

**Birmingham City Commission Minutes**  
**Public Hearing on the 2023-2024 Recommended Budget**  
**April 29, 2023**  
**8:30 a.m.**  
**Municipal Building, 151 Martin**  
**Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/820770118>**

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Therese Longe, Mayor, opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Alexandra Bingham, City Clerk, called the roll.

Present: Mayor Longe  
tMPT Schafer  
Commissioner Baller  
Commissioner Boutros (left 12:05 p.m.)  
Commissioner Haig  
Commissioner Host

Absent: MPT McLain

Staff: City Manager Markus, City Clerk Bingham, Information Technology Manager Brunk, City Engineer Coatta, Library Director Craft, Museum Specialist Donnelly, Planning Director Dupuis, Assistant City Manager Fairbairn, Parking Systems Manager Ford, Finance Director Gerber, Building Official Johnson, Birmingham Shopping District Director Sheppard-Decius, Police Captain Wald, Fire Chief Wells, Department of Public Services Director Zielinski

**III. PUBLIC HEARING – 2023-2024 RECOMMENDED BUDGET**

With the Commission's concurrence, the Mayor appointed Commissioner Schafer to serve as temporary Mayor Pro Tem for the duration of the meeting.

CM Markus recommended that the public be given an opportunity to comment after every numbered section of the budget was presented.

The Mayor opened the public hearing at 8:33 a.m.

CM Markus and FD Gerber introduced the budget hearing and answered informational questions from the Commission.

There was no public comment regarding the budget hearing's introduction.

For the General Fund, ACM Fairbairn presented the Commission and the Manager's Office budgets, BO Johnson presented the City Hall & Grounds and the Property Maintenance-Library budgets, ACM Fairbairn presented the Human Resources budget, CC Bingham presented the Clerk's Office budget, and FD Gerber

presented the Finance Department, the Legal, and the General Administration budgets.

There was no public comment regarding the General Fund. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Baller recommended that City Manager reports be discussed earlier on during Commission meetings.

FD Gerber presented the Judicial budget.

There was no public comment regarding the Judicial budget. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

For Public Safety, PC Wald presented the Police and the Dispatch budgets, FC Wells presented the Fire and Emergency Management budgets, and BO Johnson presented the Building budget. BO Johnson noted a correction to page 62, he noted that the enforcement case totals listed were actually the number of Board of Zoning Appeals cases. He stated those numbers would be corrected in the final budget document.

There was no public comment regarding the Public Safety budgets. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Baller recommended the City emphasize the Fire Department's efficiency and response times as part of community outreach.

Commissioner Haig emphasized the importance of keeping the Building Department's permit and fee amounts aligned with the costs of processing the permits and reviews. He said he wanted to avoid those costs being passed along to the taxpayers.

The Mayor noted that the permit and fee amounts have to reflect the actual costs to the City and could not factor in inflationary or other considerations. She noted that the Commission can conduct regular reviews of the permit and fee amounts.

It was noted that the City has a policy that all fees be evaluated every year to ensure that they reflect the City's costs.

For Public Works, CE Coatta presented the Engineering budget and DPSD Zielinski presented the Public Services budget.

There was no public comment regarding the Public Works budgets. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Baller observed that CE Coatta and DPSD Zielinski made improvements to their Departments' budgeting and project planning processes.

Commissioner Boutros noted that increased efficiency would lead to increased savings in the future.

Commissioner Haig told DPSD Zielinski he wanted to exchange information regarding double-walled chemical tanks.

The Mayor noted that there was a large projected street light service gain from 54 miles to 70 miles. She

thanked CE Coatta and DPSD Zielinski.

FD Gerber presented the Health and Welfare budget.

There was no public or Commission comment regarding the Health and Welfare budget.

PD Dupuis presented the Community and Economic Development budget. He thanked FD Gerber and the Finance Staff for their help with the budgeting process.

The Mayor noted the Commissioners were provided with hard copies of page 209a, which was not included in the original agenda packet.

There was no public or Commission comment regarding the Community and Economic Development budget.

For Recreation and Culture, DPSD Zielinski presented the Parks & Recreation, Ice Arena, and Community Activities budgets. MS Donnelly presented the Birmingham Historical Museum budget.

There was no public comment regarding the Recreation and Culture budgets. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

The Mayor noted that MS Donnelly has some podcasts related to Birmingham history available on the Birmingham Historical Museum's website.

FD Gerber presented the Transfers Out and Special Revenue Funds budgets.

There was no public or Commission comment regarding the Transfers Out budget. There was no public comment regarding the Special Revenue Funds budgets. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission regarding the Special Revenue Funds budgets.

The Mayor noted that the major street fund and local street fund were each being supplemented by \$3.5 million in tax dollars. She commented that those were significant investments.

For Enterprise Funds, PSM Ford presented the Automobile Parking System budget, FD Gerber presented the Water Supply System and the Sewage Disposal budgets, and DPSD Zielinski presented the Springdale and Lincoln Hills Golf Course budgets.

There was no public comment regarding the Enterprise Funds budgets. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Baller supported further discussion about a potential increase in parking rates.

Commissioner Haig explained that the weight of vehicles have significantly increased since the 1960s, when Birmingham's parking garages were built. He noted that the City might consider restriping the garages to hold fewer vehicles, both in order to maintain a safety margin and in order to extend the life of the garages. He noted that doing so would result in a decrease in net parking garage revenue, and that the City would have to explore the potential impacts of that change.

ITM Brunk presented the Information Technology budget.

There was no public comment regarding the Information Technology budget. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Baller congratulated ITM Brunk on becoming a City employee.

For Component Units, LD Craft presented the Baldwin Public Library budget, BSDD Sheppard-Decius presented the Principal Shopping District budget, and FD Gerber presented the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and the Triangle District Corridor Improvement Authority (TDCIA) budgets. LD Craft noted an error on page 349, which indicated that the ending fund balance for the next fiscal year would be negative. She explained that the Library would be pulling funds from the Library Trust in order to ensure that the Library meets its fund balance minimum of \$125,000 at the end of the next fiscal year.

There was no public comment regarding the Component Units budgets. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Baller recommended the City revise the Triangle District Corridor Plan. He said the TDCIA could potentially be repurposed under a new plan. He noted there were a lot of small parcels in the area. He also expressed disappointment that the budget revisions for the Library renovation required the removal of the proposed skylight from the plans.

In reply to Commissioner Haig, CM Markus said he would ask BSDD Sheppard-Decius to make a Commission presentation on the BSD's Business Mix Analysis.

FD Gerber presented the Debt Service Fund, the Greenwood Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund, and the Capital Projects Fund budgets.

There was no public comment regarding the Debt Service Fund, the Greenwood Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund, and the Capital Projects Fund budgets. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

In reply to Commissioner Baller, CM Markus said Staff would work on a presentation regarding the Capital Projects and also ways of communicating the information to the public.

Commissioner Baller noted that the City's debt was very low. He recommended that the City repair improved streets that are in poor condition, citing Oakland between Old Woodward and Woodward and portions of N. Adams as two potential examples. He said constituents tend to be very concerned about road conditions. He said he would like to see a comprehensive report on how the City was planning for road improvements, maintenance for unimproved and improved roads, and budgeting. The Commissioner added that Commission feedback should be solicited as part of that process.

Commissioners Baller and Host stated there seemed to be a few areas in this section of the budget where information was repeated.

In reply to Commissioner Baller and the Mayor, ACM Ecker said Staff would create a report that clarified how the road scoring system related to the proposed Capital Projects, and which projects would include City-initiated assessments.

Commissioner Baller recommended that the City's Communications Department be more involved in communicating about street improvements and repairs.

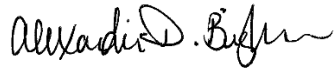
CM Markus thanked everyone for the day.

The Mayor closed the public hearing at 1:35 p.m.

The Mayor thanked Staff for all of their work on the 2023-2024 Recommended Budget presentation.

**IV. ADJOURN**

Mayor Longe adjourned the meeting at 1:36 p.m.



Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist