

## PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING QUESTIONS

Anisa Rodriguez <[anisarod101@gmail.com](mailto:anisarod101@gmail.com)> wrote:

1. On page 15 b does the line item for security guards include the pay for truancy officers? And has the expansion of the high school been considered in this increase in wages and salary when it comes to hiring security and truancy officers?

**ANSWER:**

**TRUANCY OFFICERS AND SCHOOL SECURITY IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND ONE OFFICER IS PAID OUT OF THE POLICE BUDGET.**

2. Pursuant to page 15a of the proposed budget, why is the item for “Salaries and Wages” underneath the **Cultural Affairs** heading absent of any appropriations?

**ANSWER:**

**ALL OF THOSE SALARIES WERE MOVED COMMUNITY SERVICE**

3. Pursuant to page 15b of the proposed budget, concerning the item for “Salaries and Wages” under the heading **Department of Police**, what is the justification for the increase of 2019’s budget from \$12.4 million to \$15.5 million for 2020?

**ANSWER:**

**The total amount budgeted for the police department in 2019 was \$15.1 million comprised of \$12.4 million per 15b and \$2.7 million per page 20 – CAP Waiver. Total budget increased from \$15.1 million to \$15.5 million requested for 2020. MANPOWER INCREASE, SALARY INCREASES (contractual wages)**

4. Pursuant to page 20 on two items: 1) what is the justification for lowering the appropriation for maintenance of the Free Public Library, given that it is a historical landmark and, in the wake of COVID-19, requires accommodations to be made it safe for attendance to the public when it reopens?

**ANSWER:**

**The Orange Public Library is funded above the statutory minimum requirement of approx. \$475,000.**

And 2) **comment:** this aspect of the budget should be increased significantly, given the desperate need to address the emergency as it unfolds now and into the Fall. The city should be **more than prepared** to address the needs of our community in every facet, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**ANSWER:**

**THE OPL SERVES AS THE CITY EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTER DURING STATE OF EMERGENCY. IN ADDITION THE CITY HAS BEEN WORKING WITH THE**

**ORANGE PUBLIC LIBRARY ON A LIBRARY BOND ACT APPLICATION TO FUND A HISTORIC RENOVATION AND ADDITION TO BRING THIS COMMUNITY JEWEL BACK TO LIFE AND CAPABLE OF SERVING THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.**

5. Pursuant to page 24 of the budget, on multiple items: why are there no appropriations for the following- EC Visit Nurse Sen Cit. PHN CY (2020), EC Municipal Alliance Grant, Summer Food Grant, and EC Cultural & Historic Affairs Division Local Arts Grant?

**ANSWER:**

**THESE ARE GRANT FUNDS THAT HAVE BEEN RECEIVED IN PRIOR YEARS NOTHING HAS BEEN RECEIVED YET AND THE GRANT APPLICATIONS ARE STILL OPEN ONCE THEY ARE RECEIVED THE CITY WILL DO A CHAPTER 159 TO INSERT THE GRANTS INTO THE BUDGET.**

**Comment:** these programs are significant to the health, safety, and preservation of our city. Concerning the last mentioned item, the Free Public Library could benefit from an appropriation of funding to the EC Cultural & Historic Affairs Division Local Arts Grant, being that it is a historical landmark in our city.

In continuation of items on page 24, why are there also no appropriations for the following- CDBG ADA Senior Transportation Bus Ch. 159, CDBG Central Park Pool Renovations Ch. 159, and CDBG Main Street Counseling Center Ch. 159? **Comment:** These funding of these programs are significant in the wake of COVID-19. As per the Pool Renovations, this item would benefit the recreation of our community.

**ANSWER:**

**THESE ARE GRANT FUNDS THAT HAVE BEEN RECEIVED AND SPENT IN PRIOR YEARS AND THE GRANT APPLICATIONS ARE STILL OPEN.**

Jeff Felds

Questions

1. Who was responsible for and failed to post the virtual budget hearing participation link and the CY 2020 Budget Public Hearing Agenda on Orange's official public website forty-eight hours prior to the June 15, 2020 at 7:00 pm virtual question filing deadline?

**ANSWER: I'M NOT AWARE THAT IT WAS NOT PUBLISHED — I ASSUMED YOU MEAN JUNE 16 MEETING.**

2. Who delivered the legal opinion or memorandum regarding the validity of denying and limiting stakeholders' oral participation rights regarding the virtual CY 2020 Public Budget Hearing?  
**ANSWER: NO ONE DELIVERED AN OPINION ABOUT “limiting stakeholders’ oral participation.....”**

3. Who delivered the legal opinion or memorandum regarding the validity of closing and not keeping open the CY 2020 Public Budget Hearing pending completion of the local governing body's public budget hearings; the posting of the CY 2020 User Friendly Budget, latest bond anticipation note offering statement and CY 2020 supplemental statements issued in connection with the 2 proposed bond ordinances listed on the June 16, 2020 agenda; a CY 2020 Budget Presentation by the administration and the reposting of all deleted material historical financial information and documentation from Orange's official public website?  
**ANSWER: THE QUESTIONS HERE ARE CONFUSING IN THAT THEY ASSUME A LEGAL OPINION WAS NEEDED OR DELIVERED. FURTHER THE QUESTION INFERS A LEGAL REQUIREMENT THAT ALL THOSE ITEMS MUST BE HELD WHILE THE BUDGET IS OPEN AND CAN'T BE MOVED UNTIL THE BUDGET HEARING AND ALL AMENDMENTS ARE APPROVED.**

4. Will stakeholders be provided an additional opportunity to speak on the introduced CY 2020 Budget and an amended CY 2020 Budget? **Yes, at the public hearing on the amendment.**

5. Who authorized the deletion of all historical financial and budget related materials from Orange's official public website? **ANSWER: NO ONE**

6. Did the deletion of those posted governmental records violate any State statute, rule or regulation? **ANSWER: EVEN IF DELETED FROM THE WEBSITE, AS LONG THE PUBLIC RECORDS ARE MAINTAINED NO VIOLATION WOULD HAVE OCCURRED. IN REALITY, THE DOCUMENTS ARE STILL POSTED**

7. What or who caused the increase of CY 2019 and CY 2020 long term tax exemption revenues from some long existing affordable housing projects?  
**PILOT revenues are realized on a cash basis thereby causing the fluctuations.**

**ANSWER: BETTER TRACKING AND ACCOUNTING BY THE ADMINISTRATION**

8. When will Orange begin to receive long term tax exemption revenues from the Alpert Group's Harvard Printing Press Project? **ANSWER: THIS YEAR**
9. What is the status of the Washington Dodd NJHMFA long term tax exemption revenue collections? **ANSWER: THIS IS UNDER NEGOTIATION – IN ANTICIPATION OF LITIGATION**
10. What is the status of the local housing authority's cooperation payments due Orange? **ANSWER: I WILL LOOK INTO THIS**
11. When will the reduction in staffing described in the CY 2020 Budget Summary commence? **ANSWERED: IT HAS COMMENCED**
12. In the event that the LFB denies Orange's proposed CY 2020 surplus waiver application on July 8, 2020, what will be the adverse consequences to the CY 2020 budget and municipal tax rate? **ANSWER: WE ARE NOT GOING TO SPECULATE**
13. Based upon the published CY 2020 Budget Summary, what is the projected aggregate municipal tax rate? **The local municipal tax rate based on the introduced budget is \$4,002**
14. Were the costs of the June 13, 2020 march included in the CY 2020 Budget? **ANSWER: DON'T UNDERSTAND THE QUESTION. PLEASE CLARIFY IN WRITING**
15. Are these additional and unanticipated costs subject to the annual cap? **ANSWER: SEE ANSWER TO 14 ABOVE**
16. How much of our annual state aid is pledged to the repayment of all authorized and issued qualified bonds? **Approx \$5.6 million**
17. On what date and resolution did the Local Finance Board approve the issuance of Redevelopment Area Bonds in connection with Orange' acquisition of the defaulted Orange Memorial Loan documents? **ANSWER: NOT REQUIRED**
18. In the last 5 years, how much has our long term debt (including bond

anticipation notes) increased? **Long term debt has increased approx. \$12.1 million in the General Capital Fund and has decreased approx. \$1 million in the Utility Capital Fund (12/31/2014 to 12/31/2019)**

19. Based upon the CY 2020 CBAC roster, why did councilpersons Wooten and Summers- Johnson elect not to appoint any representatives?  
**ANSWER: APPOINTMENTS BY CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS IS DISCRETIONARY NOT MANDATORY**
20. Why did councilperson Coley only appoint one CBAC member?  
**ANSWER: SEE ANSWER TO 19**
21. Under what authority did lame duck councilperson Williams appoint 3 CBAC members?  
**ANSWER: SEE ANSWER TO 19**
22. As of today, how much monies have been appropriated and allocated to coronavirus response emergency and amortizable expenses? **\$1.4 million**
23. How much monies have been appropriated for coronavirus no-bid contracts?  
**ANSWER: THEY ARE EMERGENCY CONTRACTS THAT FOLLOW THE EMERGENCY PROCUREMENT PROVISIONS- \$802,000.\_**
24. Does the introduced CY 2020 Budget fund litigation and tax appeal reserves?  
**ANSWER: YES**
25. When and why did a State taxing authority direct Orange to conduct a reevaluation?  
**ANSWER: THE STATE STATUTE SAYS EVERY TEN YEARS THE CITY WISHES TO BE IN COMPLIANCE**
26. What are the projected amortizable costs of this revaluation?  
**ANSWER: APPROXIMATELY \$500K**
27. Does Orange have any colorable intangible causes of actions against any third parties that could be used to fund this and future budgets?  
**ANSWER: THE CITY DOES NOT COMMENT ON POTENTIAL LITIGATION OR LITIGATION STRATEGY**
28. What steps has Orange taken to recoup all disgorged monies from Willis Edwards III?  
**ANSWER: ADMINISTRATION DEFERS TO CITY COUNCIL**
29. Are all the costs of the May 12, 2020 vote-by-mail election included in the CY 2020 Budget?

ANSWER: YES

30. What would be the cost savings from shifting all municipal elections from a May to a November election cycle?

ANSWER: BETWEEN \$30 AND \$60K

31. What would be the cost savings from the elimination of the legislative research officer position?

ANSWER: APPROXIMATELY \$30k

32. What would be the cost savings from the elimination of two police and fire directors, the creation of a public safety director and the creation of police and fire chief paramilitary positions?

ANSWER: APPROXIMATELY \$155K

33. What would be the cost savings from the outsourcing of our in-house law department to an outside law firm with a substantial malpractice insurance policy?

ANSWER: DON'T KNOW THIS IS MORE COMPLICATED – WILL NEED TO MAKE SOME ASSUMPTIONS AND MODEL IT

34. What would be the cost savings from the elimination and consolidation of two competing public websites?

ANSWER: APPROXIMATELY \$25K PER YEAR

35. Are all post appointment of a new CFO Suplee costs included in the introduced CY 2020 Budget?

ANSWER: YES

36. In CY 2019 and CY 2020, how much did Orange pay or appropriate for its outside auditor, special outside budget consultant and the Suplee accounting firm?

- In CY 2019 and CY 2020 a total of appropriations for approximately \$710,000.

37. How much additional in-house Finance Department related work was performed by our outside auditors, special outside budget consultant and the Suplee accounting firm?

ANSWER: PLEASE DEFINE “IN-HOUSE FINANCE DEPARTMENT RELATED WORK”

38. With regards to Jammie Anderson, was his new fire department position

authorized by the local governing body and included in the introduced CY 2020 Budget?

**ANSWER: IT IS INCLUDED IN THE BUDGET AND DOES NOT REQUIRE COUNCIL APPROVAL**

39. Who authorized the publication of a \$3,267 two page police uniforms bid notice bearing the name of our mayor and his brother to be published in the Saturday June 13, 2020 Star Ledger Sports Section and was this expense included in the introduced CY 2020 Budget?

**ANSWER: ADMINISTRATION**

**From:** Christopher Hartwyk  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 10:33 AM  
**To:** Joyce Lanier <[JLanier@orangenj.gov](mailto:JLanier@orangenj.gov)>  
**Cc:** Nile Clements <[NClements@orangenj.gov](mailto:NClements@orangenj.gov)>; Gracia Robert Montilus <[GMontilus@orangenj.gov](mailto:GMontilus@orangenj.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING QUESTIONS.docx

Please cut and paste mr Frlds questions into email and send it to me that way. I'll answer what I can.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 16, 2020, at 10:25 AM, Joyce Lanier <[JLanier@orangenj.gov](mailto:JLanier@orangenj.gov)> wrote:

Attached are questions regarding tonight's budget hearing. Ms. Rodriquez questions have been answered by the BA and Nile. Will someone be supplying the answers to Mr. Feld's 38 questions?

Thank you

Joyce

Email Disclaimer: This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender. This message contains confidential information and is intended only for the individual named. If you are not the named addressee you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this e-mail. Please notify the sender immediately by e-mail if you have received this e-mail by mistake and delete this e-mail from your system. If you are not the intended recipient you are notified that disclosing, copying, distributing or taking any action in reliance on the contents of this information is strictly prohibited.

<PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING QUESTIONS.docx>