

Bobbie Walthall

To: Brandon McGuire
Subject: RE: \$2.25 million surplus

Begin forwarded message:

From: Carol <carolb@sunflower.com>
Date: July 16, 2018 at 11:35:40 PM CDT
To: Stuart Boley <sboley@lawrenceks.org>, Larsen Lisa <llarsen@lawrenceks.org>, Leslie Soden <lsoden@lawrenceks.org>, <jananda@lawrenceks.org>, Matthew Herbert <matthewjherbert@gmail.com>
Cc: <bmcguire@lawrenceks.org>, Carol Bowen <carolb@sunflower.com>
Subject: \$2.25 million surplus

There are a lot of worthwhile projects needing funds. I'd like you to consider the following during your deliberations.

1. Do not return the money to the tax payers. Returning money to the taxpayers instead of investing in infrastructure is why we have outdated and dysfunctional infrastructure now.
2. Avoid creating new programs or positions that will have to be picked up with regular funding later unless there is a deliberate plan to do so.
3. Fund one-time-only projects.
4. Funding more projects on the CIP list addresses the original cause of the infrastructure problem directly.
5. While restoring funding to some social needs is tempting, it might cause problems down the road. Would the funding be expected at the same level next year? What is the plan?

I can think of lots of ways to spend the surplus, but I remember vividly when the city commission "returned money to the tax payers" years ago. At the time, I thought the city should try to get ahead on infrastructure needs. And, here we are, thirty years later, with some of the same infrastructure needs, a long CIP list, stakeholders competing for funds, and new ideas cropping up. Please proceed with caution.

Carol Bowen
403 Dakota Street
(785) 842-9082

Bobbie Walthall

From: wilbur45@sunflower.com
Sent: Monday, July 16, 2018 11:04 PM
To: Bobbie Walthall; Stuart Boley; Lisa Larsen; Leslie Soden; Jennifer Ananda; Matthew Herbert
Cc: Tom Markus; Diane Stoddard; Casey Toomay; rvalverde@ljworld.com
Subject: Agenda Item #4 - public comment

Please accept this as public comment regarding agenda item #4 (2018 amended budget).

Dear Mayor Boley and Commissioners,

We would like to express our concern with the proposal to divert \$200,000 to the affordable housing voucher program. While we agree that affordable housing is a problem of great concern we also have great concern about process. The city has agreed to follow priority-based budgeting, and we believe that priorities should be clearly defined before these types of actions are taken. We would recommend that future budgets include a list of highest-priority unfunded projects that excess funds could be applied towards based on the scoring system used for original determinations. We also are curious why the \$200,000 cannot be diverted from the existing housing fund, which has approximately \$600,000 available.

Regarding the 2017 sales tax vote this is not relevant to a commission decision on these funds. The voters had a clearly defined amount and time for collection and were not authorizing any additional expenditures. The affordable housing fund will start collecting \$1,000,000 a year very soon and this should alleviate any concerns about shortfalls in the future.

Also – we would like to commend the commission and staff on proposing a budget that does not include a mill levy increase. We understand that the increase in property valuations will have a significant impact on taxpayers, so it is greatly appreciated that this will not be exacerbated with a tax increase.

Thank you

Patrick Wilbur
Treasurer

Hayden Maples
Chair

Lawrence Sunset Alliance