

Bryant, Shellie

From: Web NoReply
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To: City Council
Subject: Email - Communication - Sherry Taratsoff - 2022-23 Budget Deliberations - Preliminary Corporate Business Plan and Budget - CK 1700-1

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Submitted on Monday, November 29, 2021 - 09:35

Submitted by user: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Date Monday, November 29, 2021

To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

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Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable)

Subject Comments on the MYBB

Meeting (if known) 2022/23 PRELIMINARY CORPORATE BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET - November 29, 2021

Comments

I have the following comments. Likely, they will be not even be considered, just like my previous comments for the August GPC meeting for the "2022 and 2023 Indicative Budget – Additional Information" agenda item and the October GPC meeting for the "2022/2023 Multi-Year Business Plan and Budget – Revised Timeline and Process" agenda item. I'm going with the "nothing ventured, nothing gained" adage.

PRELIMINARY 2022/2023 MULTI-YEAR BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET (MYBB)

I understand that the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan guides the priorities for the budgets. My concern is that the Draft Strategic Plan had only just been released to the public last month and there was then a two-week window for taxpayers to provide feedback, none of which would have been considered when this MYBB was drafted. Will the provided feedback have any impact now?

I have not had time to review the entire MYBB. I focused on the Saskatoon Police Service, as it is the first section in the MYBB. The Strategic Goal of "Culture of Continuous Improvement" is no longer listed. In the prior budget, initiatives listed under this goal included working with AIDS Saskatoon in the creation of a safe consumption site, working with the Okihcitawak Patrol Group (OPG) and developing an employee wellness strategy. Why was this Strategic Goal removed?

The Priority of “Community Safety and Well-being” is not listed now either. In the prior budget, initiatives listed under this priority included creating a safe and secure city in partnership with the community, addressing the root causes of crime through prevention initiatives and addressing traffic concerns. Why was this Priority removed?

What has been added to this MYBB since the last budget is a section on Key Risks and Mitigation Strategies. How will the status of these current and planned strategies be tracked? Will there be updates to Council between budget deliberations?

PILOT PROGRAMS

Please ensure that all proposed pilot programs require a report back to Council. The results from pilots are necessary to make decisions for next steps.

RESERVES

Under Urban Planning and Development of the MYBB (page 171), the 2020 Actual Results indicate that there was a \$187,000 increase in the transfer to the Affordable Housing Reserve. What is the balance of this reserve? It is not listed in the Schedule XI - Capital Reserve Sufficiency report. (An Affordable Housing – Operation Reserve IS listed on the 2020 Annual Report’s Schedule 3 – Schedule of Reserves, with a balance at December 31, 2020 of \$1,279,000. What is this reserve being used for?) Affordable Housing was one of the top three civic services that survey respondents wanted more service for, per the 2021 Civic Services Survey: Performance, Priorities and Preferences Results.

At the April Regular Business Meeting, under the “Updated Parking Revenue Distribution Formula” agenda item, it was noted that the Downtown Housing Incentive Program Reserve had a balance of \$322,093.76 as of January 1, 2021 and that a report would be provided on options for use of the funds in this under-utilized reserve. What is the status of this report? This reserve is not listed on the MYBB’s Schedule XI - Capital Reserve Sufficiency report. A Downtown Housing Reserve is mentioned under Transportation in the MYBB (page 136) indicating that a \$30,000 contribution has been removed. (A Downtown Housing reserve IS listed on the 2020 Annual Report’s Schedule 3 – Schedule of Reserves, with a balance at December 31, 2020 of \$1,237,000. What is this reserve used for and why is it not reported in the MYBB?)

CAPITAL PROJECTS

I find project P.02627 Event Venue Business Plan very interesting. In the 2020/2021 MYBB, the project description was “This project includes the development of a full-scale business plan for the replacement of SaskTel Centre and TCU Place.” NOW, the 2022/2023 MYBB description for the same project is “This project involves pursuit of a downtown entertainment district/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), including the necessary transit and parking improvements, as a priority for the City of Saskatoon. At City Council Meeting on April 26, 2021, Council has confirmed pursuit of a downtown entertainment district/BRT, including the necessary transit and parking improvements, as a priority for the City of Saskatoon...” If a new arena is planned for downtown, solutions for the expected traffic congestion are a priority. Has BRT been added on to this project in order to advance the BRT project, since funding is not coming from the provincial government? Wouldn’t downtown transit improvements be part of the Transit Implementation Plan already? It appears that \$2.7 million from each of SaskTel Centre and TCU Place are being used to fund this project. Where is this contribution reflected in their budgets? The consequences of the pandemic have already negatively impacted their bottom lines and reserves.

I have questions about project P.01361 V&E Fuel Stations. It was an approved project in the 2018 budget for \$1.22 million. Since then, some site prep and testing were done, a design consultant was selected in December 2020 and a procurement just closed in September 2021 for a general contractor. I was advised by the City that sufficient funding is in place for this. Now in this budget, \$1.851 million is requested for 2022 to develop an asset management plan for all fueling infrastructure assets and plan for corporate management of fuel. This would seem like the reverse order of steps. Why is a new fueling station for the current City Yards proceeding before a plan is in place? Is there an urgency due to aging infrastructure? Land has already been chosen for the new City Yards. A plan for fueling infrastructure

should already be in place.

I appreciate the time and effort required to deliberate and prepare a budget. I look forward to the discussions.

Thank you.

Attachments

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting? No

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

