

A \$46 million budget for FY2011 is still too high

Had spending after Jack Spiker became mayor in January of 2001 increased by double the rate of inflation - **DOUBLE THE RATE OF INFLATION!** - Rick Kaysen would be proposing a budget for the next fiscal year of \$50.5 million.

But, if spending had been held to **THE RATE OF INFLATION**, the FY2011 budget would call for \$39.6 million - not the \$46 million Rick is proposing, which, by the way, would still result in a \$1.4 million shortfall.

So, while residents may be emphathetic with city employees who have lost their jobs, the blame here goes to uncontrolled spending, not a lack of revenue. You will see in the table below, during Leo Pando's second term, a performance, you will remember, that led to his defeat when he sought a third term, the reserves grew by \$11,155,388.

During Jack Spiker's two terms, the result of which led to his election to the city council when he chose not to seek a third term, the reserves dropped by \$7,890,749. That reduction (for spending) does not include the spending of another \$15 million in excess 5th penny sales tax collections that was in the treasury when Jack became mayor.

In addition to the spending levels being manageable, had they been held to the rate of inflation, the City would not have had to terminate the

to where it is today. It was not enough for the Spiker Cabal to spend the ever increasing revenues coming to the City - especially by way of the State which was sharing its energy bounty with lower levels of government, as it should - but also spending down the hard earned savings that was to be used for times just like these. Not during a period of steadily increasing revenues. There was no need - no justification - to squander those savings during the good times. Now we don't have them available during what the City would inappropriately call the bad times.

It is embarrassing that this city of riches has to debate deferring the promised annual payment to the BOPU - a payment that was intended to hold down water rates and also to threaten to cancel or postpone dues to the Wyoming Association of Municipalities - not that they should be sending that much money to that ineffective group anyway - and the Chamber and try to find savings in minimal amounts so the excessive spending of the past can be sustained to the greatest possible level.

The City governing body should have adopted, a decade back, a policy to have on-hand reserves in an amount equal to 120 days of spending. They easily could have done that. In an emergency, they could have spent down the reserves so that there was 90 days of spending available. Now, they have a matter of hours of spending on hand.

WHP trooper on 'roids

It is obvious from a review of the kidnaping case file and the recent civil lawsuit that the management of the Wyoming Highway Patrol leaves a lot to be desired. Here was a trooper with serious mental problems. He blamed his diagnosis of PTSD on the WHP, the military and his wife. He was deeply medicated and on steroids. He had said to his counselor, "I think I'm going crazy" and that he had had those feelings "every other day for the last year." Ryle described himself as "having a very bad temper, that he can be easily triggered - especially when he's not taking Cymbalta as he is supposed to."

In his turbulent past, he admitted to trying "to shoot a guy in the head but the gun didn't fire." He also threatened to kill a guy in Lakewood, Colorado because of a domestic issue and traveled down there to threaten him - after using the NCIC data base to identify him and get his address. He stole cash bonds (fines) from motorists and converted the cash to his personal use. He misappropriated \$1000 that was to be used to purchase exercise equipment. He smuggled steroids into the country from Mexico, after going to great lengths to hide/disguise the 'roids in a vanilla bottle. Another trooper was involved with him and shared the steroids. In the weeks before the incident with the Walmart driver, he had, on more than one occasion, purchased steroids from a former WHP trooper. His wife feared for her life and at the time of this incident, he threatened to kill the whole family and once ordered her upstairs in their house. She wouldn't go because she thought he was going to kill her. She also said he had wanted to take out large insurance policies on each of them.

Finally, on this portion of the story (more in the next issue), Ryle was so comfortable with having steroids in the presence of WHP troopers that he had vials and syringes in his office desk in Douglas. He had the audacity to bring steroids to work. Did he use them at work? You be the judge. He also had a bottle of vodka in his patrol SUV glove compartment - one of his plans was to have a trucker drink the alcohol until he became unconscious, then Ryle could stage the crash.

Here's what I think happened: Ryle thought his accomplices were "in" - that they were "solid" - because they told him they were but when push came to shove, none would participate. I believe the time on his cell phone and inside his house was spent on trying to convince his wife to participate and sharing his plan with those who had promised to be his accomplices. I believe, without proof, that he had recently used steroids. Steroids can lead one to do things like professional wrestler Chris Benoit did - kill his wife, child and himself.

It is my opinion that the most he could get one of buddies to do on that nearly fatal night was to call him on the Patrol frequency and say the words, "Colorado won't extradite," which gave Ryle his cover to return the driver to his truck. Someone who could transmit on the Patrol frequency had to make that call - there is no indication of whom. The driver described Ryle as being slow, confused and deliberate that night. He was not tracking. That can lead to explosive behavior.

Lastly, I believe that the Walmart driver was one word, one challenge, one provocation, one challenge, one misstep from being a dead man. I believe he is alive today because he was calm, nonconfrontational, nonbelligerent and compliant. I believe that in Ryle's state of mind and confusion that night, something much more drastic could have easily happened. After my review of this matter, I believe that the truck driver is entitled to much more than the WHP quickly paid him in an effort to make the problem go away - quietly and secretly. \$10,000 might cover his emotional distress at the thought he could have lost his job because the trooper forced him to leave his truck abandoned and running. At the time he accepted that payment, he was not told the trooper had planned to kill him. That distress is worth far more.

City of Cheyenne Elements of Financial Statements Compared -- FY1998 through FY2009				
Period ended	Revenue	Spending/Transfers	Surplus/(Deficit)	Fund Balance
FY1998 (June 30, 1998)	\$26,482,543	\$24,694,882	\$1,887,661	\$ 7,244,135
FY1999 (June 30, 1999)	\$26,516,052	\$25,719,299	\$ 796,753	\$ 8,040,888
FY2000 (June 30, 2000)	\$30,012,313	\$26,768,032	\$3,244,281	\$12,472,873
FY2001 (June 30, 2001)	\$34,428,970	\$30,390,031	\$4,038,939	\$16,511,812
FY2002 (June 30, 2002)	\$37,043,160	\$39,629,157	(\$2,997,386)	\$13,514,426 (1)
FY2003 (June 30, 2003)	\$34,708,255 (2)	\$36,350,478 (3)	(\$1,642,229)	\$11,358,059
FY2004 (June 30, 2004)	\$36,166,485	\$39,472,350 (4)	(\$3,305,865)	\$ 8,052,194 (4)
FY2005 (June 30, 2005)	\$41,179,804	\$40,613,311	\$ 566,482	\$ 8,618,676
FY2006 (June 30, 2006)	\$45,227,716	\$45,514,884	(\$287,168)	\$ 8,331,508
FY2007 (June 30, 2007)	\$46,730,307	\$46,186,487	\$ 543,820	
	Add: Prior period adjustment		\$1,254,110	\$10,129,110
FY2008 (June 30, 2008)	\$49,862,052	\$49,501,480	\$ 360,751	\$10,490,189
FY2009 (June 30, 2009)	\$50,171,109	\$52,040,784	(\$1,869,512)	\$ 8,620,677
FY2010 Budget	\$51,663,463 (5)	\$51,663,463 (6)	TBD	TBD

(1) The following year's audit changed this figure to \$13,901,950
 (2) Revenues showed \$1,128,210 related to the parking garage, which was a bond issue - subtracted here for comparisons
 (3) Expenditures showed \$9,576,697 related to the parking garage, which was a bond issue - subtracted here for comparisons
 (4) Mingling of funds for the parking garage created much financial confusion for two years - the fund balance is right
 (5) FY2010 Budget has pencil adjustments in margin, no corrected copy was run. These numbers are incorrect but how much??
 (6) Same as (5) plus there are no Transfers out that usually adds \$1,500,000 - \$2,000,000 to need for revenue

The Spiker Budgets - July 2001 - June 2009
 Source: Annual audited financial statements. These audited figures do not agree with the figures used for budgeting purposes.

employment of a number of employees nor beg another group to accept a pittance of a buyout and retire early.

The City of Cheyenne should be rolling in money now, not searching for every payment they can delay and acquiring more and more equipment by way of leases instead of purchase.

Inflation from 2000/2001 through 2009/2010 was 25.2%. Revenue gains in the City almost doubled from FY1998 to FY2010. Yet, the City is on the verge of insolvency. Not there because there is a balance in the reserves, but close. The reserve figure being bandied around is incorrect. It is not reduced by "encumbered" amounts - payments that must be made but haven't been made yet. The true fund balance is only \$4.5 million - a loss of \$12 million since Jack became mayor. That "spend down" of the reserves has brought the City

And, I'm not too sure what I believe of the representations being made now that they're in the embarrassing position of reusing envelopes because they have so little money.

It is personally bothersome to see what they've done to the City's finances. Especially after some of us worked diligently to "balance" the budget in 1997 and promised that the City would "live within its means" and that those elected as "fiscal conservatives" would be the City treasury watchdogs.

Then a surrender was made to those who promised to spend every nickel the City had or would get. They succeeded. And, now ...

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