

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Mary Gourley](#)
Subject: Public Comment Budget: Congratulations! Well Under Budget after nearly 1/2 a year!
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 9:54:09 PM

Dear Council,

Congratulations to the City Staff for showing discipline in spending for the first five months of the year.

You are well under budget with spending year to date. The General Fund Statement says you still have 64.9% unspent. The power point slide says 68.6% unspent. The truth is probably around one of those numbers.

I hope the Council will have a meaningful discussion about the Water and Wastewater Funds. The fact the Wastewater fund budget is showing not only a deficit in YTD spending, but the Wastewater Fund is actually reached deficit status. My assumption is the city will begin to borrow from the Water Fund until it runs out and then begin borrowing from the General Fund.

Water and Wastewater rate payers will be on the hook to repay these loans when the city gets around to proposing revised rates.

Council has a fiduciary responsibility to water and wastewater rate payers in Sebastopol. Some good questions about how the cash deficit will be handled would be appropriate. Maybe a discussion about the purchase of a new flatbed dump truck could be put on the table. Good news is the cost of the new dump truck is less than was originally budgeted! It might be appropriate to clarify the timing of when city staff is planning to bring forward the revised proposal for rate increases. Every day this goes on means the rate payers are going to get a continually increasing nasty surprise.

It has not been discussed publicly except very briefly in one of the final Budget Committee meetings. Has the Council exhausted all the possible emergency measures to stem the Water and Wastewater deficits? This is the real budget emergency.

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