

City of Wildwood, Missouri
Record of Proceedings



WILDWOOD

Program Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 11, 2021

Wildwood City Hall, 16860 Main Street, Wildwood, Missouri 63040

The Program Budget Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m., on Thursday, February 11, 2021, at Wildwood City Hall, 16860 Main Street, Wildwood, Missouri 63040, and on the Zoom Platform.

I. Call to Order and Opening Remarks by Chair Garritano

Chair Garritano opened the meeting and welcomed all members.

II. Roll Call of Committee Members

A roll call of members was taken, with the following results:

Present: Council Members Edens, Garritano, and McCutchen.

Absent: None

Staff Present: City Administrator Cross, Director of Planning and Parks Vujnich, and Assistant Director of Planning and Parks Arnett

III. Approval of Minutes from the Committee's December 1, 2020 Meeting

A motion was made by Council Member Edens, seconded by Council Member McCutchen, to approve the December 1, 2020 meeting minutes. A voice vote was taken on the motion, with no opposition, and Chair Garritano declared the motion approved.

IV. Review of Proposed Modifications to Fees Assessed by the City Across All Departments

Steve Cross was asked to open the discussion and summarized the spreadsheet that contains all of the fees that are assessed by the City of Wildwood for the range of services and permits it offers. The design of this spreadsheet was to provide all pertinent information in one (1) row, with Mr. Cross highlighting the columns of information, particularly if the rate of the fee was set by State Statute, local code, or other, and how that might effect a change to them from the perspective of the approval process.

The Director of Planning was then asked to explain the fee increases and how they were determined for many of the permit processes and events. Mr. Vujnich noted the increases were generally set, based upon the change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), between 1995 and 2021. This amount of increase was approximately seventy (70) percent over this twenty-five (25) year plus period of time. The example that was provided was the zoning application fee, which has remained at three hundred dollars (\$300.00) for this twenty-five (25) plus period of time. Now, with the CPI factored into the amount, it would be five hundred dollars (\$500.00). Additionally, the Director of Planning and Parks noted that event costs have increased, so charges, entry applications, and fees have naturally followed. The intent is to make as many of the events revenue neutral, as possible, in the future.

The item that was discussed at length was assessing a new fee for the zoning authorization process in association with building permits. No fee is charged at this time. Therefore, with almost one thousand (1,000) authorizations processed each year by the City, the application of a fifty dollar (\$50.00) fee would provide almost fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.00) to Wildwood. This increase may be questioned by property owners and the contracting community, but certainly needs to be considered.

Chair Garritano noted the fee schedule, as submitted, was appreciated, given its detail, and was pleased with the results, so far. The Chair also noted a need to update these fees more regularly.

Mr. Cross noted that administrative fees were also increased, as part of this review process. These fee increases were focused on rentals, businesses, and other licenses. Chair Garritano noted the attachment that was referenced, and Mr. Cross focused on the City Clerk's Office and its associated fees, which includes liquor licenses. This attachment was needed to address the sheer number of these fees.

Ms. Edens reiterated the need to create a regular schedule and process for the update of fees and not wait for extended periods of time to undertake this type of review. Ms. Edens asked if a motion to accept these fees was needed. Mr. Cross noted to hold off on such a motion, given the need to address the City Clerk's items, while also tightening up all of them.

Ms. McCutchen asked about the events and how the fee increases would impact them. The Director of Planning and Parks noted that revenue neutral was a good goal. Ms. Edens noted that some events cannot be revenue neutral, given the need to build community and how such would be accomplished without a resident pass of some sort. It was noted that entry forms that are used for certain events can differentiate between residents and non-residents and charge different fee amounts. Chair Garritano noted that other cities probably struggle with such as well.

Mr. Cross did then note that some of the fees, particularly for events, did not necessarily need to be set by City Council, but rather a function of the cost of the activity to undertake and the charge to a participant would reflect such. The point was that certain items did not always need to be presented to City Council. Mr. Garritano noted that such was appropriate, given the limited impact of certain charges for recreation events offered by the City.

Director of Planning and Parks noted another column should be added that indicates how the fee can be changed, whether by City Council action, administratively, or other. This column would be helpful. Ms. McCutchen concurred that a column of fee origin is needed and asked if comparisons with other communities in the area has been undertaken. Mr. Cross noted these contacts were made, but with limited success. The Director of Planning and Parks noted that it reached out to some of the providers of services to the City to check comparisons and those amounts were factored into fee schedule provided to the Committee Members. Ms. McCutchen inquired about soliciting. Mr. Cross explained about the permit process for solicitors. Ms. McCutchen supported an increase in the solicitor fees, even more than the twenty-five dollar (\$25.00) amount that is being proposed. She mentioned the Traffic Generation Assessment Fee (TGA). Ms. McCutchen then questioned the telecommunication fee and Ms. Arnett explained its purpose. The Grading Permit was then identified, and it was noted it had just been increased recently.

Chair Garritano summarized the discussion, then suggested the final version of the Fee Schedule spreadsheet be reviewed one (1) last time by the Committee, before action upon it.

One (1) more comment on fees was provided by the Department of Planning and Parks and noted the strategic planning process that was underway with the Mayor and City Council, and the update process and timing can be incorporated into it in some manner.

V. Final Action on Recreation Event Modifications

The Department of Planning and Parks noted the event schedule provided for this meeting was in final form, and reflected the Members' comments from the December 2020 meeting, where it was discussed in detail. It was noted Ms. Arnett prepared the event schedule spreadsheet and it provided a very good representation. The review process to date, as administered by the Committee, has led to a major cost savings of sixty-four thousand dollars (\$64,000.00) relative to events.

Mr. Garritano summarized some of statements of the Committee Members, particularly highlighting those events that charge entry fees. He noted the Plein Air Reception had been eliminated, a major cost savings. Ms. McCutchen asked about the Wildwood Celebration Commission and the Art Festival and future versions of them remaining combined. The Department of Planning and Parks responded that 2021 event would be combined. In future years, the Celebrate Wildwood Commission preferred the two (2) events be separated again. The Department then explained some of the changes the Wildwood Celebration Commission is considering relative to the parade, such as eliminating it in 2021.

Ms. Edens stated, for the future, the pandemic is going to impact it for a foreseeable time. How do we offer events in this regard? How best to offset costs? She noted the future does hold more changes. Ms. Edens then noted the Board and Commission Appreciation Event and how might a reduction occur there, maybe the cost of the gift could be reconsidered. Further, Ms. Eden then noted, in the post-pandemic universe, may lead to more partnerships with outside agencies that may be available. A statement from this Committee indicating its commitment to new revenue models in the future would be helpful. Mr. Cross noted that not all events can be revenue neutral and supported the current model of the Board and Commission Appreciation Event. Ms. McCutchen supported the statements of Mr. Cross. She then added, if the Board and Commission and the Business Appreciation Events be combined to reduce costs. The Director of Planning and Parks noted they are very different types and would be hard to combine into a single venue.

The Village Green, when completed, will reduce costs due to the City no longer having to rent many of the needed items for events, such as restrooms, wash stations, electrical items, a stage, and others. Eventually, the Village Green Area will offer a major change to costs for concerts and similar events.

Chair Garritano then noted the need for another meeting to bring all of the items discussed today into final focus. Mr. Cross noted an email from Council Member Brost about the Committee's effort and reducing costs. Chair Garritano stated he had not reviewed the email at this time. Ms. McCutchen noted the email contained items not all related to the charge of the Committee. The Chair agreed to review the email and will talk with Council Member Brost about his thoughts.

VI. Other Items

By consensus, the Committee Members decided to schedule the next meeting at a time convenient to all parties. Staff will send an email to check availability.

VII. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

A motion was made by Council Member Edens, seconded by Council Member McCutchen, to adjourn. A voice vote was taken, hearing no objections, and Chair Garritano declared the meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.