Finance & Judiciary Committee Meeting
MINUTES
December 20th, 2011
5:30 p.m.

Members: Ben Kessler, Chair, Richard Sharp, Rick Weber

Roll Call: All present.

Others Present: Lou Chodosh, Beecher Hale, Bill Harvey, Matt Lampke, President McClelland, Jed Morison, Mike Price, Chief Rinehart and Gary Qualmann.

Presentation and/or Special Guests – None.

Ordinances & Resolutions –

Third Readings.

Ordinance 53-11 to amend Chapter 262 (Employees Generally) Sections 262.01 and 262.02 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Bexley, introduced by Mr. Kessler (Introduced on November 29, 2011).

Mr. Kessler made a motion to approve, motion was seconded by Mr. Weber-Approved for recommendation to Council. **Voice vote 3-0- Approved.**

Ordinance 54-11 to substitute Chapter 244, of the Codified Ordinance of the City of Bexley to amend building permit and related review fees pertaining to construction of residential and commercial buildings upon approval of the Building Department, introduced by Mr. Kessler (Introduced on November 29, 2011).

Mr. Weber said he has to assume these rates are in-line with charges from other communities. Mr. Harvey said Ms. Rose checked and they are similar. He does not think the slight increase would be prohibitive to residents. Mr. Harvey said he would like to make this an administrative procedure in order to avoid having to come to Council each year regarding rates. A question was raised concerning Karen Boker's rate being lower. Mr. Harvey said her rate has not changed but the Commissions are allowing Ms. Rose to handle more of the workload.

Mr. Kessler made a motion to approve, motion seconded by Mr. Weber. **Voice vote 3-0 – Approved.**

Amended Ordinance 55-11 authorizing appropriations for the calendar year beginning January 1, 2012, introduced by Mr. Kessler (Introduced on December 6, 2011).

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Mr. Hale distributed copies of the updated budget for 2012. The first discussion was regarding the Water Department budget on page 40. Mr. Kessler said the line items showed an increase in the water testing line item. He asked if they had checked into other vendors to compare pricing. Mr. Harvey said they had used another vendor in the past; however they are no longer offering this service because it was not profitable to the company. Mr. Harvey said at the end of 2010, the company ceased picking up the water samples and now the City has to drop off the samples. Mr. Harvey said the lab fees have doubled between 2010 and 2011. It is a requirement to test the water daily. He forecasted a 20% increase in lab fees for 2012. Council asked if the Hexagram line item was new. Mr. Harvey said it was not new but had previously been listed in Mr. Halsey's budget and it is more appropriately located here.

Page 41 – Mr. Kessler said the wage line item had increased. Mr. Hale said that reflects the fact that Mike is no longer a "trainee" but a "worker" for the water department. Mr. Kessler asked why the taps/meter line had increased and was that connected to the battery issue. Mr. Harvey said it has risen but it is not significant. Part of that increase may be due to battery replacements but the majority of the line item is a result of a new reader. Mr. Kessler asked about the contract professional line increasing. Mr. Harvey said those reflect the EPA and EMH&T services. There is a reserve set up for the EPA and he thinks the forecasted amount will not be spent for 2011. It is not an actual "reserve" but it is for "expenditures" (spend it or loose it scenario – not an actual savings).

Page 42- Debt Service
Mr. Sharp said there is a 20 year contract on the new meters and this was signed in 1999. Mr. Harvey said they have a 15 year life span. Mr. Lampke asked Mr. Hale to start including the bond maturity dates next to the line item for reference. Mr. Sharp said Mr. Qualmann had provided them with a summary of all of the bond information.

Page 44 – Sewer Administration
Mr. Kessler asked if this area was an EPA risk. Mr. Harvey said it actually is a risk in both water and storm sewers. He thinks some of the 2010 numbers were carried over to 2011. There is a certain amount for 2012 and 2011 payments. He said the ERU is charged by the City of Columbus and that is a different number than the water bill figure. Mr. Harvey said EMH&T is the contractor for the water and sewer. Mr. Hale said Ms. Farley's salary is also partially assigned to this account. Mr. Harvey said he doesn't think that is appropriate to have a percentage of her salary in the water department however it does avoid the general fund.

Page 45 – Reflects the sewer improvements and should be $200,000 and the bottom number $180,000. Mr. Harvey said that figure includes the addition of a training employee since the main employees who handle sewers have 28 plus

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years. Mr. Harvey said on his staff, there are very few employees with less than 10 – 20 years of experience. President McClelland asked about the sewers and whether or not they are crumbling. Mr. Harvey said we can insert a sleeve that will last 75 -100 years. We have done some of this sleeve insertion work in the past. Mr. Kessler said the trainee position is a non-general fund but with current negotiations up in the air, this is not a good time to be adding a trainee. Mr. Harvey said having Mr. Dilley train an employee is very important. It is not a general fund issue. Mr. Weber said it would be good long-term planning. Mr. Kessler said he does trust Mr. Harvey's judgment but was surprised because he was not expecting to discuss any salary issues this evening. Mr. Weber said although it is good business planning, it is not the appropriate time. Mr. Sharp stated you are cutting in some areas but then adding to this one. Mr. Morison suggested deferring this decision until the finish of negotiations. Mr. Sharp said having qualified staff helps us defer major problems. Mr. Harvey said the long-term employees know exactly where all of the manhole covers are and there is a lot of knowledge to be passed on to cross-train employees. This is knowledge is imperative when residents call in and state they have water coming into their basements. There was discussion regarding potential future retirements and the options of rehiring a retired employee. Mr. Harvey said the administration had no problem with this but it is an AFSCME regulation. The union will not allow an employee to retire and come back at a lower rate. Mr. Kessler said he would like to remove it from the budget and have Mr. Harvey come back to Council at a later time.

Discussion was held regarding the trash service costs. Mr. Harvey said he did not need a reserve in this area. Mr. Qualmann said at some point, you set yourself up for a disproportionate rate. Mr. Harvey said it makes sense to do that with the water but not on trash removal. Mr. Morison said he has always been in favor of small incremental increases versus a large one. Mr. Harvey said the previous problem with the senior rates has now been corrected. Mr. Weber asked if the overtime line item was due to leaf collection. Mr. Harvey said the overtime also comes from the street fund as well. Mr. Kessler asked why the health insurance amount had increased. Mr. Hale said it could be that it was under-budgeted last year. He is not sure and will check on that figure. Mr. Weber asked if Rhonda was included in this division. Mr. Harvey answered no.

Mr. Tim Madison asked what the operating expenses are. He said it is listed for each department but he is not clear how those funds are actually used. Mr. Hale said it helps simplify the budget. It keeps the City from having line items for small items and too much detail.

Page 54- Road and Alleys
Mr. Harvey said in regards to the OPWC, as you will recall he had asked permission from Council to ask for funds to help with the traffic lights and to repair Main Street water lines. He had submitted a request for $1.7 million to be used in 2013. He said the City has been awarded $1.4 million in funding along

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with a loan for $500,000. He said is a very good deal but we will have to provide matching funds which can be done using our Federal Grants.

Mr. Kessler said there were multiple uniform issues to discuss.

Second Readings.

Ordinance 56-11 to reduce appropriations in the ARRA Fund by $509,000, introduced by Mr. Kessler (Introduced on December 13, 2011). **No Action**

Resolution 23-11 forming and endorsing the Bexley Alternative Revenue Task Force, introduced by Mr. Kessler (Introduced on December 13, 2011). **No Action**

First Readings.

Ordinance 57-11 to make supplemental appropriations and to reduce appropriations to various accounts within the Recreation Fund, introduced by Mr. Kessler (Introduced on December 20, 2011). **No Action**

New Business: None

Old Business: None

Adjourned 6:55 p.m.

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