Fund-Pinched City Orders Hiring Freeze

By TERRY MASON

The Oklahoman

Oklahoma City officials have placed a freeze on the hiring of new police officers and firefighters, pending the outcome of a tax proposal that has yet to win the approval of voters.

The Freeze was announced by Mayor Bob Hope, who said the city cannot afford to hire new employees until it passes a $1 billion bond issue on the November ballot.

"We are facing a critical financial situation," Hope said. "We have been forced to cut back on services and programs, and we need to do more to reduce our expenses."

The Freeze, which was effective immediately, affects all city departments, including the Police Department and the Fire Department. It will remain in place until the bond issue is approved by voters.

"We need to do what we can to make ends meet," Hope said. "We are committed to providing quality services to our citizens, and we will do whatever it takes to keep our city running smoothly."

The Freeze comes as the city is facing a budget deficit of more than $100 million, due to the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We are doing everything we can to balance our budget," Hope said. "But we also need to be realistic about what we can afford."
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