



<b>Mayor</b> Elise Partin	<b>Mayor Pro-Tem</b> Tim James	<b>Council Members</b> Phil Carter Hunter Sox Byron Thomas	<b>City Manager</b> Tracy Hegler	<b>Deputy City Manager</b> Jim Crosland <b>Assistant City Manager</b> Michael Conley
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**City of Cayce  
Special Council Meeting  
Budget Work Session  
Wednesday, April 17, 2024**

A Special Council Meeting was held this afternoon at 2:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Those present included Mayor Elise Partin, Mayor Pro Tem Tim James, Council Members Phil Carter, Hunter Sox and Byron Thomas. City Manager Tracy Hegler, Deputy City Manager Jim Crosland, Assistant City Manager Michael Conley, Municipal Clerk Mendy Corder, Finance Director Kelly McMullen, Utilities Director Betsy Catchings and IT Director Jamie Beckham were also in attendance.

Mayor Partin asked if members of the press and the public were duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the FOIA. Ms. Corder confirmed they were notified.

### **Call to Order**

Mayor Partin called the meeting to order and Council Member Thomas gave the invocation. Mayor Partin led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Discussion Items**

#### **A. Discussion of Proposed FY2024/2025 General Fund Budget**

City Manager Hegler stated the Budget Work Sessions were one of her favorite meetings and staff had prepared their proposed budgets and would go through the things that they needed. She stated that she rarely told staff what not to present to Council because she wanted Council to get a full flavor of everything that staff felt they wanted and needed. She stated that the need might be in the upcoming year or might be able to wait a year or two. She stated that she never wanted Council to be blindsided in future years about something that staff says they urgently need but they had never heard about it before. She stated that the proposed budget was way out of budget which was not unusual for this time of year. City Manager Hegler stated that staff did not have any recommendations on millage, they were just going to let Council know what the snapshot of a possible millage increase would look like. She stated that they would also discuss sanitation fees so Council would have a clear understanding of the options they had before moving forward into what was a very difficult budget year for the City. She stated that they got a flavor of that from the Utility Work Session and General Fund was not incredibly different.

Ms. McMullen stated that first she would review the City's revenues. She stated that preliminary revenues had been put in for the 24-25 budget and property taxes currently accounted for 29 ¼% of total revenues. She stated that business licenses and permitting accounted for about 14%, franchise fees was approximately 16%,

accommodation and hospitality contributions were 8.5% and interest income was a little under 1%. She stated that charges for services were going to be sanitation fees and what the City charged for an actual service in the City, was 8.3%. She stated that grants and other made up 21.82% and court fines and forfeitures were approximately 1.15%. Ms. McMullen stated that the City's current millage was 58.1 mils and the recent assessment data that staff received from Lexington County the value of 1 mil in Cayce was \$67,914.18. She stated that the City was allowed by statute to have a millage increase limitation and there was two pieces to that, one was the inflation component, which staff received from the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Department Office and was 4.12%, which equated to about 2.394 mils. She stated that population was the other part of that component, but that information would not be available until May. She stated that the City was allowed to do a three year look back, which was basically looking back at what the City was allowed to do for the past three years and using anything that the City had not already used. She stated that from 2020 to 2023, there were unused millage increases of 1.306 mils and for 2024 there was 4.648 mils equaling which meant that the City was capped at limiting the increase to 8.348 mils.

Ms. McMullen stated that the General Fund did have budget challenges like it had seemingly ever since COVID. She stated that staff was anticipating another 1% increase for retirement health insurance and the employer portion increase was 11.8% which was after a 6% increase in 2023 and a 3.7% increase in 2024. She stated that the City was still seeing a lot of open positions and was having to compete with fellow jurisdictions and the private sector for jobs. She stated that because of those unfilled positions, there were increases in overtime. She stated that there was still inflation and pricing issues, and the dollar was not going as far as it used to several years ago. She stated that there was an increased need for capital purchases because of the inflation component and some capital purchases had been put off. Ms. McMullen stated that supply chain delays were still an issue as well as changing customer expectations. She stated that more and more people wanted to do everything online therefore the City had to have everything mobile app friendly. She stated that changing technologies and those effects on critical infrastructure were also an issue and created a strain on the City trying to give those new software options to the citizens.

Deputy City Manager Crosland presented the requested administration budget. He stated that the City had outgrown the space at the current municipal complex and would eventually need to have a needs assessment study done. He stated that staff would issue an RFP for the study, and it was estimated to cost \$50,000. He stated that Phase 2 of the Prox card security project was requested since it had not been done in the garage, the parks and sanitation building, public works or the museum. He stated that for Public Buildings Robert Denny only requested a tool set.

Ms. Rachel Stuckey presented the Municipal Court's proposed budget. She stated that she was requesting space for her judges. She stated that the courtroom was small and only had seating for 49 people. She stated that the only place the judges

could go was the jury room but when there were jury trials, the judges were not able to use that space. She stated that also when an inmate was brought for court by the police department, they had to keep them separated from the general public, so they used the jury room and then the judge had to sit in a chair in the hallway. Ms. Stuckey stated that currently the court's records were stored in one of the old jail cells and the cost to turn that into an office was approximately \$10,000. She stated that it would also give a place for her assistant to use when the courtroom was in use for other things since his desk was in the courtroom. She stated that she was also asking for new office furniture for herself since hers was in poor condition and needed to be replaced. She stated that she had requested again the \$12,000 since they had to use a private entity to process payments and that cost was \$1,000 monthly.

Ms. Stuckey reviewed some statistics for the court. She stated that last year, they adjudicated approximately 4,656 citations and 643 warrants were issued. They had 10 Jury trials, five (5) trials in absentia and they were all found guilty and bench warrants were issued. She stated that they currently had 633 tickets written, 175 warrants issued, 38 pending pre trials, 40 pending jury strike trials and 67 pending preliminary hearings. She stated that they were behind because they had not been able to hire a prosecutor. She stated that there was someone who was incredibly interested in the position, and they hoped to have him presented to Council sometime in May.

Mr. Thomas White presented the proposed Sanitation budget. He stated that he was requesting a street sweeper clean out area where he could dump and clean out the sweeper and it would cost approximately \$9,000. He stated that currently he had to dump the sweeper out by the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant which took half of the day to do. He stated that a closer clean-out space was needed, and he was proposing the three (3) acres area that the City owned by Abbott Arms Apartments that was close to the City's complex. He stated that a concrete pad with water running to it could be put there. Deputy City Manager Crosland stated that this would allow staff to recycle the sand and the dirt. Mr. Thomas stated that was correct and that staff used the sand, dirt, and the gravel that the street sweeper picked up to fill holes and whatever else the Parks Department needed to use it for. Mr. White stated that he was requesting an additional Truck Driver II position that could operate the street sweeper full time. He stated that currently the City did not have a full-time driver for the sweeper, only he and two (2) other staff members could drive it. City Manager Hegler stated that last year they were not sure what the routes would look like but now knew it would be beneficial to have a dedicated person to operate the street sweeper. Mr. White stated that he needed to purchase new roll carts since many of them that were in use by citizens were 16 years old and in bad shape. He stated that the parts for the roll carts were no longer being made and he only had approximately 30 roll carts left to give to residents who needed a new one. Mr. White stated that he proposed purchasing approximately 1,025 roll carts which would work with any dumping truck and would last for quite a while.

Council Member Thomas asked if the new roll carts would replace all the City's old ones or just the one's when they break. Mr. White stated that they would be used to replace broken roll carts. Council Member Carter asked how many roll carts were needed to meet the current loading ability of the City's equipment. Mr. White stated 4,000. Council Member Carter asked in a 40-hour week, how many hours was the street sweeper being used. Mr. White stated that it was used approximately three (3) times a month, but the additional driver would run the street sweeper at least four (4) times a week. Council Member Carter stated four (4) times a week was a lot of usage and asked if the City's maintenance staff would be able to maintain the brushes and mechanics. Mr. White stated yes, they could take care of it.

Deputy City Manager Crosland stated that Ms. McMullen gathered information on what the surrounding municipalities and counties charge for a sanitation fee. He stated that the adopted FY23/24 budget for Sanitation was \$1.3 million and the City had 4,785 customers. He stated that 9.44 mills of the City's millage was used to budget the Sanitation Department. He stated that the FY24/25 requested budget for Sanitation with the same number of customers estimated, was \$1.5 million and the yearly revenues from the fees would only cover 49.62% of the budget so 11 ½ mills would have to be used to cover the \$1.5 million. Deputy City Manager Crosland stated that if the City wanted sanitation to cover its costs from fees it would cost \$27.21 per month, and that would cover 100% of that budget from fees. He stated that staff was not requesting that and was only showing Council what it would cost.

Mr. James Denny presented the proposed Parks Department budget. He stated that he requested additional money for an outside tree removal company to come in during emergencies to remove fallen trees. He stated that the City had more and more trees falling unexpectedly and the City had an aging tree canopy. He stated that long term he was looking into having a tree removal company on retainer. He stated that his employee training line item increased because he had a very young department that needed a lot of training. He stated that they were great employees and would be even better with training. He stated that 18 months ago Dominion removed close to 60 trees on 12th Street Extension and he and his staff were in the process of creating a plan to replace those trees, so he had requested funds to replace the plants. Mr. Denny stated that he had requested a replacement pickup truck and an additional groundskeeper position. He stated that they did a lot of repairs in-house and now had a groundskeeper doing that work so he needed to replace him to have a full crew. He stated that he requested a power broom for the Riverwalk since it flooded so much. He stated that it took eight staff members three to four days with the current equipment to clean up after a flood and it cost approximately \$4,000 per day with that crew cleaning the Riverwalk. Mr. Denny stated that he requested an arial lift. He stated that the current arial lift could go up sixty-two feet but it only moved 1.1 mile per hour. He stated that the one he proposed to purchase would be much quicker and could go over rough terrain and get into more places.

Council Member Thomas asked what line item covered new swing sets and park equipment for the City's parks. Mr. Denny stated that those items were purchased with hospitality tax funds or through grants. Council Member Thomas asked how many of the City's parks had ADA compliant playground equipment. Mr. Denny stated that all of the City's parks were ADA compliant for swings and equipment and if the Lexington County parks located within the City had non-ADA compliant equipment then staff removed it from the park.

Deputy City Manager Crosland introduced Mr. Bill Clark, the City's Fleet Manager. He stated that Mr. Clark provided Council with a current vehicle list. He stated that as staff implemented the software program, they were able to capture the vehicles, but the updated mileage was a little off but as staff updated their car keys and got gas in the new system, it would slowly update that software factor.

Mr. Clark thanked Council for the new software and stated that it was working like a dream and was much easier and faster than the previous software. He stated that he had requested a new printer and to attend a class in Waco, Texas. He stated that it was a free class on the street sweeper taught by the people that built the street sweeper, and it was a fabulous class. Council Member Sox asked what could be accomplished once staff completed the class. Mr. Clark stated that the class went through every inch of the streetsweeper from the front bumper all the way to the back. He stated that it was good for the mechanic and the operators because the class covered stuff that the operator needed to know when he was out on the road, and it covered items the mechanic needed to know when it came in for service. He stated that he also requested a backup generator for the fuel pumps because the current one was at least 50 years old. He stated that it ran on natural gas and was on its last leg. He stated that he was not sure it would last an hour if it had to run. Council Member Carter asked if the backup generator was isolated from the grid. Mr. Clark stated that as far as he knew it did isolate from the grid. Council Member Carter asked if the power broom that Parks requested was an attachment or a self-contained machine. Mr. Denny stated that it was a self-contained piece of equipment.

Assistant City Manager Mike Conley presented the Planning and Development Department's proposed budget. He thanked Council for the new software for the department and stated that it was being installed and should be up and running in the next couple of months. He stated that Ms. Monique Ocean was taking the AICP examination and Administration was happy to support her in that. He stated that he requested a new laptop and docking station for Ms. Rochelle Smith so she could be more data supportive. He stated there had been a small increase in the amount of Hospitality Tax funds the City collected and a small decrease in the Accommodations Tax funds. He stated that that Lexington Urgent Care opened on Knox Abbott Drive and a rehab facility opened on Taylor Street and Trini Lime Caribbean Cafe opened on State Street which was a wonderful addition to the City. Assistant City Manager Conley stated that Taco Nayarit was under construction on Knox Abott Drive and Dunbar

Village, a residential construction, was underway. He stated that the new pickleball court would be under construction soon and a Five Below was opening in Parkland Plaza. He stated that Planning and Development staff had been doing audits on business licenses and had caught wrong revenues being listed and had gotten additional revenues that the City truly deserved to get.

Andy Thomas presented the proposed Museum budget. He thanked Council for being supporters and stewards of the City's history and heritage. He stated that he now had a full-time employee, Ms. Elizabeth Lumsden, who became full-time in July 2023. He stated that expanded what they could do in the Museum, and she was doing a really good job for the City. He stated that last fall the Museum hosted the opening reception for the South Carolina Federation of Museums which was the main organization for South Carolina museums. He stated that they were given a major donation of modern Catawba pottery and the appraisal on the pottery was finished in January and they were starting to look at how they could display that pottery in the Museum. Mr. Thomas stated that the African American Legends of Cayce exhibit was finished this year which gave the Museum even more diversity than it had. He stated that they had received very positive responses from everyone who visited the exhibit and would continue to promote it. He stated that the Museum Commission had worked on a new strategic plan for the Museum and were in the early stages of creating a Friends group for the museum. He stated that they were replacing the top five (5) windows of the Museum and Austin Historical was in the process of building the windows.

Mr. Thomas stated that the Museum got a donation from the Midlands Coin Club that consisted of all Confederate bills that were printed during the time when the Confederate printing press was in Columbia. He stated that he was in the process of completing the public safety building upgrades in the public safety exhibit building. He stated that the ceiling was completed as well as the lights and walls and the floors were finished. He stated that they were now ready to begin building out exhibits in the building. Mr. Thomas stated that they were creating a new exhibit that would look at all three (3) aspects of the Columbia Airport - the military part, the part when the airport was small in the 50s, and 60s, and then what the modern airport was all about. He stated that they had collected some really neat materials from the Airport.

Mr. Thomas stated that much of what he requested would be funded with Accommodations Tax and Hospitality Tax funds. He stated that he had requested hiring a design service to help staff envision the space to display the Catawba pottery. He stated that the 250th anniversary of the Revolutionary War was in the near future and he had requested money to construct cases and build an exhibit in honor of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He stated that it was approved in the current budget to have new gutters installed but had to wait until the windows were completed. He stated that the new gutters would divert the rainwater that was causing the windows to rot. Mr. Thomas stated that he also requested monies for annual events that the Museum holds.

Council Member Thomas thanked Mr. Thomas for having a rain date for Christmas Traditions. He asked if he was going to be proactive and have a rain date this year in case of bad weather. Mr. Thomas stated that he and the Commission had discussed that and did plan on having an alternate date in case of bad weather. Council Member Thomas asked approximately how many people toured the Museum. Mr. Thomas stated that in 2023 approximately 600 people toured the Museum. Council Member Thomas asked if there were any marketing materials in the Museum that listed local restaurants and where to shop in Cayce. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that the local Chamber had marketing materials for the City. City Manager Hegler stated that the Museum and the 12,000 Year History Park were marketed at welcome centers throughout the state.

Mr. Jamie Beckham presented the proposed IT budget. He thanked Council for approving a new position in IT and stated that the additional help had enabled him to tackle a lot of the help desk backlog. He stated that there was 80 to 85 help desk tickets on backlog and they were down to 16 and 12 of those were long term projects. He stated that they were able to be a lot more responsive and get things done in a timely manner. He stated that they were actually starting to check things off of their wish list and were starting to do some more proactive stuff. He stated that with the ARPA funds Council gave him last year, they started converting staff over to a docking station and laptop combination and no longer used traditional desktops where it was appropriate. He stated that way they only had to support one (1) device instead of two (2) and it helped staff to be mobile and work remote. He stated that he had requested 13 new rugged laptops since their lifespan was five (5) years and they were trying to roll them off at the five (5) year mark. Mr. Beckham stated that he also used ARPA funds to roll out some mobile device management that allowed him to keep control of the City's cell phones.

Mr. Beckham stated that he saw a substantial price increase in everything. He stated that they had added a lot of servers the last two (2) or three (3) years and the City's data footprint went from about eight (8) terabytes to about 13 terabytes which was a 50% increase in what they were already pushing up to the cloud. He stated another issue was the cost of a three (3) year commitment. He stated that across the board, all the vendors he looked at for this year, if he went with less than three (3) years with them, they wanted substantially more money for just the one (1) year commitment. He stated that he also used ARPA funds to replace all the City's switches that were the backbone of the network. He stated that they had replaced both firewalls and several of the switches. He stated that they were working with a consultant vendor to help them build it in a thoughtful manner. Council Member Thomas asked if the sanitation app could be expanded to list City events and a calendar. Mr. White stated that staff was currently working on getting all the City's addresses entered into the app. Council Member Thomas asked him to keep Council in the loop since it was beneficial to enhance the app and he would love to be supportive of that. Mr. Beckham stated that it did have some ability to have additional messaging for citizens. He stated that it was

built as a notification for sanitation pickup, but they had expanded it with a few other messages. He stated that currently staff was experiencing issues with the address database.

Ms. Kelly McMullen presented the proposed Finance budget. She stated that she had requested an additional fleet vehicle for Administration. She stated that one more fleet vehicle would help disperse the load against the current vehicles. She stated that she had requested money for new software. She stated that the current software did a great job on financials but not the transparency in the reporting of those financials as well as the stuff that was grant related and procurement related that was handled by spreadsheets and PDF and was currently a manual process. She stated that new software would give staff the ability to do budgeting and planning and make the budgeting a more collaborative process and a more transparent process so that all staff could log into a portal. She stated that the minute she made a change, it would be noted and tracked, and Administration could see the changes. She stated that the software would help in creating a real formal capital improvement plan and a personnel plan and that would be part of the planning and budgeting and the procurement side which also included contract management. Ms. McMullen stated that currently the grant process was an Excel-based manual process. She stated that the City's grants were exploding, and staff was doing everything it could to go after grants and Excel was just not ideal and she did not want to risk missing a deadline. She stated that the new software would help the City be more transparent and collaborative. She stated the cost to implement the new software would be approximately \$66,000 and that would include all the City's information, every contract, every RFP, all of the grants and a chart of all the City's accounts, being put into the software. She stated that then there would be a \$66,000 recurring cost to upkeep the software.

Ms. McMullen stated that Finance had been looking at an indirect cost transfer study. She stated that the indirect cost transfer was the amount of money that basically utilities paid the general fund for their use of HR, their use of finance and their use of the other general fund departments. She stated that in her opinion, staff needed to seek an outside source to do a professional study. She stated that it was currently an internal process. She stated that the City only had one printer capable of printing checks and she was asking to put money in reserve in the Finance budget in case the printer ever did break, the funds would be there to immediately replace it. Council Member Thomas asked if the Grants Management Program searched out the grants for the City to pursue or was it more to keep staff organized and on schedule. Ms. McMullen stated that the ones she had looked at only monitored the grant once staff was aware of it.

Chief Steven Bullard presented the Fire Department's proposed budget. He stated that over the past year they had over 2,100 calls, 91 of which were fire calls. He stated that of those 91 fire calls, they saved \$4.7 million in property. He stated that they had over 5,000 hours of training between the 24 people on staff. He stated that in 2020 they ran 1,100 calls and in 2023 they ran 2,100 so in that three-year period, they had an



89% increase in call volume. He stated that he did a salary study internally, between 10 departments around the state, and looked at varying positions within the fire department and then comparing all those positions and salaries across the state, found that Cayce was below the average in a lot of areas. He stated that he was requesting to spend approximately \$90,000 to increase their salaries to get above that average level. He stated that that would account for things such as compression and certification pay for the firefighters who work hard for the City every day.

Chief Bullard stated that they were in dire need of a new fire engine. He stated that the last engine was purchased in 2016 or 2015 and had a lot of wear on it. He stated that it would be replacing the 1999 engine that was still in service that had been used a good bit lately, due to some mechanical problems with the other trucks. He stated that a new engine would cost approximately \$900,000 and that would include the truck and all equipment. He stated that he spoke to a salesman recently and he mentioned how much these apparatuses had increased in price over the past three (3) years. He stated that the price of an engine had risen 63% since 2020 and he did not foresee the increase in price slowing down. Chief Bullard stated that he had requested a replacement of the Fire Department's service truck which was a 2008 Ford F250 with over 205,000. He stated that it was used to transport their boat to and from the river for emergencies. He stated that they were looking at replacing it with a multipurpose vehicle that could take the place of that truck and another truck they currently used and would cost about \$175,000. He stated that he had requested some upgrades to the station. He stated that they were running out of room and needed to do some general updating to make the station more comfortable for the eight (8) firefighters on shift every day who spent a third of their life there. He stated that a rough estimate would be about \$100,000 to do those updates and upgrades.

Chief Bullard stated that he had requested a UTV to be used in the Riverwalk and at the special events they do. He stated that it would be used to provide patient transport and would have fire suppression capabilities on it as well. He stated that currently when they responded to patients at the Riverwalk they had to either carry them out of the Riverwalk or borrow the police departments UTV. He stated that their own UTV would make it more efficient for them to be able to respond and provide a better level of care to the City's citizens and for events. Chief Bullard stated that the Speedway was a large area so it would be beneficial if they had a way to get around there faster carrying all their equipment. He stated that the cost of the UTV was \$38,000. He stated that the Assistant Chief's vehicle had over 100,000 miles on it and needed to be replaced as well as new bunker gear was needed. He stated that he had requested an off-site storage building where they could store a reserve engine and their boats and free up some space at the station and that cost would be \$75,000. He stated that they had applied for a AFG grant through FEMA to replace their radios but would not know until October if they got it but if not, they needed to start thinking about setting some money aside to replace the radios since the police department had already gotten funded to replace theirs and they needed to be able to communicate with them.

Chief Bullard stated that he had been looking at long range planning and with their increase in call volume and the number of services they provided to the community, they were looking at adding some additional firefighters. He stated that in FY25-26 he hoped to get one more per shift and in FY26-27 another additional firefighter per shift, and a new fire station in FY27-28 and an additional three firefighters. He stated that they would also need to replace some equipment and another fire truck at that point. He stated that turnout gear would need to be replaced then as well. Council Member Sox asked if the goal was to add nine FTEs by 2028. Chief Bullard stated yes and hopefully a new station so they could accommodate them. Mayor Pro Tem James asked if he currently had the staff he truly needed. Chief Bullard stated not really to be able to provide the best service. He stated that currently they would need nine (9) per shift which would allow them to have two (2) full shifts, trucks and a battalion chief to go on every call wherever they were needed. Mayor Pro Tem James asked what he did when he was short currently. Chief Bullard stated that they utilized mutual aid with West Columbia and Lexington County to meet the NFPA standard.

Chief Chris Cowan presented the Police Department's proposed budget. He stated that he was always excited to get the opportunity to tell Council all about the department because they were extremely proud of what their Officers were doing every day. He stated that they were looking at a very competitive market in law enforcement with currently 5,400 openings in the state. He stated that when it came to competing for talent, they were trying to make sure they were providing the best environment that they possibly could, whether that was resources, equipment, or teaming. He stated that the department was up about 10.9% in calls for service from the year before when they had 12,983 calls for service. He stated that they took 30,543 incident reports last year and that was up from the year before. He stated that they were in a situation where their calls for service were rising, and their impact to the communities was rising in a positive way. Chief Cowen stated that they had started better tracking the way that their personnel worked by utilizing Smart Cop and by utilizing more innovative operations within the department. He stated for example, they had combined the Park Rangers and Animal Services units therefore they no longer had one (1) person doing animal control and now had five (5) people that worked together cohesively to not only provide safety to the City's parks, but they also handled all animal calls.

Chief Cowan stated that they had started doing proactive education trying to encourage people to understand what the police department did and did not do because a lot of people were under the impression that if they found a rattlesnake in the door of their house, the police were supposed to respond. He stated that they did not have the capabilities to deal with that but could provide them a better service through providing them resources in the community. He stated that they were really excited about the transition that they had made to extra duty solutions, and it had provided an increase to the officers when they work extra duty in the community and they were able to track more cohesively the actual outcome of their working. He stated that they believed they provided a better service to the citizens, because they had a manager with extra duty

solutions that was locally based, that communicated directly with the clients and making sure that they were getting the service they needed and making sure their officers were signing up and everything was app based. He stated it was implemented on July 15 and the officers had done about 3,000 hours in extra duty work. He stated that it also provided them the ability to make sure they were covering the expenses for the City - gasoline, wear and tear on the vehicles and on the equipment. He stated that now every officer had a cell phone not only for extra duty solutions, but also now victims and suspects could get in touch with the officers, and they no longer had to use their personal devices.

Chief Cowan stated that he was really proud of the patrol division who was the backbone of the department as well as the Criminal Investigative Division and the Records Division. He stated that they had done some unique things this last year at no cost to the City. He stated that they had expanded their Social Worker Program to where they were out in the community and making contact with citizens and helping provide resources that the Officers could not provide. He stated that they provided a mental health clinician through the Department of Mental Health and also had a great partnership with the US Secret Service so they could now do digital evidence recovery and digital investigations and it was no expense to the City. He stated that the Secret Service paid for \$90,000 worth of equipment that they were providing them and training them. He stated that Sergeant Garmin was extremely passionate about this and about 85% of their cases had a digital impact of some kind and now they could do that and did not have to rely on SLED and outsource it. Chief Cowen stated that now they had agencies coming to them to ask them for help and were finding that often there was a link between the other agency's case and theirs. He stated that they had a whole new direction with their K9 program thanks to the Public Safety Foundation and the funding and fundraising efforts through Steel Paws. He stated that they had been able to expand their K9 unit and provide basically a diverse K9 unit. He stated that they now had patrol single purpose dogs, they could have patrol apprehension dogs and explosive ordnance detection dogs and therapy dogs and soon would also have a weapons detection dog for schools.

Chief Cowan stated that thanks to Council, the police department had gone through a huge technological relevant revolution, and they were hoping that they could demonstrate some of that to Council. He stated that it had provided a better ability for officers to be able to provide resources and stated that they did not have to go back to headquarters or the substation to download reports and could now do it in their vehicles. He stated that they were looking into a substation space in the community, possibly in the Hunters Mill area or the Charleston Highway area, but they needed to decentralize headquarters. He stated that they had outgrown that space and had the potential this year to be able to move into a retail space for about \$1,400 a month, which would move the Criminal Investigative Division out of headquarters and would double their space from what they currently had. He stated that by evolving their technology, they became more visible in the community and also provided resources like online reporting.

Chief Cowan stated that he had requested rugged laptops and range improvements. He stated that they had to remediate the lead at the range. He stated that they needed to replace their generator. He stated that he requested five (5) vehicles as he did last year. He stated that Dispatch needed a 24-hour support chair. He stated that they did a comparison of salaries between the City and West Columbia, Lexington, Columbia PD, USCPD, SLED, Highway Patrol and Pine Ridge. He stated that they picked those agencies because they were the ones, they lost people to. He stated that their salaries needed to be competitive. He stated that in order to do that they were looking for a competitive pay incentive plan which would basically give a higher pay to Sergeants and below and a lower increase in Lieutenants and above. He stated that they needed to make sure they were taking care of middle management. He stated that it would cost approximately \$380,000 and they would want to continue to have a pay specific for Patrol. Chief Cowan stated that Patrol was the backbone of the department and if someone was committed to being on Patrol, they wanted to continue to have a pay incentive. He stated that they implemented that last year within their budget, and it had been very beneficial. He stated that basically, if one was on Patrol, they received an incentive for staying on Patrol and if one was hired and came in to go on Patrol, they received an incentive for that as well. He stated that they believed it was very important and would make the City competitive with other agencies as well as help in retaining the great people that they had currently.

Council Member Sox stated that traffic stops were down about 2,000 and the City implemented Smart Cop in December. He asked what reduced the traffic stops. Chief Cowan stated that the officers were out there writing tickets. He stated that a resident called recently and wanted to know how many tickets were written in her neighborhood. He stated that 55 tickets were written in a six-month period in that neighborhood. Council Member Sox asked if he was looking into finding grants for ShotSpotter or something similar and asked if Chief Cowan thought it was needed in the City. Chief Cowan stated that he did not believe ShotSpotter was necessary in Cayce right now. He stated that he thought they needed to spend their money, attention, and time on other things. He stated that ShotSpotter was a system that detected gunfire and West Columbia had implemented it and they had been very successful in that. He stated that it immediately made notification from the system that there was gunfire, and they could actually pinpoint the location. He stated that was not to say that it would not benefit the City but there were other resources they needed to be committed to. He stated that the City had two homicides last year and one homicide was too many, but the City's crime numbers were low. He stated that the in-car radios were going to have to be replaced in the next year and that was going to be a big-ticket item. He stated that Administration talked about shifting that responsibility to next budget year so they could focus on salaries this year and continue to pursue grants.

Mayor Partin stated that the crime stats were amazing. She stated that she heard from citizens regularly that they felt safe. She stated that there were so many great new initiatives and projects that were proactive within the Police Department.

Chief Cowan stated that the social workers had 147 incidents that they helped with from October to March so that was 147 incidents where officers hopefully did not have to go back again.

Deputy City Manager Crosland thanked Council for their time and stated that staff loved being there to present their budgets to them. He stated that the purchaser rates were due April 28 and in May staff would be working with Council on finalizing the budget. June 4 was first reading of the budget and June 26 was second reading. July 1 the new budget would be implemented.

### **Adjourn**

Council Member Thomas made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Sox seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

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Elise Partin, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Mendy Corder, CMC, Municipal Clerk