

**CITY OF CLARKSTON TOWN HALL MEETING
FIRE & EMS OPTIONS
FEBRUARY 22, 2017**

	Asotin County	City of Clarkston	Data Source
Population estimates, July 1, 2015 Data	22,105	7,317	Census
Housing			
Median value owner occupied 2011-2015 Data	\$171,900	\$123,300	Census
Housing Units, April 1, 2010 Data	9,872	3,411	Census
Owner Occupied Housing Units - Levy Exempt 2017	1026	293	Co. Assessor
Income, Poverty, Health 2011-2015 Data			
Median Household Income	\$44,394	\$32,042	Census
Persons in Poverty	15.7%	20.6%	Census
With a disability, under age 65	13.3%	17.9%	Census
Persons without health insurance	10.5%	20.7%	Census
Present Services			
EMS Ambulance - Levy – per thousand – w/Lewiston	\$.50	-----	Co. Assessor
EMS Ambulance - Levy – per thousand - Clarkston	-----	\$1.32	Co. Assessor
Fire - ACFD#1 - Levy – per thousand - Volunteer	\$.72	-----	Co. Assessor
Fire - City of Clarkston – City Budget – Full Time 24 Hr	-----	\$1 Million+	Clk. Budget

City of Clarkston Budget Estimates for 2017

6 Firefighter Personnel = \$1,059,225
6 EMS Ambulance personnel = \$1,237,965
TOTAL FIRE/EMS AMBULANCE BUDGET = \$2,297,190

**CITY OF CLARKSTON
AMBULANCE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES - LEVY RATES
YEARS 2008 – 2016**

YEAR	Assessed Value	% Change Assessed Value	Total \$ Amount of Levy	% Change	Levy Amount per Thousand	Levy \$ for \$125,000 House
2008	\$308,884,975	---	\$385,019	---	1.24648	\$156
2009	\$325,891,294	105.5%	\$400,971	104%	1.23038	\$154
2010	\$362,146,907	111.1%	\$413,834	103%	1.14272	\$143
2011	\$381,048,967	105.2%	\$463,834	112%	1.21723	\$152
2012	\$389,284,675	102.2%	\$486,834	105%	1.25059	\$156
2013	\$395,062,500	101.5%	\$511,800	105%	1.29549	\$162
2014	\$400,554,662	101.4%	\$526,722	103%	1.31498	\$164
2015	\$413,253,227	103.2%	\$546,167	104%	1.32163	\$165
2016	\$436,312,074	105.6%	\$570,400	104%	1.30732	\$163

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Background Information

The Clarkston Fire Department was a volunteer fire department until December 18, 1973, and began with 5 paid members. For several years the number of firefighters varied from 8 to 9 until 2009, when a tenth member was added.

The Clarkston Fire Department began providing ambulance service on January 1, 2010 within the City limits of Clarkston. Previously the City of Lewiston provided ambulance services through contractual agreement. The ambulance services were paid for with a Rescue One Levy by Clarkston residents.

The present EMS Ambulance Levy amount is **\$1.31** per thousand dollars of property value which generates **\$570,400** towards helping to pay for ambulance service. Historically the ambulance calls have always been far greater than the number of fire calls.

Year	Ambulance	Fire	Total
2010	1,177	213	1,390
2016	1,913	235	2,148

In the past residents of the City of Asotin and Asotin County also paid for Lewiston ambulance service with a levy. Their current levy is **\$0.50** per thousand. They continue to be served by Lewiston ambulance.

In September 2012 a SAFER Grant started to pay for 2 more firefighters in Clarkston. This brought the total number of firefighters to 12. This grant paid for salary and benefits but **NO** overtime hours. This put 4 firefighters on duty full time, 24 hours. The SAFER grant expired in December 2014. The 2 SAFER grant employees were retained by a vote of the city council.

By March 2016 Clarkston city council and the mayor began to worry about the sustainability of 12 full time firefighters.

Year 2016 dollars were **projected** in March for benefits and salaries by department. At that time budgets from 2011 to 2016 increased 11% for Public Works, 10% for police, 15% for EMS, and 35% for fire. With 12 firefighter/EMS personnel the overtime and Reserve time also expanded.

Towards the middle of 2016 with two vacant positions, and now 10 staff in the fire/EMS department, the council and mayor took the option of filling the two positions with Reserves which took the number to 12. By an existing Local Union 2299 contract, and a Memorandum of Understanding, the City could only fill the 2 positions with Reserves for 62 calendar days, until August 23, 2016. The City of Clarkston asked for an extension from Local Union 2299 to allow council members fill the 2 positions with Reserve personnel so they could continue to look for options for fire/EMS services. The request was denied by the Union.

Final figures for year 2016 were not available until early February 2017. Final percentage increases for 2011 to 2016 were 11% for Public Works, 6% for Police, 13% for EMS, and 30% for fire. Part of the lower percentage for Police was a vacancy part of the year. Lower percentages in Fire and EMS could be attributed to 10 versus 12 personnel.

Wages and benefits from Current Expense plus EMS/Ambulance to total expenditures have gone from 67.5% in 2011 to 79.4% in 2016.

City council members on the Clarkston Public Safety Committee compiled a list of 13 possible options for the City of Clarkston. After considering each option from an operational viewpoint and to gauge the level of service each might provide, the focus was then on the following 4 options.

Option #1 - continue service with the Clarkston Fire Department with 12 person staffing, 4 on each shift

Option #2 - 10 person staffing with 3 on each shift and one extra person on day shift

Option #3 - Clarkston to contract with City of Lewiston for fire and EMS ambulance services

Option #4 - Clarkston to annex into Asotin County Fire District No. 1

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On September 1, 2016 Mayor Lawrence sent letters to Fire Chief Myklebust of Lewiston, and Chief Hardin of Asotin County Fire District No. 1 asking whether they would participate in exploring the possibility of broader based services. A letter was also sent to Mayor Bonfield of Asotin advising her of Clarkston's intentions to make her aware of the process.

Beginning in September Fire Chief Cooper - Clarkston, Chief Myklebust - Lewiston, and Chief Hardin - Asotin County Fire District No. 1, began to meet in order to review present services and possible options for Clarkston. Public meetings occurred on Nov. 15, 2016, and Jan. 10, 2017 with various public officials attending from the LC Valley.

How is Clarkston Funded?

Current Expense, considered the "workhorse" of Clarkston's budget, derives revenue from a variety of sources including, property taxes, sales and use taxes, public and private utility taxes, land use and building permit fees, gambling taxes, rentals and leases, user fees, service contracts, grants, fines and forfeitures and investment interest.

Current Expense monies pay for police, fire department, EMS, streets and sidewalks, parks, building maintenance, utilities, and fuel.

Cities collect a lot of tax dollars for the state. Less and less of that money is coming back to cities. Marijuana has not been the windfall for revenue as many had thought. For year 2016 Clarkston will receive approximately \$35,000 from the State of Washington for marijuana sales.

Property Taxes from real property in the City, only represents about 15% of the revenue to the Current Expense fund. The median value of Owner Occupied housing Units is \$123,300. Only about 50% of our residents are homeowners. We have many properties in the City that are exempt from taxes such as schools, churches, Senior Center, Tri State Memorial Hospital, and other health organizations. Currently 300 homeowners are exempt from any Levy.

What are enterprise funds?

Revenue for the operation of **sanitation and sewer, and maintenance and improvement** of these systems comes directly from public user fees charged for each specific service. Revenues from each of these utilities are restricted by State law to be self supporting and cannot be used to fund services outside their approved categories.

State law also mandates that certain funds which can maintain reserves, such as **Building Improvement** and **Transportation Improvement Districts**, are restricted funds and can only be used for specific projects, like our remodel of City Hall and the Public Safety Building.

Lodging Tax is in the restricted category and can only be used to promote tourism. **Grants** also have restrictions.

Closing Message

We know that our City employees are dedicated to serving the residents of Clarkston and preserving city services and public safety as are the City Council and the Mayor.

As elected officials and stewards of public money it is mandatory for us to review city services and costs. Even with budget pressures we must provide adequate levels of service. We can only do this by exploring options and finding possible solutions that meet the needs of Clarkston. In doing so, we might forge partnerships with other community service providers.

We are grateful to our residents, neighbors, and friends in the Lewis Clark Valley willing to explore and embrace any possible changes as opportunities.

As elected officials we should always be asking ourselves, "What is in the Best Interest of the People We Serve?" and "How can we do the most good for the most people?"

While we respect the past, in doing so, we can provide a more stable and fiscally sound future.