

City of Willcox Newsletter

July 2009

City of Willcox Annual Budget, Fiscal Year 2009-2010

Ruth Graham, Director of Finance

The Willcox City Council has approved a tentative budget for the 2009-2010 fiscal year totaling \$35,212,134. That is an increase of \$14,683,191 over the FY08-09 budget of \$20,528,943. The City's actual expenditures for the year ended June 30, 2009 are projected at \$8,320,116 before year-end adjustments. Looking at the budget by Fund, the current year General Fund budgeted expenditures of \$4,334,378 and Streets Fund (HURF) budgeted expenditures of \$1,250,996 are about the same as last year. Streets has a number of ongoing projects planned to chip seal and plastic seal streets, and construct drainage and greenways in the Keiller Park parking lot that will aid in the removal and use of storm water that accumulates on that lot, as well as increasing safety. Patte Road improvements are also planned. We have budgeted \$25 million for three major capital projects in the Utilities Funds. The Gas Fund's overall budget is \$4,190,841, which includes approximately \$3 million for a gas regulator station. The City's current system was built more than 50 years ago and no longer meets our needs. The Water Fund's budget totals \$3,122,793. Of that, \$2 million has been budgeted for the installation of a secondary water transmission main. We have one 16 inch water main to feed the City. If it was out of commission for any reason, the City would be without water. The proposed main down Circle I Road from the wells will also provide additional infrastructure for future development. The Sewer Fund has an overall budget of \$20,747,501. That amount includes capital improvements of approximately \$20 million for wastewater system repairs and improvements. The Arizona Dept. of Environmental Quality has issued several Notices of Violation to the City for its sewer treatment plant that must be addressed. The City has been working with ADEQ and an engineering firm to develop a lower-cost solution to the problems. We have been awarded a \$35,000 grant to help with the engineering costs, and have applied for additional grants.

The State of Arizona has a budget deficit of more than 20% of its projected revenues. Efforts by the State to control its costs have resulted in less money coming to the cities through State Shared Revenues. Our projected State Sales Tax revenues are based on income tax collections made two years ago. Those projected revenues have decreased by about \$53,000. The State Revenue Sharing of sales tax receipts has been reduced by \$71,127. The Auto Lieu Tax from vehicle licensing fees has dropped by \$12,000 with additional cuts anticipated. The projected Streets Fund shared revenues have been cut by about \$40,000. Across the State of Arizona, fuel taxes have been decreasing. The rate of state tax on a gallon of fuel has not changed in decades, while roadway maintenance and construction costs have increased. In addition, vehicles have become more fuel efficient which further reduces revenues.

The City budget is available for review at all City offices, including City Hall, the Library, Public Works and Public Safety. Public hearings on the budget will be held at the regular City Council meetings on July 20th and August 3rd at 7:00 p.m. at the City Council Chambers, 300 W Rex Allen Drive, Willcox, AZ 85643, and public input is welcomed.

SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING TO BE HELD IN WILLCOX

Chief Jake Weaver, Willcox Department of Public Safety

On July 28th 2009, the Willcox Police Department, in conjunction with the FBI, will be conducting training at the Willcox High School campus. Training will begin at 9:00 A.M. and will last into the late afternoon. Municipal, county, state, and federal law enforcement officers from numerous agencies throughout south eastern Arizona will be participating in active shooter training. The Active Shooter Training program is designed to teach law enforcement officers the safest and quickest methods to take back a school, business, shopping center, or other areas where people are concentrated, from a hostile shooter or shooters. This training teaches and evaluates the ability of law enforcement to function in a controlled, safe, and efficient manner while working in a chaotic environment. The training will involve law enforcement officers moving through the school with weapons which will have been rendered safe by certified law enforcement firearms instructors, in search of another law enforcement officer acting as a hostile shooter.

To provide a more realistic environment and help recreate conditions that officers may encounter, the training will utilize 20-40 school age students and school staff as role players for the scenario. These students and staff will receive a safety briefing and then be expected to act as injured/panicked citizens attempting to flee the hostile shooter. Students and staff participants will be given specific parameters as to their roles and responsibilities during this training.

Throughout the training, participants will be exposed to loud screaming, loud music, running, and “controlled” confusion, which may be heard coming from within the school campus and buildings. Officers may be seen from time to time assembling in the area with real weapons and entering the school campus, and may be seen running and shouting orders, which the role players may be instructed to ignore based on their assigned role.

During this time, it is requested that members of the public **DO NOT** attempt to enter the high school campus, and do not become alarmed by the activity that may be heard or seen from time to time. The public's understanding and consideration throughout the day will be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions regarding the training, please contact the Willcox Police Department at 384-4673.