

CITY OF BALTIMORE

BERNARD C. "JACK" YOUNG, Mayor



OFFICE OF COUNCIL SERVICES

LARRY E. GREENE, Director
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HEARING NOTES

Bill: 20-0527

Ordinance of Estimates for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2021

Committee: Budget and Appropriations
Chaired By: Councilmember Eric T. Costello

Hearing Date: Thursday, June 11, 2020

Fire Department and Office of Emergency Management

Time (Beginning): 9:10 AM
Time (Ending): 11:05 AM
Location: Virtual "WebEx" Meeting
Total Attendance: Approximately 40

Department of Recreation and Parks

Time (Beginning): 12:30 PM
Time (Ending): 3:00 PM
Location: Virtual "WebEx" Meeting
Total Attendance: Approximately 50

Comptroller's Office

Time (Beginning): 3:05 PM
Time (Ending): 4:05 PM
Location: Virtual "WebEx" Meeting
Total Attendance: Approximately 40

Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPSS)

Time (Beginning): 5:40 PM
Time (Ending): 8:55 PM
Location: Virtual "WebEx" Meeting
Total Attendance: Approximately 50

Committee Members in Attendance:

NOTE: All committee members attended at least one or more hearings throughout the day

Eric Costello Bill Henry
 Leon Pinkett Sharon Sneed
 Danielle McCray Sharon Middleton
 Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer

Bill Synopsis in the file?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Attendance sheet in the file?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Agency reports read?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Video or audio-digitally recorded?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file?.....	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a
Evidence of notification to property owners?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a
Final vote taken at this hearing?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

- Niles Ford, Fire Department
- James Matz, Fire Department
- James Fischer, Fire Department
- Daniel Ramos, Finance Department
- Christopher Caisse, Fire Department
- Derrick Ready, Fire Department
- Reginald Moore, Recreation and Parks
- Adam Boarman, Recreation and Parks
- William Vandrusek, Recreation and Parks
- Jacia Smith, Recreation and Parks
- Joan Pratt, Comptroller
- Mira Green, Finance Department
- Simon Etta, Municipal Telephone Exchange
- Charmaine Callah, Municipal Post Office
- Walter Horton, Comptroller's Office
- Josh Pasch, Department of Audits
- Sonja Santelises, CEO, BCPSS
- Mary Anne Cox, BCPSS
- Alison Perkins-Cohen, BCPSS
- Jeremy Grant-Skinner, BCPSS
- Lynette Washington, BCPSS
- Tina Hike-Hubbard, BCPSS

Major Issues Discussed

1. Several agency heads and their staff came before the committee/council members for day four (4) of the budget hearings.
2. PowerPoint presentations were given by all agency representatives. **Copies of all presentations are in Legistar and/or on file.**
3. After each agency head concluded his/her presentation, the committee/council members asked questions, stated concerns, asked for clarification, and etc. Some highlights of same were:
 - **Fire Department and Office of Emergency Management**
 - Converting Uniform Positions to Civilian Positions
 - How many have been converted to date?
 - Equity Coordinator
 - Have you hired one yet? **Answer: Yes**
 - Disbanding Two (2) Fire Suppression Companies
 - Can you talk about the disbandment(s) and the impact it will have on response time?
 - We need to know which companies will be closed before voting on the budget
 - Take Home Cars – is of concern
 - The number of take home cars are down from 45 to 37 – **Response: The use for take home cars depends on need**
 - Billing for Services Provided – is of concern
 - We should be collecting for what services we are providing
 - EMS Staffing Level
 - Can you talk about the effect the pandemic has had on your operation and are you outsourcing any of your services?
 - What was the name of the company used when outsourced? **Answer: Heart to Heart Ambulance.**
 - Have you considered creating an Assistant Chief position for this unit?
 - Comment: The 911 Unit is doing an exceptional job. Keep up the good work!
 - Service 608 – Defunding an Executive Director's position; why?
 - High Turnover
 - Have you figured out why turnover is so high?
 - Service 615: Fire Training and Education
 - The target for the number of collisions for vehicles seems high; a lot of collisions! What processes are in place to reduce the number of collisions?
 - **Department of Recreation and Parks**
 - Aquatics Unit
 - It appears there is some immediate needs for fixing up pools, how much will it cost?
 - Do you have capital funding budgeted for these projects?
 - How much would it cost the city if we allowed free admission into pools?
 - Recreation Centers
 - What is the possibility of housing some of these centers in schools?
 - Some discussion regarding having centers opened seven (7) days a week

- How much does it cost to build a recreation center?
 - District #5 – No recreation center is located in district and the children in district are being left behind; would like to hear something about resolving this issue before voting on budget
- Basketball Courts/Soccer Pitches/Tennis Courts
 - Each district was supposed to get at least one
 - Which districts received one?
 - Let's go through every district and give an update for same
- Service 646 – Park Maintenance
 - Where are you with assessing all playgrounds citywide?
 - **Request by Burnett:** Provide an update for all playgrounds after the assessment is completed
- Service 654 – Urban Forestry
 - Where are we with the ability to provide maintenance to our urban forestry?
 - Additional funding: What funding do you need to maintain same?
 - There are five (5) new positions – What will be their job duties?
- Urban Forestry and Senior Services
 - What do you think you could do if more funding was allocated for same?
- Equity Analysis
 - How is it applied to your budget?
- Park Advisory Board
 - It seems to be defunct! What is your view on the Board?
 - We need to get it back up and running
- Board of Recreation and Parks
 - Bylaws discussed
 - If this Board is re-established would you (Director Moore) be interested in serving on it? You would have a voice on it! Looking forward to having a conversation with you regarding same
- Service 651 – Recreation for Seniors
 - What will be a part of this program(s)?
 - What will be provided?
- Trails
 - Comment: Unsafe conditions on some trails; need trails restored to a safe condition
 - Do you have a timeline for some of these improvements?
- Fields and Paths
 - Some are in bad shape and some are due to be improved! Have COVID-19 affected funding for same?
- Pen Hurst Park
 - Are you removing the restroom from this location?
- Stump Removal
 - Who is responsible for removal(s)?
 - District #3 – would like to see more removed in district; especially the very large ones that have been sitting a long time!
- Skate Parks and Pump Tracks
 - We need more! What is the status for same and what kind of outreach are you doing?

- Playing Field Across for Rita Church Recreation Center
 - Where are we with this Field? **Answer: Will submit an update for changes and cost associated with same to committee**
- Service 647 - Youth and Adult Sports
 - Where do you think COVID-19 is going and how will it affect youth and adult sports?
 - For budgetary purposes: We need to know 100% about who is using our fields
- **Comptroller's Office**
 - Service 130 – New Position
 - Position to provide operational support – tell us about the duties associated with this position
 - Contractual Services
 - Are all these services new or are they existing services?
 - What is the timeline for implementing the new VOIP system?
 - Nine (9) Full-time Operators
 - Do you have statistics on how many calls we get? How do you measure same?
 - Is there a reason why we do this separate from 311 operators?
 - Unused Phone Lines
 - A report came out recently in the media!
 - Have you received any requests to disconnect unused phone lines/numbers?
 - Can't the numbers that have nothing coming in or going out be seen? It should be relatively easy to do!
 - Telephone Directory
 - What can we do about updating telephone numbers for the proper person(s) the number(s) are assigned to?
 - For clarification purposes: The Directory for reaching people – who is responsible for this?
 - Municipal Post Office
 - How many employees pick up mail?
 - Does the U.S. Post Office deliver mail to the city? **Answer: We pick it up for the city at the U.S. Post Office**
 - How many vehicles do you have for your drivers?
 - Who is our mail person for city hall?
 - Transferred Position
 - One position is being transferred to the Municipal Post Office – can you talk about this transfer?
 - Audits
 - Comment: Thanked Auditor for getting audits completed
 - Improving technology for audits – What is the status of this?
 - Equity Coordinator
 - Who is your equity coordinator?
 - Where are you with the implementation of the equity law?
 - **Request by President Scott** – Provide a follow-up on your implementation plan
 - Positions – Reducing four (4) Positions
 - Three (3) reductions from Audits and one (1) from Real Estate; why are the cuts only proposed in these two offices? Are these vacant positions? **Answer: Yes**

- **Baltimore City Public Schools**
 - Mental Health – can you talk a little about this?
 - Highlighted Deficiencies Due to Pandemic
 - Deficiencies especially surrounding technology, curriculum and training
 - Where are we going with virtual technology?
 - How are we going to address the digital divide?
 - Pandemic effect on next school year!
 - Will probably be a new way of during things
 - Students who are struggling through school: What is happening with them come July 1, 2020?
 - Are adult resources being allocated for students who are falling through the cracks?
 - Tutors need to help students catch up – who is the contact person for this? May have some older adults to assist!
 - Cuts to Risk Management – how did this affect your operation?
 - School Rezoning
 - **Request by Burnett** – Provide an update on school rezoning
 - Teacher Recruitment
 - What is the current retention rate for black teachers?
 - Is there anything you can use from us to help attract teachers?
 - Are any cuts being made to teachers? **Answer: No, no layoffs**
 - Fine Art Teachers – where are you with increasing the hiring for same?
 - Air Conditioning in Schools
 - What is the status of same?
 - Are you staying on track of this issue?
 - Webpage
 - Is there a webpage for the 21st Century Schools?
 - Early Childhood Education
 - Early literacy – can you talk about how your budget promotes same?
 - Is it in the blueprint to make sure we have literacy coaches?
 - **Request by McCray** – Provide a list of schools who have literacy coaches
 - Auto Mechanic Program(s)
 - Suggestions:
 - Our Department of Transportation may be able to help with this program; try connecting with them
 - Should connect with Recreation and Parks too to partnership; believe the connection will grow
 - Comment: Talked about the power of partnerships
 - School Closing in District #6
 - Concern: Students walking to go to another school while sidewalks, lighting and debris are present – our students must be safe and the walking routes maintained
 - Transportation and Walking to School
 - Quote: If all students got to school on time, our transit system would not be equipped to handle them all!

- Elijah Cummings Healing Act – Memorandum of Understanding
 - Mental health crisis – as pandemic continues to affect family – concern: child abuse
 - The initial point when students returns to school – how will you address trauma related issues?
 - Zero Waste
 - Zero waste is about finding new ways to incinerate!
 - Composting food waste
 - Want city to provide containers for composting and for recycling
 - Use our students to get the work out to the public about composting and recycling
 - Preparing students for the workforce
 - Community Use of School Facilities
 - How are you tracking this?
 - And, how are you going to roll it back out?
 - Sports in the fall – some comments and concerns
 - MTA Schedule during summer school – is of concern
 - BCPS Farm
 - Who is the contact person for this?
 - School Choice Process
 - Talk about the work going on for making school choice a more equitable process
 - Schools with high concentration of poverty – comments regard same and is of concern
4. The hearing was called to recess until June 12, 2020

Further Study

Was further study requested?

Yes No

If yes, describe.

Marguerite M. Currin

Marguerite M. Currin, Committee Staff

Date: June 29, 2020

cc: Bill File
OCS Chrono File

City of Baltimore

City Council
City Hall, Room 408
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Meeting Minutes - Final

Budget and Appropriations Committee

Thursday, June 11, 2020

9:00 AM Virtual Webex Hearing: Phone: 1-408-418-9388, Event
Number: 129 259 4959, Password: Public,
[https://bmore.webex.com/bmore/onstage/g.php?](https://bmore.webex.com/bmore/onstage/g.php?MTID=e868d83c3829a0554050f8f0d221bc2dd)
MTID=e868d83c3829a0554050f8f0d221bc2dd

20-0527

FY 2021 Budget Hearings
CHARM TV 25

CALL TO ORDER

INTRODUCTIONS

ATTENDANCE

Present 7 - Member Eric T. Costello, Member Leon F. Pinkett III, Member Bill Henry, Member Danielle McCray, Member Sharon Green Middleton, Member Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer, and Member Shannon Sneed

ITEM SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

20-0527

Ordinance of Estimates for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2021

For the purpose of providing the appropriations estimated to be needed by each agency of the City of Baltimore for operating programs and capital projects during the Fiscal 2021 year.

Sponsors: City Council President (Administration)

Hearing was called to recess.

ADJOURNMENT

AGENCIES BUDGET HEARING - DAY FOUR (4)

