THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date: May 23, 2022

Subject: Public Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Annual Operating Budget

Staff Resource: Tony McDowell, CFO, Finance and Management Services Director

Action Requested: Conducting the public hearing on the City of Asheville Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-24 Proposed Annual Budget and inclusion of public input in City Council's consideration of the budget.

Background:

- The FY 2023-24 Proposed Annual Budget was presented to City Council on May 9, 2023, and totals $239.7 million.
- In summary the Proposed Budget includes the following:
    - Recommends no change to the current property tax rate of 40.3 cents per $100 of assessed valuation,
    - Employee compensation adjustments that reflect inflation in the labor market and local cost of living increases including 5% salary increase for existing employees and a 6% salary increase for sworn police officers. Additional investments in community safety and emergency response include:
        - Additional pay for achieving Intermediate Law Enforcement Certification.
        - Participation and certification in a wellness program for sworn police officers to help improve the health and well being of current and future sworn officers.
        - Upgrading APD uniforms, to a more technical fabric for durability and comfort.
        - Upgrading cameras for vehicles to enhance operational reliability.
        - Replacing furniture in Fire Stations to improve working conditions.
    - Continues funding core community services in a time of rising costs and provides additional investments in key core service areas in alignment with Council priorities;
    - Strategically utilizes fund balance funding to advance Council's priorities and balance the budget.
- A detailed copy of the Proposed Budget is available for public review in the City Clerk's office, as well as on the City's website (www.ashevillenc.gov).
- In accordance with the North Carolina Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act (G.S. 159-12), a summary of the Proposed Budget along with a notice of the public hearing was published on May 12, 2023.
- As noted above, adoption of the FY 2022-23 Budget Ordinance is scheduled for June 13, 2023, at the regularly scheduled City Council meeting.
- The Proposed Budget may be adjusted by City Council before adoption.
- It may also be changed by budget amendment after adoption, with the only exception being the property tax rate, which cannot be changed once the budget is adopted.

Council Goal(s):

- A Financially Resilient City

Pro(s):

- Provides the opportunity for the public to comment on the Proposed Annual Operating Budget for FY 2023-24.

Con(s)

- None

Fiscal Impact:

- No impact to conducting the public hearing.

Suggested Motion:

- Conduct the public hearing on the Proposed Annual Operating Budget for FY 2023-24 and include public input in City Council's consideration of the budget.