

BUDGET HOTLINE CALLS

3/9/09 Daniel Spooner – Utilities, extension 6437 **LORI RESPONDED 3/9/09**

Utilities has 15 open positions and the City as a whole has approximately 100 open positions. Dan has suggested the City close these positions and announce them as closed due to budget. Dan feels this would have a major impact on our deficit projections. Department supervisors will have to devise a way to operate without these positions. He would have to do it in Field Operations and feel it's a good challenge and he is ready.

3/10/09 Anonymous

Vote for 36 hour work week.

3/11/09 Vicki Lloyd – Civic Center, extension 6240

Thank you for implementing Budget Hotline very grateful.
Votes for 36 hour work week
A 2% salary increase across the board this year if possible or next or wage freeze.
Take home vehicle policy revisited.
Revenues from Boat Club Park look at may we can rent out more.

3/11/09 Brenda Gibbs – Human Resources

Employees not currently paying for medical benefits should contribute \$25 per pay period.

3/11/09 - Jim Macintyre, Boynton Beach Fire Rescue

EARLY RETIREMENT BUYOUT SUGGESTION

Eligibility – All employees who meet Normal or Early retirement requirements would be eligible.

Benefit to Employee - Additional 1%, .75% or .5% to multiplier for each year of employee's service, with a cap of 10% and one year of medical benefits. This would fairly reward employees with different years of service.

Benefit to City of Boynton Beach – It would include many more employees to be eligible for early retirement. This would give the City more latitude to eliminate positions or hire less costly employees with reduced or modified benefits (defined benefits vs. defined contributions, etc.). This would result in immediate cost saving due to the creation of vacant positions. This would allow the City to leave vacant certain positions, eliminate others or hire less costly employees at its discretion.

3/11/09 Anonymous

Eliminating the high priced managers in Utilities which there are too many of.

3/11/09 Indra Sweeney – Development extension 6372 LORI RESPONDED 3/12/09

Article 1, Administrative Code of Ordinance 2-13. Suggests that if there are any unencumbered or inappropriate funds left they be transferred to the General Fund at the end of the year.

3/12/09 Les Sarkkinen – Utilities, extension 6476

In 20 years working he has seen Utilities grow in management from a Director and two (2) Deputy Directors to now having to report to nine (9) supervisors whose jobs were created in the last few years. Positions seem to be not needed.

Car allowance given to about 9-10 managers and when a supervisor has something they need to be shown in the field the supervisors has to take them out. Thought car allowance was for that purpose.

3/12/09 Fred Greenberg – Building, extension 6756 PAM RESPONDED 3/12/09

He suggested a Grants Specialist position be created so they can research and obtain grants.

3/12/09 Anonymous

AUI Infiltration & Inflow doing inspections on sewer lines for Utilities, feels that this can be done with City employees since Utilities has the equipment to do this and it will save the City a lot of money by doing it in house.

3/16/09 – Planning, extension 6258

Who can initiate review of any possible issue with the homestead exemptions?
Other cities have had reviews and found people who misreported or were Ineligible but collected sizeable revenues.

3/16/09 – Yury Konnkov, extension 6395

Look into new federal dollars for flat roofs like the library and install solar panels to greatly reduce energy expenses and be green.

3/16/09 – Building, Anonymous

Building has 3 Plan Reviewers and 3 Structural Inspectors. Feels Building should layoff these people then hire back when needed.

Uniforms to be give only to Utilities and only people dealing with the public.

Revise evaluation worksheet, too much paper. Evaluation could be shorter.

4 day work week

3/17/09 Joe Ivy, 1000 Sw 28th Ave, Boynton Beach, 33426 BARRY ATWOOD RESPONDED 3/18/09

I know you must be scrambling to try and find a place to cut \$10 million dollars. I have a couple of suggestions:

My water bill comes every month along with a "**high quality linen self addressed envelope**"-I don't know how many of these are mailed out on a monthly basis-but being the finance guy you can find that number (I'd be curious) , multiply that by 12 and that gives you a small number you can quickly eliminate from the budget. More and more of these envelopes end up in the landfill as customers pay their bills on line, or in person.

Another suggestion would be to begin once a week garbage pick up-if an average family generates more than that 44 gallon trash container in a week , they must be importing it. The neighbors of mine that need more than one pick up a week-don't recycle...Not you Jerry.

I am sure if you ask the citizens where to cut in the next water bill you may get some better ideas than I came up with.

3/18/09 Wayne Bergman, Building, extension 6366 – LORI RESPONDED 3/18/09

I'm not comfortable sending budget ideas to the Commission members privately, so I thought I'd send my brief ideas to you for your review. I'm compelled to do this based on last night's discussion. Please feel free to forward my ideas to the Commission members, if you feel that is appropriate.

- Consider selling the sanitation department and water / sewer department. Start with a study to determine values. Sale conditions to include guaranteeing City workers would be employed at similar wage and benefits for 5 years and guaranteeing property owners would be provided stable, affordable sanitation and water / sewer charges for at least 5 years. Place the selling amount in a restricted fund and transfer each year into the General Fund, as necessary.
- Consider selling the City cemetery. Start with a study to determine value. Place the selling amount in a restricted fund and transfer each year into the General Fund, as necessary.

- Capital spending freeze on all City projects until better economic times. Oceanfront Park, Jaycee Park dock, Boat Club Park bathroom and pavilion project, Congress Ave. Community Park, and the new Nautica / Meadows Park design should be frozen at their current stage. I understand the funding of these projects comes from CIP dollars, but I think it sends the right message to the residents.
- Hiring freeze. Continue to eliminate vacant positions, including those in management.
- Wage freeze. Then discontinue merit raises in the future. Limit any future salary increase to COLA.
- All newly hired employees go into a defined contribution plan, with City matching 5%. Maybe a 401(a) and 457 combo plan, with the City paying 5% into 401(a) and employee paying 5% into the 457 plan.
- Eliminate the complex and time consuming employee evaluation process, which consumes enormous time and detracts from other duties. As City staff attempt to provide the same level of service with fewer employees, we should not be spending 100's of man-hours absorbed with such a complicated and involved evaluation process.
- Review car allowances for senior staff, especially if they do not use their car for work-related business on a regular basis.
- Four day, 8 to 10 hour work day schedule and close City Hall one day a week, resulting in electric savings, less wear on mechanical equipment, reduced carbon footprint and a better quality of life for the majority of staff.
- Increase or add user fees throughout City departments, including the beach pass program to at least break even each year.
- Consider privatizing certain City departments (or portions of departments) whose services can easily be provided by outside consultants, on an as-needed basis – if the outsourcing is more affordable. This could be accomplished by freezing vacant positions, not hiring new staff and beginning to utilize outside firms to provide certain services. The City would only pay for services it requires, not a full wage with all payroll-related benefits.
- Make a decision on the future of City Hall and move forward, as opposed to continue spending money on the current facility in upkeep and maintenance.
- Raise taxes, at least back to the level before the “boom”.
- Public Art program??? Why??? Let's furlough this program until better economic times return. I have heard developers state that they have passed on recent projects in Boynton Beach due to the 1% Public Arts fee.
- Aggressively solicit other municipalities to provide Building services to them, either as a whole or by providing staff to supplement their operations.

- I would like to discuss 553.80, F.S., with you all and Quintus Greene, at your convenience, regarding the advantages of establishing an enterprise fund for the Building Division of Development and some ideas I have for a cost allocation program for City-provided services.
- Eliminate the shopper hopper program.
- Begin “flattening” the size and scope of City government. Just my opinion, but based upon serving as a Township Manager in PA for 7 years, and being in PA government for 11 years, our City is extremely top heavy with senior management. I’m not sure we need such a tight span of control in areas outside of public safety.

Thanks for your time.

3/19/09 Joseph Green, Library, extension 6396

Salaries should be frozen at current level.
 City should contact FPL to do an energy audit on all public buildings.
 Look at number of days per week garbage is collected and possibly go down to one day a week.

3/19/09

BUDGET QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Provided by: Paula Leblanc, Facilities Management, Ext. 6205

This is collaboration represents budget cut suggestions from various employees in the Public Works Department; all employees that contributed with these suggestions are requesting a response in writing regarding these suggestions.

Defer Replacement Vehicles for FY09/10 and then transfer the \$2,376,244 to the General Fund.

Defer Pre-Funding for FY09/10 for all of the General Fund for an approximate savings of \$2,500,000.

Use old Police Squad Cars as vehicle replacements for staff cars and DNR (do not replace) or pre-fund in the future years.

Eliminate longevity bonuses or space them out from every five years to every ten years.

Defer all CIP projects that are not related to maintenance and transfer dollars to General Fund.

Cell Phones: Who really needs them? Commissioners (why at all), Department Heads (probably, but no email), Assistant Directors (maybe, but no email), Division Leaders and Call-Back Employees (go to beepers at \$2 per month verses approximately \$40 per month).

Travel: No Out-of-State Travel...no exceptions. Use Webinars when possible to save fuel.

Recreation Programs: Do they pay for themselves and if not, at what percentage do they pay for themselves? Must set a minimum percentage or eliminate. We can’t continue to meet the needs of a few.

Four – 10 hour Days: Change all administrative, non-shift, non-task staff including recreational to Monday-Thursday or Tuesday-Friday from 6:30/7am – 5:30/6pm. Try to coordinate days and hours with other local municipalities. Might need to offer before/aftercare for employees' children.

Reduce Paid Holidays. If most staff would go to a Tuesday-Friday schedule, this would eliminate hundreds of dollars of holiday paid and still in many cases the employees would have the holiday off especially considering that MLK, President's, Memorial, and Labor Day are all on Mondays.

Code Enforcement: Do they get time to go to the gym in addition to their lunch? Why do some of them ride two to a vehicle?

Uniforms: Eliminate sweatshirts, jackets, multiple style shirts (make uniform). Some places only provide shirts and the employee is responsible to meet the dress code including safety shoes on their own, but can use the expense as a tax deduction since they are required.

City Consignment: Instead of taking items to the Surplus Store, could we do our own consignment-type shop?

Vehicles (Take Home): Contractual employees with Take Home Vehicles to be responsible for gas; insurance and maintenance to remain with the City for liability purposes and to ensure proper maintenance. Police & Fire (and maybe even the Contractual employees) with Take Home Vehicles to do a cost share. Limit the driving distance for Take Vehicles.

Reduce vehicle washing at Main Street; use truck wash station at Public Works.

Do not give up 40 hour pay weeks; freeze raises instead. This would ensure that no employee takes a cut in hours while shift workers are unaffected. Or cut 5% from every single employee's pay from top to bottom including both shift and non-shift workers.

Eliminate Management Package Bonus Vacation Days.

Eliminate Quarterly Vacation Day Bonus.

Eliminate the contractual On-Hold Message and have in-house staff do the updates.

Review Organizational Charts for proper Span-of-Control; especially Utilities and Parks.

Move Streets Division under Utilities including the street sweeping function to help with utility cut restoration and keeping debris out of the stormwater system; this would be a savings to the General Fund and may be more appropriately placed due to need.

Did the Commission actually start receiving a pension last year? Why?

Eliminate Floor Mat Service.

Eliminate Annual Deep Cleaning of the Fire Stations (down from Semi-Annual Deep Cleaning) from Facilities Management Budget. Have the Fire Department become solely responsible for cleaning administrative/meeting areas at FS1 & FS3. Have the Fire Department become responsible for more basic maintenance at the fire houses.

3/20/09 Anonymous

Eliminate uniforms to employees who do not work with the public and those that get uniforms should buy their own pants.
Eliminate gas allowance except for Field Inspectors.
Have departments share vehicles.
Eliminate and/or furlough programs such as Shopper Hopper, Public Art.
Excessive management in Utilities has worked with less in previous years.
Utilities has outside people doing work which could be done by Utilities such as AUI, and Line Tech.
Take home vehicles for supervisors, directors, workers should be looked at.
No vehicles should be brought home unless on call and if you do bring a vehicle home you should pay for the gas. It doesn't look good for city when you see s supervisors with City vehicles at the pool supply store, or Publix.
Too many middle management personnel.
Freeze salaries.
All travel should be cut out unless inside county.
Early buyout if possible.
CRA bogus also top heavy.

3/27/09 - Conley, Rosanna. Engineering,

Add motion sensitive lighting to the bathrooms or other rooms that are not occupied. That way the lights will automatically be off when empty. (I like this one)

Have Board meetings in another location besides the Chambers, which uses a lot of electricity and lighting. The Chambers is not necessary for every meeting. Use a smaller conference room to accommodate a smaller group of participants to the meetings.

Raise the insurance deductions to cover some of the City's cost. Right now a single employee has no deductions for insurance. Also, charge higher premiums for families with more children, instead of a flat deduction for family coverage. Why should a family with 3 children, pay the same premium as a family with 1 child?
This way, we are not getting a large percentage reduction in pay, but still receiving insurance coverage.

Let employees have the choice of working as many hours as it takes to cover their cost of benefit deductions, without the fear off losing their insurance coverage, which would still be their normal deduction as if they had worked 80 hrs. Employee has to work enough hours to cover the deduction costs of insurance, pension, life insurance and other personal deductions.

No more company take-home vehicles. The city vehicles can only be used during working hours. This way, there would be less wear and tear, insurance cost and less fuel usage.

Also, have oil changes done at vehicle service, instead of sending the vehicles out for service.

Have flex time. 40 Hr work week not mandatory... If an employee would like to leave early or come in a little late, and his/her important work task are completed for that day, let them have the choice of vacation time or **leave without pay**; therefore, saving vacation time and money.

Keep longevity bonuses every 5 years as an incentive in this trying economy, depending on how many sick hours used in that 5 yr period. A fair number of hours should be decided on.

4/1/09 – Christine Roberts, Assistant Director Public Works

I have been very compelled to make a statement regarding budget reductions and after this morning's budget meeting find myself even more compelled than ever. I have a suggestion for a budget reduction that I believe has merit, is fair to the entire organization and will not decrease services to the community by reducing work hours. As has been stated the biggest bulk of the City's budget is personnel costs. I suggest that every single employee of the City from the Commission down take a 5% cut in pay. According to the Budget Power Point presentation, page 13 Personnel Services = \$54.5M. A 5% cut from that figure would save 2.725M.

I along with several employees I do not believe that cutting only some employees work hours to make up for the budget shortage is fair. I also believe this will cause great morale issues within the organization that will affect job performance. In my humble opinion fair is fair and all City employees are responsible to work together for the good of the City and their co-workers. Pay cuts are not popular but need to be made in fairness to all. By only effecting certain employees and not the entire organization people will ask "why does the entire fix have to come off my back, haven't I been a hard worker and contributed to the organization as well? Public safety is a very important aspect to this organization but so is garbage pickup, water running from faucets, sewer systems not backing up in to homes, some Recreation programs that add quality of life, etc.

I understand that a pay cut across the board isn't enough to balance the budget and possible additional benefit increases (i.e., Pension) could decrease take home pay as well. However in speaking with many employees all that I have come in contact with have said cut my pay, take away benefits but please don't take my job.

Additionally, if this option is used then possibly City services don't need to be effected with reduced work hours. This could help maintain some of the services without losing productive hours.

Just a suggestion and food for thought.

4/7/09 – Anonymous

4 ten hour days with 1 furlough day each month.

If the city is filling a vacant position, it should look at filling it with a lower grade. Example would be instead of a Mechanic Sr. Grade 17 replace with Mechanic Grade 13.

All employees should be affected by a salary cut, that mean Police, Fire and Utilities. Just because they are shift personnel doesn't mean they shouldn't be affected. It seems that these departments are the favorites and always get what they want especially if they play the right games.

To many Administrative Associates (5) in Utilities when a department like Public Works only has 2. Also amount of management staff should be looked at.

Car allowances and take home vehicles should be looked at. The City doesn't look good when you go to Publix or Wal-Mart on a weekend and see City vehicles parked.

Discontinue tuition reimbursement until we can regain stability in our budget.

Everyone should take a 5% salary reduction across the board.

Discontinue \$500 bonus awards.