

The Hiawatha City Council met in a Budget Work Session on January 13, 2020. Mayor Bill Bennett called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. Council members present: Dick Olson, Steve Dodson, Rob Archibald, Jerry Mohwinkle, and Aime Wichtendahl. Staff present: City Administrator Kim Downs, Police Chief Dennis Marks, Fire Chief Mike Nesslage, Community Development Director Pat Parsley, City Engineer John Bender, Public Works Superintendent Rod Jasa, Finance Director Cindy Kudrna, Library Director Jeaneal Weeks and Library Operations Manager Claire Broyles. Guests: Daniel Hoffmann.

Wichtendahl moved the approval of the agenda, seconded by Archibald. Motion carried.

POLICE

Chief Marks presented the Police Department budget for FY 2021:

- 0% increase over FY20 approved budget numbers.

Requesting consideration for increasing the size of our department by up to two additional officers. It has been seven years since the last increase in personnel. The police department's 2004 five-year plan identified a need for additional officers. The plan identified 2.0 officers per thousand residents as the goal. Full-time Law Enforcement Officers are reflected in the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting publications. We fall in the category with a population under 10,000 residents. Departments in the 1.6 to 2.0 officers per thousand is the most common. Hiawatha is at 1.7 when considering 7,500 Hiawatha residents. Two additional officers would bring us back to the 2.0 mark.

Below is the officer per thousand breakdown at 7,500 residents:

Currently at	1.73
1 Add. Ofc.	1.86
2 Add Ofc.	2.00

Officers were hired in 2004 to bring the department up to the desired staffing level of 2.0 officers per thousand residents. Also hired a civilian administrative assistant to handle day to day office and public needs. The police department had 13 full-time employees at the end of 2004. Staffing levels remained the same from 2004 to 2013. One additional officer was hired in 2013 to accommodate growing needs and provide minimum staffing levels on all shifts. The police department has added only one position in the last 15 years.

The civilian position was also filled with a certified police officer in 2014. This has provided better service to residents and allows me to place an officer on light-duty at the front desk. We have utilized this several times for light-duty assignments since inception.

The number of cases have remained fairly constant over the last several years while the amount of time spent on cases has increased. We have investigated several in-depth cases resulting in significant Federal and State convictions. These type cases require additional steps and time spent investigating. We have also seen an uptick in firearms related cases with three separate shootings in the past 12 months. Again, these types of cases require a significant amount of man hours to bring to a close.

The average years of service at the Hiawatha Police Department is 13.5 years including our last hire in June 2019. One of the challenges with a veteran department, such as ours, is current and accumulated leave time. Our staff currently accrues annually 2464 hours of leave for vacation and personal time. Sick time and training are in addition to this total. We also currently have 2,593 hours of vacation and personal time on the books for use. Some training and numerous vacation requests have been denied.

Council Member Olson said he agrees with adding two officers, the department has longevity and asked if Chief Marks has had to deny any vacation requests.

Chief Marks answered he has had to deny more vacation hours than he has ever had to and would like to be able to grant them time off to recharge.

Operating below our minimums this year has been difficult. We had an officer leave for the private sector on March 7, 2019. The application period was opened on February 22, 2019 upon receiving the resignation letter. Testing began promptly and a replacement was hired in June 2019. The newly hired officer began the academy in the fall of 2019. He will be done with training and able to cover his first shift on March 16, 2020.

The Friday and Saturday night minimum staffing level has also been reduced. Maintaining safe staffing levels is paramount for officer safety and was a factor in the 2013 request for the 14th officer. In 2019 we have fallen below minimum staffing 82.6% of shifts on Friday and Saturday nights. Falling below minimums was non-existent in 2018 and previous years.

Adding an officer will not result in a request for an additional vehicle. I believe even if we add a second officer, the existing vehicle fleet will be sufficient.

Council Member Archibald asked if two additional officers will be enough.

Marks said two will get the department back to where they were and to expand over time.

Council Member Olson said in 2004 picked up standards and stayed with that standard, he is in favor of two additional officers and also inquired about not needing an additional car with a new officer.

Marks answered the equipment would be the same, had a conversation with Mayor Bennett and have been getting more out of our vehicles and are not convinced to run our cars longer will get us there; worse case in a year or more from now we will have to pull a reserve vehicle.

Council Member Olson asked what the timeline would be for the additional officers.

Marks said his preference would be to hire February 1, 2020 and amend this budget and apply for COPS grant and hire the 2nd one July 1, 2020. There is \$400 million available for COPS grant but the size of our jurisdiction we can't apply for more than 5% of our jurisdiction.

Council Member mentioned they were rejected in 2004 for the COPS grant.

Council Member Dodson asked if the growth was 7.5% and if it is wise to act now.

Marks said the need is on the day shift as the population doubles during the day.

Council Member Wichtendahl asked what the average salary would be.

Marks said it starts at \$49,000 plus benefits.

Council Member Wichtendahl asked if the focus is away from traffic stops or will they go back to that and if there would be an increase in revenue from traffic stops.

Marks replied that is not where they want to be right now, they want to get back, traffic accidents are going up and there would be an increase in presence for traffic enforcement and there should be an increase in revenue from it.

Council Member Wichtendahl commented the outline for the two new hires makes sense and if we had consistent rate of growth when would you need a third officer.

Marks said it depends on what happens, maybe four to five years will look at it again.

Council Member Dodson commented that he has personally worked with Federal and State agencies and is more intense work and commends the police department with all the work they did on cases.

Marks said he appreciates that and thank you.

Council Member Dodson said the average tenure is 13 ½ years, need to get some younger blood in here.

Marks commented they have one becoming a US Marshal, one will retire in two years and then it is spaced out pretty good.

FIRE

Chief Nesslage presented the Fire Department and Ambulance budget for FY 2021:

Fire –

- \$3,000 decrease in Incentives line item due to the change in how the two recognition events are handled in successfully reducing costs
- \$750 increase in Dues/Memberships line item due to rates increased for some organizations.
- Dispatch fees has been added as a line item for fire. Previously Police paid the single fee of \$33,000. Now that fee is allocated 1/3 to fire, ambulance, and Police each at \$11,000. This is an accounting change to better reflect actual expenses.
- \$1,000 increase in Misc. Contractual line item due to a wide range of items, the two largest being software licenses and preventive maintenance agreements for extrication equipment, breathing air compressor, and fire extinguishers.
- \$2,000 decrease in Minor Equipment line item, have done a good job of staying under that budget for the last five years. One of the major areas we've been able to save here is SCBA equipment. As we have all new cylinders and masks funded by the grant, we are not expending that money on replacements every year.
- Overall, the operating budget minus personnel and benefits remained constant for FY21. The primary increase is the reallocation of \$11,000 in dispatch expenses to the fire department as a line item.

Ambulance –

- \$500 increase in Clothing Allowance line item due to when new staff joins and the cost of uniforms increase.
- \$3,500 increase in Vehicle Maintenance line item, the last few years we have seen large increases in repair cost.
- \$11,000 in Dispatch fees has been added to the ambulance budget.
- \$3,000 increase in Ambulance Refund line item, that relates to money that is paid to us improperly through the Medicare, Medicaid and insurance process.

- \$5,000 increase in Operating Supplies line item due to inflation and increase in-transport.
- Overall, the operating budget minus personnel and benefits for ambulance remained fairly constant for FY21. Revenue for FY21 is budgeted for \$375,000, however, that only includes a portion of the revenue that we will receive from GEMT and until we actually see that money coming in, we won't be sure of the total amount. Regardless, the ambulance revenue will cover the cost of any budgeted increases listed.

In 2019, the fire department and ambulance responded to 1,374 calls for service, a 5.4% increase over 2018, and a 14% increase over the last five years.

Ambulance expenses are driven by usage. In 2018 we saw a 5% increase in transports. In 2019 we saw a 3% increase in transports.

Council Member Archibald asked what items come out of the clothing line item.

Nesslage said turnout gear and rookie clothing will come out of clothing allowance line item.

For more than 15 years we have been able to rely on volunteer medics, backed up by himself, Chief Powers and other paid staff for paramedic staffing after 5 PM and on weekends. The entire system was built around relying on volunteer staff after 5 PM. It became apparent several years ago that they are unable to attract volunteer paramedics specifically. There is a nationwide shortage of paramedics.

When they recognized this problem, they began hiring paramedics to work 24-hour shifts. The positive effects of having a paid staff person on duty with the duty crew overnight became quickly apparent. First, it provided a bridge between the day staff (paid) and the duty crew (volunteers) staff.

Secondly, it benefited both the volunteer paramedics and the volunteer officers on the duty crews. Thirdly, this specifically benefited Chief Powers, Chief Jellison, myself and other staff members. Covering the shifts, coming in early, staying late, or working weekends, takes us away from our other responsibilities, both at home and work.

Currently you have authorized us for two full time firemedic positions. They work a 24 hour on, 48 hour off schedule. This allows us to cover two out of the three days. In order to have coverage on all shifts we need a third full time firemedic position. This will provide us 24/7 full-time paramedic coverage, with the exception of vacation or illnesses. This is recommended in the master plan as item 20-Adding paramedics to allow for 24-hour coverage seven days per week. This is an item that many of the volunteer staff have expressed as being important.

The addition of a fire inspector has been on my ask list for several years. It was built into this past years budget as you approved, but it appears we may need to give this additional discussion. Over the years, myself, Chief Powers and other paid staff have done fire inspections as part of our other duties. However, we are doing them at a minimal level, only as required. Two things are happening; the number of buildings in Hiawatha are increasing, and the age of those buildings are increasing. As our buildings age, the risk of a major commercial fire increases. A commercial fire could result in a major economic loss to the community if that business decides to leave or not rebuild.

Council Member Olson commented that it was made very clear that a fire inspector would be a mistake if you didn't hire a third full-time fire medic.

Council Member Archibald said the fire medic position is a great thing and he supports that and wants to see how many inspections.

Nesslage said it won't break staff free.

Council Member Archibald asked if the same person would they move into a different job classification.

Council Member Olson asked if they have addressed the outsourcing possibility.

Nesslage commented there is not many possibilities for outsourcing fire inspections and their goal is to touch it every year, bi-annually.

Council Member Wichtendahl asked if it is a reduction of the number of calls.

Nesslage answered yes it is a reduction of the number of calls but is hard to see here because we are so small and have very few fires.

Council Member Wichtendahl inquired about what the part-time salary would be.

Nesslage answered it would be at an annual salary of \$31,500.

Council Member Dodson inquired about what the cost of a full-time medic salary would be.

Nesslage answered it would be at an annual salary of \$48,400.

Council Member Olson commented it is a pretty inexpensive investment.

Nesslage said where we are at on the income we should be able to cover the cost of a full-time medic.

Council Member Dodson asked if we have a fire investigator.

Nesslage answered that a few of us have been trained on fire investigation.

Nesslage also stated that no one has come back to them and wanted tuition reimbursement but should not be too long before you see the policy on it.

Council Member Mohwinkle said education is invaluable and asked what the time frame is to pay back the tuition.

Nesslage said there is a payment plan for tuition reimbursement.

Council Member Olson asked out of the \$50,000 for the point system what were the ranges people received from it.

Nesslage said it ranged from \$40 to \$1,300 and was meaningful to a lot of the volunteers who received it.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Development Director Parsley presented the Community Development Department budget for FY 2021:

- \$500 decrease in Refunds line item due to changes in permitting and fees associated with the online portal. Contractors are learning the system.

- \$1,000 increase in Misc. Contractual line item to cover the items the building department contracts for cell phones, I-pads, computer program licensing fees, and computer support agreement. This account includes permit software and internet access for online permitting and data entry for inspections and scheduling.
- \$500 decrease in Minor Equipment line item this account provides necessary testing equipment and tools to accomplish building and housing inspections including hand lights, and other small hand tools. No longer includes I-pads.
- The remainder of the Community Development budget remains virtually the same as FY 2020.

Council Member Archibald asked if the fire inspector would do the multi-family and rental property inspections.

Parsley said for the large facility or alarm inspections we would use the fire inspector.

LIBRARY

Library Director Weeks presented the Public Library budget for FY 2021:

- \$2,450 increase in Education and Training line item to allow for a staff member to attend an annual conference.
- \$12,400 increase in Building/Grounds Repair/Maintenance line item due to unknown costs created by building project.
- \$14,000 increase in Utilities line item due to increases related to new building.
- \$26,000 increase in Misc Contractual line item due to increases related to new building.

Weeks noted they will be fine free next year, starting in July they will only be charged for lost materials. Fine free model will create more usage, copies/faxes, new cards and postage budget decreases to go to state self supported material route.

Council Member Wichtendahl commented she is happy fines are going away and asked why the supplies budget was running under \$10,000 and is now \$13,000.

Weeks answered because it is part of the new building and are unsure of what the costs will be.

Council Member Archibald commented it all makes sense to him and asked if they have had any more discussion with Palo.

Weeks said they are having a little back and forth with Alburnett and has not had time to get Palo back into the mix.

City Administrator Downs said we will circle back to Palo.

Council Member Archibald explained that a child in Palo can not use the Cedar Rapids library. Says he will help the library when they get back to Palo on that situation.

PARKS AND RECREATION

City Administrator Downs presented the Parks and Recreation and Community Center budget for FY 2021:

- Community Center Rentals brought in \$23,152.41.

- Park pavilion rentals totaled \$13,603.16.
- Received \$100,795.00 in Park donations over the past year. This number is so high in comparison to past years because it includes Dave Wrights donation to the dog park.
- Received \$10,048.00 in Recreation donations an increase of \$2,320.00 from last year.
- \$5,000 increase in Dog Park line item as our Park will be completed by FY21 and will help with maintenance costs.
- \$1,800 decrease in Parks, Building and Grounds, Repair and Maintenance line item due to not falling near the \$20,000 in the last two years.
- \$2,100 decrease in Utilities line item due to not reaching over \$4,400 over the past two years.
- \$500 increase in Capital Equipment line item for possible unknown expenses for the park pavilions.
- \$1,000 increase in Education and Training line item for additional training for staff.
- \$100 increase in Dues/Memberships/Subscriptions line item for memberships.
- \$100 increase in Clothing Allowance line item to adjust for going over budget last year.
- \$1,000 increase in Vehicle Maintenance Supplies line item to cover costs of oil filters and small vehicles maintenance supplies.
- \$50 decrease in Refund-Park Rental line item.
- \$1,000 increase in Special Events line item to cover all of our special events including two new additional events.
- \$250 increase in Operating Supplies and Miscellaneous line item to cover costs of park supplies.
- 0% increase in Recreation and Community Center budget.

Council Member Olson commented that she is coming up with creative stuff every year and commends Willadsen for that.

City Administrator Downs the Pet Clinic wants to provide items for the dog park, they are getting other donated items and a new business is looking to get involved also.

ROAD USE, STORM WATER, SEWER

Public Works Superintendent Jasa presented the Road Use and Sanitary Sewer and Storm Water budget for FY 2021:

Road Use Budget –

- No major changes in the Road Use budget for FY 2021.
- Plan to overlay 13th Avenue, 8th Avenue, Tucker Street, and/or Marion Street in the summer.
- Plan to replace 2006 New Holland backhoe and purchase trailer to haul it.

Sewer Budget –

- Sewer budget is in good shape.
- The 3rd Avenue sewer basins scheduled to be televised this year and may add Dry Creek South Basin to be cleaned and televised since it is such a small basin.
- Continue to make payments to Cedar Rapids for the Dry Creek/Indian Creek rehabilitation project.

Storm Water Budget –

- Plan to replace some drain tile on Emmons Street and installing some new drain tile on 11th Avenue.

Jasa said 12th Avenue is so much easier to plow now. Parks had two seasonals and one part-time and they would like to try for three full-time seasonals and one would help Public Works mow right of ways and free up some of his guys.

Council Member Archibald commented the Public Works department is under appreciated.

Jasa said their average years of service is about 20 years.

ADMINISTRATION (MAYOR, COUNCIL, CITY ADMINISTRATOR, CLERK/FINANCE, CITY HALL AND ENGINEERING)

City Clerk Graber presented the Mayor and Council, Building, Grounds and Maintenance, Clerk and Finance, City Hall, Elections, Legal Services, and Technology Reserves Budgets for FY 2021:

City Council Budget -

- \$3,200 increase due to this being a Strategic Planning year, this is an every third year process.

Building, Grounds and Maintenance Budget -

- No significant increases.

Clerk/Finance Budget –

- \$200 increase

City Administrator –

- 0% increase from budget FY20.

City Hall Budget -

- 4.7% increase due to increased dues of League of Cities and MPO. Education and Training due to additional training. Newsletter to adjust for increased postage and having newsletter designed by Cynthia Peterson. Website Maintenance to adjust for website updates. Contingency to adjust for the GIS Software upgrade. 70th Birthday line item added for a city celebration.

Elections Budget -

- 0% increase for FY20; no election until November 2021.

Legal Services Budget -

- 0% increase from budget FY20.

Technology Reserves Budget -

- No significant increases to our Technology Reserve.

Engineering Budget -

City Engineer Bender presented the Engineering budget for FY 2021:

- \$1,000 increase in budget FY21. This budget is not inclusive of personnel costs.

City Administrator Downs said she was contacted by Cedar Rapids transit about a weeknight service fee for an increase of \$25,000. Does not see the need for night service and does not make any sense for us to do it right now, she is proposing two additional hours for week nights only and said Marion is not doing it either.

Finance Director Kudrna commented January 27, 2020 is the next Budget Work session meeting.

Wichtendahl moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 P.M., seconded by Archibald. Motion carried.

Bill Bennett, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kari Graber, City Clerk