

#1 - C0006-24

Ways and Means Committee
February 5, 2024

The Committee on Ways and Means met on Monday, February 5, 2024 at 6:00pm in the City Council Chambers at City Hall.

The meeting was recorded by ECTV and can be viewed on the City of Everett website.

Members present were Councilor Stephanie Smith, presiding; Councilors Anthony DiPierro, Guerline Alcy Jabouin, Holly Garcia and Robert Van Campen, as ex-officio.

The Committee met on a Resolution offered by Councilor Guerline Alcy Jabouin: A resolution to determine and analyze the ongoing project for Senior ARPA programs to determine that our budgeted funds are being spent appropriately and effectively.

Chief Financial Officer Eric Demas was also present.

Mr. Demas acknowledged that he had received some questions from Councilor Jabouin via email regarding the status of ARPA funds spent. He explained that the ARPA program was compiled by working with outside consultants in which a plans was presented to the prior City Council who approved with the exception of the modular unit acquisition which currently remains an unexpended allocation. He mentioned that the ARPA proposals were listed on the City's website so that the public could view. Councilor Jabouin questioned how many residents who were not online would be able to view this information and Mr. Demas responded that the Administration was working on addressing that. Councilor Jabouin inquired how the rental and mortgage assistance program was advertised and who had received the assistance. She also inquired to the status of the funding for the Pope John Feasibility classrooms and Mr. Demas responded that he would research tomorrow and provide her with the information to these questions. Councilor Jabouin noted that she felt that the amount shown for the Senior Meals program was excessive and suggested that it be outsourced since she believed it could be done cheaper. Mr. Demas provided an overview of the process for that program and remarked that he didn't believe it could be done cheaper. Councilor Jabouin mentioned that there were a lot of wasted meals and stated that the program was not working. She questioned the status of the on-line teaching & learning program and Mr. Demas agreed to provide her with the information. She asked about the line item for public meetings and wanted to know where these meeting were held and Mr. Demas responded that he believed that they were for zoom meetings during the pandemic but agreed to look into further. Councilor Jabouin expressed concern about paying the salaries of City employees out of ARPA funds especially to an employee in the Finance office and another in the Executive office. Councilor Garcia also requested further information on the ARPA funds that were paid to City employees. Mr. Demas explained the challenges the City faced during the pandemic and mentioned adding staff to the 311 Department to address resident concerns during this timeframe who would now be included in the City budget. He also noted that the Finance person was paid with ARPA funds because they were doing all the paperwork and reporting requirements for ARPA that would not be going away. Chairperson Smith inquired if the Pope John funding was for the MT. Vernon feasibility study and Mr. Demas agreed to look into. Chairperson Smith also inquired about the status of the Water – Ferry and Elm improvements and Mr. Demas indicated that the funding provided was expected to be sufficient. Chairman Smith asked Mr. Demas if he could provide the unexpended amounts for Rental & Mortgage assistance and Local Small Woman & Minority Owned Businesses programs and Mr. Demas

agreed to do so. Mr. Demas informed the Committee that all the funding for ARPA needed be funded this year and spent through the end of calendar year 2026. Councilor Jabouin asked if people could still apply for rental assistance and Mr. Demas confirmed that they could. Councilor Jabouin requested that the matter remain in Committee to allow Mr. Demas the time to respond to the questions he agreed to look into and provide the members with the appropriate documents to these items.

The Committee voted: to grant further time.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley
Clerk of Committees

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The Committee met on an Order from Councilor Robert Van Campen, as President: An Order requesting the approval to appropriate \$270,000 from the General Fund Budgetary Fund Balance (Free Cash) to the General Fund Comp General Liability account to cover the increased insurance costs related to the Old High School and the new Fire boat.

Chief Financial Officer Eric Demas and City Solicitor Colleen Mejia were also present.

Solicitor Mejia explained that the Insurance carrier the City had dropped the coverage for the old high school and as a result the City had to find a new Insurance Carrier which resulted in the new policy setting the City over budget at a cost referenced at \$168,000. Solicitor Mejia also noted that the City had acquired a new Fire Boat through a grant, but need to fund the docking and insurance costs. Councilor DiPierro asked if these costs were just related to insurance or if repairs were also included. Mr. Demas informed the Committee that there would be an agenda item at the next regular meeting seeking an additional appropriation related to repair work for the old high school roof. Councilor Jabouin asked if there was a long term plan for the old high school and Mr. Demas responded that the Mayor would address that at the next City Council meeting.

The Committee voted: to report back to the City Council with a recommendation for Favorable action.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley
Clerk of Committees