



# City of Independence, Ohio

"THE HEART OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY"

6800 BRECKSVILLE ROAD

INDEPENDENCE, OHIO 44131

(216) 524-4131

## MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Gregory P. Kurtz  
Members of Council

From: Finance Director Vernon Blaze

Date: Friday, December 3, 2021

Re: Finance Office Updates

### 2022 Annual Appropriations Ordinance/Budget

As most Directors have completed their initial 2022 budget presentations with Mayor Kurtz, that process is far enough along to allow Budget Presentation Meetings to be scheduled with Council.

For now, those meetings are scheduled on Tuesday, December 7 and Thursday, December 9. Sessions on both of those days are scheduled to commence at 3:00 PM and go for two hours.

Detailed schedules of timetables for when individual directors are scheduled to present their 2022 Budgets have been provided via Inter-Office Mail today. At the Monday, December 6 Directors' meeting, a review session will be held to prepare for Tuesday and Thursday and make any needed final edits. Following is the summary of who will be presenting on which days:

#### Tuesday, December 7

- |                     |                    |   |                           |                 |
|---------------------|--------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------|
| • <u>Police</u>     | Chief Butler       | * | <u>Fire</u>               | Chief Rega      |
| • <u>Recreation</u> | Tom Walchanowicz   | * | <u>Community Services</u> | Emily Thomas    |
| • <u>Service</u>    | Ron McKinley       | * | <u>Tech/Facilities</u>    | Dave Snyderburn |
| • <u>Gen. Gov't</u> | Dennis/Maggie/Vern | * | <u>Boards/Commiss.</u>    | Maggie Osysko   |

#### Thursday, December 9

- |                      |                |   |                          |                 |
|----------------------|----------------|---|--------------------------|-----------------|
| • <u>IT</u>          | Jim/Dawn       | * | <u>Building</u>          | Mike Gero       |
| • <u>Engineering</u> | Don Ramm       | * | <u>Economic Develop.</u> | Jessica Hyser   |
| • <u>Court</u>       | Angie Zeleznik | * | <u>Council</u>           | Dave G./Debi B. |
| • <u>Legal</u>       | Mayor Kurtz    | * | <u>Mayor's Office</u>    | Mayor Kurtz     |
| • <u>Finance</u>     | Vern Blaze     |   |                          |                 |



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## **2022 Annual Appropriations Ordinance/Budget Continued**

If the above outlined schedule can be adhered to, it will put Council in the position to adopt the Temporary 2022 Annual Appropriations Ordinance at the Tuesday, December 14 Council Meeting. Since so much work is being put into the preparation of it, it will be substantially similar to the Permanent 2022 Annual Appropriations Ordinance, which will be before Council for its adoption in January of 2022.

If the above outlined schedule proves to be overly optimistic and more time is needed to adequately address everyone's questions and concerns, additional budget review meetings can be scheduled during the week of December 13 and December 20 if needed. A Temporary 2022 Annual Appropriations Ordinance has to be adopted prior to year-end, and the goal is to not have to meet anytime more this year after December 23 at the latest.

Come January, the focus will switch to refining and wrapping up the 2022 – 2026 Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) so that it can be put before Council for its adoption by the end of the First Quarter of 2022.

## **Appropriating/Budgeting – Part II**

The Finance Office always preaches that budgets are figuratively completed in pencil since they need to be and are such fluid documents. Events and circumstances occur daily that can lead to needed changes in future budgets and plans.

An example of that almost occurred just between yesterday and today. The initial draft of the 2022 Annual Appropriations Ordinance was completed yesterday, and at the same time, the story broke that legislation has been introduced in Columbus to increase the employer's share of police and fire fighters pensions.

Currently, employers like Independence contribute 19.5% of police wages and 24% of firefighter wages to the Ohio Police & Fire Pension Fund (OP & F). The proposal is to increase that percentage to 26.5% for both police and fire fighters.

The OP & F's executive director hopes that the legislation can pass before the end of 2022, so it shouldn't be a budget concern for cities like Independence until 2023. But had the timetable for adoption of that bill in Columbus been expedited, changes to the just completed draft 2022 Budget would have been needed already.

When it comes to budgeting, always have those erasers ready – it's a constantly moving target!