



The District's Dime

Going Beyond the Budget Book

The DC Fiscal Policy Institute blog
www.dcfpi.org

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It's Budget Mark-Up Week!

By Ed Lazere

This is an important week in the development of next year's DC budget! As of last Friday, each Council committee completed budget oversight hearings — on the proposed budget for the DC government agencies they oversee. That brings us to this week — “mark-up week.”

This is an important step because it is the first chance to see if the Council will take up the budget recommendations you and others have made. (Note: There will be other chances to influence the budget in the next few weeks.) Each committee drafts a budget report and holds a mark-up meeting to vote on it. The committee reports do the following:

- **Make budget changes.** A committee can cut one program to fund another, or it can find budget savings and then reallocate them.
Important Point: Committees cannot spend any more than they started with, the total amount in the mayor's proposed budget. So, the ability to shift resources around is limited.

| FY 2015 BUDGET MARK-UP SCHEDULE | |
|---|-------------------------|
| NOTE: This is highly subject to change. | |
| Check www.dccouncil.us for the latest schedule. | |
| Tuesday, May 13 | |
| Health | 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, May 14 | |
| Business, Consumer, & Regulatory Affairs | 10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. |
| Finance and Revenue | 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. |
| Government Operations | 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. |
| Judiciary & Public Safety | 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. |
| Thursday, May 15 | |
| Human Services | 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. |
| Economic Development | 1:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. |
| Transportation & the Environment | 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. |
| Education | 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. |
| Committee of the whole | 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. |

- **Give money away!** Sometimes committees find savings in the agencies they oversee and put those savings in an agency overseen by another committee. In recent years, for example, the Transportation Committee devoted some of its resources to homeless services.
- **Recommend policy changes.** The committees also offer comments on the legislative changes in the mayor's Budget Support Act. For example, does the committee like a proposed new reporting requirement, or changes in how unemployment insurance is provided, or the mayor's ideas for tax reform? The committee's comments on such things are generally seen as advisory, and will be considered by the full DC Council as it finishes budget work.

The mark-up schedule is on the [Council](#) web site and also listed above. But note that these are highly subject to change, so keep your schedule flexible and follow the Council online for the most up-to-date information.

The mark-ups are not the end of the budget process, though. Between the end of mark-ups this week and the full Council budget vote on May 28th, the Council will gather to deliberate on the issues raised by each committee. That meeting is scheduled for May 21st. At that time, residents and advocates will have a week to meet individually with councilmembers to ensure that their issues are being considered.

See you at mark-ups!