

Mayor's Office



Mayor Roger Fitzpatrick
City of Riesel

Honorable Members of the Riesel City Council:

Enclosed is the proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2014 and ending September 30, 2015.

The proposed balanced budget maintains the same .35 cent tax rate as last year; however, due to increased appraisal values the city should receive 27.56% more tax revenue than last year. Due to major expenses and legal fees with the rebuilding of Rattlesnake Well, the unrestricted portion of the Water Reserve Fund has been completely depleted and it is with careful consideration that I recommend leaving the tax rate at .35 cents to help re-establish proper reserve funds. I would like to request that Council consider pledging a portion of the additional tax revenue to the Water Reserve Fund in order to adequately operate and maintain the level of services needed by our citizens.

A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is also included with the budget. The capital projects we currently have underway or have completed this year are the Charles Street, Sewer & Water Line Rehab Project, The Mullens Park Trail Project, and Citywide AMR Water Meter Upgrades. General Street repairs are being considered as well, and may be started by the end of this year, but will most likely carry over into this next fiscal year. An Arsenic Pilot Study was also planned for this current year, but with the Rattlesnake Well having been inoperable for the majority of the year, the project has been on hold. Thus, the Arsenic Pilot Study is in the Capital Improvement Plans for the upcoming year and that is also reflected in the attached proposed budget.

Repairs and replacement of some of the sewer plant infrastructure were budgeted to be complete this current fiscal year, however they will most likely roll over into next year and therefore have been included in the proposed budget.

In the CIP, there are recommend annual allocations for other expenses such as vehicles, infrastructure, equipment, buildings, etc. This helps reduce the burden of purchasing or replacing large capital items by allocating smaller amounts of money each year and planning strategically for those expenses in advance and having a schedule of life expectancy and tentative replacement times. This is the purpose of a Capital Improvement Plan and we as elected officials are charged with this responsibility of planning and preparation.

There are numerous needs for infrastructure improvement throughout the city (Arsenic Treatment System, Water Line upgrade from Rattlesnake Well to Hwy 6, Sewer Lines, etc.) and before delving into another large, costly project, I propose that the City Council take this year to begin some rigorous strategic planning and prioritizing future infrastructure upgrades and expansions, financial planning and rate studies. An outside consultant or committee could even possibly be utilized to help in these endeavors. Contingency funds need to be replenished. With the current projects, repairs, engineering fees and legal fees, our contingency funds have dwindled and we must look at rebuilding those for future emergencies and projects to prevent a possible financial crisis down the road. These are all things I urge council to spend time focusing on this upcoming year, holding workshops and soliciting public input to help set the goals in stone.

And lastly, a very important goal I charge you with this upcoming year is to carefully consider and implement Building Codes & Permits, a Zoning Ordinance, and an Economic Development Committee. We need to encourage growth, but it needs to be structured to benefit the greater good of the City and our citizens. Building Codes and Zoning serve a number of purposes and will help facilitate planning and will ensure that minimum requirements are met. An Economic Development Committee may help Council create a purposeful economic development strategy. Riesel has much to offer and has immense potential for future growth. I look forward to joining you in collaborating in the initiation of these ideals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mayor Roger Fitzpatrick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'R' and 'F'.

Mayor, Roger Fitzpatrick