INDEPENDENCE
MISSOURI

A GREAT AMERICAN STORY

City Council Study Session Minutes

May 27, 2025 6:00 PM

Council Chambers - 111 E. Maple Ave.

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

1. Municipal Services

Lisa Reynolds, Deputy City Manager, gave the budget presentation for this item.

The mission of the Municipal Service Department is to provide quality, reliable, and responsive public services for the Independence community. The Department must proactively and reactively maintain City infrastructure such as streets, facilities, sanitary sewer, stormwater mitigation, and wastewater treatment. Additionally, the Department is dedicated to public health and environmental protection through the enforcement of local, state, and federal laws. Ensuring a motivated and professional staff is essential to the success of the Department.

Municipal Services Strategic Plan Connection
An Engaged Community: Outreach
Solicit public feedback in citywide infrastructure projects.

An Innovative Economy: Business Growth
Support economic development by facilitating infrastructure improvements
Partner with ISD and Fort Osage for job shadowing and potential internships

Financially Sustainable: Control Long Term Costs Perform cost of service studies for water and wastewater utilities
Apply for all applicable grant opportunities
Create equipment/facility/vehicle replacement plans and fund accordingly

A Well-Planned City: Infrastructure

Facilitate citywide vertical construction projects
Refine the Pavement Management program
Implement multiple Complete Streets projects
Finalize an ADA transition plan
Increase rate at which water transmission and distribution mains are replaced
Enhance major corridors/gateways into the City

Municipal Services Accomplishments
$20.8M in grant dollars secured for various projects throughout the city
• 90.24 lane miles addressed through the pavement maintenance program
• Square Streetscape construction underway
• Municipal Commons design complete and construction in process

The number of full-time employees is down from 239.05 in 2024-25 to 209.10 for 2025-25.

The proposed budget for 2025-26 is higher than last year at $132,156,763. The budget in 2024-25 was $113,080,749.

Municipal Services revenue is projected to be lower this year at $92,150,168 vs. $104,405,431 in 2024-25.

We have 5 approved budget packages this year.
1) A mini excavator for $95,000. This replaces an existing mini excavator and a backhoe. Existing units will be surplused to help reimburse this cost.
2) Little Blue Valley Sewer District: • $350,000 (fund 030 – Sanitary Sewer) • Covers LBVSD's rate increases • Estimated increase is only spent if necessary
3) Chlorine Analyzer Replacement: • $45,000 for four units (fund 040 – Water) • Replacing discontinued models • Analyzer readings are used for treatment purposes as well as monthly reporting to MO Department of Natural Resources
4) Well Flow Meters: • $45,000 for six units (040 – Water) • Monitors production well performance • Helps maintain flows for proper water treatment • Used for required annual reporting of groundwater usage to MO Department of Natural Resources.
5) Service Line Notifications: • $20,000 (fund 040 – Water) • Lead and Copper Rule regulatory requirement • Right of Entry notices must be sent by certified mail

This budget does not include the general obligation bond funds. $10M for sidewalks to elementary schools. $15M for bridges. The balance would go to overlay to full reconstruction of streets. This does not include overlay or crackfilling. The plan is to spend roughly $6M in overlay each year on top of the City's maintenance plan. GO Bond projects will be posted to the website to let everyone know when they will start and where.

2. Health and Animal Services

Christina Heinen, Director of Health and Animal Services gave this presentation.

The mission of the Health and Animal Services Department is to protect and promote health and safety and prevent disease and injury for the residents and visitors in our community through a variety of programs and services.

Strategic Plan Connection

- Engaged Community
- An Innovative Economy
- A safe and welcoming community
- A well-planned city

Accomplishments

- 1834 animals taken in
- 5152 animal control calls
- ARCH diverted 876 emergency responders
- Live release rate of 93.9%
- 3624 communicable disease cases
- 800 ARCH emergency responses; 788 follow-ups
- 167 cats TNR (preventing 229,000 additional cats)
- 4096 lbs of pet food donated through our pantry
- distributed 481 boxes of Narcan
- 1757 permitted health inspections
- increased FB followers from 10,240 to 10,730
- 80 ARCH transports to alternative centers, saving citizens $261,600

The number of full-time employees is down from 35.08 in 2024-25 to 27.34 in 2025-26

Significant budget changes

- Animal control staff moving to the PD budget
- Grants remain volatile at State and Federal level

The proposed budget is down from $3,708,052 in 2024-25 to $3,179,578 in 2025-26

Revenue
Revenues remain flat while expenditures (especially personnel costs) continue to rise.
• Staff continue to apply for and receive grants and join partnerships that reimburse for events: spay/neuter coalitions, Bissell & PetSmart adoption specials
• Staff are continuing to work to be able to bill health insurance for services or obtain free supplies; Medicare, Medicaid, Vaccines for Adults, and Vaccines for Children
• Staff continue to work on new revenue sources: vital records, billing for LCSWs

One approved budget package for an incinerator.
$91,575
• Replacement of failing equipment
• Failing due to age and items needing burned
• Used to cremate remains and evidence

32% of this department is supported by grant funds.
Jackson County still has not responded to the money they owe the city for upkeep of the shelter
We are still handling animal control calls for the County.
About 500 calls of the 5100, are county calls.

3. Tech Services

Jason Newkirk, Director of IT, gave the presentation on this item.

Technology Services Mission
The mission of Technology Services is to provide information technology solutions within a secure and reliable environment and support City departments in delivering quality services to the community.

Strategic Plan Connection
An Engaged Community: Outreach Implementing and improving external communication tools such as the public website, public web maps, and online portals
An Engaged Community: Public Agency Collaboration Involved in the regional cyber security task force.
An Innovative Economy: Business Growth Completed an initial deployment of a new licensing and permit portal. This will soon serve as a unified license/permit portal.
Financially Sustainable: Control Long Term Costs Promote standardization of technology to make operations more efficient and cost-effective Mature the City's cyber security practices to control risk.

Strategic Plan Connection
High-Performance Organization: Values Driven Culture Create a culture of innovation – by showing what is possible with technology we have increased the demand for creative technology solutions
High-Performance Organization: Best Practices Integrate key systems together to improve efficiency Improve departmental collaboration through the use of shared systems, improved communication tools High-Performance Organization: Performance Metrics Utilize GIS and Cityworks to develop data standards and deploy data analysis tools

Accomplishments
Security
•Developed and enforced a Password Policy and Password Manager
•Deployed an additional email security tool

•Deployed an XDR security tool to assist with detection and investigations
Application Deployment
•GIS Upgrade
•Cityworks Upgrade
•Deployed a new public portal for licenses and permits
•Utility billing cashiering system
•Deployed a more reliable wifi solution to all city buildings
•Agenda Management solution
•eFax Deployment

In-Progress
•Deploying new remote access solution
•Device Management & Remote Assistance
•Utility Kiosks •Utility Online Portal

Number of full-time employees: 24.25

Significant Budget Changes

Identified cost-saving measures in the current fiscal year that allowed us to offset internal service charges for FY25- 26.
Budget increase largely attributable to annual payments associated with software and support of data center (Internal Services)

Proposed budget has gone from $4,491,257 in 2024-25 to $5,290,199 in 2025-26

Personnel Addition - Systems Administrator
Software & Training - $38,000 Call filtering cloud software and $10,000 additional training

4. Human Resources

Mike Jackson, Director of Human Resources gave the presentation on this item.

Human Resources Mission
The mission of the Human Resources Department is to assist the City of Independence staff in meeting the needs of its residents. To ensure we are in alignment with the City's comprehensive plan, our goal is to recruit, select, develop, motivate, and retain a welltrained, professional, and responsive staff.

Accomplishments
• Ensured availability of Human Resources to City staff
• Transitioned recruiting functions from CityHire to Dayforce
• Standardized disciplinary action process/documents across all departments (except IPD)

• Updated/bargained IBEW-IPL Collective Bargaining Agreement
• Started the employee Active Lifestyle Program (ALP) - fitness reimbursement
• Initiated federal CDL compliance process
• Began updating/bargaining IAFF & USW Collective Bargaining Agreements

Full-time Employees - 10

Significant Budget Changes
• Identified costsaving measures in the current fiscal year that allowed us to offset internal service charges for FY25-26.
• Operating expenditure increase due to Dayforce charges moving into HR budget.
• $10,000 Supervisor/Manager Training

Proposed budget went from $1,545,968 in 2024-25 to $2,072,740 in 2025-26

5. Police

Deputy Chief Jason Petersen gave the presentation for this item.

Police Department Mission
The mission of the Independence Police Department is:
• To protect the life, individual liberty, and property of all people within the City of Independence
• To lower crime and disorder in the community
• To develop and maintain a positive relationship with members of the community
• To foster a positive working environment for police employees

Strategic Plan Connection
Well-Planned City
• Development of the Independence Justice Center
Financially Stable Organization
• Exploring new and innovative ways for fiscal stewardship
Engaged Community
• New and creative ways to combat crime and increase the perception of safety. Establishing a substation on the Historic Indpendence Square.
A Safe, Welcoming Community
• Secure grant funding to expand ALPR plan and add fourteen intersections

Accomplishments
•The Police Department deployed Body-Worn cameras to all uniformed personnel. This technology will expand opportunities for supervisory review, relevant training material, evidence-based footage, and community education and engagement.
•The department updated in-car video systems to the same platform used by Body-Worn cameras. This system incorporates mobile ALPR and updated, high-resolution cameras. This streamlines the recall and case assignment for digital evidence while providing a much more valuable recording.

•The department began deploying Panasonic Toughbook tablets to replace the aging in-car mobile data terminals (MDT) that are no longer capable of upgrade. The new devices have a five-year warranty that will allow us to budget for partial fleet replacement each year to mitigate the expense of mass replacements.

The budget covers 331.63 full-time employees - this does not include the animal control personnel that will now fall under this budget.

Significant budget changes
• In FY25-26, PD has been moved out of the general fund, and the entirety of its budget is now housed in Fund 067 – the "Prop PD" Sales Tax Fund. Police is receiving a transfer out from the General Fund, equivalent to 42.5% of General Fund revenues.
• To balance the Police budget in this new framework, the following adjustments were made: - Vacancy savings factor increased by $1.9M -Approx. $200,000 is miscellaneous operating costs reduced
• Personnel costs and contractual expenditures continue to be large cost drivers.

Budget changes
• Animal Services (Animal Control) officers will be moving to the Police Department in FY25-26.
• Additionally, PD's planned equipment expenditures in Fund 016 were reduced to balance that fund's budget. This includes reductions to vehicle replacements, radio replacements, and star chase system purchases.
• Personnel costs and contractual expenditures continue to be large cost drivers.

Proposed budget went from $52,595,363 in 2024-25 to $52,369,194 in 2025-26

Revenue went from $1,762,400 in 2024-25 to $1,920,000 in 2025-26

6. Finance/Law

Melissa Cabrera, Director of Finance, gave the presentation for this item.

Mission of the Finance Dept.

The Finance Department ensures the City's financial health by responsibly managing resources, fostering innovation and efficiency in service delivery, and leading with integrity and collaboration to meet both the challenges of today and the opportunities of tomorrow. Strategic Plan Connection: • A High-Performance Organization We operate as an ethical, high performance organization anticipating future needs, utilizing best practices and striving for continuous improvement. • A Financially Sustainable Organization We create long-term financial stability by using equitable and sustainable sources of funding for City Services, and we deliver them in a lean and efficient manner.

Accomplishments
Annual audit resulted in zero reportable conditions on internal audit
• Achieved City's budget award for 2024/applied for 2025
• Received ACFR award for 2023; Submitted 2024 ACFR award application
• Assisted CMO on MDFB financing for 3 new fire stations & IUC renovation
• Working with Tech Services and Community Development to include the Finance Department on business license approval process to:
• Ensure businesses are registering with the Department of Revenue
• Ensure that businesses are registered in the proper taxing districts
• Soliciting bids to gather options to conduct city sales tax audits
• Implementing plan for new Prop PD Sales Tax initiative and calculations for costs of IPD salary increases
• Worked with CommDev to develop pamphlet to provide vendors at SantiCaliGon

Full-time employees went from 16 in 2024-25 to 17 in 2025-26

Significant Budget Changes
• Identified cost-saving measures in the current fiscal year that allowed us to offset internal service charges for FY25-26.
• Addition of the Contract Specialist (approved budget package)

Proposed Budget went from $2,554,669 in 2024-25 to $2,963,460 in 2025-26.

Two approved budget packages
Personnel - Contract Specialist
Equipment: $40,000 annual comprehensive financial report and budget book software

Finance is also looking at a new budget software system.

Councilmember McCandless stressed that this is a draft version of the budget, not the final version and that changes can still take place.

INFORMATION ONLY

1. ***Please Note:*** *In accordance with RSMo. 610.021, the City Council may convene in a Closed Executive Session during or after the meeting, on matters of litigation, legal action, and/or attorney client communications, as permitted by Sec. 610.021(1), on matters of personnel, as permitted by Sec. 610.021(3) and personnel records, as permitted by 610.021(13), on matters of contracts, as permitted by 610.021(12), on matters of real estate, as permitted by 610.021(2) and/or matters of labor negotiations, as permitted by 610.021(9).*