

COE Budget Outreach Meeting Notes

Total Participants: 40

Introductions

Why did you attend today's meeting? What do you hope to get out of the meeting?

Meeting #1

September 17th, 2019 | 6 P.M. - 8 P.M. | D65 Administration Building

- Concerned with spending/lack of long term planning
- Wants more details about the budget
- Wondering how the planning will move forward and wants to know more about the budget
- Wants more answers to the questions that residents have asked in the past (i.e. Divvy bikes, health care concerns, closing the fire station)
- The budget wasn't brought up in the Ward meetings last year, specifically the 6th Ward
- Having difficulty correlating the mission with the goal and wants better communication regarding City Council goals
- Wants to know what happens to the money donated from community
- Wants more information about TIF money

Meeting #2

September 19th, 2019 | 1 P.M. - 3 P.M. | Evanston Main Library

- Wants a better sense of the budget
- Concerned about lack of affordable housing in Evanston
- City needs to do a better job acting on citizen input. Nothing is coming out of current policies

Meeting #3

September 21th, 2019 | 12 P.M. - 2 P.M. | Levy Senior Center

- Wants to learn more about the budget and how the money was spent
- Concerned that the Alderman are not listening to the priorities of citizens when it comes to services and the budget

Roundtable Discussion #1

What barriers do you face to achieving your ideal quality of life as a resident of Evanston?

Meeting #1

September 17th, 2019 | 6 P.M. - 8 P.M. | D65 Administration Building

- Not being able to afford to live in Evanston
- High parking fees/tickets
- Find a way to finance a city and attract more residents.
- Citizens need to be a part of the discussions surrounding taxation
- Engage the students of NU with the government

Meeting #3

September 21th, 2019 | 12 P.M. - 2 P.M. | Levy Senior Center

- Fix sidewalks in the neighborhoods
- Evanston's lack of affordability
- Evanston is losing its character
- Budget and debt is almost the same in the City
- Lack of affordable housing

Roundtable Discussion #2

What ideas do you have that would improve quality of life as a resident of Evanston?

Meeting #1

September 17th, 2019 | 6 P.M. - 8 P.M. | D65 Administration Building

- Stop selling off city assets
- Property standard inspections need to be equitable
- 90% of the services are excellent programs
- Enforcement of City policies needs to be fair for all
- A dog park or dog beach is a service that needs to be added
- The City needs better parking services
- Parking is too costly
- Really enjoy all the parks
- Community centers are an enjoyment
- More comprehensive planning that is actually measured and followed
- Want to know more about the Economic Development Committee
- Need universal basic income for low-income residents
- NU needs to start paying their fair portion of the taxes to the City of Evanston
- Municipal ID for NU's buses
- The relationship between NU and City Administration needs to be addressed
- New ways to engage the university (NU) with the conversation of taxes

Meeting #2

September 19th, 2019 | 1 P.M. - 3 P.M. | Evanston Main Library

- The Council's goal of "Stable City Finances" is not being met. We are not considering cutting expenses.
- The programs are good and increase the quality of life.
- The rising debt is a long term concern.
- Evanston is safe, clean, has good transit, and is very walkable.
- More bike lanes would improve quality of life.
- Housing uncertainty hurts the quality of life.
- Diversity of Evanston's population is good, but is threatened by expensive housing.
- We need to tackle issues related to climate change.

- We need to encourage diversity.
- We need to be thoughtful about how we spend money.
- We spend too much on studies.
- Quality of life is very high - lakefront and walkability.
- Residents don't want to feel nickled and dimed to death ie parking app fee.
- Parking - easier access for those that don't have the app on their smartphones.
- Create more affordable housing
- Decrease traffic
- Rezone land on Ridge, Emerson and Green Bay. Keep lanes painted and clearly identified.
- Budget for Harley Clarke repairs
- Eliminate beach tokens for families under \$25,000
- Bring back the dog beach
- Addressing climate change should be a City Council goal
- Need equity in all we do
- Commitment to equity - operationalize equity, consider the marginalized
- Public transportation for all neighborhoods
- Parking fines drive people out of the city
- Contesting a ticket is too difficult
- Parking tickets feel like a money grab
- Ordinances are enforced inequitably
- Trash pickups are non-reliable, inconsistent
- Who is paying for law suits
- Beaches, parks, and the lark are all services people interact with often

Meeting #3

September 21th, 2019 | 12 P.M. - 2 P.M. | Levy Senior Center

- Increase health and human services funding.
- Reduce taxes

Roundtable Discussion #3

What city services do you use on a regular basis?

Meeting #2

September 19th, 2019 | 1 P.M. - 3 P.M. | Evanston Main Library

- Police
- Fire
- Streets
- Economic development, permits, etc.
- Library
- Mental health services
- Services for the homeless
- Wheel tax
- Parking is costly but good
- Evanston taxes are costly but pay for good services

Meeting #3

September 21th, 2019 | 12 P.M. - 2 P.M. | Levy Senior Center

- Parking tickets
- 311 services
- Senior services
- Parking/street cleaning
- Beaches
- Bike lanes
- Garbage, water and waste services
- Website/newsletter

Roundtable Discussion #4

What ideas do you have to balance the budget?

Meeting #1

September 17th, 2019 | 6 P.M. - 8 P.M. | D65 Administration Building

- Create consequences for how money is being spent
- Engage residents on decisions regarding spending
- Put equity back into the budget process
- Dog beach would be a great revenue generator
- Working with nonprofits
- Entertainment tax
- Increase cost to NU
- Create a congestion tax
- Use Climate Action Resilience Plan to create revenue for the city
- Establish a new director of Health and Human Services
- Being creative with the waterfront
- Rely on all nine Aldermen to discuss issues within their wards and bring them back to the City
- Cut expenses
- Increase Demolition Permit fee
- Pocket Parks

Meeting #2

September 19th, 2019 | 1 P.M. - 3 P.M. | Evanston Main Library

- Have users of hockey rink raise money to support their costs
- Vespas/scooters should be provided with designated parking spots with the ability to lock their vehicles. Two could share the space for reduced costs. Charge for license plates for vespas/scooters
- The City should allow NU to increase their special events
- Create more beach events: concerts, picnics, etc.
- Create a marina and rent out boats
- Tax commercial trash cans
- Allow alternative ways to pay parking tickets
- Cut staff costs by having citizens adopt a park and be responsible for litter pick up, mowing etc.

- Stop paying businesses to stay in town

Meeting #3

September 21th, 2019 | 12 P.M. - 2 P.M. | Levy Senior Center

- Stop spending money on unnecessary Capital improvement projects
- Those who have money should supplement those who don't
- Have departments cut their spending

Roundtable Discussion #5

How can we improve the City's Budget process? What questions do you still have regarding the budget?

Meeting #1

September 17th, 2019 | 6 P.M. - 8 P.M. | D65 Administration Building

- Does the City pay a storage unit tax?
- How high are the City's health insurance premiums?

Meeting #2

September 19th, 2019 | 1 P.M. - 3 P.M. | Evanston Main Library

- Develop more budget education early in the process
- Increase grassroots efforts
- Use equity in the budget process
- Alderman should drive the budget input process
- More documentation and access to public for discussions around budget
- City does more of these types of meetings but with council involved
- Should be a way to hear the responses to questions asked in public comment
- A lot of people can't/won't come in person, so there should be a digital option to learn about the budget
- What came of the survey last year?
- Priority-Based Budgeting results did not have an impact
- We should have a system where participants can allocate points to different city operations

- Last year's survey was a step in the right direction

Meeting #3

September 21th, 2019 | 12 P.M. - 2 P.M. | Levy Senior Center

- What came of last year's survey result. Why weren't they taken into consideration?
- Put additional information about the budget process in eNews and online
- Promote the budget process more