

Tim Riordan, Acting City Manager
101 W. Third St.
Dayton, OH 45402

Subject: Budget Solutions

Dear Mr. Riordan,

First, we want to thank you for the opportunity given on the City's Intranet to participate in the budget process. In spite of the fact that there are members of our group who feel the system has failed us to date, we are still reaching out internally, trying to be heard through proper channels that you have allowed.

The purpose of this correspondence is to provide for your consideration an alternative budget solution from the Department of Recreation & Youth Services. We want to stress that we are not a group of bitter employees. Instead, we are a passionate group of recreation stewards with integrity and trust.

We are sensitive to the needs of the organization; however we feel that due to past unheeded warnings, many of the current financial problems not created by us, are being solved at our expense without our input.

The Department of Recreation & Youth Services has been bleeding internally for a long time. The current recreation leadership has mentioned that they lack recreation experience in some areas, yet, in these difficult times, inexperienced leadership is expected to come up with budget solutions that will have the smallest, negative impact on our customers and employees.

In past years, budget solutions presented by mid-mangers from our department were given serious consideration because the Programs Supervisors and Recreation Leader 2's are where the rubber meets the road and can therefore offer up solutions which have the greatest financial impact yet cause the least break in service.

We want to be a partner in these tough times, but distrust was making it hard to come to the table. Why the distrust? It is believed through-out the City that during these staff-reduction times, measures have been taken in our department to protect 'friends' of high-ranking City officials from joblessness. In our department, these 'friends' not only have less recreation experience, but less years of service.

It is rumored that the initial budget plan that is coming from our department was presented months ago by the former City Manager and was designed to circumvent ***CIVIL SERVICE RULES AND SENIORITY***. If the forth-coming proposed department staff reduction was truly about the budget, and only about the budget, things would have been handled differently.

Instead, the 10 mid-management, Program Supervisors were told in 'front of the entire department' that Program Supervisor jobs were being abolished; the Program Supervisors' positions would be given

new names; and if the current Program Supervisors wanted their jobs, they would have to re-apply. This should have been done in private. If this was truly only a budget solution driven decision, then the Program Supervisors would have just been told that the proposed recommendation will be for their positions to be dropped two pay scales as a budget measure. However, when you change the job title, you can circumvent seniority and Civil Service.

Then, **the six Recreation Leaders 2s** were given their bad news: become part-time permanent; loss of pay, hours and insurance. This position is vital to our department, for next to the Program Supervisors, these are true front-line people. Along with the Program Supervisors, they are the implementers and the face that the public relates to. Recently, when the Building Attendants were reorganized, many of them were allowed to remain as full-time. The Recreation Leader 2 position is so vital to the overall organization, that we feel they too should remain full-time as well.

A few of the job factors that the City of Dayton has adopted are integrity, trust, and reliability. We are appealing to you that when changes are made within our department, please insist that these factors are used.

Some of our initial budget suggestions:

• In approximately 2001, the employees from our department were encouraged to help pass *Issue 2*. The citizens of Dayton were told that passage of the levy would help fund parks and recreation. The City did a gentleman's handshake with the County. To date, no funds have been shared with the City. **NO ONE CAN HANDLE INTER-CITY YOUTH LIKE WE CAN.** Our department should be receiving a steady revenue stream from that levy. So, once again we are asking that City officials reach an agreement with the county to send at least 25% of those collected levy dollars to fund inner-city recreation.

- Return the Department of Recreation & Youth Services back to Public Works as a division as we once were.
- Bring back Peggy Collins (or someone professionally comparable) back as the superintendent.
- Back under Public Works as a division eliminates the need for a Director, Deputy Director, two Coordinators, a Community Involvement Advisor, Budget Manger, an additional payroll clerk, along with **4 NEW MANAGEMENT POSITIONS THEY ARE REQUESTING.** Becoming a division saves money and prevents a drastic impact on service delivery, for it is the Program Supervisors, Recreation Leaders 2, and Part- Time Recreation Aids that deal with the public, provides the hands-on service, and have the community net-working contacts that have kept this department going all these years.

In the past ten years, this department has had a lot of upper management turnover. During this time period, we only had '2' true recreation professionals, Peggy Collins being one of them. If you check the trusted advice from her, you will find that the plan we are suggesting has always worked. In fact, Peggy Collins was the superintendent when we were structured in a similar fashion and we didn't have all the layers of upper-management that they are calling for in 2010.

In the past two years, two surveys were done on our department. The first survey was a professional, paid-for job audit. The second was an informal, internal survey done on our union and mid-management staff by a mid-manager who is trusted by both union and management staff alike. The unanimous results of both surveys proved that the problem within our department lies with the Recreation Upper Management.

When you couple this with a recent disturbing quote made by the Acting Deputy: "A whole lot of folks will be gone before I am", how can we recreation employees trust any budget solutions coming from within?

The Department of Recreation helps the City fulfill many of the promises and commitment to youth and families as laid out in the 20/20 Plan. That explains why when the proposed Recreation budget plan hit the streets, an unbelievable amount of citizens came forth asking how they can voice their concern.

Surprisingly even to us, we discouraged their involvement. As much as we understand their frustration, and quite frankly would love their support and attention, we advised them that at this time, an in-house budget solution is the way to go.

We look forward to hearing from you so we can mutually create a fair and honest budget solution. As a point of contact for our group, we have selected two representatives: both a union and management representative. Our mid-management contact is David Corbit, Program Supervisor and 18-year recreation veteran. His contact phone numbers are 333-6371 and 422-7424 (cell). Our union employee contact is Billie Tweedie, Recreation Leader 2. His contact phone numbers are 333-7051 and 301-8879 (cell).

In closing, we thank you in advance for your time and consideration. In the future, we will present a full-scale budget solution with additional recommendations

Sincerely,

The Concerned Recreation Stewards

Cc: City Commissioners