

CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON M. SCOTT, Mayor



OFFICE OF COUNCIL SERVICES

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HEARING NOTES

Legislative Oversight: LO21-0003

Budget Briefing – Bureau of Budget and Management Research (BBMR)
2nd Quarter Projection – Fiscal Year 2022

Committee: Ways and Means
Chaired by: Councilman Eric T. Costello, in part and by Councilman Robert Stokes, Sr., in part
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 8, 2022
Time (Beginning): 10:00 AM
Time (Ending): 11:05 AM
Location: Virtual "WebEx" Meeting
Total Attendance: Approximately 50

Committee Members in Attendance:

Eric T. Costello
Robert Stokes, Sr.
Danielle McCray
Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer
Kristofer Burnett
Ryan Dorsey
Sharon Green Middleton

Form with checkboxes for Bill Synopsis in the file?, Attendance sheet in the file?, Agency reports read?, Video or audio-digitally recorded?, Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file?, Evidence of notification to property owners?, Final vote taken at this hearing?

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

- Robert (Bob) Cename, Finance Department

Major Issues Discussed

- 1. The representative from the Finance Department gave a PowerPoint presentation based on data collected through December 31, 2021. A copy is on file. The Department is projecting a \$73.3

million surplus based on the data collected during this period, an increase of \$13 million since the first quarter projection. Some highlighted comments were:

- Gave an update on the federal aid received and how it affected this quarter's projection
- All funds received via CARES Act are spent in full
- Most of the surplus projected came from Income Taxes and Transfer and Recordation Tax Revenue
- Currently no hiring freezes due to high vacancies/staffing shortages
- Made comments about the high vacancy rate throughout city government, including staffing shortages around the country
- The good news: recovery is starting to happen!
- City's financial status right now is very strong! More capital projects will be completed as a result of same

2. Committee/council members asked questions, stated concerns and asked Mr. Cennane to chime in with answers and/or comments. Some highlighted topics of discussion and/or concern were:

- Vacancies in the Department of Recreation and Parks
 - Give a little more insight into what is happening in this area
 - We should be paying employees more!
 - Are we encouraging agencies to think outside of the box? Such as creating new positions or swapping positions?
 - Staff shortages – is of concern
- Towing
 - Revenue is down
 - Overcrowded yard for storing vehicles – is of concern
 - Vehicles left on streets too long due to full capacity of the towing yard(s)
 - How is the towing inventory conducted and/or implemented? Is of concern
- Staffing Shortages
 - Are you looking at other ways to attract workers? Such as shorter work weeks and/or other innovative ways? **Answer: I need to check in and/or have a discussion with our Human Resources Department**
- Inspecting Vacant Properties
 - Capacity level to complete inspections – is of concern
 - What is being done to better increase the inspections?
- Programs/Funding Available for the Department of Recreation and Parks
 - We need to expand the programs available within the Department
 - Would like to see our young people afforded the opportunity to go on more trips that are outside of the community in our Summer Camp Program, more funding is needed in the Department for this! Have you looked into this? **Answer: There may be an opportunity to redirect funds here, will reach out to Director Moore regarding same**
 - Expansion of services available for our seniors and/or older adults – is of concern
 - We have a lot of older adults living in the city – we need more funding to expand services for them. **Answer: We will have a conversation with the Health Department concerning this.**

o **Requested by Chairman Stokes** – Is it possible to re-create the Cabinet that use to be for our Senior Population? Please look into this.

• **Requested by Councilwoman Ramos** – Can we get the balance of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund? Answer: Will forward

- Is the cost incurred for the hotels (shelter costs) where homeless people were housed included in the projected deficit for the Health Department? Answer: Yes
- Does the projection include tax credits? Answer: Yes
- Have you completed an analysis for property taxes versus property tax credits? Is there a forecast?
- There was some discussion regarding positions that actually generate revenue for the city. Have you identified key revenue generating positions? Answer: Yes

3. Hearing called to recess.

Further Study

Was further study requested?

Yes No

If yes, describe. See requests noted in “Red and Yellow highlights” in the Major Issues Discussed section above.

Marguerite M. Currin

Marguerite M. Currin, Committee Staff

Date: February 11, 2022

cc: Bill File
OCS Electronic File



Baltimore City Council Committee Hearing Attendance Record

Subject: Legislative Oversight – Budget Briefing – BBMR – 2nd Quarter Projection	Bill #: LO21-0003
Committee: Ways and Means	Chair: Eric T. Costello
Date: Tuesday, February 8, 2022	Time: 10:00 AM
Location: Virtual “WebEx” Meeting	

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY			What is your position on this bill?		Lobbyist: Are you registered in the City?*		
<u>CHECK HERE TO TESTIFY</u>			Testify	For		Against	
First Name	Last Name	Address / Organization / Email		For	Against	Yes	No
John	Doe	400 N. Holliday St. Johndoenbmore@yahoo.com	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		<i>See hearing notes</i>					

*NOTE: IF YOU ARE COMPENSATED OR INCUR EXPENSES IN CONNECTION WITH THIS BILL, YOU MAY BE REQUIRED BY LAW TO REGISTER WITH THE CITY ETHICS BOARD AS A LOBBYIST. REGISTRATION CAN BE DONE ONLINE AND IS A SIMPLE PROCESS. FOR INFORMATION VISIT: [HTTPS://ETHICS.BALTIMORECITY.GOV/](https://ethics.baltimorecity.gov/) OR CALL: 410-396-4730

City of Baltimore

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

Meeting Minutes - Final

Ways and Means

Tuesday, February 8, 2022

10:00 AM
Webex Hearing: Phone: +1-408-418-9388, Access Code:
179 198 2096, Password: Public, Link:
[https://bmore.webex.com/bmore/onstage/g.php?](https://bmore.webex.com/bmore/onstage/g.php?MTID=e6de4a8a1842b3f46de5c5e163d3bdb47)
MTID=e6de4a8a1842b3f46de5c5e163d3bdb47

Legislative Oversight: LO21-0003

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Bureau of Budget and Management Research - Fiscal Year 2022 - 2nd Quarter Projection

CALL TO ORDER

INTRODUCTIONS

ATTENDANCE

Present 7 - Eric T. Costello, Kristerfer Burnett, Ryan Dorsey, Danielle N. McCray, Sharon Green Middleton, Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer, and Robert Stokes Sr.

ITEM SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

LO21-0003

Budget Briefing

For the purpose of calling on regular budget oversight hearings for Baltimore City Public Schools to improve transparency and accountability in the allocation of over a billion dollars in public funding for the vital task of educating Baltimore's children.

Hearing was called to recess.

ADJOURNMENT