



2020 Budget update: Minneapolis park officials, public speak at Sept. 11 Board of Estimate and Taxation Hearing

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News

Minneapolis park officials, public speak at Sept. 11 BET meeting in support of proposed tax levy that focuses on youth investment

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), through two retreats in May 2019, identified key budget priorities for 2020. These priorities include sustaining the current service level for MPRB programs and services and adding funding to invest in youth, increase access to park amenities and advance work on the MPRB's carbon footprint.

These priorities were presented to the Mayor and his staff in May and June. The MPRB is grateful that the Mayor's recommended budget includes a 5.73 percent increase. This honors the MPRB's current service level request.

At its Sept. 4 meeting, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) commissioners passed a resolution seeking an 8.06 percent maximum tax levy for 2020. This request includes the MPRB's current service level and additional priorities identified above.

The MPRB's request, in response to funding levels not keeping pace with current needs, includes \$1.3 million for expanded youth services, including increasing youth employment and developing four ideation tech labs in recreation centers. It also includes \$236,000 to support increased access to existing park amenities and carbon footprint initiatives. The funds, if approved by the Board of Estimate and Taxation, would come from the city levy and would impact the property tax

owed on a median valued house of \$266,000 approximately an additional \$6 annually above the current service level increase of approximately \$17 annually.

The resolution transmittal for the MPRB's maximum tax levy request was sent to Mayor Jacob Frey's office for signature on Sept. 5. On the afternoon of Sept. 10, a vetoed transmittal was returned from the Mayor's office.

On Sept. 11, the Minneapolis Board of Estimation and Taxation (BET) held its [regular meeting](#) at City Hall. At that meeting, MPRB Superintendent Al Bangoura and several staff members presented the Board's request for a maximum tax levy of 8.06 percent (30:45).

The meeting included a public hearing on the maximum tax levy request. At the hearing, multiple members of the public spoke in support of the board's request for a greater investment in youth. Those speaking included MPRB Superintendent Emeritus Mary Merrill, MPRB Commissioner Londel French, a representative from the Somali-American Peace Council, several Minneapolis Public School teachers, Ideawerks' Stephen Slater and his students, and others. (Public hearing begins at 53:11.)

At the hearing, Board Vice President AK Hassan spoke in favor of the MPRB's request. He also shared a statement from Representative Ilhan Omar, which read:

For more than a generation in Minneapolis there has been a significant under-investment in our youth and out of school time programs. I applaud the Park Board's youth service levy. It's a bold vision to closing the funding gap and making the youth investments we need now. I'm looking forward to supporting the Park Board and City to find every dollar available for our city's most precious resource-our youth.

The difference between the Mayor's recommendation and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board request is .44 percent in overall city property tax increase. This is less than half a percent.

Currently, the MPRB receives seven cents on every dollar in property tax paid by Minneapolis homeowners. The MPRB's full request for current service level and additional youth funding would represent a 1.52 percent increase on total City of Minneapolis property taxes, or approximately \$24. Of this amount, \$6 would be for expanded youth services, per homeowner of a median valued house of \$266,000.

"This board is committed to helping the young men and women of Minneapolis grow into healthy, happy, productive adults," said Brad Bourn, President of the Park Board of Commissioners. "I continue to have faith that the Mayor, City Council and Board of Estimate and Taxation will take actions that reflect a shared commitment to the youth of the city."

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