

Cut consideration.

With sales tax revenues below budget projections, the Tulsa City Council is expected to talk about proposed cuts at their next budget meeting this month.

It was unclear at press time if Mayor Dewey Bartlett would attend, but some councilors loudly criticized Bartlett for not appearing at an Oct. 31 committee meeting.

"He should have been here at this table to answer some of our questions," Councilor Jack Henderson said at the Oct. 31 meeting.

Those expressing the most criticism even made appeals directly to the absent Bartlett.

"Mayor, can you come down to the council meeting, please, and answer some questions," said a half-smiling Blake Ewing, raising his voice to make the plea. "Because it seems, I don't know, like a tremendous lack of leadership to send other people down to do your job," Ewing said, his voice falling.

Others took a different stance.

"Have we ever asked the mayor to come down here other than this agenda item?" asked Councilor Phil Lakin, referring specifically to Bartlett participating in budget talks.

Councilor G.T. Bynum said he had "never detected that much enthusiasm for the mayor's attendance at these meetings previously."

The same day, Bartlett's office issued a statement that seemed to downplay budget concerns.

"Compared to what we have dealt with before in 2009, Tulsa is better prepared to handle budget challenges and we are not in a budget crisis," Bartlett said in a statement, which also outlined plans to continue a hiring freeze and reduce travel expenditures.

At the Oct. 31 meeting, Mike Kier, the city's finance director, said city revenues are about \$2.25 million below expectations through September.

While Bartlett in his statement touted approximately \$16 million the city's Rainy Day Fund and operating reserves, Kier spoke out against using such funds.

"From the finance perspective, that is something we most definitely would not believe would be fiscally responsible," Kier told councilors. He also noted that "we are not having a decline in revenue right now, it is just going up hardly any."

The cost of politics.

What does it take to be mayor? It's may not be a prerequisite, but a pretty large pocketbook doesn't hurt.

Former mayor Kathy Taylor has loaned her own campaign about \$2.7 million while raising about \$850,000, according to disclosures made Nov. 4 as part of public election laws.

Those numbers dwarf the funds put forward by Mayor Dewey Bartlett, who has loaned his campaign \$180,000. The difference is much narrower when it comes to fundraising, with Bartlett raising about \$790,000.

A look at Bartlett's itemized spending shows the cost of running for mayor. He has spent \$533,000 this year in the category "Advertising: Media Buy," by far the largest spending category for his campaign.



COURTESY CITY OF TULSA

Promoting from within.

The city finally has named a new leader for its Human Rights Department, promoting Michael Smith to the position.

Smith, who joined the city in 2008, had served as interim director after the Aug. 31, 2012 firing of Lana Turner-Addison amid a bitter legal dispute.

Before her firing, Turner-Addison filed a lawsuit claiming she was wrongly disciplined after filing a civil service grievance. But a judge eventually dismissed her case.

The department "receives and investigates complaints of discrimination in the areas of employment, housing and public accommodations," the city

noted in its statement announcing the promotion of Smith.

The statement also noted that the department also monitors city contractors and their hiring and labor standards, as well as affirmative action practices. The department also coordinates the city's Building Resources in Developing and Growing Enterprises (BRIDGE) program, "which promotes connections between small, developing and growing businesses and opportunities available through larger companies in the area," the statement noted.

Smith founded the Oklahoma Association for Problem and Compulsive Gambling, and also previously worked for natural gas company ONEOK to make sure the company complied with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

He has also previously served as president of the Oklahoma Rehabilitation Association and is currently on the board for Crossroads, an organization that helps adults with mental illness.

"I'm grateful for this opportunity and to have a staff that is committed to addressing the human rights needs of all Tulsans," Smith said in a statement.

More than cute doggie videos.

Tulsa Animal Welfare hopes to be a winner in a video contest spotlighting ways to help animals living in a shelter.

The Shelter Me contest, sponsored by PetSafe, seeks to "communicate different ways to help shelter pets around the country, such as promoting adoption, fostering, spay/neuter, donating and volunteering at animal shelters," according to a statement from the city.

Tulsa Animal Welfare entered two videos into the contest. Contest finalists will be chosen based on the number of views a video receives online, as well as ratings from viewers and frequency that videos are shared.

One video focuses on volunteer photographer Sherry Stinson and her work to alter public perceptions of shelter animals. Another video spotlights how a puppy from Tulsa Animal Welfare "became a hero showing kids how to be safe in Oklahoma's severe weather."

The Stinson video can be seen at contest.shelterme.com/videos/108 and the puppy video at contest.shelterme.com/videos/98.

The first prize video results in a \$5,000 award, with voting set to continue until Dec. 20.

Check these movies out.

The Tulsa City-County Library patrons now can access movies and television shows through a service known as Freegal Movies.

Library cardholders may view up to three videos each week from thousands of video offerings in diverse categories including concerts and children's videos.

An app is available for mobile devices or the videos can be streamed on a computer.

"With the popularity of mobile devices, offering streaming movies was the next step in providing beneficial services to library customers," Sue Anderson, the library's collection management manager, said in a statement. "We anticipate Freegal Movies will be a hit with all ages."

Selections each get checked out for 48 hours, but can be watched multiple times.

To access instructions for the service, visit guides.tulsalibrary.org/movies.

Mayfest seeking vendors, artists.

Performers interested in hitting the stage at Tulsa's Mayfest — the city's annual street festival — now must submit an electronic press kit.

Applications from performing artists are available at tulsamayfest.org/music/ and must be submitted by Dec. 18.

Tulsa International Mayfest attracts more than 350,000 attendees, according to a news statement highlighting the application process.

Visual artist applications will be accepted online at zapplication.org and must be submitted by Jan. 25. Entries are judged through a blind jury process to select participants in the event's art festival.

"Each year, Mayfest seeks to provide the best visual and performing artists to Tulsa," said Heather Pingry, executive director of Tulsa International Mayfest, in a statement. "Providing the best festival food enhances the experience for attendees and artists. The Tulsa community now offers great food trucks, and we are excited to again incorporate them into the festival."

A selection committee will also review food truck applicants, who can find application materials at tulsamayfest.org/food/. The deadline for food vendor applications is Jan. 15.

Questions about the application process may be directed to the Mayfest office at 918-582-6435.

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-MR. SMARTY PANTS KNOWS

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- Brett Favre's first completed pass as a Green Bay Packer was to himself.
- The idea for an electronic monitoring device was inspired by a storyline in a Spider-Man comic in which one of his enemies, Kingpin, put an electronic bracelet on the superhero to follow his movements. After seeing the comic, in 1983, a district court judge persuaded a computer salesperson to develop a system to monitor five offenders in Albuquerque, New Mexico.
- Through all five seasons, the Breaking Bad series was shot on 35mm film.
- Because he used a wheelchair, President Franklin D. Roosevelt needed a specially shaped room in the White House and he helped design a new room — the Oval Office.

The above is information that Mr. Smarty Pants read in a book, magazine, newspaper, or Internet; heard on the radio; saw on television; or overheard at a party. Got any facts? Email them to Mr. Smarty Pants for possible inclusion in the column at mrpant@austinchronicle.com. "Mr. Smarty Pants Knows" and the logo, copyright 2013, R.U. Steinberg.

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

