

The FY 2022 Budget continues the healthy financial growth of our city. This next FY, the City will spend \$3,166,904 in salary increases, additional police personnel and vehicles, beautification, new equipment for both Parks and Recreation and Public Works. This budget also borrows \$925,000 for the Quail Hollow and Pebble Brook projects from the water/sewer fund with a ten-year payback. The budget totals \$18,004,147.00.

### General Fund

Let's start with the General Fund. Salary increases totaled \$222,684 or a 3% increase. As you know, the City does not give "across the board" increases. The increases are determined by the department heads and are based on yearly performance reviews. An individual may receive an increase of 3%, 5%, or no increase, based on their performance. This method rewards initiative and hard work. In addition, all employees were given a new benefit, vision care, at a cost to the City of \$15,011, for a total of \$237,695 divided across all departments.

The police department will receive five cars, and two new slots for manning. These new officers will be the first step towards the development of a narcotics division, joining the patrolling and traffic divisions. The goal is to bring our force to seventy slots over the next four years.

A review of salaries within particular levels of the police department proved there were deficiencies that required adjustment. To address this, an additional \$174,124 was added for senior officers – those with eight or more years of service, civilian dispatchers, and booking officers. Total increase to the police department, \$304,579.

We will continue to seek ways to better protect our community from the criminal element, both active and passive, maintaining Clinton's status as the third safest City in Mississippi.

The fire department receives a new pickup truck, an outdoor warning siren for fire station 2 (\$29,500) and four thermal imaging cameras. Additional salary increases totaling \$12,895 were given to the Fire Marshall and the Training Officer to align them with other cities. Total increase for the fire department, \$57,862.

The Public Works Street Department adds a sand/salt spreader, and money for a landscaping contractor to maintain the Highway 80 intersection and the entrance/exit ramps on I-20. New Christmas decorations along the Parkway are included to replace the rotting decorations held together by duct tape.

This budget adds \$100,000 for street paving, bringing that budget line to \$1,300,000. We continue to add to the street paving total each year in increments of \$100,000. We are one of only a few cities that grow their street paving budget each year and at the end of this elected term will have \$1,600,000 in paving/street maintenance. We will also seek paving funding from sources outside the City budget.

In addition, this budget borrows \$925,000 from the water/sewer fund to repair a culvert on Quail Hollow and a pipe issue along Pebble Brook. The City has maintenance responsibility for both of these problems. The General Fund will repay this loan, with interest, to the water/sewer fund over a 10-year period. Total increase to the street department \$2,308,500.

The Parks and Recreation Department adds two pickup trucks, a maintenance foreman, increases the salary of the Parks and Recreation Director and adds two new grass cutting mowers. Finally, the purchase of a robotic line painting machine will increase efficiency and save labor cost when lining fields. Once set, this machine will paint a soccer field in 15 minutes with one employee vs. up to 90 minutes with four employees - freeing three workers for other tasks. Total increase for the Parks and Recreation Department, \$83,789.

Our Main Street Department will host a Strategic Planning Process called "Downtown Road Map" at a cost of \$27,000. This process will take a look at the progress made, plot the direction and develop new goals for the future. \$10,000 was added to initiate a spring and fall concert season, bringing music to the ATMOS Stage at Lions Club Park. Finally, \$21,500 will be spent for new Christmas decoration in Olde Towne. With the increase in activity and the age of the current decorations', replacement of the current crumbling Olde Towne decorations is long overdue.

Finally, the General Fund budget adds a grant writer (\$18,000) Many years ago we tried a grant writer, but we discovered grants were not available. With Congress opening up the checkbook, it is a good time to see if hiring someone that talks the language of grant writing could be beneficial. This budget also hires an assistant to the Communications Director (\$40,000). The position has expanded in scope and work load to the point that an additional person is needed.

#### Water/Sewer Fund

The water/sewer fund includes spending that will provide major benefit to the City, now and in the future. This budget includes badly needed, and long overdue, equipment such as a large excavator, a small excavator, and new attachments for the City skid steer. Pay increases for the employees in the water/sewer budget are included as well as many maintenance projects. From mapping to stabilization, to water tank rehab, this budget spends \$1,989,179 to assure proper functioning of City services. The City's maintenance program is something that is rarely talked about, but is one of the most important functions we do. A continuous maintenance program prevents the breakdowns so many other cities experience.

There are two items I want to point out. One is the expansion of the Lovette Treatment Plant and the other is the hiring of a lobbyist to locate money for a new treatment plant. These two items are tied together in a bigger picture of water/sewer needs and the future direction of the City.

When I came into office (2013), the City had until 2024 to expand its water/sewer system or face fines and possible closure by MDEQ. We faced two major issues. The first problem was MDEQ would not allow additional discharge of treated water into Baker's Creek, thus closing our only discharge source. Without a source to discharge, the City is unable to expand the water/sewer system to accommodate anticipated growth. The second problem is the need to construct a new treatment plant discharging treated water in the Big Black River, 19 miles away (est. cost \$97,000,000). No City has that kind of money, so we needed to seek funding at the federal level. But funding for such projects was not available.

To deal with this important issue required a short-term and a long-term solution. The short-term solution required the expansion of the Lovett Treatment Plant. Planning to expand the Lovette water/sewer plant began in 2016. By 2020 the water sewer/fund had grown enough to pay for the

expansion of the Lovett Treatment Plant (est. cost \$5,500,000) without a need to raise sewer rates. With that expansion MDEQ agreed to extend the deadline for their new compliance numbers from 2024 to 2030. This expansion will take place over the next two budget years, and FY22 budget allocates \$2,750,000 for that purpose. The balance will be paid from the water/sewer fund in FY23.

Once the Lovett Plant expansion was underway, we could begin to address the long-term issue. In July of 2021, MDEQ finally agreed to allow Clinton to discharge our treated water into our only option, the Big Black River. With that agreement in hand, we can now move forward with obtaining the money required, solving the water/sewer needs of the City for the next 50+ years. The est. cost is \$97,000,000 and the facility will take eight to ten years to complete. The facility structures account for half of the \$97,000,000. The other half of the \$97,000,000 is in the required pipe to cover the 19 miles to the Big Black River.

This is where lobbyist comes into play. Congress is the only source for such a large amount of money and earmarks are back. To achieve success in that part of the process, we need someone that knows where to go and follow up on a consistent basis with the right people in Washington DC. Because every City in America is facing the same issues with infrastructure, competition will be intense and no city has the funds required to meet EPA and MDEQ's growing requirements without federal funds. This budget allotted \$72,000 to hire someone for this purpose.