

## Missoula City Council Budget Committee of the Whole Minutes

June 23, 2021  
1:45 PM  
ZOOM Webinar

**Members present:** Mirtha Becerra, John P. Contos, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, Julie Merritt, Jesse Ramos, Amber Sherrill, Sandra Vasecka, Bryan von Lossberg, Heidi West

**Members absent:** Stacie Anderson, Heather Harp

### 1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

#### 1.1 Roll Call

#### 1.2 Approval of the Minutes

##### 1.2.1 Minutes from the March 24, 2021 Meeting

The minutes were approved as submitted.

##### 1.2.2 Minutes from March 31, 2021 Meeting

The minutes were approved as submitted.

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Public comment called for and there was none.

### 3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

#### 3.1 FY22 Strategic Priorities

John Engen - The strategic plan has not changed. We are working to establish a budget based off that plan. We are presenting this to you prior to budget preparation, so you can add or subtract based upon your priorities prior to the budget. Staff has vetted these and is on board, as well.

The Mayor's Key Priorities 2022 document was reviewed. It is attached. There is a lot of ambition in these goals, but they are coupled with practicality. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sandra Vasecka - Thank you for that presentation. This notes it is from Mayor John Engen and the Missoula City Council. I did not sit down with anyone to discuss, but have been out having a baby. Did I miss something?

John Engen - This is the beginning of that discussion.

Bryan von Lossberg - The strategic plan document from 2020-2023 is posted and is a product of getting together in pre-pandemic times and also would have been before

Sandra and John started to serve on Council. We have not revisited that. This priorities document is an outgrowth from that.

Dale Bickell - I was going to say just what you did. This list is to set the priorities for the FY22 budget. Because of the longer view of the strategic plan, it takes multiple years to implement.

Amber Sherrill - I am excited to get this going and look at it. I like the priorities. How are we going to be prioritizing and becoming carbon neutral?

John Engen - I don't think we are going to become carbon neutral in the next fiscal year. I know we have some new staff and I think that will give us some new opportunities to look at those plans and our goals for implementation and bring some of those to you throughout the fiscal year. None of these priorities mean that anything not bulleted has fallen off the radar.

Gwen Jones - Thanks for all the information. It is all good stuff and there is more good stuff, too. In looking at the next couple of months ahead of us, can you speak to how the ARPA funds will unfold?

John Engen - Our approach to deploying the ARPA funds has been to assign an internal team and also convene an external team of folks regarding those funds. The internal team is reviewing Federal guidance. This has been slow to evolve. They will provide information to the management team once all the information is received. We want this one-time money to have significant impact. There are so many places where this money can be used. It will be incorporated into the budget picture. My hope is that we can maximize this money. We want to shore up the budget for fiscal year 22. We want to provide more without affecting our mill levies. The ARPA money can help us to lengthen some of the projects we have just been piloting. By necessity we are entering into lines of business we have never been in before, such as behavioral health services, daycare, etc. These are just a couple of examples. We can also use ARPA funds for public safety, some salaries, infrastructure for utilities. We are likely to see some additional transportation funding. Our intention is to bring you information on the Executive Budget in July.

Jordan Hess - Thank you. This is a very exciting list of priorities. I think it involves building on some good priorities. I think it might be helpful to note what we are doing with regard to the climate, also.

Bryan von Lossberg - I have great agreement with 99% of what I see on there. I think alongside the investment in technology for project management activities needs, I think we need to articulate what we do in training and skills, best practices in project management. I am really grateful to see the highlight around communications. We also have really good and thoughtful plans envisioned around climate issues. I know you mentioned those things are still there. I think it would merit to have these items included on the list. We are doing the work and it should be articulated on this list. All said, I am grateful for what I see there and it sets us up well for going into the future.

John Engen - This is a guidepost document. I am more than happy to incorporate your suggestions as we move forward, as this is a collaborative effort. We do not want to de-emphasize sustainability and climate. I think we will add some language as a guiding document.

Bryan von Lossberg - We are seeing unprecedented temperatures now, so I am glad we are addressing this.

Sandra Vasecka - I really love all the strategic goals. I would like to see infrastructure higher on the list. On Davis Street and River Road, we need more sidewalks, especially in Ward 6. Sustainability, energy and conservation is high up on Missoula's plan. I think streets and sidewalks should be higher up on the list.

Mirtha Becerra - I too want to thank staff and the Mayor for this list of priorities. I would like to see somewhere, either under organizational excellence or perhaps investing in community safety and wellness, a way for better participation to our constituents. I would like to see us finding ways to providing better venues for communication. I really appreciate having the Mullan area focused for development.

Julie Merritt - I really appreciate modernizing our communication approach. I echo what Mirtha stated. We need feedback from the community. That is easier said than done, so very happy to see that being addressed. I also echo Sandy's concern regarding infrastructure. These do cost money, so when they come up, we need to vote for them.

Bryan von Lossberg - Public comment called for. None offered.

John Engen - If other things occur to you, and as we go through the budget process, we will find things to adjust.

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

Adjourned at 2:28.