Budget Review talks for 2027 and Set/Approve 2027 Preliminary Budget and Tax Levy for City of Gilbert & Set Date and Time for Truth In Taxation Hearing

Extensive discussion was held. Mayor Karl Oberstar's preference was to set the levy at approximately 9% and fund any shortfall through local bank financing; he suggested a $500,000 loan with a 10-15 year term. Mayor Oberstar suggested a transfer of funds from the Electric The discussion shifted to setting the date and time for the Truth in Taxation meeting and at which meeting the Final Levy would be set. Councilor Bob Pontinen reminded Council that the City has traditionally set the Final Levy at the Truth in Taxation meeting.

Motion by Councilor Paul Skrbec to set the Truth in Taxation meeting for 6:00 pm on Tuesday, December 8, 2026 and the Regular Meeting of City Council to follow at approximately 6:30pm, seconded by Councilor Ryan Redepenning. **MCU**

Discussion continued regarding the 2027 Budget and Preliminary Tax Levy. Discussion was spirited; topics ranged from audit delays, audit firms performance, City's responsibilities in filing audits timely, recent new hire being charged to General Fund versus Public Works, departmental wish lists, and preferences for setting a higher level with the anticipation of reducing once staff has been able to provide more thorough analysis of actual spend. City Clerk-Treasurer Nancy Sanford expressed a preference for a higher preliminary levy with adjustments downward once data is verified.

Motion by Mayor Karl Oberstar to set the Preliminary Levy at 9.9%. Failed due to lack of second.

Discussion continued. Councilor Rudy Vertachnik noted that he has asked multiple times for information about each City vehicle and the expenses associated therewith but has not received any data. Councilor Rudy Vertachnik also noted that some of the requests made by Public Works are not reasonable and that other requests that have been made by him for repairs or work around the City have not been completed. Councilor Rudy Vertachnik noted that he opposed additional funding for Public Works. Clerk noted that 2026 healthcare benefits are increasing by more than 29% and that it is unlikely there is time to consider changes that would reduce costs. Councilor Skrbec expressed he did not like the 25% levy figure but felt it was the best approach to have the Preliminary Levy high and work together as a team to reduce the number as far down as possible.

Motion by Councilor Paul Skrbec to set the Preliminary Levy at 25%, seconded by Councilor Ryan Redepenning. Roll call vote was taken.

Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. – No.
Councilor Paul Skrbec – Yes.
Councilor Rudy Vertachnik – Yes.
Councilor Bob Pontinen – Yes.
Councilor Ryan Redepenning – Yes.
The motion carries 4 to 1.

City of Gilbert
Minutes of Special City Council Meeting
Monday, September 28, 2026
Council Chambers

Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at 6:04PM
Quorum determined.

Present: Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr., Councilor Bob Pontinen, Councilor Rudy Vertachnik, Councilor Paul Skrbec, Councilor Ryan Redepenning; Clerk/Treasurer Nancy Sanford, Interim Deputy Clerk/Finance Director Maegen Bothwell; City Engineer Matt Reed.
Absent with Notice:
Pledge of Allegiance

Building Permit to Review/Act on for Debi Leseman

Discussion was held regarding request for land use/building permit. Councilor Rudy Vertachnik presented information regarding delinquent taxes on the property for which the permit was being requested. Councilor Paul Skrbec noted that it was the replacement of an existing deck and was not changing the footprint of the building. Mayor Karl Oberstar recommended approval of the permit despite delinquent taxes noting that the ordinance does not limit approval due to delinquency. Councilor Paul Skrbec noted that perhaps the ordinance should be changed but that City Council cannot withhold permit approval at current time.
Motion by Councilor Paul Skrbec to approve the land use/building permit, seconded by Councilor Bob Pontinen. **MCU**

Review/Act on Campground Host Contract Proposal

Discussion was held regarding increase in compensation for Campground host/manager contract for 2026-2028. Mayor Karl Oberstar discussed a 10% raise for 2026-27 and an additional 10% raise for 2027-2028. Councilor Rudy Vertachnik indicated that the current host may not return without a significant raise; host was asking for a raise from $38,000 to close to $60,000. Councilor Paul Skrbec noted additional investments made by the city recently including a UTV and washer/dryer; also noted that off-season may be able to be insourced to City Hall. Councilor Bob Pontinen expressed his opinion that discussion about the campground is a conflict of interest for Councilor Paul Skrbec; Councilor Paul Skrbec disagreed. Councilor Rudy Vertachnik suggested an increase to $55,000 for each of the two years covered by the contract. Mayor Karl Oberstar confirmed it should be a two year contract.
Motion by Councilor Rudy Vertachnik to approve a new two year contract with the current campground hosts for a rate of $55,000/year, seconded by Mayor Karl Oberstar. Roll call vote taken.
Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. – Yes.
Councilor Paul Skrbec – No.
Councilor Rudy Vertachnik – Yes.
Councilor Bob Pontinen – Yes.
Councilor Ryan Redepenning – No.
The motion carries 3 to 2.

City of Gilbert
Minutes of Special City Council Meeting
Monday, September 28, 2026
Council Chambers

Motion by Mayor Karl Oberstar, seconded by Councilor Paul Skrbec, to adjourn the meeting at 7:44PM. **MCU**

**These minutes are paraphrased and are not written word for word.*

ATTEST:

Nancy Sanford, Clerk/Treasurer

Karl Oberstar Jr., Mayor