

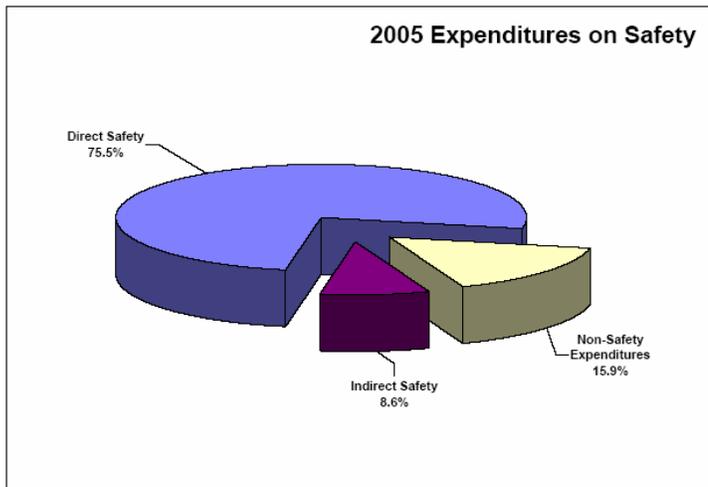


Call The Roll

An E-Publication of Columbus City Council

COUNCIL AMENDS BUDGET TO FOCUS ON JOBS AND SAFETY

Council announced amendments to the administration's 2005 City budget on January 20. Council President, [Matt Habash](#) explained Council's overall approach: **"We are organizing our budget around four priorities: jobs; safety; indirect safety; and efficient service delivery. We're earmarking \$2 million for jobs, \$2 million for safety, \$1.5 million for indirect safety and \$600,000 for efficiency measures."**



Perhaps the most significant change was the creation of a \$2 million **Jobs Growth Fund** for use to help attract and retain businesses. [Mary Jo Hudson](#), chair of Council's Jobs and Economic Development Committee, emphasized the connection between jobs and the City's ability to provide services. **"Besides improving the quality of life of workers and their families, good paying jobs generate income tax revenue for the City, which comprises about two-thirds of all general fund resources. Without healthy income tax growth the City can't provide the police, fire, and other critical services citizens want and deserve."** Hudson plans to hold public hearings to flesh out the most effective plans for use of the new Jobs Fund.

Another amendment set aside \$350,000 for studies to address long-term growth issues and regional partnerships. Council member [Maryellen O'Shaughnessy](#) will lead this effort.

As shown by accompanying chart, 75 percent of the City's proposed 2005 budget will be dedicated to public safety with another 8.6 percent set aside to indirect safety measures.

TAVARES RECOGNIZED

Council member [Charleta Tavares](#) garnered two recent honors. The Columbus Education Association (CEA) awarded her its MLK Award in January for her hard work and advocacy on issues pertaining to children and education.

"This a particular honor because it comes from the education community and this is the work that Dr. King was so passionate about, providing equal access and quality education for all of America's children," stated Tavares.

And continuing a long tradition of Columbus leadership with the National League of Cities, this January Tavares began serving on its Board of Directors. NLC is the oldest and largest national organization representing municipal governments throughout the United States.



Charleta Tavares speaks with citizens.

BOYCE TAKES OVER FINANCE COMMITTEE

[Kevin Boyce](#) can put his recently acquired masters in public administration to work now that he has assumed the duties of chair of Council's Finance Committee in January. Already chair of the Administration Committee, which deals with operational efficiency issues, Boyce welcomed the new responsibilities. **"It makes sense to consolidate oversight functions. I'm interested in continuing to pursue efficiency and effectiveness initiatives,"** he said. **"The Finance chair is a natural position to help shape the budget to save costs – like reducing worker injuries and downtime."** Council set aside \$600,000 in its amendments to the administration's 2005 budget to continue effective service initiatives.

Kevin Boyce "slides" into his new role as Finance Committee chair.



MENTEL LOOKS TO MAKE STREETS SAFER



Mentel examines the power of armor-piercing bullets.

[Michael C. Mentel](#)'s on-going investigation of unsafe and unregulated weapons continued with a firearms demonstration by Columbus Police. Officers exhibited the kinds of weapons commonly referred to as assault weapons and offered general background on various types of weapons and ammunition found on Columbus streets. Some ammunition rounds can penetrate the types of bulletproof vests worn by officers. **"I do not want police out-gunned on the street,"** Mentel said. **"These kinds of weapons have no business on our streets and in our parks."**

Mentel is also concerned that new technology and manufacturing processes now can disguise weapons as common, ordinary items such as cell phones.



The federal government's ban on assault weapons expired last fall. Up next is a series of public meetings to hear from proponents and opponents of potential City action to regulate certain weapons. Visit the Council's website for a schedule

www.columbuscitycouncil.org/news/events/weapondiscussion.htm, and stay turned for future developments.

Council colleagues Habash and Boyce join Mentel to talk with Columbus Police officers about confiscated weapons.

PROJECT SECOND CHANCE TAKES ANOTHER LEAP FORWARD

[Patsy Thomas](#) has been busy negotiating an agreement with an AED manufacturer that promises to help the City expand distribution of automated external defibrillation devices within City buildings. In exchange for the City's endorsement for its own marketing purposes within the Columbus community, Medtronic will contribute \$100,000 to boost the City's internal efforts to make City buildings safer for employees and citizens. The private funds will support the training of city employees. Moreover, Medtronic will contribute a portion of sales revenue to help the City buy additional units.



"We need to get creative in how we do business," Thomas said of the revolutionary approach. "When it comes to saving lives, in this economic climate the City needs to look beyond traditional ways of budgeting." The partnership allows the City to accelerate its own program.

GOODBYE TO THE POWER PLANT



Council closed a long, often frustrating chapter of City history on a positive note in January by allowing the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio or SWACO to demolish large parts of the municipal power plant on Jackson Pike. Thanks to Council's insistence that SWACO bid the project, SWACO literally turned a minus into a plus sign—to the tune of \$1.1 million! SWACO's initial demolition offer was projected to cost three-quarters of a million dollars. Instead, it received \$377,000 in revenue from the winner of a competitive bid process. Those funds were turned over to the City.

Council member [Patsy Thomas](#), who sponsored the legislation, said: "It pays to seek competitive bids when dealing with public funds, and in this case, I'd call the result recycling trash to cash!"

The idle refuse coal-fired power plant on Jackson Pike.

"WAIT TIL' NEXT YEAR!"

The time-honored lament of a disappointed sports fan could be heard coming from the office of Council President, [Matt Habash](#), long-time Pittsburgh Steelers enthusiast. His favorite professional football team succumbed to the cold weather and superior talents of the New England Patriots in the AFC Championship game on January 23. The loss was doubly painful, coming at the hands of former University of Michigan quarterback, Tom Brady. Ever the optimist, Habash inexplicably continues to hold his seat firmly on the Steelers bandwagon and fully expects their return to the title game next year. To ensure the outcome, he vowed to don a uniform himself and volunteer for duty.

One council staffer encouraged the crestfallen Habash to devote his armchair sport's energies to a winner—the OSU Women's Basketball squad, whose run likely won't end short of the NCAA championship in April.



"Bronko" Habash – Class of '78