Finance & Judiciary Committee
MINUTES
July 14, 2009
6:00 p.m.

Members: Robyn Jones, Chairwoman, Jeff McClelland, Mark Masser

Roll Call: Robyn Jones, Chairwoman, Jeff McClelland. Mr. Masser was out-of-town.

Others Present: Mayor Brennan, Lou Chodosh, Beecher Hale, Larry Heiser, President Lampke, Jed Morison, Chief Rinehart, Rick Weber.

Review of Minutes: June 23, 2009- Approved

Presentation and/or Special Guests: None

Ordinances & Resolutions –

a. **Finance Committee Report– Robyn Jones, Chair**

Third Readings.
None.

Second Readings.

Ordinance No. 34-09 to appropriate $48,354.00 from the Unencumbered General Fund for the purpose of paying the fire contract with the City of Columbus, introduced by Ms. Jones, (Introduced on June 23, 2009).

Ms. Jones stated that she was in favor of this Ordinance. President Lampke asked if this cost was included in the budget. Mr. Harvey explained that the additional amount of the increase was not in the budget. He said the contract which was signed prior to the current administration has no cap or percentage limit regarding an increase. Mayor Brennan stated the contract does refer to a minimum increase of 3% per year but no limit on the increase. He stated they are not required to provide us with a breakdown on the increase or the numbers. Mr. Heiser stated it was $1,483 in 2007 and 2008. Mr. Hales stated this increase reflects a 7.2% increase. President Lampke asked if the City of Columbus decreases their personnel, would it result in a decrease of payment for the City. Mr. Harvey answered no. Unfortunately the contract is not favorable for the City of Bexley but we are locked into the contract.

Ms. Jones made a motion to recommend this Ordinance for passage. **Vote was 2-0 – Recommended.**

Ordinance No. 35-09 to amend Ordinance 65-97 which placed a moratorium on the hiring of full-time and part-time employees, both new hires and replacement hires, to allow for the hiring of both full-time and part-time employees without the approval of Council, provided that the salary has been approved in the budget, introduced by Ms. Jones, (Introduced on June 23, 2009) **No Action**

Ms. Jones said she had hesitation regarding this Ordinance because she thinks the City Council members should have the final approval on pay and what pay level someone is hired. Mr. Weber stated that he can certainly appreciate the staff's position on this issue. Mr. Harvey stated that he is currently in the process of hiring union positions and the salaries are already mandated. He suggested that it be worded for a salary over a certain amount; it would have to go to Council. Mr. Chodosh suggested that a percentage be used.

Mr. Harvey used the example that if it is in the budget for a department to get $100,000, what does it matter if you have three $33,333 employees or one $100,000 employee as long as you get the job done. Mr. Weber used the example of the Jeffrey Mansion position and Mr. Harvey wanted to raise that pay and everyone else wanted to lower it. Mr. Weber said Council should make the final decision on what a new hire will be paid.

Mr. Morison stated that perhaps Mr. Chodosh's idea of adding a percentage rate of the base would be effective. If it went over the base by a certain amount, then it would need to be presented to Council for approval. He stated at his place of employment, it would also cause great delays to fill positions if he had to wait for approval first. He said that perhaps Council could use the same system and have the administration report at each meeting regarding any employment changes or revisions. Mr. Weber stated he would agree if we could reach a happy medium.

Mayor Brennan explained that currently there are open positions in the Service Department and they are short staffed. He said the City advertised the positions in the local papers with a pay range from $12 - $17 per hour in an attempt to replace the employees who no longer work for the City. These are not new jobs or additional positions. They are bound by the ASME contract on the pay range. His intent is not to bring in someone at $80,000 to fill a position. If there were an $80,000 replacement opening, he certainly would not be hiring anyone to fill it unless it was considerably less.

Ms. Jones stated she would only agree to the Ordinance if the wording applied to "union" positions only. President Lampke inquired about the pay ranges for each position. Mr. Heiser stated the pay ranges only apply to the union positions. President Lampke suggested that the final pay could be based upon Council's approval. Mr. Chodosh said that would not work in reality because no one will accept a position without knowing what they are going to be getting paid.

Mr. Morison suggested that the wording be changed to allow the administration to hire or replace positions if they were union or non-union and

make a provision for only Directors or high salary range levels to be approved by Council.

Mayor Brennan stated that in 1995, the moratorium was passed due to the previous administration hiring a new Code Enforcement Officer position that Council was not aware of. This is certainly not his intent. He said the Service Department is down staff and he needs to be able to hire people. Mayor Brennan said he is asking for some trust from Council in order for him to make some progress.

Mr. Morison asked if Council would be able to provide some "qualifiers" for the administration on when they would have to bring it to Council. Mr. Harvey reminded Council that he had brought this issue up previously and the Ordinance had expired. He reminded Council Members how long it took him to receive approval to replace his assistant, Jan Yaple and that was even being filled with an internal employee.

Mayor Brennan stated that currently there are substantial overtime issues because we basically have a one man show due to needing to hire someone. Mr. Harvey asked if he needed to bring forward an Ordinance for these positions. President Lampke asked if it would be introduced this evening. He said if so, perhaps by our next meeting we can justify a suspension and adoption.

Ordinance 36-09 to appropriate $229,348.00 from the unencumbered General Fund for the purpose to purchase Service Department equipment and three police cruisers, introduced by Ms. Jones, (Introduced on June 23, 2009) **No Action**

Mr. Hale stated this is mainly a cash balance issue.

Ordinance 37-09 to appropriate $15,000 from the unencumbered General Fund to provide for deaf interpretation and other special needs of the residents during City sponsored programs, meetings and events, introduced by Ms. Jones (Introduced June 23, 2009) **No Action**

Mr. McClelland explained this is the situation involving an interpreter for special needs children. It is an expensive proposition to hire for each event. This Ordinance would be a City wide one to assist with future needs. The Ordinance contains a conservative number. Mayor Brennan stated the City negotiated with the current interpreter and we were able to get assistance for much less since it is a reoccurring expense.

Ordinance 38-09 to increase the salary of the Parks and Recreation Grounds Supervisor position to $53,000 per annum beginning July 1, 2009, introduced by Ms. Jones (Introduced June 23, 2009) **No Action**

Mayor Brennan stated this Ordinance pertain to Ron Gould's position. He stated the City is attempting to get Mr. Gould to the pay scale that would be similar to the other supervisor positions at the Parks and Recreation facility.

First Readings.

Ordinance No. 41-09 to establish the rate of pay for the Recreation Director at $60,000 per year effective July 1, 2009, introduced by Ms. Jones, (Introduced on July 14, 2009) **No Action**

Resolutions –

Resolution 9-09 to adopt on or before July 15, 2009, the Bexley 2010 Tax Budget to be submitted to the Franklin County Auditor, introduced by Ms. Jones, third reading, (Introduced on June 9, 2009) **Vote 2-0 to recommend.**

Resolution 10-09 accepting a grant in the amount of $7,500 from The Columbus Foundation for the College-Livingston Gateway Project and authorizing the Mayor to sign all appropriate documents accepting said grant, introduced by Ms. Jones, first reading (Introduced on July 14, 2009) **No Action**

Mr. Langner explained this Ordinance is to grant the Mayor to sign the appropriate documents in order for the City to receive these funds.

New Business: Mr. Chodosh said he spoke with Mr. Harvey regarding the new 911 emergency equipment. The cost is $250,000 and Mr. Harvey was concerned as to whether or not this needs to be sent out to bid. He said he did some research and it is not a requirement to bid out equipment. Mr. Chodosh wanted to inform Council that according to Section 15 there is a suspension of public bidding. The Ohio Revised Code states it does not have to be a public bid. Mr. Chodosh stated that the funds have already been approved as part of the new police station so he does not see a problem with it. There are very few places that provide this equipment. If you do put it out to bid, you could get a fly-by-night company which could cause havoc since it is very complex equipment.

Mr. Harvey stated the consultant the City hired as recommended a company and he does not receive any monies for the recommendation. Mr. Chodosh added that a bid for the equipment will also result in a delay in the process. Mr. Weber stated that since it is such a large amount, he is surprised the architects do not tell us two or three installers to be able to do a price comparison. Mr. Harvey stated we definitely will be getting three or four prices from established companies; he just does not want a formal bid.

Old Business: None.

Adjourned – 6:50 p.m.