




**OFFICE OF THE  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER  
OFFICE OF BUDGET**

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**To:** Council President Mary Sheffield  
**From:** Steven Watson, Deputy CFO/Budget Director   
**Date:** April 5, 2023  
**Re:** Response to City Council FY24 Budget Questions Dated March 27, 2023

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Please find below responses to your questions dated March 22, 2023, regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget for Board of Review.

1. Employee benefits in City Council's proposed budget is approximately 21% of the salary and wages which is indicative of the fact that not all Council employees receive benefits due to budget constraints.  
[Has there been an analysis performed which looks at the employment needs of any given Council office and what should be allotted for salaries/wages and benefits for all employees?](#)

As has been the case in past years, the Mayor's proposed budget for City Council provides uniform increases for all Council Member offices such that the At-Large Members and the Council President have equal budgets and the other District Members have equal budgets. These uniform increases are driven by the same salary growth factors used citywide, and the outcome is all Council Member offices being treated consistently from a total funding perspective. Each Council Member determines how to utilize their funding for their personnel needs and may reprioritize within their budgets throughout the year.

2. City Council recently received capital dollars to refurbish Council Chambers and other City Council common areas on the 13th Floor. However, Council offices are outdated and given the recent pandemic and social distancing requirements are inadequate. Currently, City Council has to pay for office renovations from individual office's operation budgets.  
[Is City Council afforded any capital funding for office renovations much like other departments? If not, why?](#)

The Chief Operating Officer and his team are responsible for managing the space planning and renovation process. Departments are responsible for funding minor improvements. For larger capital improvements, the facilities capital budget is very limited with a long list of deferred projects in the queue. I would recommend discussing Council needs with the COO so that they can be added to the planning process, which is the first step in identifying future funding.

3. For City Council's last retreat focusing on professional development and policy agenda development, Council need to request a budget amendment and ultimately use the fund balance from Council Administration and/or LPD's budget which was the result of unfilled positions.

[Why isn't there an annual allocation for professional development for City Council as a body?](#)

City Council approves its budget every year and may prioritize professional development activities if it wishes.

4. The Law Department's Municipal Section has very capable and talented attorneys who assist Council Members with drafting ordinances and other legislative functions. With that said, there has been a struggle to keeping attorneys in the Municipal Section making it more difficult to simultaneously work on multiple ordinances.

[Has there been an assessment of Council's legislative needs with respect to the adequate level of staffing to handle Council's legal requests? If so, what is that level, what is the current level, and how many municipal attorneys does the budget anticipate?](#)

I must defer to the Law Department on the specifics, but there has been a concerted effort to provide more competitive pay for City attorneys through their most recent negotiated labor contract. This has helped with recruitment and retention.

5. City Council has established a number of worthy task forces to be responsive to residents needs and to continue to move the City in a positive direction. Typically, if there is any funding needed to handle the business of these task forces, the funds come from individual Council office's operations budgets.

[Could there be funding set aside in the budget to cover costs related to task force administration and work? If so, where is the best place to house these funds within the budget?](#)

Such funding could be housed in either the Non-Departmental budget or the City Council departmental budget. However, key considerations on where to place it would include the nature of the activities and who is responsible for managing it.

cc: Honorable Detroit City Council  
City Clerk  
Jay B. Rising, Chief Financial Officer  
John Naglick, Jr., Chief Deputy CFO/Finance Director  
Tanya Stoudemire, Chief Deputy CFO/Policy & Administration Director  
Malik Washington, City Council Liaison  
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