

CUYAHOGA FALLS CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & Appropriations Committee

November 23, 2015

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Klinger, Chair, at 6:42 p.m. A quorum was present.

Approval of the Minutes

Without objection, the minutes of the November 9, 2015 meeting were approved as submitted.

Non-Agenda Items

The Chair recognized Finance Director Bryan Hoffman with respect to Report 21 for the period ending October 31, 2015. Mr. Hoffman stated that, on the revenue side, final real estate property tax receipts for 2015 are less than estimate by \$64,106, mostly because delinquency collections were less than estimated. Interest revenue has been higher than expected and is estimated to finish at \$310,000, well over the \$218,000 that was originally estimated. This is due to changes in investment policy made in 2014. Admissions taxes are up 5.4%. The Local Government Fund is up 9.6% over 2014 due to increases in sales tax receipts. However, the state portion of the Local Government Fund will be down about \$40,000 due to cuts by the General Assembly. Estate taxes in the amount of \$72,258 were received, after the City had estimated zero for this line item. Income tax collections are up 6.9% over 2014. Fees, licenses and permits are up 5%. Cable television franchise fees from Time Warner have been decreasing while a similar fee paid by AT&T has been increasing. In the Leisure Time Fund, total revenue is up 4.1%. Brookledge and Downview both showed better performance than in September. On the expense side, income tax refunds are up due to a few large refunds. Medical expenses are down \$140,000 year-over-year. Prescription drug expenses were up in October but should finish about the same as 2014.

The Chair asked if the Finance Director sees Natatorium revenue finishing ahead of 2014. Mr. Hoffman stated that he sees no downward trend in the near future. The Chair recognized Ed Stewart,

Superintendent of Park & Recreation, who stated that Natatorium membership is at an all-time high.

Agenda Items

Temp. Ord. B-89

An ordinance establishing annual appropriations of money for the current expenses, capital expenditures and other expenses of the City of Cuyahoga Falls for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2016, and declaring an emergency.

There were no questions from the prior week's budget hearing.

Regarding the budget of the Community Development Fund, the Chair recognized Mrs. Pyke, who noted that contractual services were budgeted at \$29,000 for 2015 while actual expenditures are now at \$86,000 YTD, and asked the Finance Director to identify the expenditures for contractual services in 2015. Community Development Director Diane Sheridan stated that the expenditures included \$2,991 for SAS Environmental, \$15,000 for Chambers, Murphy and Burge, architects, \$1,400 for Rogers Sauers & Co., \$2,770 for Mann Architects, \$4,975 for Patriot Engineering, \$3,500 for Wolven Engineering Group, \$2,250 for Patriot Engineering, \$2,250 for Go Sustainable Energy, and \$50,000 for Portage Trail, Inc. The Chair asked Planning Director Fred Guerra to explain the expenditure to Portage Trail, Inc. Mr. Guerra stated it was a loan to facilitate energy efficiency improvements at an apartment building on Portage Trail. The Chair asked Ms. Sheridan to identify the \$15,000 expense to Chambers, et al. Ms. Sheridan stated that this was for a feasibility study on the theater. Mrs. Pyke asked for a list of the projects for which these expenditures were made. Ms. Sheridan stated she would provide such a list. Mrs. Pyke asked why the 2015 printing services line item was increased from \$1,350 to \$16,000. Ms. Sheridan stated that she would provide this information at a later date. Mrs. Pyke asked where the money for this increase in appropriations came from. Mr. Hoffman stated that this money will need to be appropriated. A "clean-up" ordinance will be submitted in December. These expenditures may also have come out of other

line items. The Chair stated that the most recent budget amendment ordinance did not include an increase in appropriations for printing expenditures.

Regarding the budget of the Enterprise Zone/Community Reinvestment Fund, the Chair noted that contractual services listed there are for the services of a CPA. There were no questions regarding the budget of the Enterprise Zone/Community Reinvestment Fund

Regarding the budget of the Falls River Square division, the Chair noted that the decrease in contractual services is due to the termination of the NAPA contract. There were no questions regarding the budget of the Falls River Square division.

Regarding the budget of the Community Development Block Grant Fund, the Chair recognized Mrs. Pyke, who noted that the 2015 budget line item for housing rehabilitation had been amended to \$327,000 but that as of the end of September only \$66,000 had been spent, and asked if more money will be spent on housing rehabilitation. Ms. Sheridan stated the department has six completed owner-occupied projects and another to be started within one week. One is waiting for inspection. Five projects are currently being income qualified. Four files are awaiting income documentation. Four applications were denied due to income ineligibility. One project was denied due to the expense of the project. One project was denied due to the applicant's refusal to provide information. Mrs. Pyke asked if there will be more applicants this year. Ms. Sheridan stated that there will be 11 completed projects by the end of the year if all pending applications are approved. Mrs. Pyke asked if unspent grant money can be carried over to 2016. Ms. Sheridan stated this is correct. Mrs. Pyke asked for a list of training events that Kelli Crawford-Smith has attended. Ms. Sheridan stated that she would provide this.

There were no questions regarding the budget of the Dept. of Park & Recreation.

Regarding the budget of the Recreation Levy Fund, the Chair asked Mr. Stewart to discuss the 5-year capital plan of the Park & Recreation Dept. Mr. Stewart stated that the biggest expense in 2016 will be the Natatorium roof. The riverfront boat launch will be bid in 2016. Another boat take-out will be designed and built for an estimated \$45,000. Also included for 2016 are drainage improvements at Lions' Park, a floor at the Quirk Center, replacement of maintenance equipment at the golf course and at Park Maintenance. The Chair recognized Mr. Weinhardt, who asked if there will be signage alerting kayakers to the presence of the boat launch and take-out. Mr. Stewart stated that previous signage is still there, and additional signage has already been added. More signage will be added as part of this project.

The Chair asked about the \$2 million scheduled for the Lazy River in the fifth year of the capital plan. Mr. Stewart stated that this is a placeholder in the event something needs to be done. The facility has stopped subsiding and appears to be stable for now. The pool will need to be refinished as well, although this may be a multi-year project. The Chair recognized Mr. Colavecchio, who asked how far the Lazy River may sink before something needs to be done. Mr. Stewart stated that it could sink another five inches before it would be inoperable. The Chair recognized Mrs. Pyke, who asked Mr. Stewart to explain the appropriation of \$140,000 to the maintenance and repair line item when this line item in previous years has been \$50,000. Mr. Stewart stated that this is for three new roofs for park outbuildings, \$18,800, resurfacing the tennis courts at the high school, \$23,000, and asphalt repairs at various parks, \$55,000, including Galt, Babb Run, Newberry and Lions' Park. These types of expenses were formerly deemed to be capital expenditures and are now deemed maintenance and repair. Mrs. Pyke asked for a full list of the repairs. Mr. Stewart stated he would provide it. Mrs. Pyke asked why the department is budgeting \$50,000 for tree trimming when it has never budgeted for this expense in the past. Mr. Stewart stated that the department annually contributes \$28,000 for tree trimming to the General

Fund departments which handle this task in the parks. This appropriation is for the removal of the remainder of 151 dead or damaged ash trees in active park areas.

Regarding the budget of the Storm Drainage Utility Fund, the Chair recognized Mrs. Pyke who thanked the administration for installing a storm drain to alleviate flooding on 9th and 10th Streets. There were no questions regarding the budget of the Storm Drainage Utility Fund.

Regarding the budget of the Water Fund, the Chair asked water Superintendent John Christopher to discuss the Department's 5-year capital plan for water and sewer. Mr. Christopher stated that in 2016 the department will replace a water main on Highland between Bailey and Hanover. \$500,000 will be appropriated for re-painting the Oak Park water tank. \$100,000 is appropriated for miscellaneous water line repairs, and one vehicle will be replaced. For 2017, a water main will be replaced on Bailey Road from Graham Road to Adams. A back-up generator will be purchased for the wellfield. For 2018, \$1 million is appropriated to build a new water tower in the vicinity of Howe Ave. In 2019 and 2020, there are no specific projects. In the sewer fund, for 2016, \$750,000 is appropriated for sanitary sewer overflow projects. This is not for any particular project, but is a reserve for needs that emerge during the year. \$100,000 is provided for miscellaneous sewer repairs, and annual machinery and vehicle replacements are included. A safety trailer is included with the cost split between water, sewer and storm sewer. In 2017, the breakdown is similar except that an additional \$350,000 is provided for replacement of a Vactor machine. In 2018, 2019 and 2020 the breakdown is the same. The Chair recognized Mrs. Pyke, who asked if water system improvements will be necessary for South Front Street as a result of the developments there. City Engineer Tony Demasi stated that if such improvements are necessary, they would be stand-alone projects budgeted elsewhere. Mrs. Pyke asked if the City's brine well facility extends under Water Works Park. Mr. Christopher stated that

the brine well does not extend beyond the water treatment plant.

Regarding the budget of the Sewer Fund, the Chair asked Mr. Christopher to discuss the City of Akron and County disposal fees. Mr. Hoffman stated that the contract with the City of Akron is in negotiations. The goal is to avoid having Akron's new sewer project expenses being charged to Cuyahoga Falls. The Chair asked if any new charges from Akron will be retroactive. Mr. Hoffman stated that Akron has been informed that Cuyahoga Falls as well as other communities opposes any retroactive charges. Service Director Eric Czetli stated that the City is verifying the readings of the three sewer meters read by Akron.


There was no opponent testimony. There was no public comment.

Motion by Mr. Lula to release Temp. Ord. B-89 with a favorable recommendation. Seconded by Mr. James. Motion adopted by acclamation.

Without objection, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:34 p.m.



Carol A. Klinger, Chair



Paul A. Janis, Clerk of Council