

I. Call to Order

Members Present: Jean Szilva, Sheldon Goodwin, Susan Eddy, Steven Berbeco, Matt Francis, Maurice Matte

City Staff Present: Jessie Baker, Angela Aldieri, Kristine Lott

Guests Present: N/A

Call to Order by: Sheldon Goodwin

Meeting Start Time: 5:41

Minutes Recorded by: Susan Eddy

II. Public Comment

None

III. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

Decision: Approved

Motion by: Jean Szilva

Second: Maurice Matte

IV. Tax Rate Comparison

Staff provided a schedule comparing Winooski's tax rate and driving factors to other VT municipalities mainly in Chittenden county. The municipal tax rate is higher than other towns in Chittenden county because the value of Winooski's grand list is substantially lower. Since there is very little vacant land in the city, infill development is the only way to grow the grand list and simultaneously reduce the municipal tax rate. Reappraisal orders have been received from the state because the Common Level of Appraisal has dropped below 85%. Due to a shortage of qualified consultants the process could take up to two years to complete. The City hopes to convert land records to online storage as a part of the reappraisal process.

V. Budget Process Discussion

The FC would like to increase community involvement in the budget process. Staff shared the previous year budget presentation to help the FC committee understand how the process is shared with the Council and the community. In the past, the budget presentation to the council has been made over the course of several meetings and presented by each department. For Council the presentations need to be technical and from a city-wide perspective. Staff and the FC discussed some additional information that will make the budget more meaningful to the residents including foundational information to increase understanding and an idea of how their households might be affected by specific items. Traditionally, the budget is also presented at a Community Dinner and the Town

Meeting presentation. Other ways to outreach are not likely to be possible for the upcoming budget due to the pandemic. Brainstormed some ways to try to involve the community earlier in the budgeting process to help gauge the priorities of the community. Surveys are possible but would be difficult to conduct in a way to be sure that all demographics are included.

VI. FY21 Budget Concerns

Staff presented a memo showing the areas of the current year budget estimates that are being watched carefully. Areas of concern include changes in circumstances with some salaries and benefits which may leave some expenses that will need to be paid, unforeseen COVID-19 expenses, higher delinquencies and Local Options Tax receipts potentially being much lower than budgeted.

VII. Adjourn

Before adjournment, Maurice Matte requested more information about the “job description” the FC for the next meeting.

Motion by: MF

Second: SE

Meeting End Time: 6:50 PM