

FY 2023 Proposed Budget Council Questions

Question No. 1

Received: July 18

Assigned: Information Technology

Status: Complete

Slide 24. How do you evaluate new technology software and hardware and how do you prioritize?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

Please see the Automation Plan in the Appendix of the IT Service Plan for details.

<https://www.bellairetx.gov/DocumentCenter/View/29916/Information-Technology---Service-Plan-2021-2022>

Question No. 1a

Received: July 18

Assigned: Information Technology

Status: Complete

Is the 30-36" touch screen for our building official included in the plan?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

According to Director Leech, the purchase of this equipment is included in the FY 2023 Development Services department budget.

Question No. 1b

Received: July 18

Assigned: Information Technology/Police

Status: Complete

Did the police dept ever get their new reporting system up and running?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

The new Central Square Computer-Aided Dispatch/Report Management System (CAD/RMS) went live on June 28, 2022. All reports stored in the old system since 1999 have been migrated into the new RMS. There have been minor configuration issues that the vendor is currently working to resolve but as a whole the new system is performing as expected. One of the outstanding issues involves the citizen data portal which will share crime stats and call for service data with the public via the website crimemapping.com. This issue is in development and should be deployed in early August.

Question No. 1c

Received: July 18

Assigned: Police

Status: Complete

Where are the crime stats??

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

Regarding citizen access to call for service data, see the note above regarding the citizen data portal. Regarding crime stats, there is now a large amount of data available for reporting. Rather than speculate on relevant data points the police department has an agenda item scheduled for August 15th for Council to review available statistics and specify which would be reliable indicators of police performance.

Question No. 2

Received: July 18

Assigned: Police and Facilities

Status: Complete

PA2308 Animal Shelter Replacement \$500k. Enough to build a 2-story house. I checked minutes from Nov 15 last year. The agenda items reads a “modular facility.” We talked about ~\$200k. Why the extreme cost of a possible new dog pound? Is it air conditioned? Does it have a lobby or a visitation room? Is there a sewer line? Also \$10k in shelter expenses. How many animals have been cared for? How many returned to Bellaire homes?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

While the discussion in 2021 started around a modular animal control facility, Council direction on the agenda item was for the police department to explore a more durable and long-lasting solution. This is why the facility outlined in the latest Capital Improvement Plan is a brick-and-mortar structure. The specific reason was to ensure longer-lasting service and reduced maintenance and upkeep over the long term and provide a facility capable of serving the City of Bellaire for 20 years and beyond.

The proposed facility will have interior kennels that will be air-conditioned.

Construction specifications will rely on input from the department’s partner organization, Friends of the Bellaire Pound, and the newly-formed Animal Control Advisory Committee. Among the envisioned features will be a lobby, office, and reunification space. Additional specifications will rely on the minimum standards and recommendations for animal control facilities from the Texas Department of Health and Human Services.

The proposed facility will have water, sewer, and other utilities.

The department currently has \$10,000 Dog Pound line item in the budget. These funds are to be used to cover the increased services to be provided by the new Animal Control Officer. These services include basic heartworm and other treatments previously outsourced to area veterinarians as well as microchipping services and any required medical treatments previously funded by the Friends of the Bellaire Pound.

Since early April 2022 a total of 29 dogs have been cared for by BPD.

Since early April 2022, 16 dogs have been returned to their owners. Of those, 13 were returned to City of Bellaire residents and 3 returned to owners outside of Bellaire.

Question No. 3

Received: July 18

Assigned: Fire

Status: **Partial** Complete

Slide 29 (pg 30) 2nd medic unit. Where is the study of ambulance runs? Does WU assist COB in servicing the freeway?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

We are working on updating our stats so Council will have updated information through the end of July. This will be shared in the August 5th weekly memo.

Yes, West University assist COB in servicing the freeway as well as all parts of our community.

Question No. 4

Received: July 18

Assigned: Finance

Status: Complete

FEE Schedule: I see in the Fees schedule that most fees change incrementally. Are there any significant changes that we should be aware of?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

No. There are no significant changes to fees in the current proposed fee schedule. Any new fees or significant changes recommended as the budget process progresses will be brought to City Council's attention.

Question No. 5

Received: July 18

Assigned: Finance

Status: Complete

**pg 176 of proposed budget. We agreed to language about park facilities rentals. Should be displayed here, but it's not.

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

Thank you for pointing out this oversight. We have made the following revisions to the proposed fee schedule:

- added the language you noted that reservations are not required to use park facilities, but that reservations guarantee your exclusive use of facilities,
- added language clarifying that the permit process fee is not applicable to garage sale permits, estate sale permits, and parking permits, and
- changed the column showing "Adopted 2022" to "Amended 2022," which included showing the 2022 garage sale permit fee cost of \$15.

Question No. 6

Received: July 18

Assigned: Development Services

Status: Complete

Please explain the re-inspection fees problem in the weekly memo. Are we going to raise those fees?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

The DS / PW team sees the reduction in re-inspection fees as a positive outcome because there have been fewer disapproved re-inspections, if not necessarily inspections. This is indicative of better plan reviews, inspector training, General Contractors not scheduling their trades' inspections prematurely (only the trades should schedule their inspections), better communication between inspectors and contractors then ensuing better punch work before scheduling / rescheduling, etc. In summary, some of the practices and procedures that have been implemented to improve the quality of the process by staff are working.

At this time the DS team is contemplating the addition of punitive re-inspection fees at some point in FY23, but not through this budget process. An example of this would be as follows: lets say an air-conditioning system installation inspection costs \$50. The air conditioning contractor would already know the City of Bellaire standard for such an installation through the permitting process. If they fail the inspection, the subsequent reinspection would cost \$55 for example. If it fails again, the re-inspection fee would rise to \$60. We are not ready to implement a programmatic change like this at this time but hope to bring a recommendation like, or similar to this with a handful of other relatively minor development services related fee changes in FY23.

Process Improvements – Development Services

The Finance Department brought to the Development Services teams attention that Residential reinspection fees of \$2,300 are under the allocated budget by \$7,247, or 76%, and Commercial reinspection fees of \$0 are under the allocated budget by \$7,778, or 100%. Fewer disapproved re-inspections don't necessarily indicate fewer disapproved initial inspections, but is indicative of:

1. More comprehensive and thorough plan reviews, which identify issues at the get-go, and

Question No. 7

Received: July 18

Assigned: Public Works

Status: Complete

July 18th Council Meeting: CIP did not include some potential projects (Harris County's recently approved plan to build a pathway from Braes Bayou to Memorial Park along the railroad tracks) potential opportunity for Bellaire to improve certain spaces along that pathway (Mulberry Park, Lafayette/Officer Lucy Dog Park)

Nathan Wesely, Council Member

Answer

The Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board has been communication with Houston Parks over the past several years. In past conversations Houston Parks has stated that the pathway along CenterPoint property hasn't been funded and that there was no foreseeable timeline as to when this project would receive funding. Last Monday night was the first time the Director heard funding was made available and will contact Houston Parks and get more information.

Question No. 8

Received: July 18

Assigned: Finance

Status: Pending

July 18th Council Meeting: Should the No New Revenue Rate reconcile to the De Minimis Tax Rate? Should the De Minimis Rate generate exactly \$500,000 more than the no new revenue rate?

Tax Rate Scenario	Rate	Assessed Value	Tax Revenue (a)	Additional Revenue Over Proposed Rate	Impact on Average Bellaire Home (b)
Proposed Tax Rate	\$0.4473	\$5,138,167,772	\$22,983,024	\$0	\$0
No New Revenue Tax Rate	\$0.4341	\$5,138,167,772	\$22,304,786	(\$678,238)	(\$98)
Voter-Approval Tax Rate (Includes Increment Rate)	\$0.4809	\$5,138,167,772	\$24,709,449	\$1,726,424	\$249
De Minimis Tax Rate (Authorized for Small Cities-2500k increase)	\$0.4483	\$5,138,167,772	\$23,034,406	\$51,382	\$7

Andrew S. Friedberg, Mayor

Answer

Question No. 9

Received: July 18

Assigned: Finance

Status: Complete

July 18th Council Meeting: expressed an interest in knowing the amount of assessed values attributable to new properties versus existing properties.

City Council

Answer

Based on the Certified estimates sent out April 28, 2022, of the total certified estimate taxable value in the amount of \$5,183,167,772, \$85,082,101 or 1.67% is attributed to “new property”. Please remember this is the certified estimate amount as it will change when the City receives the certified roll in August. To date staff is using estimates to calculate reasonable tax rates for Council to consider while discussing the budget for next fiscal year.

Question No. 10

Received: July 18

Assigned: All Departments

Status: Complete

July 18th Council Meeting: Request to distribute the departmental service plans which could be reviewed in conjunction with the budget departmental service pages, to understand the services provided by the department, the resources necessary to supply such services, and the performance metrics used to measure successful service delivery.

Nathan Wesely, Council Member

Answer

Here is a [LINK](#) to all the most current versions of departmental service plans.

Please note, departments update their respective service plans every couple of years so there will likely be notable staffing changes, etc.

City of Bellaire

FY 2023 Proposed Budget – Council Questions

Question No. 11

Received: July 18

Assigned: City Manager's Office

Status: Complete

July 18th Council Meeting: Looking at budget consideration items, there were two apps, in addition to the existing See-Click-Fix app. The mayor expressed a preference for a single app for all city services versus having multiple city apps.

Andrew S. Friedberg, Mayor

Answer

The CivicPlus smartphone app will be able to provide a one-stop shop for users on their mobile devices. It can be configured to provide access to the city website and other useful platforms like SmartGov, SeeClickFix, AquaHawk, Online Payments, and more. The ReCollect app would be a different platform specific to recycling in Bellaire, and a link can be included in the CivicPlus smartphone app. This will be explored in detail in the supplemental request information to be provided for the budget workshop.

Question No. 12

Received: July 18

Assigned: City Manager's Office

Status: Complete

July 18th Council Meeting: (What is) the adoption rate of our existing apps? (Is there a) need for additional apps and whether the adoption rates would justify the offering? What metric should be used to judge the success of each existing and proposed new phone app?

Jim Hotze, Council Member

Answer

The City of Bellaire currently has one app, SeeClickFix. The SeeClickFix platform replaced the Resident Request Center on the city website to address resident concerns. We have received 318 and resolved 275 requests since the app's release. The remaining requests are still under review by staff. We will look into the user rate metrics for this app, the SeeClickFix software, and the analytics from CivicPlus. We will include this information in the supplemental request information for the budget workshop.

Question No. 13

Received: July 18

Assigned: Finance

Status: Complete

July 18th Council Meeting: General Fund fiscal forecast – Is an assumption of an annual 4% increase in assessed taxable values to rosy?

Andrew S. Friedberg, Mayor

Answer

Based on the last 10 years the average increase in taxable property value has been 3.6%. Therefore, to be conservative and more realistic we will be using 3% in our fiscal forecast moving forward. Please remember this is an estimate.

City of Bellaire

FY 2023 Proposed Budget – Council Questions

Question No. 14

Received: July 18

Assigned: Development Services / Finance

Status: Pending

July 18th Council Meeting: General Fund fiscal forecast – Is an assumption of an annual 4% increase in assessed permit revenues?

Andrew S. Friedberg, Mayor

Answer

Question No. 15

Received: July 26

Assigned: Finance

Status: Complete

Your financial analysis shows that in a couple of years, the budget will not be structurally balanced. How much do we have to cut expenditures to bring the budget back into balance? In each fund?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

A structurally balanced budget is a budget in which recurring revenues equal or exceed recurring expenditures. Structural balance has two components: (1) recurring revenues, and (2) recurring expenditures. Projected structural imbalance can be addressed through increased recurring revenues, decreased recurring expenditures, or a combination of increased recurring revenues and decreased recurring expenditures.

As required by our Comprehensive Financial Management Policy Statement, we present a fiscal forecast for the General Fund, the Enterprise Fund, and the Debt Service Fund. The five-year fiscal forecasts for the Enterprise Fund and for the Debt Service Fund presented to City Council on July 18, 2022, were structurally balanced in all years. In the five-year fiscal forecast for the General Fund presented to City Council on July 18, 2022, the maximum annual delta between annual recurring revenues and recurring expenditures was \$0.59 million forecast in fiscal year 2026.

City of Bellaire

FY 2023 Proposed Budget – Council Questions

Question No. 16

Received: July 26

Assigned: Police

Status: Complete

Follow up on question 2. It seems that at least one dog is being held at a local vet. Is this dog or other dogs held at veterinarian facilities counted? Are we paying boarding for those dogs or are other subsidizing the cost? How many dogs returned to Bellaire owners and other owners in the last year, as contrasted with those adopted out? How many of those are pit bulls or pit bull mix?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

Animals housed with either fosters or the vet are included in our head counts. Boarding of animals for either medical care or to provide relief from the heat is paid for out of the department's "Dog Pound" line item budget.

Reviewing numbers from August 2021 to the present shows these numbers on animals taken in, returned to owners, adopted out, or transferred to a rescue organization:

- BPD/COB cared has cared for 80 dogs from August 2021-present.
- 23 of those taken in were Pitbull/Pitbull mixes.
- 36 dogs were returned to their owners. Four of those returned were pitbull/pitbull mixes.
- Friends of the Bellaire Pound handled adoptions for 4 unclaimed animals.
- Animals that were not returned or adopted were transferred to rescue organizations by Friends of the Bellaire Pound.

It should be noted that as of late rescue organizations have reached capacity and are unable to take additional dogs. It is increasingly difficult to find homes for unclaimed animals and any organization still taking animals won't take large dogs.

Question No. 17

Received: July 26

Assigned: Public Works

Status: Complete

DR2202 refers to implementation of the MDCP. You indicated that changes made since presented to council Sept 2021 were done for TXDOT. What did TXDOT change? Were any council recommendations incorporated? Please specify.

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

The input from council included in the MDCP was:

1. no land acquisition of existing city homes was acceptable
2. focus on Concept C
3. construction phasing is important to right size projects
4. maximize outside funding opportunities.

Question No. 17a

Received: July 28

Assigned: Public Works

Status: Complete

DR2202 refers to implementation of the MDCP. How much (does) it costs and when (is it) expected?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

The goal is to implement plan C in some form or fashion. The plan includes working with other agencies and breaking plan C into smaller yet impactful and affordable pieces. The Public Works team has been working with a consultant on developing a scope of work to guide us through the next steps of this process. This scope of work will be brought to Council in late August or September for consideration.

Question No. 18

Received: July 26

Assigned: Parks, Rec, Facilities

Status: Complete

Have we had a history of failures with the chiller unit on the HVAC at the fire station? How many? How long did it take to get it fixed?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

The chiller at the Fire Station has failed, which is not unusual for equipment to fail over time. The longest the chiller has been down at the Fire Station has been around 36 hours. The intent of a secondary chiller is to ensure the HVAC system is operating at all times and to protect the operation of the Fire Department, the Emergency Operation Center, and the City wide computer system from overheating. Replacement chillers currently have a lead time of up to six to eight months.

Question No. 19

Received: July 26

Assigned: Fire

Status: Complete

How many ambulance runs, in the last year, actually required a paramedic as opposed to an EMT? How many ambulance runs in the last year from medical facilities, including nursing homes and doctors' offices?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

We had a total of 1288 EMS Runs last year that our Medic Unit responded to. Out of the 1288 responses, 673 required a paramedic as opposed to an EMT. 524 responses were of the BLS level and 91 responses were cancelled with out any patient contact.

Out of the 1288 responses we had a total of 239 EMS responses to Medical Facilities in Bellaire.

Question No. 20

Received: July 27

Assigned: Police

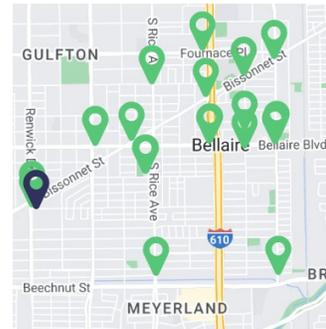
Status: Complete

How many “flock” type security cameras do we have operating? How many has the city planned to purchase and set up this year and in the next few years? Where are they likely to be located?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

The department operates 20 Flock Safety ALPR cameras within the city. Eighteen of these are installed at stationary locations as shown on the map to the right. Two of the cameras are installed on the department’s speed monitoring trailers. These mobile cameras can be deployed in areas to address issues such as speeding, burglaries, or other such offenses.



The department foresees deploying six additional cameras in the future: two on the northbound feeder of I-610 north of Beechnut, two northbound Chimney Rock at Beechnut, and two northbound on Renwick at Beechnut.

Question No. 21

Received: July 27

Assigned: Parks, Recreation and Facilities

Status: Complete

What is the source of funding for \$160k of improvements at Evergreen Park? Is this also donations, along with \$189.5k. Total PA2304 \$349.5k.

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

There is a typo on the Evergreen Park CIP page (PA2304) that states Patrons for Bellaire Parks anticipates donating \$136,384.00. This is incorrect, Patrons for Bellaire Parks has \$160,000.00 in a designated fund for Evergreen Park.

Evergreen Park CIP (PA2304) has been revised to say, “A total of \$349,500 is proposed for PA2304-Evergreen Park in FY23. This includes a \$160,000 donation that has been pledged by the Patrons for Bellaire Parks and \$189,500 from the General Fund. Please note the \$189,500 from the General Fund is associated with a restricted account established by Ordinance 11-10 whereby right-of-way sale are designated for development of parks. The FY23 funding for PA2304 is programmed to replace the existing Evergreen Park with a new, more inclusive playground for people of all abilities.”

Question No. 22

Received: July 27

Assigned: Public Works / Facilities / Fleet

Status: Complete

Can we get detail of which vehicles are being replaced, as in previous budgets?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

Fleet recommendations are included in the CIP that was sent in the July 22nd weekly memo to City Council and can be found in Appendix F, Page 48.

<https://www.bellairetx.gov/DocumentCenter/View/29915/Proposed-FY-2023-2027-CIP>

Question No. 23

Received: July 28

Assigned: Public Works

Status: Complete

Are we using the same street & drainage ranking as we were 2 years ago, with the same criteria?

Catherine Lewis, Council Member

Answer

The Street and Drainage Criteria the City last had in place were from the BBB16 Program and were to decide which streets were reconstructed and in what order. The list derived from the BBB16 criteria were made with a paving condition score and a drainage score. Reconstruction in this case means a complete removal and replacement of the street and its storm sewer infrastructure. The only streets that were evaluated using this system that are being addressed currently are the four streets funded by a 2017 CDBG Grant funding allocation and include Larch, Cedar, Mimosa and Chelsea.

Council approved this contract on February 21, 2022. All other current work relating to street repairs are from staff inspections of failing infrastructure or from the Pavement Condition Analysis (PCA) performed by RAS Pavement Services in 2021. City Council received a workshop on this topic on March 15, 2021. That discussion overviewed the Public Works plan for pavement maintenance and detailed the departments standard operating procedures for addressing pavement related maintenance matters.

Additional questions will be compiled and answered as needed throughout the budget process.