

Council delays budget to include pay for officer

The Irvine Council was scheduled to give the final approval to its budget Monday. Instead, the council will amend the proposed budget to include the salary for a seventh police officer.

Chief John Sturniolo stated the police department spent \$54,000 during this fiscal year on overtime pay to officers. The overtime occurs when an officer goes on vacation, is sick or injured, goes to court or is serving a search warrant. At least two officers are required when officers are investigating domestic violence, assaults, traffic stops, etc.

Sturniolo said the hours for an investigation are long. Officers must also fill out extensive paperwork.

The Irvine Police Department has over a 98 percent closure rate on cases. According to the chief, the salary for the officer will be \$31,000.

Councilman Tim Burkhart estimated the budget will be amended by \$53,780 to include mandatory fringe benefits for that officer.

The council asked Sturniolo ques-

tions about the ABC money (from liquor sales) and the number of cruisers.

Mayor James Gross stated the city is expected to receive about three rounds of CARES money which will be used for salaries.

Burkhart stated that if the council does not have money for an officer in two or three years, they will have to lay off.

Sturniolo said there will still be some overtime.

"I'd be afraid to get out there by myself (if I was an officer)" stated Councilman Billy Arthur.

The mayor has scheduled a special meeting for Monday, June 21 at 7 p.m. to approve the budget for the fiscal year. It must be approved and advertised by the July 1 deadline.

Auditor Sammy Lee reported on the audit for the 2019-2020 fiscal year budget. He gave the city a clean opinion, which is the best an auditor can give.

"The financial position of the city is really strong," Lee stated.

Lee stated that he did not audit Irvine Municipal Utilities but their audit has to be reported in the city's audit.

The auditor discussed the pension liability with the council. This has occurred because the state's assets for pensions are below the pay-outs.

At this time, local governments are not required to make up the difference, but they must be prepared for the future.

"We don't yet know what the state of Kentucky will do with it," Lee stated.

The pension liability runs about \$200,000 to \$300,000 a year for Irvine.

Lee said there were only two findings in the audit. Last year's audit report had four or five findings which were corrected.

Most governments have the first finding, which occurs because of a limited number of personnel.

The second finding was the city had gone over a budget category before

amending the budget.

Lee recommended the council look at the budget quarterly to see if they were going over a budgeted amount.

Bill Wesley, 91st district state representative, told the council the bridge over the Kentucky River will be painted green, starting in July. The bridge will be closed for three months until about November.

Wesley said he is also meeting with engineers to discuss a closed walkway to cross the bridge.

Terry Barnes, pastor of True Vine Ministries, approached the council about building onto the church on Broadway. Barnes said the church is on two and a half city lots.

City Attorney Rodney Davis told Barnes to contact the state fire marshal because it is considered as a commercial building.

Fire Chief Justin Patrick introduced a full time and part time firemen to the council. The fire department is now fully staffed.



The Kentucky Steam Heritage Corporation is located in a former CSX car repair shop where they are restoring train engines and cars. The corporation has plans for a tourist attraction at this location.

Mayor Flinchum Resigns

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Fire Chief David Harvey asked the council if there was an easier way to use money in the fire fund other than getting purchase orders.

Harvey said that there was money in the account that needed to be used by the end of June but said the current process of purchasing items that the fire department needed made it difficult.

Harvey said that he had even purchased things with his own money and had been reimbursed for those items.

Flinchum said that this was the first time she had heard anything about there being a problem and said that Harvey should have spoken with her about it first.

The council agreed that Harvey should have a debit card to use for purchases that he needs to make for the fire department. Harvey commended Tony Begley and Patrick Jimmo on their help with Engine 5.

The council members were asked if they would be interested in taking turns opening the park on Sundays.

Flinchum said that she had watched the weather on Sunday and saw that there was a chance of rain, therefore,

she did not open the park.

She went on to say that Sundays were the only day that she took off, and she would like for the council members to open and close the park on that day. All agreed that they would take turns opening the park.

When it came to public comments, tension grew within the room as Flinchum tried to move on to the next item on the agenda.

Councilmember Tammy Howell reminded her that they were still on public comments, and she thought the guests should be allowed time to say something if they chose to do so.

Flinchum became angered and said that she was resigning from her position as mayor, and that everyone had gotten what they wanted.

"I failed at my job, I admit it," stated Flinchum.

The council discussed how they would handle the resignation of Flinchum, and agreed that Amy Crowe would contact Chris Johnson at Kentucky League of Cities on Tuesday for guidance in the matter.

No other agenda items were discussed after Flinchum left the meeting.

Two charged with drugs

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During a search of the residence, the officers report they found nine large white oval shaped pills in a trash can next to the male occupant's bed. The pills were expected to be gabapentin.

The officers said they also located a digital scale inside the residence and \$107 in the male's wallet.

Fifty-one year old Robert Harvey was charged with trafficking in a controlled substance, first degree and second offense;

drug paraphernalia -- buy/possess; and persistent felony offender first degree.

Officer Morris said he located a pink zip-up bag in a dresser door in the bedroom of Jessica Moses, 39. She reportedly told the officer the bag belonged to her.

Officer Morris stated there was a small clear plastic bag in the pink bag which contained a crystal like substance and a syringe.

He charged Moses with possession of a controlled substance, first degree

and first offense (methamphetamine) and drug paraphernalia -- buy/possess.



Robert Harvey
Photo/3 Forks Jail



Five or six train cars were lined up at the back of the Car Repair Shop for Saturday's open house. Rides were being given on small motor cars.

Irvine Police & Sheriff Activity

Gunner Cornett, 18, of McKee, was charged June 12 by Officer James Marshall with second degree disorderly conduct, giving officer false identifying information, no tail lamps, and failure of non-owner to maintain required insurance, first offense.

The officer said he was just entering Irvine from Ravenna around 9:42 p.m. when Cornett pulled in front of him with no tail lights on the vehicle. Marshall followed the car and made a traffic stop at S. Madison.

The citation states that Cornett gave Marshall a social security number that came back to someone else.

It adds that Cornett tried to call his mother to get his social security number. He said this was "BS." The officer was lying because he hadn't done anything. He was yelling and started acting combative.

Shannon Hardy, 36, of Broadway in Irvine was served June 12 by Officer

Marshall with a Fayette County warrant for failure to appear.

The Irvine Police Department pulled over a vehicle at Baker's Pool Supply on Richmond Road June 10 for a possible DUI.

Officer Marshall charged the driver, **Dakota Earl Hatton-Rawlins**, 19, of Race Track Road with operating a motor vehicle under the influence, first offense.

When Officer Russell Morris, Officer Marshall and Irvine Chief John Sturniolo, approached the driver side window, they said they saw a rifle beside front seat passenger, Jerry Puckett.

Officer Morris charged **Jerry Puckett**, 39, of Old Fox Road, Irvine with possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

Officer Morris served four Estill County warrants for failure to appear on **Larry Hall**, 29, of Ruby Lane, Irvine on June 9.

On June 8, Officer Conrad served a parole viola-

tion warrant from Madison County on **Andrew W. Means**, 33, of Lilly Ferry Road, Irvine.

An Estill County warrant for failure to appear was served June 7 by Officer Conrad on **Jessica N. Townsend**, 41, of Steveland Court, Irvine.

Deputy Josh King cited **Toni Heather Niece**, 29, of West Cedar Grove, Irvine with rear license not illuminated and operating on a suspended/revoked license.

The deputy said he observed Niece on June 13 traveling on S. Irvine Road toward town with no illuminated license plate at 9:40 p.m. Niece will appear in district court on July 28.

He was assisted by Irvine Officer Jason Conrad.

Deputy Brad Smith charged **William M. Sizemore**, 37, of Witt Ridge Road, Irvine with possession of a controlled substance, first degree and first offense.

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Police arrest Estill man with trafficking in drugs

An Estill County man was arrested for drug trafficking in Ravenna last Tuesday evening.

Irvine Officer Jason Conrad was assisting Ravenna Police Chief Ken White with a traffic stop on Fourth Street in Ravenna.

The driver of the vehicle had consented to a search of the vehicle. Chief White and Officer Conrad asked the passengers to exit the vehicle.

While the officers were searching the vehicle, Officer Conrad said he saw Charles J. Hamilton place a small pink bag down the front of his pants.

Conrad said he asked Hamilton what was in the bag, and Hamilton told

him, "Dope."

Officer Conrad stated he retrieved the pink bag. It contained two large baggies containing a crystal like substance and a large baggie containing a brown powdery substance.

The citation states the crystal like substance was expected to be methamphetamine and the brown powdery substance to be heroin.

Conrad added that Hamilton also had a brown zipper bag that contained three small empty baggies and \$743 in cash.

Hamilton, 44, of John Rawlins Road, Irvine was charged with trafficking in a controlled substance,

second or greater offense (heroin); trafficking in a controlled substance, first degree and second or greater offense (methamphetamine); tampering with physical evidence; and persistent felony offender first degree.



Charles Hamilton
Photo/3 Forks Jail