



CITY COUNCIL

David Ripma, Mayor

Zach Andrews
Geoffrey Wunn
Jesse Davidson

Carol Allen
Glenn White
John Leamy

Agenda Tuesday, March 18, 2025

Work Session | 6:00 PM

Troutdale Police Community Center - Kellogg Room
234 SW Kendall Ct, Troutdale, OR 97060

1. Roll Call

2. Public Comment:

Public Comment on non-agenda and consent agenda items is welcome at this time. Public comment on agenda items will be taken at the time the item is considered. Public comments should be directed to the Presiding Officer and limited to matters of community interest or related to matters which may, or could, come before Council. Each speaker shall be limited to 5 minutes for each agenda item unless a different amount of time is allowed by the Presiding Officer, with consent of the Council. The Council and Mayor should avoid immediate or protracted responses to citizen comments.

3. Discussion:

3.1 A discussion of revenue enhancement options to respond to the substantial increase in the cost of fire and police protection. - Ray Young, City Manager

4. Adjournment

David Ripma, Mayor
Dated: March 12, 2025

Meeting Participation

The public may attend the meeting in person or via Zoom. Please email info@troutdaleoregon.gov by **5:00pm on March 17th** to request Zoom meeting access credentials. You may also submit written public comments [via email](#) to info@troutdaleoregon.gov no later than **5:00pm on March 17th**.

Further information and copies of agenda packets are available at: Troutdale City Hall, 219 E. Historic Columbia River Hwy. Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; on our [Web Page](#) www.troutdaleoregon.gov/meetings or call Sarah Skroch, City Recorder at 503-674-7258.

The meeting location is wheelchair accessible. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours before the meeting to: Sarah Skroch, City Recorder 503-674-7258.

MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL – WORK SESSION
Troutdale Police Community Center – Kellogg Room
234 SW Kendall Court
Troutdale, OR 97060-2078

Tuesday, March 18, 2025 – 6:00pm

1. Roll Call

Mayor Ripma called the meeting to order at 5:59pm.

PRESENT: Mayor Ripma, Councilor Andrews, Councilor Allen, Councilor Wunn, Councilor White, Councilor Davidson and Councilor Leamy.

ABSENT: None.

STAFF: Ray Young, City Manager; Sarah Skroch, City Recorder; Ed Trompke, City Attorney and Erich Mueller, Finance Director.

GUESTS: See attached.

2. Public Comment: Public comment on non-agenda and consent agenda items is welcome at this time.

None.

3. Discussion: A discussion of revenue enhancement options to respond to the substantial increase in the cost of fire and police protection.

Ray Young, City Manager, gave a brief overview of the staff report.

Ed Trompke, City Attorney, stated this is a time for everybody to be forthcoming, open, ask all the questions you have and give staff direction. If you look at pages 20 and 21 in the document in the packet from ECONorthwest, you can see local revenue enhancement tools and it lists almost everything available to cities.

Ray Young stated nobody likes paying more and nobody likes asking for more. You can keep your fees down low, and the citizens may pay in it by having reduced property values due to lack of services. We are looking at somewhere around a \$1.5 million increase for police and fire costs for next budget year, this is huge. The Sheriff's Office is asking for a 67% increase which is a \$2.7 million increase. Staff doesn't yet know what Gresham is going to do as far as fire. It could easily be another \$500,000 or more. Technically they're asking for \$1.4 million more just for next year. Troutdale is looking at \$4 million more for next year in those costs. It's something that is being negotiated and still being worked on.

To give an idea on what \$1.5 million is, Troutdale's whole Parks & Facilities department for staffing and operation costs is \$1.8 million. To not increase the general fund revenues would essentially mean you have the choice of just destroying the whole parks department. That's just an example of how much \$1.5 million is. Last year at the Budget Committee's request, staff cut \$1.2 million out of the general fund which means any wiggle room was reduced for this year's budget. There aren't going to be easy ways to cut that general fund to get anywhere close to the \$1.5 million increase in costs without considering new revenues. Almost all cities in Oregon have instituted a public safety fee on utility bills. Staff will be making a recommendation of a \$15 per month public safety fee on utilities and no longer use the \$175,000 worth of rent the City gets from the police building to buy down the citizens bond levy rate on their property taxes.

Mayor Ripma stated that this Work Session doesn't mean we are done negotiating. But we are being realistic. He stated he did not call this meeting. Ray thought Council should be informed of the options available. The idea of imposing a fee is not going to be easy or popular. The fire district idea, if the City were to join a fire district the tax base of \$3.76 per \$1000 would not change, unless the City changed it. What the City would do if it joined Fire District 10, the rate of 2.85 per \$1000 would be on the tax statements and property taxes would go up. He assumed there would be an offset to the City's property taxes because you wouldn't have to pay for fire services out of the general fund but in fact that isn't necessarily the case. The City could decide to do some sort of offset. It's going to be a very tough sell to the voters.

Ray Young stated that Troutdale would have a vote in how the fire department is operated and the citizens could vote on the board members. It frees up money from the general fund so that the City could put more money into law enforcement and parks. Because of that control it allows Troutdale to maybe change the service model.

Councilor Leamy asked when it would go on the ballot.

Mayor Ripma stated the fees wouldn't go on the ballot but there may be objections.

Ray Young stated a fire district would take a couple of years to get to the ballot. A local option levy also would take a couple of years. You have to decide which election would be best based on your voter turnout.

Councilor Allen stated she always wants to protect how much taxes she pays and protect residents that have been here a long time and are living paycheck to paycheck.

Ray Young stated that the City has a low income and disability utility reduction for utilities for those that struggle.

Councilor Andrews stated that adding both tax rates together, would that be for the foreseeable future and then phase out? Or is it just doubled up for the foreseeable future?

Mayor Ripa stated it's his understanding that if you live in the city, you pay city taxes and if you live in the district, you pay district taxes.

Councilor Andrews asked what the main benefit would be for doing a fire district.

Ray Young stated if you talk to the fire union they will tell you several advantages. You get to control your fire service, affect the service model, the fire union will tell you for them, they like it because it's stable source of funding for fire services. Right now, the Gresham Fire Department that Troutdale experiences, they have to fight for their budget against the police department and against the parks department. They're battling with all of them and their board members are not fire professionals. Fire District 10's board, or any fire district, usually the people on the board have experience in the fire department so they understand what they're doing, and they don't have to fight anybody else for the funding. This why they're so popular.

Councilor Andrews stated that Tigard and West Linn residents seem to feel that if they see benefit from these fees then they are okay with it.

Councilor Leamy asked if the police and fire will need to be packaged together. He thinks the voters feel burned that they passed a bond for the police building and then the City went out and got rid of its police department.

Mayor Ripma stated he thinks it's being pitched as a public safety surcharge/fee that combines both. He thinks the public is more concerned with police and getting a police department back.

Councilor Wunn stated there are two issues at hand. One, there is the here and now and the lack of funding for the budget for the next year. He stated we need to think about now and what to do long term. He thinks that adding the service fee is something that the majority of other cities do and will help offset costs. It significantly reduces the need to cut from somewhere else. Based on meetings and surveys it seems like getting our police department is what is wanted but for fire it may also be a fire district. If the City goes that route, it could be made into a 5-year transition with some buydown.

Ray Young stated that he has already cut out a lot of the Park's requests for next year before it even gets to the budget meeting. They also asked for an additional FTE for the past 2 years and he said no. With Parks, there is an additional park being added and there will be extra work on that group. The other thing, he just learned 2 weeks ago that since 2000 the City of Troutdale owns with Metro 15 acres next to the Sandee Palisades neighborhood. Of those 15 acres, approximately 5 is in the Beaver Creek Canyon and 10 is flat farmland. The agreement is that it has to be used for open space recreational uses. It's never been in the Parks Master Plan because staff didn't know it existed. He stated he's working with Metro to figure out what's going on with it. It would be a very attractive location for soccer or game field. Those are the kinds of things that might be afforded if

there are resources in the general fund to do things like that. There are great needs in Troutdale's parks right now to improve the parks and maybe expand parks.

Councilor White stated that Troutdale is the A+ group for parks. In 2008 the City laid off 8.5 FTE's. He's not saying he wants to do that again. He's looking for contribution from staff's side of the fence.

Ray Young stated that staff is already instituting a pay to park in Glenn Otto Park because most of the people that go down there are not from Troutdale. There is going to be a kiosk in there. In the budget, staff put in a line item of \$10,000 a year in additional income.

Councilor White stated every time red light cameras have been mentioned; the old Council was dead set against it. I would not like to see the red-light cameras on a list anymore.

Ray Young stated staff's job is to give you options. He doesn't know how income generating it really is. Mostly it's a way of enhancing enforcement without hiring new police officers.

Councilor White stated he would like to see a more creative list. He stated this building is a great example. Troutdale passed a levy for residents and now it's a countywide service, but Troutdale is the only one paying for this building. This is a patch job on a worn out tire. He thinks what the City really needs is their own police and their own fire. He's thinking that Gresham is going to have increasingly trouble getting to Troutdale especially when the County lowers the speed limit and shrink the freight lanes down. The fire department the City currently has isn't going to save your life. The response time is too long. Even Nehalem has a fire station on the ground level and their city hall is above it and they're self-contained. He's thinking just bite the bullet now and then start contracting later with Wood Village and Fairview.

Ray Young stated having any long-term option is a great idea. He would love to have better control over both police and fire. The long-term solutions are going to take long-term to get to. We can't do a fire district immediately and we can't do a local option immediately. He stated he only advocates for a public safety fee because it's a short-term solution that the City can do now but definitely there needs to be long term solutions that gives the City more control.

Mayor Ripma stated he had several citizens say the City should charge MCSO more for the use of the rental of the sheriff's office building.

Councilor Andrews stated that starting to save now goes a long way.

Councilor White stated he's been on budget a long time and every time the City got a new business like Fed Ex he would ask if some of that money could be put aside for a city hall

and start saving for one. It all gets spent before you can see it. The same thing with the Amazon money. He didn't see any of it coming for any projects or any benefit to the town.

Ray Young stated the Amazon money paid the loan on the URA, and the City is owed back \$5 million from the URA. It will be put back in the general fund as soon as there is an approved development plan and sell that property.

Councilor White stated there's the new battery farm and he knows the revenue won't be showing up for a while. He asked why staff doesn't earmark that new revenue for police and fire. Let's start thinking ahead so these tough situations don't arise.

Councilor Davidson stated he identifies with Councilor White is saying. He thinks asking the public to foot the bill is unfair. The other thing he hasn't heard mentioned is the TLT money. If Metro owes Troutdale any money we should collect it.

Ray Young stated there is an ordinance that is in germination at Ed Trompke's office to tax the Airbnb's and VRBO's in the City. He stated that currently the annual revenues from the current TLT is somewhere near \$800,000-900,000 annually.

Councilor Allen asked if the City does a public safety fee of \$15, how much notice would the voters have about the fee?

Ray Young stated it would be approximately 60 days' notice advance notice. Council could give them more time to adjust to it if that's decided.

Councilor Allen stated she thinks the citizens are more apt to getting the Troutdale police back more than fire.

Councilor White stated he doesn't think this should be followed up on until negotiations are over.

Ray Young stated he doesn't see any chance that it's going to be less than \$1.5 million no matter what the City does. The other concern he has is if something isn't started now, Gresham may take that as an act of bad faith.

Councilor Wunn stated he would like to see staff bring back a service fee and also options with a levy and what it would look like to establish a 3 cities fire department and also a district.

Councilor Davidson asked if it has to be a flat fee or could it be a percentage.

Ed Trompke stated he thinks the reason the cities use a flat fee rather than a floating fee or variable fee is because the City of Jacksonville had their utility fee appealed and it was a flat fee and that was approved so that is probably why other cities do it that way since it made it through the court.

Mayor Ripma opened public comment 7:32pm.

Paul Wilcox, Troutdale resident, read from a self-prepared statement (attached as Exhibit A).

Sandy Glantz, Troutdale resident, stated to read the room. Troutdale is a pretty purple area and about as close to red as it gets and okay with dismantling the government. She thinks it would be important to plan for the voters to turn it down. Unless there are some cuts that they feel and see, they're not going to appreciate what the consequences are.

Tanney Staffenson, Troutdale resident, stated this building passed a whopping 322 votes when it was built. It was done by a lot of work going door to door by a lot of beloved people. It seems like this has come up all of a sudden and if that's the case then people haven't been paying attention very well. In 2019 a budget was passed with \$2 million deficit ended up being to the plus \$700,000. 2020 was a \$1.5 million deficit. Then there were 4 years of Biden bucks coming in that bought it down, but the last 2 years had deficits. He hears a lot of talk about parks. He loves parks but in 2022 the parks & facilities budget was \$1.6 million and in 2024 it was \$3.2 million. It increased by \$1.6 million. He thinks the parks look great, but they don't look like golf courses. This last year it was \$2.7 million which is a 70% increase over 3 years ago. It's not like the City isn't putting money into parks but where do you balance that out? If you look at taxes and people are going to have to pay more but how much more can they pay? Then you're going to hit them with a fire district and they're just going to pony up for it. This needs to be very well thought out. This will be impacting a lot of people.

Diane Castillo-White, Troutdale resident, stated that when Troutdale got the building where the sheriff's office is she worked on the flier and the sign. The police were concerned with when they tried to get money before, on their sign it said, "Police Yes." She stated what they sold them on was everybody in the community really loved the officers patrolling, their community engagement and if you had an issue with your son, you might have the chief come over and have a conversation with the parents. She stated she supports anybody providing the City services and she support the sheriffs as well. The main concern she heard going around was discontent in lack of patrolling. \$15 is an easy ask, it's flat and not a percentage. Long term solutions and allocating small cuts and increases where staff can for a holistic approach would be good.

Mayor Ripma closed public comment 7:50pm.

Ray Young stated he would like to respond to some of the comments. As Tanney said, we should have seen this coming, no, he doesn't think anyone could have seen the extent of these increases coming. For the last 10 years both contracts had a maximum increase of 4.5% so one would assume that would continue because it's been the same for 10 years. Which would have been about a \$300,000 increase for next year not the 1.5 or more that we now know is going to happen. Staff did not know that Gresham was going

to change their methodology or that the Sheriff's Office was going to tell us that their cost for providing their services went through the roof in the last 10 years to where they were going to ask almost double, initially. Staff didn't know that until last August and September. That was the first notice they had that there wasn't going to be a consistent increase that was in place for 10 years. Staff has been working really hard since last fall to try to get them down to a more reasonable level that the City could manage. He is going to consider a success if staff can keep it to \$1.5 million or less. These are new ways of approaching these charges. There was the Safer Council which was all the cities and Fire District 10 all meeting together on a regular basis to talk about the future of fire services in East County and 3 years ago Gresham pulled the plug on that thing. That was the venue for when they talked about a fire district and what the future looked like for Troutdale. Gresham shut it down and backed out of it without any indication that they were thinking of approaching Troutdale with a different way of calculating fire services. For 30 years of Troutdale's fire service Gresham has charged what more does it cost them to add our coverage area. They already pay a full time chief, so they don't have to increase that type of staff. That's been the standing agreement for 30 years. Gresham has decided that they're not committed to beyond that, but their council has decided that they want to charge a rate that's comparable to what every citizen in Gresham pays which means Troutdale citizens do pay for part of their coverage that they would pay anyways without Troutdale, and we would pay for a system that we have no control over. He stated he has tried to push back on it but to no avail.

Councilor White stated he thinks the citizens would appreciate it if more creative options were explored.

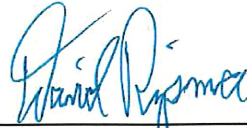
Mayor Ripma stated that the rent paid on the building the sheriff's office uses should be increased as just being fair to the voters if we impose a public safety fee.

Ray Young stated the rent is going to go up on this building.

4. Adjourn

MOTION: Councilor Wunn moved to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor White. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:03pm.



David Ripma, Mayor
Dated: June 5, 2025

ATTEST:



Kenda Rimes, Deputy City Recorder

March 18, 2025 Work Session Zoom Guests

Name (origir Email	Join time	Leave time	Duration (minutes)
Troutdale Cc troutconf@troutdaleoregon.gov	3/18/2025 17:49	3/18/2025 20:04	135
Testimony Table	3/18/2025 17:49	3/18/2025 20:04	135
City of Troutdale	3/18/2025 17:50	3/18/2025 20:04	135
Troutdale Cc troutconf@troutdaleoregon.gov	3/18/2025 17:53	3/18/2025 20:04	132
Paul Wilcox	3/18/2025 17:53	3/18/2025 20:04	131
Victoria's iPhone	3/18/2025 17:56	3/18/2025 20:04	128
Jordan Ramis Information Technology	3/18/2025 17:57	3/18/2025 20:03	127
Sandy Glantz	3/18/2025 17:58	3/18/2025 20:03	126
Carol	3/18/2025 18:02	3/18/2025 20:04	122
ray.young	3/18/2025 18:03	3/18/2025 20:04	121
Shelby Staffenson	3/18/2025 18:04	3/18/2025 20:03	120
Councilor Leamy	3/18/2025 18:05	3/18/2025 20:04	120
jesse.davidson	3/18/2025 18:05	3/18/2025 20:04	119
Geoffrey Wunn	3/18/2025 18:06	3/18/2025 20:03	118
Councilor Zach Andrews	3/18/2025 18:12	3/18/2025 20:04	112

Mayor and Councilors,

First, a few brief comments regarding City Manager Ray Young's March/April Troutdale Champion article. The article states that Gresham passed a local option levy last year, Measure 26-247, to help fund police and fire services. That's correct, but I question his cost estimate of adding about \$400/year to every home's tax bill. The voters' pamphlet statement sets the rate at \$1.35/\$1,000 of assessed value. The stated average assessed value is \$228,000, for an annual cost of \$307.80, not \$400. The pamphlet statement pegs the cost at \$25.65/month. Of course, assessed value is going to go up 3% every year, and this is a progressive tax, meaning those with a higher than average assessed value will pay proportionately more. Gresham's public safety utility fee, on the other hand, is regressive, because everyone pays the same, regardless of income or property value.

The current staff report states that only Troutdale and Wood Village among Metro cities don't have a supplemental utility fee. Fairview's fee of \$4.82/month is to fund a maintenance building replacement, not for services such as police and fire. Also, one of the LOC's numerous recommended income enhancement options is a local gas tax, which Troutdale has had for several years, which of course required and received voter approval. Of the 35 cities in the KGW report only 20 specifically mention public safety, the rest are mostly for street maintenance, which of course was the reason for Troutdale's motor fuel tax. There's also a huge range of fee amounts.

In the interest of transparency it should be acknowledged that if the \$175,000 police station building bond buy-down is discontinued properly taxes will increase slightly.

Providing the Exhibit C list of cities with local option levies demonstrates that they are achievable, but a compelling case for them needs to be made to voters.

While I was listening, I did some back of the envelope calculations. Based on an assessed value of \$220,000 the City tax rate of \$3.76/\$1,000 would be \$827. The fire district tax rate of \$2.85/\$1,000 would be \$627. The \$15/month utility fee would be \$180. Gresham's local option levy rate of \$1.35/\$1,000 would be \$297. Their levy and utility fee combined would be

\$477, or \$150 less than a fire district tax alone.

Submitted by:

Paul Wilcox

Troutdale

3-18-25