MINUTES OF THE CITY OF DRIGGS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Budget Work Session
July 22, 2025

Pursuant to adjournment of the City Council meeting held July 15, 2025, and to the call of the Mayor, the Driggs City Council met **Tuesday, July 22, 2025**, at 6:01 pm. Present were Council Members: Jennifer Bragg and Jason Popilsky, Council President Miles Knowles, Mayor August Christensen, Community Development Director Doug Self, Public Works Director Jay Mazalewski, Treasurer Maddi Manos, and Finance Officer Carol Lenz

Public Present: Robert Boyles

FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET WORK SESSION (BWS)

Christensen welcomed attendees outlining the purpose of tonight's meeting. With a full agenda, Christensen asked that presentation/discussion on each topic be limited and on point to hold to the scheduled two-hour meeting timeframe.

1) Teton County Idaho: Law Enforcement Presentation

a. Presenting for the County were: Commissioner Brad Wolfe; Sheriff Clint Lemieux; Manager Dan Reyes
b. Wolfe presented first stating that the county "needs help" to increase the capacity of county law enforcement noting that the increased level of crimes in the county has jeopardized the "public safety" of residents by over-extending existing staff
c. Reyes next assisted Lemieux in presenting a law enforcement statistics slideshow. The slideshow detailed which crimes have seen an increase; the time deputies on patrol spend in each city in the county; and national standards for coverage
d. At the end of the slide show, Lemieux discussed the need for six (6) additional deputies to have enough staff for 2/2/2 coverage; two deputies for each of three daily shifts. LeMieux went on to say that existing staff is "stretched thin" and cannot currently conduct security checks [airport, treatment plant, etc.] or enforce city code as desired
e. No dollar request was made by county representatives; however, on-boarding cost for one (1) deputy, inclusive of vehicle/equipment, was estimated at $150,000; wage for one (1) deputy was estimated at $65,000 plus benefits
f. During discussion, Christensen reinforced that double taxing of city residents should not be an option to fund law enforcement but also expressed the desire to explore "other ideas" to help. Knowles wondered what the county's ask was - eliminate the existing enhanced contract between the city and county and/or replace. Popilsky questioned the cost; Bragg questioned LeMieux on jail options for the county.
g. Once county representatives left the meeting, council discussion was tabled to the end of the agenda.

2) **Staff Retention Benefits – Criteria and Signing Bonus**
    a. Manos reviewed the proposed Employee Perk Qualification Matrix which listed the proposed perk and which employee status, full-time, part-time, or seasonal, would qualify for each specific perk. Council confirmed use of the matrix as presented
    b. Manos then presented the proposed sign-on bonus perk, a follow-up from a previous budget work session. Council agreed unanimously to offer the Sign-On Bonus perk as proposed:
        i. Sign on bonus set at $1,500 for all Departments/Positions
        ii. Department Director to determine which position(s) qualify in his/her department
        iii. Advertised position must be open [advertised without response] for four (4) months before a bonus is warranted; an exception may be granted for chronic "hard to fill" positions
        iv. Bonus to be paid to the hired applicant 50% at 90-days and 50% at 180-days if still employed
        v. Bonus expensed to the respective department's budget

3) **Mayor/Council Compensation – Proposed Ordinance**
    a. Draft Ordinance was presented for Council approval which was approved as presented
    b. Mayor's compensation:
        i. Salary of $35,500 paid equally over 12-mns
        ii. City Health insurance premiums paid 100% for the Mayor, 80% for dependents; PERSI retirement benefits. The Mayor has the option to purchase City dental insurance with 100% of dental premiums paid by the Mayor

    c. Council compensation to be offered as Option A or Option B
        i. Option A:
            1. Salary at $6,000 per year paid equally over 12-months
            2. City Health Insurance with Council premiums paid 100% and dependent premiums paid at 80% by the City up to a total monthly cost of $2,000; premium cost above $2,000 to be paid by the respective council member; PERSI retirement

        ii. Option B:
            1. Salary at $18,000 per year paid equally over 12-months
            2. PERSI retirement

    d. Once an option is chosen, the selected option remains in effect for the elected official's entire term of office: Mayor – dental insurance coverage – individual, family, or no coverage; Council – compensation option A or B
    e. Effective date for the ordinance: January 1, 2026

FY2026 FULL BUDGET REVIEW

S [address redacted] & Teton Ave LID

- Self reported that property owners are proposing initiation of a Local Improvement District (LID) to install water, sewer, and roads for associated properties
- The owners are requesting a City match of 30-33%. Lenz noted that a city match is not required for any LID, confirmed by Self
- Evaluation of the petition has not been completed so this LID was not considered for the FY 2026 budget

Parks & Rec Fund OOB (Out of Balance) ($11,202)

- Self and Mazalewski recommended Council look to increasing Park Reservations fees to which Christensen responded that she has received complaints that fees are already too high
- Self and Mazalewski then recommended that the TISA entryway, budgeted in the Resort Tax fund be postponed until a Facilities Study is completed. They also recommended that the $3,000 Lions Park mural be reduced to $500; and that Arbor Day, which can include the budgeted replacement tree line, be reduced to balance the fund
- Weed control in all City parks and along pathways/roads was discussed; options reviewed were contracting with Teton County's Weed Department and training in-house for licensing; Lenz reminded Council that $93,000 is contracted in the Parks budget even though a full-time seasonal employee was approved and hired. Popilsky stated his objection to spraying toxic chemicals in public spaces.

Transportation Fund – OOB ($62,824)

- The remaining savings from eliminating the TISA Entryway in the Resort Tax fund was approved for transfer to the Transportation Fund
- To balance the fund, the proposed $100,000 to bury utility lines on Front Street, was reduced. Funding for burial is based in large part on application and award of a GEM Grant and Urban Renewal contributions
- Mazalewski noted that weed control along pathways and roadways in the past was accomplished by staff mowing the City's right-of-way

Wastewater Fund – Balanced

Although in balance, Mazalewski reported the following changes for FY2026:

- Construction of the expanded wastewater treatment plant will not occur in FY2026 so $9.8 million in expense and associated revenue, from a new residential WWTP debt service rate and City of Victor revenue, has been removed
- $1.4 million in expense has been added for replacement of drum screens which have reached their useful life and need replacing
    - Under the existing wastewater treatment agreement between the cities of Victor and Driggs, Victor has two options for its portion of capital costs:
        - Paying an upfront % of cost, which would be refunded on a depreciated basis once Victor is no longer using the facility, or

    - Being billed on a pro-rated basis as long as Victor remains on Driggs' system
- Rather than raise residential utility rates, Council agreed to use Wastewater Reserve funds, estimated at $1,193,562, to cover the $1.4 million drum replacement cost above Victor's share recognizing that doing so will, in effect, eliminate wastewater treatment reserve funds above required existing bond reserves

Other

- To the question of providing additional financial support in fiscal year (FY) 2026 for Teton County Law Enforcement, Council was unanimous in stating, "No"; the option to request voter approval at this year's November election, to increase short-term rental non-property sales tax (resort tax) percentage from the existing 6% to 8%, to allow law enforcement/emergency services as an approved use, and to expand the timeframe to 2050 for all existing resort tax, was discussed. The question was asked, "What happens to existing local option taxes if the proposed question fails?" Self will follow-up.
- With the fund changes noted above, all fiscal year (FY) 2026 funds are in balance with one caveat, the General Fund property tax levy will be finalized, and the budget adjusted accordingly, once final market value data is received from Teton County Idaho. The FY2026 Budget will be presented for public comment at the budget hearing scheduled for August 19, 2025 at 6:00pm in the Council Chambers. Council will be asked to adopt its Preliminary FY2026 Budget at its regular meeting on August 5, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

ATTEST:

Madison Manos, Treasurer

August Christensen, Mayor