

Scott D. Houseman-Chair  
Julie R. Flowers  
Matthew J. St. Hilaire

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**FINANCE AND PROPERTY / CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES**

Monday, February 27, 2023 7:00PM

City Council Committee Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Beverly City Hall, 191 Cabot St.

Houseman called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

Committee Members present: Julie Flowers, Scott Houseman

Committee Members absent: Matthew St. Hilaire

Councilors present: Hannah Bowen, Estelle Rand, Todd Rotondo

Order Number	Date to Committee	Description	Action Taken
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Houseman stated the purpose of this meeting is to discuss how to integrate the new format into the budget process. The Council will still get the binder with the line by line Munis information as well.

Ayles stated ClearGov is the vendor for the new program and it checks all the boxes in terms of best practices. The City of Medford's ClearGov was used as an example. Ayles showed a draft version of Beverly's ClearGov website with test data and stated the site is not live yet. It will include financial policies and links to documents. The goal is to get everything in one place. It will also have graphs and data from multiple years so viewers can see trends. Ayles stated it is laid out to read tabs from left to right. The further to the right the viewer goes, the more details there are. It would be a mistake as a reader to just go in and only look at expenditure details; it's set up to tell a story starting with the broader sections. In the department expenditure level, the ERP are the line numbers within the budget.

Houseman stated the statutory requirements only actually require a few votes. The Council could review all this ahead and wouldn't necessarily have to go line by line during meetings. Houseman stated he would probably default to going department by department, looking at the summary and asking for questions. Houseman asked if this website will be available to Councilors and the public at the same time.

Ayles confirmed that when the budget is submitted to the Council this will all also be available online.

Flowers asked if Mr. Ayles envisioned it being possible to have the screen set up for the meeting. In terms of the meeting flow, it would be helpful to have up for department heads and for the public to see.

There was some discussion about using the large monitor versus the drop down screen and making sure BevCam can broadcast it. Ayles stated that wouldn't be a heavy lift to have someone navigating the site during budget discussions.

Flowers asked about how Medford used those tools in their budget process and stated it may be worth looking at. Sometimes we get far afield in budget discussions and perhaps this will help us stay on topic.

Bowen stated it would be good to include links to this in the meeting postings for the budget meetings and making sure this gets communicated out to the public.

Rand suggested coordinating with BevCam so they could also have the link on social media when they post the recording and possibly having the department titles up so that when someone tunes in to a budget meeting they know which section of the budget is being discussed.

Houseman stated it sounds like it will be more of a narrative discussion than a numbers discussion, not that we won't still look at line items. Houseman asked how the school department will interact with this.

Ayles stated he still needed to talk with them but the intention is in ClearGov to put a link to their presentation so they don't have to enter it all twice. They will not use the ClearGov format. Ayles stated he thought it would be good to give a general overview on the heels of the mayor's budget presentation.

Houseman stated he is working with Sean in the engineering department to get a data set of how many feet of street work the City is doing each year and asked if that's something that would fit into part of the DPS budget presentation.

Ayles stated that would be under roads and sidewalks and show under capital funds not in the DPS budget. The way its set up now is more linear, not multidimensional. For the first go around, it's separated by fund summaries since the Council is required to vote by fund not by department.

Bowen stated getting an annual snapshot of that fund would be nice because it really does accomplish a lot.

Houseman asked if this dovetailed with the capital expenditure plan and sequencing over time.

Ayles stated it's not dynamic but it will make reference to and include the capital plan, then those numbers will tie to this year's budget. We want to provide an additional level of overall financial health and information on things like how free cash works.

Rand asked about the narratives being translated into other languages.

Ayles stated he could find out about that and he knows that it will be ADA compliant.

The motion to adjourn Committee of the Whole was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion passed (5-0).

The motion to adjourn Committee on Finance and Property was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion passed (2-0). The meeting adjourned at 8:03pm.