

From: Kate Haug [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, June 4, 2026 8:51 AM
To: Mary Gourley <mgourley@cityofsebastopol.gov>; City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Public Comment - June 16 Meeting

Hi Mary,
I hope you are well!

As I know the City is in a deficit, I strongly encourage the City to implement Time Tracking in order to make the City more efficient in terms of employee time. In addition, it seems that the City can make better hiring decisions once it understands what gaps need to be filled, which will be revealed more clearly after employee time is tracked.

Attached is my public comment to that effect.

Thanks you,
Kate

Dear Council and City Staff,

In light of budget deficits, I would recommend that the City utilize employee time tracking via the Springbrook software or another module in order to focus employee time more directly on City Goals and priorities.

Currently, employees work 40 hours per week. Does City Management know how the time is spent on City Goals versus necessary administration for the County, State and Federal Governments? How much is spent on homelessness administration and clean up versus sewer repair? How much is spent on Planning Department initiatives like the CalTrans Grant and Creek Naturalization versus creating a Pavement Plan?

As it is clear that the City will need to restructure and reprioritize time, it would be extremely useful for the City to understand where employee time is going.

I would strongly recommend that before the City hires any additional staff, that time tracking be implemented to better understand where staff currently spends their time and then give directives on how much time should be allotted for specific projects, given the monetary restrictions presented by the budget deficit.

For instance, the Enterprise Committee has suggested that Billing expenses could be reduced with a few simple adjustments including 1) a POB box for Water and Sewer Bills, 2) Customer services hours from 8-Noon where phone calls, emails, banking and all water admin be addressed, 3) Lobby lockbox for payments, 4) Eye on Water video tutorials online. We make these suggestions to lower admin costs as we have found that a comparable service costs 1/3 of what ratepayers are being charged and the higher charge is largely due to inefficiencies in the process.

The City Management needs to have a clear sense of where employees spend their time and then direct employee time toward City priorities before hiring additional staff. Time needs to be limited on projects that are not directed toward core services and revenue generation until the budget is balanced.

In addition, time tracking will allow City Management to see where additional employees are truly needed. What core functions and services do not have enough employee hours.

Employees could have different categories to track - Core Job Function, Water, Sewer, Committees, Goals, Parks, Homeless, Infrastructure (including Roads, City Buildings, Trees, Sidewalks), City Administration, County Administration, State Administration, Federal Administration.

Tracking time on unfunded mandates, homelessness and other categories could help the City with grant applications and to apply for an increased portion of the property tax from the County.

Time tracking is critical for the City at this juncture of budget deficit, the Grand Jury report and the need to focus on core responsibilities.

Employee time tracking is standard across every industry; organizations use time tracking so they can address basic questions of how employee time aligns with goals and priorities.

City administration needs to become a more efficient and transparent in terms of its use of employee time and time tracking is the only way to achieve this.

I urge you to implement time tracking prior to any hiring. As you will be using time tracking for the Enterprise Funds, you can implement it for a year for the overall City Administration to figure out how employees are using their time, match employee time with the City's core functions and goals, and then decide how many and what type of additional hours are truly needed.

Best,
Kate Haug