

Finance & Judiciary Committee

Minutes

December 15, 2009

5:15 p.m.

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

Roll Call: Robyn Jones, Chairwoman, and Jeff McClelland. Mark Masser was not present.

Others Present: Mayor Brennan, Lou Chodosh, Beecher Hale, Bill Harvey, President Lampke, Bruce Langner, Mike Price, Jed Morison, Chief Rinehart and Rick Weber.

Review of Minutes: December 8th, 2009- **Approved**

Presentation and/or Special Guests: None.

Discussion by Finance Committee - Ms. Jones said there are several issues to be discussed at this meeting. She said Mr. Heiser was not able to be present at the meeting but had forwarded the issues he thought Council needed to discuss.

BCA Request for \$5,000 in Funding – Ms. Jones stated her opinion is the City already spends a substantial amount in police overtime for events. She is not in favor of the City providing additional funding. Mr. McClelland said that he disagrees and said the BCA does a wonderful job managing these projects. He is in favor of the additional funding. He stated that most residents probably already think the City is funding these events. Mr. Weber said he agrees with Mr. McClelland and is in support of the additional funding the BCA has requested. Mr. Kessler said the BCA has done a great job and works hard to raise funding. He is in support of providing the funding requested also. President Lampke said an amendment will need to be presented in order to make a motion to increase the funds for the BCA.

Car Allowances: Ms. Jones said the committee needed to discuss car allowances and the process of eligibility. President Lampke proposed changing all car allowances to an actual mileage reimbursement versus a flat fee.

Mr. Harvey said currently only Directors are receiving the car allowance and both he and the Recreation Department have employees who travel within the City limits on business who are not currently being reimbursed. Mr. Price agreed and requested that his employees who travel within the City limits also need reimbursed. Mr. Harvey said Russ Halsey does a lot of traveling between the new police station and City Hall which will be continuing. Mr. Harvey said the flat fee is added to the W2 form at the end of the year. Employees must then keep track of their own mileage in order to claim it as a business reimbursement on their income taxes.

Mr. Morison said he thought allowing employees that do use their own vehicles for City business seems only fair to allow them to use the IRS rate for mileage reimbursement. He suggested that the City combine mileage for those individuals while keeping the flat rate for the Directors. President Lampke said he is opposed to the flat rate and would rather have the Directors reimbursed for the actual mileage used. He said the mileage option could apply to all employees. Ms. Jones reminded Council that they were not having a discussion as to whether or not to reimburse employees for mileage but rather whether or not to alter the flat fee rate to mileage. Mr. Hales stated it could be complicated offering both methods from an accounting standpoint. Mr. Kessler said an Ordinance needs to be prepared regarding this subject for future voting purposes.

Budget Review - Mr. Hale distributed copies of the breakdown in capital expenditures.

Water and Sewer Rate: Mr. Harvey reminded Council that he does need action on the Water and Sewer Rates this evening in order to be able to pass along the increase from the City of Columbus. President Lampke stated that he did not think it has to be finalized this evening. Mr. Harvey explained that if it is not passed this evening, the City does loose money because we will still be receiving the increase from the City of Columbus effective January 1, 2010. Mr. Harvey said he does need action on this topic.

Ordinance 60-09 regarding the passing of the 2010 Budget is currently tabled. Mr. Kessler said he had some questions regarding the budget. He asked about the pole barn that Mr. Price had suggested and requested that the Land Strategy Use Commission be included in those discussions.

Mayor Brennan said he is hoping to have enough funds to be able to do some work on the alleys in 2010. He said the City repaired the tennis courts last year and saved a lot of money by using the City staff.

President Lampke asked about the capital outlay for 2010. Mr. Harvey said that figure includes both new streets, resurfacing of streets and water and sewer lines. Mr. Weber asked about an allotment and how that would be approved. Mr. Harvey said he does need the Council's direction as soon as possible. He would like to put out bids in January and February.

Mr. Harvey said they had applied for funding for College Avenue and it is a reimbursement. The City will have to spend those dollars in 2010 and receiving the reimbursement may take as long as 2011.

Mayor Brennan said we tied with Whitehall to receive the funds. Mr. Harvey said even the Whitehall project won't be funded. He said the grant provides half of the money and the other half is a loan at zero percent interest.

President Lampke said capital outlays should involve City Council members' participation as far as what is going on in the City. Any project other than cruisers or Jeffrey Mansion could be considered in January. He suggested removing improvements

and expense to discuss on a line to line basis. Mr. Harvey said that the generator/boiler improvement had already been approved by City Council members but he waited to spend the money as long as possible. He cannot wait long term because it is in desperate need of repair. He also said that some of the improvements such as traffic lights become a safety issue. The City has some traffic lights that are 12 years old and he plans on replacing 5 each year.

Mr. Weber asked about the 3 million for the four streets and whether it could be borrowed from the alley fund. Mr. Harvey said he needs a "yes" or "no" from Council along with a commitment of what the City wants to do. He said it is up to Council to decide to spend or not spend the three million dollars.

Mr. Harvey said what he owes to Council is to keep them informed and take some hard looks in the future to decide if we need to keep doing these projects. Mayor Brennan said the City wants to start taking a proactive approach versus putting out fires. Ms. Jones said she views this as something the City needs to take action on.

President Lampke asked what the long-term plans were for the City Hall building. Mr. Weber said extensive conversation has taken place regarding this issue. Ms. Jones suggested taking out the capital improvements and revisiting these issues. Mr. Kessler said he understands that we want to keep money in the budget, but if the generator/boiler blows, we can't keep City Hall running. Mr. Harvey said we have to keep the building running. Residents expect us to be able to help them and we won't be able to do that if the generator/boiler stops working. President Lampke said he understands the urgency but would like to wait and have more discussions in January.

Mr. Harvey said in order for an engineering firm to get the boiler and get bids, he needs action. He said at this time, it appears City Hall will be located in this building for at least a couple of years more. With the market place being what it is, it would be difficult to sale the building. He said the boiler needs to be replaced. We are past the point of continuing to repair it. Mr. Kessler said he would like to have a strategic plan for 2010. He asked if Council could start putting time aside for this planning on an additional basis.

Ordinances & Resolutions –

Third Readings.

Second Amended Ordinance 66-09 to appropriate \$20,000.00 from the unencumbered General Fund for the purpose of paying for the Turf Maintenance Contract within the Parks Department and to appropriate \$45,000.00 from the unencumbered General Fund for paying police salaries and wages for the remainder of 2009; and to appropriate \$2,500.00 from the Recreation Fund for the purpose of paying Senior Programs salaries and wages for the remainder of 2009, introduced by Ms. Jones (Introduced November 17, 2009)

Mr. Hale stated the police department budget didn't have the extra 27th pay period included. Mr. Weber asked why there was flexibility in the Brickman's contract. Mr. Harvey explained that extra watering or landscape can make that amount fluctuate. **Vote was 2-0 to recommend to Council.**

Second Readings.

Ordinance 68-09 to establish rates for all salaried employees, Police Chief, Police Captain and Part-Time and Casual Employees of the City of Bexley, effective as of January 1, 2010, introduced by Ms. Jones, (Introduced on December 8, 2009)

Mr. Hale said he left pay raises in the budget that had been requested previously in the event Council decides to go forward with the pay increases. Mr. Kessler asked why it was still included in the budget when it hasn't been approved. Mr. Weber agreed that he thought this was a problem when it hasn't been approved. This contradicts the budget that we are approving. Mr. Weber said the budget should be revised to reflect the 3% increase that was previously approved. Ms. Jones said she recommended passing the budget as it currently is written with Beecher coming back to Council in January with a corrected line item. Mr. Hale said he would also have to change the numbers discussed this evening by line items so he could make all the changes and corrections at one time. Mr. Chodosh said the wage issue could be discussed on January 12th, 2010. **Vote 2-0 to recommend to Council.**

Ordinance 69-09 to revise the Codified Ordinances by adopting current replacement pages for 2009 and declaring an emergency, introduced by Ms. Jones (Introduced on December 8, 2009) **Vote 2-0 to recommend to Council for adoption.**

Mr. Chodosh stated that this Ordinance needs to be suspended and adopted this evening. The same would apply to Ordinance 70-09.

Ordinance 70-09 to revise the Codified Ordinance by adopting current replacement pages for 2008 and declaring an emergency, introduced by Ms. Jones (Introduced on December 8, 2009) **Vote 2-0 to recommend suspension and adoption.**

Ordinance 71-09 to appropriate \$8,500.00 from the unencumbered General Fund to pay for electricity for the remainder of 2009, introduced by Ms. Jones (Introduced on December 8, 2009) **Vote 2-0 to recommend suspension and adoption.**

Ordinance 73-09 to appropriate \$4,500.00 from the unencumbered General Fund to pay for the prosecutor's contract for the remainder of 2009, introduced

by Ms. Jones (Introduced on December 8, 2009) **Vote to recommend suspension and adoption.**

First Readings.

Resolutions

Resolution 18-09 to request the Auditor of Franklin County, Ohio, to make advance payment to the City of Bexley of monies held for its account in the County Treasurer, introduced by Ms. Jones (Introduced on December 15, 2009)

No Action

New Business: Mr. Weber said he would like to thank Ms. Jones for her excellent leadership as the Finance Chairwoman and will miss not having her as part of Council next year.

Old Business: None

Adjourned: 6:55 p.m.