



REGULAR MEETING OF THE BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMISSION – 6:30 P.M.

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the Redondo Beach Budget and Finance Commission was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Woodham, in the City Hall Council Chambers, 415 Diamond Street, Redondo Beach, California.

B. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Marin, Jeste, Allen, Ramcharan, Sherbin, Turner, Chair Woodham

Commissioners Absent: None

Officials Present: Eugene Solomon, City Treasurer
Nilesh Mehta, Chief Deputy City Treasurer
Jacob Kamsvaag, Administrative Analyst
Emily Bodkin, Liaison

C. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chair Woodham led in the salute to the flag.

D. APPROVE ORDER OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Marin, seconded by Commissioner Allen, to approve the order of the agenda as presented.

Motion carried 7-0- by voice vote.

E. BLUE FOLDER ITEMS - ADDITIONAL BACK UP MATERIALS

E.1. For Blue Folder Documents Approved at the Budget and Finance Commission Meeting

Analyst Kamsvaag reported two Blue Folder items: one for J.2 and one for J.3.

F. CONSENT CALENDAR

F.1. APPROVAL OF AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING FOR THE REGULAR BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMISSION MEETING OF JANUARY 8, 2026

F.2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 11, 2025

Motion by Commissioner Marin, seconded by Commissioner Allen, to approve the Consent Calendar as written.

Motion carried 7-0 by voice vote.

G. EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS - None

H. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

H.1. For eComments and Emails Received from the Public

Maria Larissa Yasol stated that she is a Real Estate professional; reported that the City's population is about 68,075, owner occupied is 15,233, and renter occupied is 13,314; stated that when housing is evaluated through a finance lens ownership units consistently outperforms rental units in long term revenue; stated that a fiscal healthy city must balance rental housing with real opportunities for ownership and once the coastal land is committed to permanent rental the City forfeits its highest long-term fiscal potential; urged the Commission to be pro title holders and raise stakeholders in the community.

I. ITEMS CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS AGENDAS - None

J. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION PRIOR TO ACTION

J.1. CITY TREASURER'S FIRST QUARTER, FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 REPORT

CONTACT: EUGENE SOLOMON, CITY TREASURER

City Treasurer Eugene Solomon reported that due to the Commission's agenda and schedule they are bringing this report a bit later than planned; stated himself, Rick Phillips (Meeder Advisory), and Nilesh Mehta (Chief Deputy City Treasurer) would walk them through the first quarter of the fiscal year 2025; turned the floor over to Nilesh Mehta.

Chief Deputy City Treasurer Mehta stated that quarter one covers July 2025 to September 30, 2025; noted that the Quarterly Admin Report is in the Commission's packet and includes the Portfolio Summary, the Investment Reporting Guidelines, and the Investment Report by Meeder; stated that the Meeder report includes a Portfolio Summary, Investment Policy Compliance, Investment Activity Report, and the Economic and Market Update; stated that the PowerPoint presentation includes investment reporting objectives/guidelines, policy compliance, quarterly performance, cash flow analysis, maturity distribution, trading activity, and fiscal impact; under Key Investment Objectives for Municipal Investing, he stated that the City Treasurer maintains the City's cash flows, while earning a competitive rate of return, within the constraints of the City's investment

policy and state law; noted that the Treasurer focuses on safety, liquidity, and yield; reviewed the Investment Reporting Guidelines which states:

- Always remember whose money it is and act according in a responsible stewardship capacity
- Investment manager's objective is to earn a reasonable rate of return on the City's investments while preserving capital in the overall portfolio. It should never be the investment manager's goal to earn maximum returns on the City's portfolio as that would expose the City to an unacceptable level of risk.
- Failures in public investing occur when:
 - Policies are not clear
 - Policies were inappropriate
 - Policies are not followed
 - Oversight was inadequate

Chief Deputy City Treasurer Mehta reviewed key questions they ask themselves; provided a slide that went over the Policy Compliance and noted the City was in compliance with all except the Corporate Issuer Compliance; turned the floor over to City Treasurer Solomon for more explanation.

City Treasurer Solomon stated that Clearwater is the system that generated all the information contained in the Policy Compliance report and handles the management of all of the assets for the creation of the report; explained that when Clearwater sees a Corporate Issue such as the one the City has for a Caterpillar Bond in the amount of \$4 million, it shows noncompliant because of the balance in the City's total assets under management; stated that the real guideline is, "are they in compliance at the time of the purchase", and for that purchase, which was done in August 2024, they were in compliance with that corporate concentration item; noted that Clearwater doesn't recognize the purchase at the time of purchase, it only recognizes the concentration now in the City's portfolio and staff wanted to explain and let the Commissioners know why they are seeing it and that they have flagged it; stated that staff did consider the idea of a swap analysis but after doing the swap analysis realized it was not in the best interest of the City and since they are in compliance staff left it as is.

Chair Woodham asked if the investment policy statement addresses the issue and allows the overage to continue in a case like the one Treasurer Solomon explained.

City Treasurer Solomon stated it doesn't specifically talk about the overage continuing; mentioned they could change, it is section 21 of their investment policy and provided more explanation of why they do not feel it's in the City's best interest.

Chair Woodham stated he was comfortable with it, he was just curious.

City Treasurer Solomon reported they will see that change in the second quarter because they have December's property taxes and that will change the Total Assets Under Management, which will change that percentage of concentration.

Commissioner Turner asked if there is somewhere in the Investment Policy Statement that says how often or when rebalancing will take place.

City Treasurer Solomon said he didn't believe a rebalancing of portfolio is contained within the investment policy; stated the investment policy tenants being safety, liquidity, and yield don't require the City to rebalance unless they are out of compliance; noted that if the rule was at any point you find your concentration to exceed, then they would need to rebalance.

Commissioner Turner asked if the City is within the appropriate values at time of purchase but, after the fact, grow to be out of balance and there's no rebalancing, doesn't that mean over time the City is exposing themselves to more unnecessary risk than originally planned.

City Treasurer Solomon stated, in this case, the risk of being balanced in excess Corporate concentration is essentially credit risk and they manage that against their other requirements (safety or liquidity) in taking that risk of yield and being in Corporates; spoke of performing a swap analysis so they can weigh out whether they are taking too much credit risk and, if so, they would consider rebalancing; reported that they did not consider it to be enough of a risk in this situation.

Commissioner Turner asked if there are built in acceptable margins in the Investment Policy Statement that determines what percentage is out of balance.

City Treasurer Solomon responded that they do have percentage requirements within the Investment Policy; stated he believed it is up to 20% for Corporates and if they found themselves over a percentage in their portfolio they would rebalance.

Chair Woodham asked City Treasurer Solomon to go into further detail about the swap analysis.

City Treasurer Solomon explained, in this case, they would consider selling out all or a portion of the security in order to bring their concentration below the 5%, they go out into the marketplace and see what coupons or products are available and analyze selling out of the security and what kind of impact that would realize.

Chief Deputy City Treasurer Mehta stated the following slide featured the comparison of investment portfolio for FY 25-26; noted that this is the first quarter so there isn't much to compare but as they move forward through the year the Commission will see the comparison; reported that cash at the end of the first quarter was almost \$12 million; stated there was a request to separate US Bank money market and CAMP and reported

the money market balance was at \$9.3 million and CAMP was at \$12.4 million and continued to read through the other figures on the slide.

Chair Woodham noted that there was \$73 million at the end of the quarter, which is substantially down from the first quarter's for FY 23, 24, and 25 and asked why the reduction.

City Treasurer Solomon stated there are a number of different factors and it is something they have been discussing internally; spoke of the City receiving ARPA funds, grant funds and other funds that was spent on a variety of different things, including CIP projects; stated when they spend down those other one-time funds and when they spend down CIP projects the total Assets Under Management begin to reduce; noted there is a component of it that they are analyzing with the City Finance Department and creating more cash flow analysis to see where their revenues and expenditures are and to see where the deltas and the positives are coming in; agreed with Chair Woodham that this is the lowest they have been in the first quarter Assets Under Management since 2013-2014 and they are concerned and are trying to determine what is happening exactly and monitoring it very closely.

Chief Deputy City Treasurer Mehta reported that he included the 24-25 FY Performance, and they can see the comparison from first quarter last year.

Commissioner Marin asked, with a \$20 million delta year over year, did their analysis determine what was driving it.

City Treasurer Solomon thought a lot of it was the one-time funding appropriations from ARPA and from the lease revenue bonds but noted there are other things that impact it and explained some different reasons.

More discussion followed regarding expectations and budgeting and forecasting.

City Treasurer Solomon spoke of it being more a function of which revenue streams they are looking at that might underperform or overperform and the City has been relatively flat with most of those revenue streams.

Chair Woodham noted that the revenue streams were close to budget so they shouldn't view it as a negative; stated it is more a factor or a function of larger projects that have come and gone as City Treasurer Solomon pointed out; referenced the first slide which showed a portfolio effective rate of return of 3.23, noted that the City Treasurer is not trying to maximize return in this portfolio but asked how they view the City's risk in that portfolio and how do they know if they are doing a good job of investing.

City Treasurer Solomon stated he would view it on the low end of risk where the primary function of their responsibility is preservation of capital and the liquidity in order to service cash flow needs of the City; noted that there are some other factors that come into play and explained they have some age securities on book that are paying less than 1% and

as those mature and they can roll them into better yields they will see the effective rate of return improve; stated due to the liquidity needs he is not sure if they will ever be at benchmark but would like to keep up with inflationary pressures.

Commissioner Marin said it looked like the City's average maturity is the lowest it's been in years and asked if that was due to the City's liquidity needs.

Chair Woodham asked what the benchmark was in that case.

City Treasurer Solomon stated it was 0 to 5 year treasury.

Rick Phillips, Meeder, added that the biggest thing City Treasurer Solomon touched on is that they have had to shorten maturities dramatically over the years to provide the liquidity; noted that safety and liquidity are 1 and 1A and the yield and return is the 3rd perspective.

Chair Woodham asked what the other investors are like the City, getting as their rate of return, is it higher or is there a way of comparing it.

City Treasurer Solomon responded that every portfolio is a bit different, the needs of each city are different, and the revenues of each city are different; stated, for them, the benchmark starts with prudent financial management, are they in line with their priorities, and are they in line as a good steward of the portfolio; explained the benchmark is stewardship of the fiduciary responsibilities and being in compliance and anything that contributes to the General Fund and to the City's overall interest is a bonus.

Chief Deputy City Treasurer Mehta stated they included the quarter-by-quarter comparison FY 23-24 for the purposes of full transparency; said they are working to improve their cash flow analysis but for the time being they have met the cash flow needs of the City for the quarter and expect to meet the requirements for the upcoming period; provided a slide with the sector allocation showing US Agencies at almost 34%, US Treasuries at 21%, LGIP at 17.16%, Corporate Bonds at 14.57% and Money Market Funds at 12.8%; went over the maturity distribution of the entire portfolio with a bar graph slide, noted that 30% of the City's portfolio is in fully liquid assets; provided a chart showing the historical book value of the City's portfolio going back to FY 22 month by month; reported the fiscal impact to the City as: Interest earned year to date is \$575,653, they contributed approximately 60% of it to the General Fund (\$345,000), and the budgeted contribution for the interest to the General Fund for the entire fiscal year is \$1.5 million.

City Treasurer Solomon added that when you see General Fund contributions at 60%, the other 40% goes to pooled funds that they have within the City.

Analyst Kamsvaag reported no one online and no eComments.

Motion by Commissioner Marin, seconded by Commissioner Turner, to receive and file.

Motion carried 7-0 by voice vote.

J.2. CIP SUBCOMMITTEE QUESTIONS

Chair Woodham recalled a Blue Folder item for J.2 but did not see it in the packet.

Commissioner Allen stated she received it and would like to read it for the public since it had some good points; reported the item was a letter written by Redondo Beach resident Jim Mueller and focused on the cost of change orders on 10 out of 22 of the current fiscal year CIP projects; noted that he used the spreadsheet of project estimates and actual year-to-date that is part of the Commission's public record; the letter stated the Commission is right to be concerned about the level of change orders and reported it is 19% of the engineer's estimate; opined that level suggests one or more of the following: poor pre-bid investigation, change orders used to fix design errors, or scope creep after contract award; the letter stated there is considerable variance among individual contracts and provided variance percentages which he felt justifies a serious investigation into the CIP estimating budgeting process; he reported that many of the projects are paving projects which are not one-off municipal projects.

Chair Woodham asked if anyone had any comments regarding the letter or other comments on issues they have been discussing with CIP; mentioned last week they discussed hiring an auditor to audit it and suggested the next step would be to have the Director of Public Works present to the Commission addressing the issues in the letter from Jim Mueller; stated they need to have the discussion about the items before they recommend going to the expense of having an auditor.

Commissioner Allen stated that Jesse Reyes, the Manager for CIP Projects, had recently come to a meeting and answered a lot of their questions and they agreed that a subcommittee would meet and write questions down; asked if the subcommittee completed the questions.

Commissioner Ramcharan said he is part of the subcommittee, but they do not have the questions completed at that time; noted that he was away on vacation and that they need to meet, discuss, and form the list of questions.

More discussion followed on the subcommittee's actions to follow up on the item.

Commissioner Jeste stated the three of them (Ramcharan, Turner, and Jeste) need to meet; reported that he has gone over the information that Finance Director Meyer had provided and felt the issue is beyond CIPs; opined that the root cause of the problem is poor planning and the way the CIP projects are managed; added that the subsequent appropriations for the change orders are processed without anyone questioning them; stated he spoke to Councilmember Kaluderovic and she was shocked by the numbers as well but reported that when presented to Council the change orders are rubber stamped approval; referenced the letter he wrote to Mayor Light about six months ago mentioned the CIP issue and the Mayor's response was the process has been done the same way for maybe 50 years; spoke of the TQM concept that he believes in and mentioned that

the City is taking the easiest route in getting things done and does not want to change; stated the thing that worries him the most is the \$93 million bond that was approved by the voters on November 24th and the voters agreed to paying higher taxes for 30 years so they have put a lot of faith and confidence in the City's administration; mentioned the article's comment from City Manager Witzansky gave no indication that the \$93 million was planned and based on any information; read from the article the City Manager's statement from the Easy Reader and stated there doesn't seem to be any real plan or analysis for the fire stations and police headquarters on cost and it will be a disaster; recommended the City has a complete overhaul of the planning process.

Chair Woodham said Commissioner Jeste brought up two important issues; the first being normal work order change to projects and asked Commissioner Jeste how Fort Wayne handled their change orders.

Commissioner Jeste responded that he did not know and did not go into those details; stated plenty of consultants are experts at TQM and if they review the City's process could point out weaknesses and other issues; felt that the City has no incentive to change their planning because things have been going well; pointed out that the City has been very fortunate for a number of years and money had been pouring in from the state and federal government but now the state has a \$18 billion deficit and the City will not get easy access to any more funding; voiced his concerns over how the City is handling the \$3 million budget deficit, using funds from the pension reserves, and that the City Council turned down the Commission's request to increase reserves; continued to voice his concern that the Council is making no serious effort to manage the City's budget in a prudent, conservative way; stated the CIPs are even worse and is not comfortable with the \$93 million ahead of them.

Chair Woodham, in regard to the Fire and Police bond issue, stated they were told a substantial amount of planning had gone into sizing that bond issue but from what Commissioner Jeste read, that isn't the case.

Commissioner Jeste read direct from the article what was said by City Manager Witzansky, "We chose the smaller scope because from a prudent calculation, we thought this is what residents would support."; stated the City Manager also said he was looking for \$50 million more to play with.

Commissioner Marin said he didn't feel the City Manager meant "play" and felt that was not his intent.

Commissioner Jeste did not think the word "play" should have been used and opined that the City Manager is already playing with 80% of the money spent on CIPs since there are no bids for those.

Chair Woodham asked Finance Director Meyer if she knew what the planning process looked like for the Fire and Police construction process.

Finance Director Meyer responded that the City engaged Griffin as the owner representative to help the City manage the whole process; stated that Griffin will help plan

out the construction and select people to do the design/build and they have been working closely with the City's Police and Fire and the City Manager's office to identify locations to sequence the projects and determine the scope and costs; stated that Griffin is a well respected firm and has had successful similar projects in other cities; reported that every meeting they have had with their financial advisor for the bond they have stated they will not go over the bond proceeds.

Commissioner Sherbin pointed out that the approved amount for Griffin is \$150,000 and they have already liquidated \$94,000 of it and only have \$55,000 left to go; asked what happens to that consulting agreement.

Finance Director Meyer stated that the \$150,000 was put down as placeholder number before they hired Griffin and they will amend that consulting agreement; noted that the costs will be recoverable from bond proceeds.

Commissioner Jeste said in the same article City Manager Witzansky stated they would not be making the Police headquarters any larger and asked why bother building a new building if it's the same square footage.

Discussion followed and many Commissioners pointed out several issues in the current building.

Chair Woodham stated the couple of times the Public Works Director came to answer questions it was not specifically about how they handle work orders and projects as they grow after the initial budget has been set; recommended the subcommittee put the questions together, then they combine those questions with the letter from Jim Mueller, and then, as the next step, raise those issues with the Director of Public Works.

Finance Director Meyer requested that the comprehensive list of questions are very targeted; mentioned that the Public Works Director and CIP Manager have both attended the Commission meetings a few times and would like to make sure they are able to address and document what the Commission is really looking for and make the best use of their time.

Commissioner Turner asked if it would be possible to set up a group of questions for the different roles within the process; stated there is an apparent leak somewhere and in order to find it they need to check all the parts within the process; noted that the initial estimate is very far from the ending cost and felt if they understood the initial process they would better understand the cause behind the change order; voiced his concern for the \$93 million project with the process being broken.

Finance Director Meyer stated that with this particular project the City only has the bond amount to spend unless they get a windfall of some other money from somewhere else; noted that it is Council's decision to put money to something else if there is available funding.

Commissioner Turner understood Director Meyer's point but stated regardless of the funding source there is an intended budget for any project; noted that 10 out of the 22

CIP projects all started out with an original estimated cost that was vastly different from the final cost.

Finance Director Meyer stated there are multiple reasons for that and they have discussed them in the course of the Commission meetings; disagreed with the notion that there being a difference between the starting and the ending amount implies there is something systematically wrong with the City's processes.

Chair Woodham stated that Jim Mueller's letter lists 4 or 5 reasons why costs have been higher and they need to figure out the issues and the cause of them; suggested they go through a list of 10 projects to find one or two where things were done incorrectly and see if they can identify how it could have been done better; noted with inflation and other factors there may have been nothing they could have done differently but it is worth looking to find out if there is something wrong with the process; noted that they have seen some data suggesting there is something wrong and they need to pursue the data.

Commissioner Jeste stated when no competitive bids are requested it is like giving somebody a blank check and there is no incentive to give a low price.

Commissioner Turner mentioned that he is talking about professional services that don't go out to bid but that CIP projects are competitively bid.

Finance Director Meyer stated that they are all competitively bid and all the change orders follow the City's established change order policy and, beyond the specific threshold, Council also approves every single change order.

Commissioner Allen said there is another letter that says exactly what the City's municipal code requires and they do not require any bidding; stated that there are problems with planning, RFPs not being written correctly, leadership oversight, policies, and change orders and they need to get to that.

Commissioner Turner asked Finance Director Meyer if they would be able to look at the City's documented change order process.

Finance Director Meyer responded yes and that she had it with her and could share it with the Commission.

Commissioner Jeste stated that the change order itself could comply with the process but that is not the issue, the issue is that change orders do not require bids; reported going through two of the completed projects and saw no reason why they could not go for competitive bids.

More discussion followed. Commissioner Jeste compared not requiring bidding for change orders to giving the contractor a blank check to do more work.

Commissioner Allen pointed out that once work is started, there is no bidding process.

Commissioner Turner reviewed his understanding of the process as the City awards the contract to a contractor, then as the scope of work progresses something occurs, and then they need a change order.

Chair Allen said there are too many of those happening and that is why she thinks the scope of the RFP for the project is not being done correctly.

Commissioner Turner asked if what Commissioner Jeste and Commissioner Allen are saying is that, when a change order or new order comes up for work that wasn't part of the initial proposal, they want a competitive bid to occur and to possibly bring in a new contractor to finish the scope of work.

Commissioner Jeste stated it could be considered as an extension of the project or a completely new project but there should be no reason why it cannot go out for bids.

Commissioner Marin recommended that it be part of the subcommittee's questions: How does the RFP process work? Is it appropriate? Do things need to be added in terms of policy going forward? He stated getting feedback from the questions would help them in making a decision on what they can recommend to the City Council.

Chair Woodham pointed out that some projects don't lend themselves to changing contractors in the middle of the work and there are probably costs involved in changing contractors in the middle of a project; noted that it can be overdone so the question is: Does it happen on rare occasions, or does it happen on many occasions?

Commissioner Jeste stated that is why he suggested last month that they get an outside consultant to dig into each and every project to determine the reasons; explained what he found in the two projects he reviewed.

More discussion followed regarding the City's ability to get bids for change orders.

Commissioner Turner voiced concern about the process of the change orders with contractors that know the process and purposely underbid contracts knowing they will have every green light to go ahead and do change orders during the project to generate more revenue; stated he is not accusing anyone of doing this but would like to look at the process just to make sure.

Finance Director Meyer said the questions would be great to add to their list; stated staff could give a detailed discussion of how change orders work and how the Public Works team make decisions in the middle of projects.

Commissioner Jeste reported that the City engineer has the authority to approve up to \$25,000; stated in the two examples he has seen the engineers used prudent, rational decision making and he has no issues there; asked even when the City gets more money why they still wouldn't request bids even if they want to use the same contractor; noted that the City has 80% of the money going into change orders and if they could even reduce that by 10% they would save at least \$2 million in his estimation just by getting

bids; pointed out that having competition may incentivize the current contractor to offer a lower bid to continue.

Commissioner Turner agreed with Commissioner Jeste; asked if there is any protocol in place for additional work being added on to the projects after the original scope of work was completed.

Finance Director Meyer responded that Council approves every single one of the actions.

Chair Allen reminded everyone that the Council are not construction workers, they are not consultants, so they need to trust staff and staff's recommendations.

Finance Director Meyer stated that staff provides a lot of information, rationale, pricing, and discussion for the Council to review and consider their decision; noted that in speaking to the Public Works Director that Council is very interested in the projects and look at them closely.

Commissioner Turner asked if Director Meyer knew what the City Council's opinion of the budget of the current projects was.

Finance Director Meyer stated she could not speak to that; reported that the only questions she has heard are from the Commission; noted that internally they are always looking to spend as little as possible and complete capital projects more effectively; reported that the Mayor has expressed interest and the City Manager has directed the Public Works team and her team to work together on the presentation of capital projects in the Budget Book.

Commissioner Allen recommended that the entire Budget & Finance Commission attend the Strategic Planning Meeting since that is where they can ask questions and might be able to influence Council's decisions.

Finance Director Meyer reported that she did include a note about the Strategic Planning session in the agenda for the Commission in case they wanted to send any information or statements for the Council to consider at the session; suggested that the Commission could attend the Public Works Safety and Sustainability Commission meetings to see if the topic is of interest to them; noted that they will have a joint meeting with that Commission around budget time.

Chair Woodham stated they need to make a decision on this item; suggested they have the subcommittee meet to form the questions, they combine the questions with the letter from Jim Mueller, Finance Director Meyer sends those to Public Works for their review, and then someone high ranking from Public Works needs to come back to discuss it with the Commission; reported, for the record, that they are not making any accusations at this point, they just want to make sure that if anything improper can take place or is taking place that they are able to stop it; asked if everyone agreed with the approach he is suggesting.

Analyst Kamsvaag reported there was one public comment.

Maria Larissa Yasol reported that she worked for a glazing contractor that served Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach, and Hermosa Beach for many years; stated that, in professional construction, unforeseen situations should not be routine but most of the time that means careless planning; stated city construction jobs have become what they call “dairy farm” which is due to weak oversight, predictable change orders, and fragmented accountability and that allows costs to be “milked” long after the contract is signed; suggested that a total contract is installed with no change orders.

Commissioner Allen agreed with everything Maria Larissa Yasol said.

Commissioner Jeste also agreed with everything; stated it took them two years to get the data they requested and the City didn’t show any interest in digging deeper until Director Meyer provided the data.

More discussion followed regarding putting together enough detail and data for the Council to realize a change is potentially needed in the process.

Chair Woodham said the completion of their work will be a report and recommendations to the City Council.

Commissioner Allen asked the subcommittee to add a question asking where they advertise for bids and the average number of bids they receive for CIPs.

Analyst Kamsvaag reported no more one online and no eComments.

Motion by Commissioner Allen, seconded by Commissioner Jeste, to put the item on the agenda and bring it back.

Motion carried 7-0 by voice vote.

J.3. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES PROCUREMENT DATA FROM STAFF

Commissioner Allen stated that Jim Mueller provided a letter for this item and requested to read points that she highlighted; the letter noted that the municipal code states “professional services of engineers, architects, accountants, attorneys, doctors, and other professional classes are hereby declared to be noncompetitive and bids need not be received.” She stated the letter said, “Another issue with services contract is automatic extensions for multiple years.” She read his recommendation is that “stricter discipline to create and review sole source justification, eliminate automatic contract extensions, and make requests for extensions be accompanied by a review of alternate sources for services and review and possibly change the categories exempt from competition.” She asked what the City’s municipal code says about professional contracts.

Finance Director Meyer reported that staff did submit both as Blue Folder items and shared it on the screen; stated she could pull up the municipal code for them if needed.

Commissioner Allen asked staff to confirm if what Jim Mueller wrote in the letter regarding the municipal code was accurate.

Finance Director Meyer confirmed it was accurate.

Commissioner Allen read the municipal code again and stated one of their recommendations later could be that the code be changed; noted that it just requires Council approval.

Commissioner Turner asked if the codes are regularly benchmarked or reviewed to see if changes are appropriate.

Commissioner Allen said it is done on an “as needed” basis.

Commissioner Turner asked if there is a record of the last time that the code was reviewed and a change was made.

Finance Director Meyer reported that a charter change to the Public Works purchasing section of the City code was done and the City updated purchasing thresholds for other goods and services in 2014 and 2015; stated the City has not updated the section of the code for a number of years; pointed out that she did mention to the Commission that the City is looking at just reviewing the City’s non-Public Works procurement; noted that codes are sometimes changed internally, or due to state law codes, or directed by City Council or the City Manager.

Commissioner Allen pointed out that the charter can only be changed by the voters and the municipal code can be changed by Council.

More discussion followed.

Chair Woodham asked Director Meyer if the \$10 million budget that was mentioned in the letter included outside attorneys.

Finance Director Meyer said she didn’t know where Jim Mueller got that number from so she would have to take a look but if he is just looking at contractual professional services line item in the City’s budget it would probably include some attorneys’ fees but not all; stated she would have to look at it in more detail since she is not sure where he based that number on.

Commissioner Turner asked what the first steps would be if the opinion of the Commission is to update or amend the code.

Chair Woodham stated a resolution by the Commission and a letter to City Council.

Commissioner Turner suggested they put some evidence behind the value of changing the code such as a scenario to show the monetary value of putting the process into a bid and what the positive outcome might be from it.

Commissioner Ramcharan agreed with that and thought Finance Director Meyer was putting together some data to compile the evidence to see what savings could potentially be.

Chair Woodham pointed out that if legal fees were included in the figure that all the other expenditures may pale in comparison to one or two big legal fees so they need to differentiate that.

Finance Director Meyer responded that they could do that; stated that she included in the Commission's packet a short cover report and all the examples provided are professional services but does not encompass the totality of the City's professional services.

Discussion followed regarding whether all those mentioned in the short cover report were professional services since Athens was listed and that contract was definitely bid out.

Commissioner Marin pulled up Manhattan Beach's municipal code and pointed out that theirs is exempt from bidding as well but they have some metrics around dollar value for approval.

Finance Director Meyer stated that Redondo Beach also has metrics and actually has very low thresholds compared to most cities.

More discussion followed.

Finance Director Meyer reported that anything over \$5,000 needs a purchase order, everything over \$35,000 goes to Council and is a short item, and above \$35,000 is a standalone item that Council approves and the Mayor signs every single contract; asked if the Commissioners had any other questions before she pulled up the sample data.

Commissioner Allen wanted to review the letter; commented that the letter does say "professional services".

Finance Director Meyer showed an example of an export from their financial system of the type of data that they can provide; explained what each column contained and noted that each provides some level of description so they can identify the associated service.

Commissioner Allen stated according to the City's municipal code none of the jobs needed to be bid but noted that some of them have been competitively bid.

Finance Director Meyer clarified that Athens is considered a service contract, so it's non-professional but it is 100% service so that is why it falls into this category.

Commissioner Allen asked if there was a way to distinguish which ones are the professional services for next time.

Finance Director Meyer responded that she thinks so; noted that, although their municipal code says they do not have to bid for professional services, they frequently do bid as a best practice and so they can get the best service for the City.

Commissioner Ramcharan stated one piece of data that would be helpful would be they could identify which PO's were bid and which ones were not; asked if the City keeps track of that.

Finance Director Meyer stated it is data that they could find but it is not readily available; noted that they are working on ways to add functionality to the data so that they are able to pull data like that more easily.

Commissioner Ramcharan spoke of the hypothesis being when you place a contract out to bid the price is marked to market and so you get a comparative price but if a contract is not frequently placed for competitive bidding the price gets stale and goes up and noted that would allow them to detect the inertia in pricing and give some sense whether it makes sense to bid some things; stated his concern is if they try to bid everything the transaction cost would be so high that the savings would be minimal and a waste of everyone's time; suggested if they could identify the subset of things that make sense then that would be the most efficient way to proceed; noted that if they have the data in excel it would not be that difficult and he would be happy to help.

Finance Director Meyer agreed with Commissioner Ramcharan but noted that getting the data would be the tough part, but once they have it, it would be easy.

Commissioner Turner asked if there is some type of defining criteria behind which contracts are sent to bid and which ones aren't.

Finance Director Meyer said she can only speak for her department, and she looks at how long it is, how long it's been since they've had a new provider, cost and timing; felt other departments use the same factors in their decision to send out for bid or not.

Commissioner Turner agreed if they blanket bid for everything it would be a huge waste of time.

Commissioner Allen clarified that there are different types of bids and that a traditional bid would advertise and go through the process but for a competitive bid they can send an email out to three people and get a quote quickly.

Finance Director Meyer noted that they have been collecting best practices from other cities to benchmark and noticed that at a certain dollar threshold different levels are required; reported that is what the City does with goods and services.

Discussion followed on practices for the bidding process.

Commissioner Turner suggested the develop a universal criteria that states if it hasn't been sent to bidding in a certain period of time then it's required to be bid, if it is over a dollar threshold it is required to be bid, and they can set up a book of rules to follow rather than just say everything needs to be sent to bid.

Chair Woodham noted that under the Total Ordered Category some of the contracts are multi-year and so they would need to come up with a figure of how much is spent on an annual basis.

Commissioner Allen pointed out that the Community Development Department has very large contracts for plan check and consulting services and asked if they outsource everything for that department.

Finance Director Meyer reported that they have had difficulty in recruiting for some of the positions and its been a strategic decision that Council has been supportive of over the past few years to have consultants do some of the plans, with staff oversight, to speed up the process.

Chair Woodham felt the next step would be to show City Council the annual amount spent on contracts that do not get a competitive bid and show its significance.

Commissioner Ramcharan stated the initial question they had was whether the bidding or the procurement process is a reasonable one but aside from comparing the bid/non-bid contracts he is drawing a blank on how else to test whether the current process is reasonable or not; said another possibility would be to look at the frequency of the provider and ask if they (he used Griffin as an example) continually show up on the spreadsheet and review the data to see if anything is off.

Commissioner Allen stated she would like to know which ones on the spreadsheet are professional services.

Finance Director Meyer apologies for having both categories in the spreadsheet and would separate them out.

Commissioner Turner suggested they use one of the examples from the professional service list and go out and collect quotes or bids to give them a clear cut idea on whether the price they are currently paying is competitive or not.

Commissioner Ramcharan asked about the feasibility of being able to compare contracts that are customized to a certain project.

Chair Allen said they have the ability to use the information from the City's contracts to create a similar RFP.

Commissioner Turner confirmed that they could use the same proposal and send it out to different companies to see what they come back with.

Commissioner Marin questioned whether a vendor would spend time on an RFP if there is no actual work to be done.

Commissioner Allen questioned how the vendor would know that there is no work.

Commissioner Marin stated it would be unethical to waste someone's time knowing there is no actual contract to be awarded.

Commissioner Allen reported that at her place of work they do it all the time just to get an idea of a cost in order to propose it.

More discussion followed regarding the intent of the bid and the execution of running the comparison, the market changes from the time of the contract they choose to use, and what district the services are predominantly being used.

Chair Woodham stated the reason they are looking at this is the idea that things that are not competitively bid, over time, can become too expensive; said they should not be concerned about getting a competitive bid, they are just showing that there is X amount of the budget on an annual basis that is spent without competitive bidding and that money could be saved if it is competitively bid.

Commissioner Turner felt in the process of getting the bids it would give their argument strength as to why change is needed.

Chair Woodham pointed out that unless they go to every one of them and get a competitive bid, which is not something they are prepared to do, they wouldn't know how much savings it would be; noted they simply need to show City Council that there is a vulnerable position to some degree regarding professional services.

Commissioner Turner suggested they create a sample size to compare; felt it is important to collect the bids and there might be potential benefit for the vendor.

Commissioner Sherbin stated when they talk to Public Works they can ask them to run the Commission through a bidding process for a particular project, they can look at the bids, and staff can explain what the criteria was for making the selection; noted that staff could also talk them through the change notices and combine it with the questions from the subcommittee; felt they could get a better picture for making a potential change in the City's code.

Chair Woodham voiced concern of the Commission getting involved in getting competitive bids; felt they just need to show the Council where the City is vulnerable, the City Council can then pass an ordinance that the City will be getting competitive bids, and the City department will get bids; stated if the dollar amount is substantial on an annual expenditure basis the City will realize the savings; noted that their sale is to City Council and then City Council can decide whether to take action or not.

Commissioner Marin pointed out it would at least be on public record.

Commissioner Turner stated in his opinion the easiest way to go about trying to offer resolution is to come up with criteria for when things should be taken to bid and when they don't need to be, a rule book; commented that he agrees with Director Meyer's approach in her department and wondered if they could create rules similar to her considerations for all professional services.

Commissioner Allen asked Director Meyer what her criteria is for going out to bid in the Finance Department.

Finance Director Meyer stated she looks at how much time they have to work with, when the last time they bid the service out, and she will look at discussion boards to determine what other cities have done.

Commissioner Marin agreed with Director Meyer's protocol.

Commissioner Allen said then there is no need to change anything.

Commissioner Turner felt establishing a universal criteria would be important.

Chair Woodham suggested they bring the item back with some massaging of the data showing the annual amount for professional services not competitively bid for a future meeting.

Finance Director Meyer commented that it is something her department is interested in for the process they are already working on, so she is happy to do it.

Analyst Kamsvaag reported no eComments and no one on Zoom.

Maria Larissa Yasol spoke about working with a lot of developers when she worked for the glazing contractor; stated bidding is for price comparison and the scope of work must be strong and clear; commented that the change orders can be capped not to exceed a certain amount or percentage and that it is not about the lowest price but about the responsible bid.

Motion by Commissioner Allen, seconded by Commissioner Turner, to bring the item back on the agenda for the next meeting.

Motion carried 7-0 by voice vote.

K. COMMISSION MEMBER ITEMS AND FUTURE COMMISSION AGENDA TOPICS

Commissioner Allen mentioned they have the CIP questions and the last item they just added.

Chair Woodham asked if anyone from CalPERS would be coming to talk to the Commission.

Finance Director Meyer reported that she was not able to secure anyone from CalPERS this year but her substitute idea was to gather her projections using their pension tool and the Commission's questions and vet them through their actuary and bring those back to the Commission.

Discussion followed regarding what the pension tool can provide; Chair Woodham stated he would be interested in information on the UAL; Director Meyer stated the pension tool could provide that information and would run it to bring it back for the next meeting.

L. ADJOURNMENT – 8:43 P.M.

Motion by Commissioner Allen, seconded by Commissioner Marin, to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

Motion carried 7-0 by voice vote.

The next meeting of the Redondo Beach Budget & Finance Commission will be a regular meeting to be held at 6:30 p.m. on January 16, 2026, in the Redondo Beach Council Chambers, at 415 Diamond Street, Redondo Beach, California.

All written comments submitted via eComment are included in the record and available for public review on the City website.

Respectfully submitted:

Stephanie Meyer
Finance Director