responsibilities include enacting local laws, ordinances, and resolutions governing the City. One of the most significant is reviewing and approving the city's budget. Council members meet with residents to discuss their concerns and issues. The Common Council functions as a bridge between the community and city government. The Police and Fire Departments saw increased staffing in 2024. Affordable housing was built all over the City in 2024. The Common Council approved infrastructure upgrades such as roads and traffic calming and continued to expand Wi-Fi to neighborhoods that lack access. The total amount of American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds that the Common Council allocated was fifty-eight million dollars (\$58,000,000). The total ARP funds spent as of September 25, 2024, is fifty-two million and five hundred thousand dollars (\$52,500,000). 466 Works has been building affordable housing in the City and has partnered with Riley High School to continue that work. The Common Council continues to work closely with DCI to create Residential Neighborhood Plans that benefit the residents of those communities. The Common Council continues to pass Quality of Life Ordinances such as code enforcement, nuisance ordinances, and vacating alleys. Council President McBride stated that Councilmember White is reviewing the Quality of Life Ordinances. Connectivity to upgrades to the city's parks & trail system are ongoing. The Not in Our Community partnership is continuing. The Common Council supported funding a permanent supportive housing project for people experiencing homelessness in the City, the Mental Health Crisis Center, and Light Up South Bend. The funding for the Homer Repairs Program was two million and five hundred thousand dollars (\$2,500,000), and an additional one million dollars (\$1,000,000) was allocated for the Home Buying Assistance Program. The Drewrys site was demolished in 2024. The Common Council approved four million dollars (\$4,000,000) for demolitions in 2024. The Neighborhood Recovery Grant distributed two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000). Council



President McBride stated that residents want increased traffic calming in their neighborhoods. United Way offers early childhood development services, and the City recently broke ground on the new Youth Services Bureau. Council President McBride stated that the Youth Council, under the leadership of Councilmember White, has increased year over year. The Common Council received a cost-of-living increase in salaries & wages. Education and training increased due to improved engagement by the Council. Other services & charges increased due to I&T maintenance and cleaning services. The Common Council's allocation to the I&T budget is seventy-one thousand dollars (\$71,000), which is not seen in the Common Council's budget as it is taken directly from the General Fund. Additional budget allocations will be made in 2025 due to the move to the new City Hall and the Common Council going to trial for the police tapes.

Committee Member Tomas Morgan requested the physical form of the presentation.

Council President McBride stated that she would receive it.

Committee Member White asked if Council President McBride could highlight some of the challenges of 2024 and offered to help with that project.

Council President McBride stated that evaluating the past year would be good.

Committee Member Lee asked what would happen if all of the travel budget was not spent.

Council President McBride stated those funds would be returned to the General Fund.

Committee Chair Niezgodski opened the public hearing.

Sue Kesim, 4022 Kennedy Drive, South Bend, IN 46614, asked how much money has been spent on the police tapes issue and if the Councilmembers had completed Aim budget training.

Council President McBride stated that the Aim training was made available to all Councilmembers at the beginning of their term and that there is continued education for the Councilmembers to serve the community better.

With no further business, Committee Chair Niezgodski adjourned the Personnel & Finance Committee meeting at 7:09 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheila Niezgodski, Committee Chair

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