

2007 - We were presented a ¾ of a million deficit budget

2008 - We were presented a 1.5 million deficit budget, before it was discovered that the mosquito contract was left out, which brought your budget to almost a 2 million deficit.

NOW we find that it is 4 million dollars.

Since January we have seen hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of expenditures and needs come before the Council. Each department looks out for their end which is understandable but it appears there's no gatekeeper who's looking out for the City as a whole before it get's to the Council. Many of these needs and expenditures are true needs; the City still has to operate. But many are not so urgent.

I think everyone agrees our new finance director has done a fabulous job and provided the council with more accurate information in just a few months than his predecessor did in the whole time he was here.

But at what point will there be ANY plan from the Mayor's office to start to curb or offset many of these expenses.

Our economy appears to be flattening and it's this same economy that we receive a big portion of our City revenue. I'm not preaching gloom and doom and I'm not a financial analyst but I have concerns about the lack of oversight that many of these requests may or may not be receiving before they reach the Council Committees.

I'd ask between now and the end of the year there's some indicators from City Hall to be a bit more fiscally conservative in how public monies are spent and possibly evaluate or re-evaluate what appears to be a need, regardless of the department.

A perfect example is the GIS position we saw tonight. Can it wait until the new budget year until there is a better handle on our finances? Maybe not, I don't know. It just appears that there is no one in City Hall saying "*hold back; let's look at how this will effect the budget.....*"

then it comes before the the Council and yes it's part of our job in some respects to be made out to be the bad guy because we have to ask the fiscally responsible questions and at times say no can it wait.

In the real world, when your checkbook shows a deficit and you continue to spend, there's a price to pay.

Unfortunately, in this case, when the City continues to spend monies it may or may not have, then we all are going to be left to foot the bill.

It needs to be said and I'm going to say it..

The City Council only has the Constitutional Authority to approve a budget...The State took away our authority to manage it several years ago when the Finance Director / Treasurer was placed under the Mayor's authority.

We passed a budget and 2.5 million dollars later we find out what has really been going on only because we have a capable finance director who is actually getting us the correct information .

The only way we have to monitor and control this budget is thru reports and information that are provided by a Mayor's employee.

~~If it was your personal money would you spend it?~~