

THE CALL

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Councilmen Seek To Stop 10 Percent Cut In Budget That Effects Urban Core

By Tracy Allen

The Kansas City Council will vote on a new budget for the 2001-2002 fiscal year, and City Councilmen Troy Nash and Terry Riley are concerned that the budget may not include areas that are necessary for those in the urban core.

The Council will vote on the \$94,483,906 budget at the Thursday, March 22, City Council meeting. The budget is an increase of 6.5 percent over the previous year's budget. Riley is the proposed funding for outside agencies that totals \$118,680. Those agencies that are considered to lose money are: Kansas City Area Economic Development (KCAEDC), \$6,500; Metropolitan Organizational to Counter Sexual Assault (MOCSA), \$2,500; Black Economic Union, \$2,337; Crime Commission, \$3,000; Don Bosco, \$6,200; Guadalupe Center, \$6,000; Homeless shelters, \$9,436; Child care facilities, \$67,207; Wayne Miner Center, \$3,500; and Black Archives, \$10,000.

Although representatives from the council have met with the council word is, that the cuts could still go into effect. And that worries Nash and Riley, who both serve the Third and Fifth districts which are made up of primarily African Americans and other minorities. Councilmen Nash and Riley said if the cuts were to pass, it would hurt key entities in the urban core that meets the needs of the poor and the under-served.

"It's like Paul robbing Peter. It is like we have to be lean and mean to trim the budget," said Councilman Riley. "What people need to understand is that for many African Americans and other minorities, government becomes the last resort." According to Councilman Nash, "Why should we take away from people the last viable opportunity they have to become a part of the mainstream of our country?"

"We have a moral obligation to do what is right," Nash continued. "In order to fulfill it, you have to honor that social contract. I'm optimistic that we'll be able to make a decision that will reflect the community."

What we want to stress to the Council and to those who want to cut off money supplies is that this is not a black and white issue, this is a people issue," Councilman Nash said. "This is class more than race."

Councilman Riley agreed and said he and Nash will vote against the 10 percent cut. Riley said he and Nash will vote against the 10 percent cut. Riley said he and Nash will vote against the 10 percent cut.

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