

16 New Hires (FTE) - Crazy

The 2022 staffing study was originally not realistic and probably quite flawed. No other small city with our services has 63 FTEs (up from 47 now). These cities all seem to function and live within the constraints of their revenues.

- **Staffing Study Critique:** The staffing study's recommendation for 16 additional headcounts is illogical and financially unfeasible, as it would result in Sebastopol having one-third more staff than in similar small cities in the county.
- **Comparison with Other Cities:** Comparisons with Cotati and St. Helena reveal that these cities manage with fewer staff while providing additional services like parks and recreation, which contribute to their revenues.
- **Financial Concerns:** Adding the six critical positions identified would increase the salary budget by \$1 million, and fully loaded salary and benefits to an estimated \$1.3million. Even if we get the full ½ cent sales tax approved by voters (\$1.5million), little money would be available for roads and other infrastructure projects promised by the city council. If we only get ¼ cent we would be back to a \$600,000 annual deficit. Where are all these people going to work? Add the cost of a new city hall.
- **Efficiency and Collaboration:** There is a need to rethink work processes and improve efficiency in staff positions and council. When the council defers an agenda item to another meeting it does make additional work for staff and delays the benefits of the work being proposed.
- **Do a study of work that can be stopped:** 20% of what we do every day actually produces 80% of the benefits that lead to achieving goals. Identifying work that can be stopped is as important as work that is critical. Aligning the daily activities with the goals of the city (you need goals) and having permission not to do things that no one can remember why they are done anyway can go a long way to relieving workload and stress.
- **Consider Alternative Models:** Alternative models include contracting PW projects, outsourcing administrative functions like accounting and water and sewer billing, enhancing parks and recreation offerings, and considering a hybrid police model with the Sheriff's office to reduce costs.
- **Consultants are not bad:** Hiring a person to perform a task means paying a salary, benefits and increased contributions to the Retirement System. Every year salaries and benefits increase and that increase compounds increasing costs exponentially over time. A one-time expense for a consultant with expertise can be a good investment.
- **City Council Needs to Provide Leadership:** City staff need to prioritize their work to the goals which are set by the City Council in collaboration with the City Manager and his leadership team. Goals need to be realistic. Priorities need to be clear. This allows employees to identify work that is important and work that can be delayed or even dropped if not meaningful to the city's priorities.