City budget at $7.4 million

By CHRIS PETERSON
Hungry Horse News

Columbia Falls has released a $7.44 million budget for the 2016-17 fiscal year. The general fund is $3.01 million, while the remainder of the budget is a host of other funds, including sewer, water, capital projects, debt service, special revenue funds and the fire relief pension fund.

The overall budget is down slightly from last year, though personnel costs citywide are up about $125,000.

The tax impact of the budget wasn't available by presstime, though council will take up the budget at a public hearing at its Aug. 15 meeting at 7 p.m.

About 34 percent of the budget goes to pay staff and 30 percent is used for operating and maintenance. On the revenue side, taxes and special assessments are about 23 percent of the budget; 26 percent is cash carryover and 25 percent is from charges for services and miscellaneous fees. Services include sewer and water fees.

The city won't add any staff in the coming year, though it does have some capital projects on tap, including fixing the approach to the Old Red Bridge, which is eroding and dangerous. It also plans work on the Cedar Creek Dam diversion ditch. Both of those projects will cost about $20,000 apiece, though a state grant could come through that would ease the cost of the Red Bridge project, noted city manager Susan Nicosia.

The city has also budgeted about $378,000 for streets next year, which doesn't come close to covering the city's "wish list."

Still, the city will likely have to do some work on Fourth Avenue West near Glacier Gateway School.

The city is working with the state on a long-term plan for Fourth in that location, but that project is a few years down the road.

The preliminary budget is available for public review at city hall.

ARE YOU A CAREGIVER OF A PERSON(S) WITH

Major Depression
Bipolar Disorder (Manic Depression)
Schizophrenia and Schizoaffective Disorder
Borderline Personality Disorder
Panic Disorder and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
Co-occurring Brain and Addictive Disorder

NAMI Family-to-Family Education program is offering a Free 12 sessions classes to help caregivers understand and support individuals with serious mental health issues while maintaining their own well-being.

CLASSES START: Wednesday, Sept. 7, 2016 through Wednesday, Nov. 23, 2016
6:00 PM. to 8:00 PM
LOCATION: Gateway Community Center in the Activity Center, Room 25, 1200 Highway 2 West, Kalispell

nami
National Alliance on Mental Illness

Co-Teachers:
Julie Doyle 406-854-2323
Colleen Konopatzke 406-250-3795

Registration is required, please contact co-teachers

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