

CITY OF MONROE, WASHINGTON

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-015

A RESOLUTION of the City Council of the City of Monroe, Washington, relating to regular property taxes; providing for a ballot proposition to be submitted to the qualified electors of the City on November 5, 2024, in conjunction with the State General Election to be held on the same date, of a proposition authorizing the City to levy regular property taxes in an amount in excess of the limitations provided in Chapter 84.55 RCW; designating the City Administrator, City Attorney and special counsel to receive notice of ballot title from the Snohomish County Auditor; and providing for other related matters.

WHEREAS, an increase in people living, working and visiting the City of Monroe, Washington (the “City”) has created demand for more community services to promote public health, safety and general welfare, including park amenities, recreation activities, crime prevention, nuisance abatement, and animal control; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Thomas and the Monroe City Council are considering alternative revenue sources for the 2025-2026 Biennial Budget to fund priority community services to promote public health, safety and general welfare, including public safety and parks; and

WHEREAS, public safety and parks services are funded through the City’s Operating Budget, specifically, the General Fund which is primarily supported through property and sales taxes; and

WHEREAS, the City’s maximum levy rate allowed by State law is \$1.60/\$1,000; and

WHEREAS, between 2013 and 2024, the City’s tax rate has fallen from \$1.46/\$1,000 assessed value to \$0.86/\$1,000 assessed value; and

WHEREAS, sales tax revenues of the City are not keeping pace with inflation and are expected to be below 2022 levels; and

WHEREAS, the Monroe Police Department is dedicated to problem-oriented policing as a strategy aimed at solving persistent community problems; and

WHEREAS, a 2019 Staffing Study prepared by the City recommended “modestly augmenting” staff to improve services, “particularly community-oriented proactive efforts such as animal control, parking enforcement, and abandoned vehicle enforcement”; and

WHEREAS, the 2021 Imagine Monroe visioning project found that the community desires “To feel safe and worry less about crime,” and the 2023 Business Survey reflected the desire for more police presence, especially at night; and

WHEREAS, the City’s police services are enhanced by the role of Community Services Officers (“CSO”) who address nuisance violations, animal control complaints, parking violations, and participate in community events representing the City Police Department; and

WHEREAS, the City currently has two CSO positions – one is a full-time equivalent employee and the other is temporarily funded through 2024; and

WHEREAS, due to the demand for expanded CSO support, the City requires permanent funding for the second CSO as it would allow for seven days a week coverage and provide more relief to police officers who can respond to emergent calls for service; and

WHEREAS, expanded coverage would provide for neighborhood and business crime prevention programs that would support the community’s desire to feel safe; and

WHEREAS, the 2021 Imagine Monroe community survey highlighted that City residents value the City’s parks and open space and support improved parks and trails, protected natural areas and waterways, and access to more parks and outdoor areas that are vital to the City’s future; and

WHEREAS, to promote public health, safety and general welfare, the City’s Parks Department is responsible for mowing, weeding, sweeping, trash collection, landscaping, equipment repair, restroom maintenance, special event support, and vandalism repair for 17 park and open space sites, 14 miles of trails, 160,000 square feet of median strips, 12 playgrounds, 12 athletic fields, nine grass open fields, and 14 sports courts; and

WHEREAS, there has been a 29% increase (additional 81.2 acres) of parkland since 2008 bringing the total to 288.3 acres (developed and undeveloped), a 44% increase in park field reservations from 2015 to 2024, and a 400% increase in City-permitted events from 2008 to 2023; and

WHEREAS, many City parks are more than 30 years old with aging play structures, restrooms, and irrigations systems that are in need of more frequent repair; and

WHEREAS, parks maintenance staffing levels have not increased since 2008 despite an increase in demand for parks maintenance and operations; and

WHEREAS, although the national staffing benchmark for acres maintained per full-time equivalent (“FTE”) is 12 acres: 1 FTE level, City maintenance staff is currently performing at 26.2 acres: 1 FTE level; and

WHEREAS, the City’s budget planning process needs to carefully look at how best to provide “quality of life” services including public safety and parks; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City desires to provide for additional permanent employees to operate and maintain City parks and public safety, along with their respective equipment and supplies needs (including vehicles); and,

WHEREAS, to provide for the above, the City requires additional funds to supplement existing City General Fund revenue; and,

WHEREAS, Chapter 84.55 RCW limits the amount of the City's regular property tax levy to 101% (or 100% plus inflation, if inflation is less than 1%) of the prior highest lawful levy amount (the "levy lid"), plus an additional amount for increases in assessed value from or due to new construction, construction of certain renewable energy facilities, improvements to property, increases in assessed value of State-assessed property, and increases in assessed value of property in any tax increment area; and,

WHEREAS, due to the levy lid and increasing property values within the City, the City's current regular property tax levy is limited to a dollar rate of approximately \$0.86 per \$1,000 of assessed value; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that it is in the best interest of the City and its residents to submit a levy lid lift proposition to the City's voters for their approval or rejection; and,

WHEREAS, under RCW 84.55.050(1), the City may submit to its voters at a general or special election, for their approval or rejection, a proposition authorizing the City to increase its regular property tax levy in an amount exceeding the levy lid in a single year (a "levy lid lift"); and,

WHEREAS, under RCW 84.55.050(3) and (4), the proposition may provide that the City will use the regular property tax levy amount so approved for purposes of computing the levy lid for subsequent levies; and,

WHEREAS, under RCW 84.55.050(4), the proposition may set the regular property tax levy at a rate less than the maximum rate allowed for the City; and,

WHEREAS, under RCW 84.55.050(4) the proposition may provide that the exemption for low-income senior citizens, disabled veterans and other people with disabilities authorized by RCW 84.36.381 will apply to the levy of any additional regular property taxes authorized by voters; and

WHEREAS, the continual provision of operations and maintenance of City parks and public safety require the expenditure of permanent and reliable (i.e., sustainable) revenues in excess of the current levy lid; and,

WHEREAS, it is therefore in the best interests of the City, its residents and public health, safety and general welfare to seek voter approval of a levy lid lift proposition authorizing an increase to the City's regular property tax levy for collection in 2025 by a rate of approximately \$0.22 per \$1,000 of assessed value to the maximum aggregate rate of \$1.08 per \$1,000 of

assessed value and providing for the exemption authorized by RCW 84.36.381 to apply to such regular property tax levy increase;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MONROE, WASHINGTON, HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Description of the Ballot Proposition. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(1) and RCW 29A.04.330, the City Council of the City hereby calls for the submission of a proposition to the qualified electors of the City asking whether the City shall levy regular property taxes in excess of the limitation established in RCW 84.55.010, as follows:

(a) *Purposes.* The amounts collected pursuant to the increases shall be used for City purposes, including public health, safety and general welfare purposes such as costs of community services, including enhancing public safety operations and maintaining and operating city parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities including adding additional staff and equipment.

(b) *Maximum Aggregate Levy Rate Authorized.* The proposition authorizes the City to establish its maximum aggregate regular property tax levy to the amount resulting from a rate of \$1.08 per \$1,000 of assessed value for levy in 2024 and collection in 2025, which represents a rate that is less than the maximum rate allowed for the City.

(c) *Computing the Limitations for Subsequent Levies.* The City will use the dollar amount of the maximum aggregate property tax levy resulting from a rate of \$1.08 per \$1,000 of assessed value for levy in 2024 and collection in 2025 for the purpose of computing the limitations for subsequent levies under chapter 84.55 RCW.

(d) *Exemption.* The exemption authorized by RCW 84.36.381 applies to the additional regular property taxes authorized by this proposition.

Section 2. Calling of Election. The Snohomish County Auditor, as *ex officio* supervisor of elections in Snohomish County, Washington, is hereby requested to call and conduct a special election, in the manner provided by law, to be held within the City on November 5, 2024, in conjunction with the State General election to be held on the same date, for the purpose of submitting to the qualified electors of the City for their approval or rejection, the proposition authorizing the City to increase its regular property tax levy in 2024 for collection in 2025 by an amount greater than otherwise permitted under chapter 84.55 RCW, to use the dollar amount of such levy for the purpose of computing the limitations for the City's subsequent levies under chapter 84.55 RCW, and to provide that the exemption authorized by RCW 84.36.381 applies to such additional regular property taxes. The Snohomish County Auditor's office, as the City's *ex officio* supervisor of elections shall conduct the election, canvas the vote, and certify the results in the manner provided by law.

Section 3. Ballot Measure. Pursuant to RCW 29A.36.071, the City Attorney of the City (the “City Attorney”) has prepared the concise description of the aforesaid proposition for the ballot title in substantially the following form:

CITY OF MONROE, WASHINGTON
PROPOSITION NO. 1
LEVY LID LIFT FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Monroe City Council adopted Resolution 2024-015, concerning funding for community services, including public safety and parks. This proposition would provide funds for increased community services, including adding employees and equipment to operate/maintain parks and public safety. It authorizes a maximum regular property tax levy for collection in 2025 of \$1.08/\$1,000 of assessed valuation (an increase from 2024 of approximately \$0.22/\$1,000). The 2025 levy amount will be used to compute the limitations for subsequent levies under RCW 84.55. Qualifying seniors, veterans and others would be exempt under RCW 84.36.381.

Should this proposition be approved?

Yes

No

Section 4. Authorization to Deliver Resolution and Perform Other Necessary Duties. The City Administrator (or the City Administrator’s designee) is hereby authorized and directed to (a) present a certified copy of this resolution to the Auditor no later than August 6, 2024; and (b) perform such other duties as are necessary or required by law to submit to the City’s voters at the November 5, 2024 election, for their approval or rejection, the proposition authorizing the City to increase its regular property tax levy in 2024 for collection in 2025 by an amount greater than otherwise permitted under chapter 84.55 RCW and to use the dollar amount of such levy for the purpose of computing the limitations for the City’s subsequent levies under chapter 84.55 RCW.

Section 5. Notices Relating to Ballot Proposition. For purposes of receiving notice of the exact language of the ballot proposition required by RCW 29A.36.080, the City Council hereby designates (1) the City Attorney (Zach Lell, (206) 447-7000, zell@omwlaw.com); (2) the City Administrator (Deborah Knight, (360) 863-4500, dknight@monroewa.gov); and (3) special counsel to the City, Foster Garvey P.C. (Stacie Amasaki, (206) 447-6278, stacie.amasaki@foster.com) as the individuals to whom such notice should be provided. The City Attorney is authorized to approve changes to the ballot title, if any, requested by the Snohomish County Auditor.

Section 6. Corrections. The City Attorney and City Administrator are authorized to make necessary clerical corrections to this resolution, including, but not limited to, the correction of scrivener’s or clerical errors, references, resolution numbering, section/subsection numbers and any references thereto.

Section 7. General Authorization. The Mayor, City Administrator, City Attorney, Finance Director, City Clerk of the City, other appropriate officers of the City and special counsel, Foster Garvey P.C., are individually authorized and directed to take such actions and to create, accept, execute, send, use and rely upon such documents, records and signatures (including in tangible medium, manual, facsimile or electronic form, under any security procedure or platform, and notwithstanding any other City resolution, resolution, rule, policy or procedure) as in their judgment may be necessary or desirable to effectuate the provisions of this resolution. All actions taken prior to the effective date of this resolution in furtherance of and not inconsistent with the provisions of this resolution are ratified and confirmed in all respects.

Section 8. Severability. The recitals stated above (i.e., the “Whereas” clauses) constitute specific findings by the City Council in support of adoption of this resolution. If any provision of this resolution is declared by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, then such provision shall be null and void and shall be separable from the remaining provisions of this resolution, and shall in no way affect the validity of the other provisions of this resolution or of any other resolution or resolution, or of the levy or collection of the taxes authorized herein.

Section 9. Effective Date. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Monroe, at its regular meeting thereof, and APPROVED by the Mayor this 23rd day of July, 2024.

CITY OF MONROE, WASHINGTON


Geoffrey Thomas (Jul 24, 2024 18:45 PDT)

Geoffrey Thomas, Mayor

ATTEST:


Jodi Wycoff (Jul 25, 2024 11:46 PDT)
Jodi Wycoff, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Zach Lell (Jul 24, 2024 16:13 PDT)
City Attorney
(Prepared by Bond Counsel)

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, City Clerk of the City of Monroe, Washington (the “City”), hereby certify as follows:

1. The attached copy of Resolution No. 2024-015 (the “Resolution”) is a full, true and correct copy of a resolution duly adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City held at the regular meeting place thereof on July 23, 2024 (the “Meeting”), as that resolution appears on the minute book of the City, and the Resolution is now in full force and effect.

2. The Meeting was duly convened, held and included an opportunity for public comment, in all respects in accordance with law; a quorum of the members of the City Council was present throughout the Meeting; and a majority of the members voted in the proper manner for the adoption of the Resolution.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 24th day of July, 2024.

CITY OF MONROE, WASHINGTON


[Jodi Wycoff \(Jul 25, 2024 11:46 PDT\)](#)

Jodi Wycoff, City Clerk

Res 2024-015 Levy Lid Lift Resolution_City of Monroe_November 2024 Election(102778810.4)

Final Audit Report

2024-07-25

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