

Committee reviews city budget

If the proposed budget is passed, the Eugene City Council won't have to cut services

By Michael Burnham
Community Editor

Interim City Manager Jim Johnson presented the city budget proposal for the 1999 fiscal year, which begins July 1, 1998, before the Eugene Budget Committee on Tuesday night.

The proposal is the first in a series of budget discussions and public hearings required by state law. According to budget manager Hillary Kittleson, the city will host a number of hearings during May and June before the council takes action on the proposed budget at a June 22 work session.

But city officials did more than just compare numbers Tuesday night, as the proposed budget yielded hope that the city will not have to repeat the task of trimming monetary fat off already lean city programs.

Kittleson said there will be no additional cuts to existing city programs during the next fiscal year. "I think the council had done its work in responding to Measure 50 cuts," she said. "It's pretty much a steady budget."

Budget meetings

■ **April 27:** Budget committee meeting, McNutt Room, City Hall, 5:30 p.m. Public hearing, City Council Chambers, City Hall, 7:30 p.m.

■ **May 4, 11:** Budget committee meetings, McNutt Room, City Hall, 5:30 p.m.

■ **May 12:** Tentative budget committee meeting, McNutt Room, City Hall, 5:30 p.m.

■ **May 16:** Public hearing and action on preliminary budget recommendation, McNutt Room, City Hall, 5:30 p.m.

■ **May 21:** Tentative meeting for completion of budget committee recommendation, McNutt Room, City Hall, 5:30 p.m.

■ **June 22:** Public hearing and council action on committee recommendation, City Council Chambers, City Hall, 7:30 p.m.

cent increase per year. The "cut and cap" measures resulted in a \$5.9 million decrease in tax revenue for the current fiscal year, requiring city service reductions and more than 20 employee layoffs.

The proposed budget of more than \$262 million is approximately 3 percent less than that of the current fiscal year because the City Council completed the collection of revenue from long-term city bonds.

City expenses such as the intentional over hiring of police officers to offset the expected high retirement numbers over the next year are also taken into account in the proposed budget.

According to Warren Wong, city administration services director, more than a dozen police officer applicants out of 300 will be hired to fill the positions expected to open next year.

The hiring will be funded through \$700,000 in savings the City Council set aside Dec. 2 after city officials learned that they overestimated budget shortfalls due to Measures 47 and 50.

The budget committee's next steps are to hold an additional meeting and the first of three proposed public hearings April 27.

The current fiscal year has been marked by the City Council's slashing of services and employee layoffs due to the passage of Measures 47 and 50.

The measures cut taxes to 90 percent of 1995-96 levels and capped property taxes to a 3 per-

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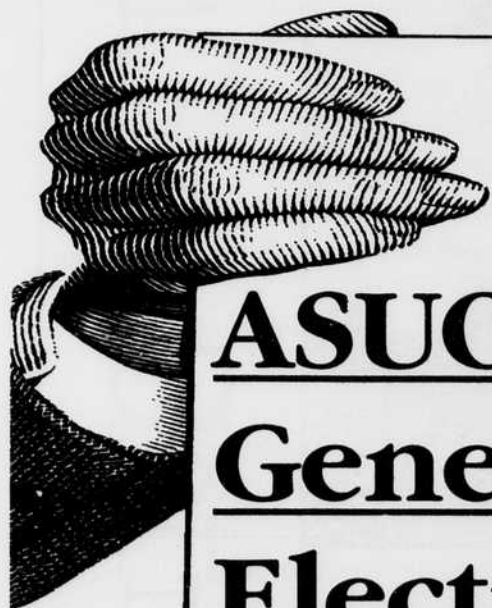
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