

**Cuyahoga Falls City Council**  
**Minutes of the Public Affairs Committee Meeting**  
**April 16, 2007**

**Members:** Debbie Ritzinger, Chair  
Diana Colavecchio  
Doug Flinn

Mrs. Ritzinger called the meeting to order at 9:00 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes of the April 2, 2007 committee meeting were approved as submitted.

**Legislation Considered**

Temp. Res. B-60  
Temp. Res. B-61  
Temp. Res. B-62  
Temp. Ord. B-63

**Discussion:**

**Temp. Res. B-60**

A resolution declaring support for and urging swift passage of Senate Bill 72, regulating check cashing and payday lending businesses, and declaring an emergency.

Virgil Arrington stated that S.B. 72 will address most of the concerns regarding the payday lending businesses. Most people are taking out multiple payday loans to pay other payday loans and get themselves into a hole of which they cannot dig out. S.B. 72 will allow people to have one loan at a time. They will not be able to get a second loan until the first is paid. A state-wide data base will be used by the lenders to verify that the borrower does not already have an outstanding loan through another payday lender. Other items addressed by the Bill are that loans would be reduced from six months to 30 days with reduced fees. Loan origination fees would also be reduced from 5% to 3%, as would the monthly interest rate. There are also additional regulations on the businesses themselves. For example, currently a business is required to have \$100,000 to open its doors and the Bill will increase that to \$200,000. Mrs. Ritzinger indicated she has a copy of S.B. 72 if anyone wanted to review it.

*The Committee recommended bringing out Temp. Res. B-60 for approval.*

**Temp. Res. B-61**

A resolution expressing support for and urging passage of the Cuyahoga Falls City School District Tax Levy (Issue 8), and declaring an emergency.

Dr. Holland stated that two years ago, the Auditor of State had indicated an excess of \$4 million deficit for the School District. Dr. Holland initiated "Project Recovery" which included many budget cuts and had a goal of balancing the school budget within two years (June, 2007). In actuality, the District balanced its budget in June, 2006--one year early. The Auditor has reviewed the books and removed the District from its watch. The District now needs to look forward and is asking for Council support of a 4.75 mill five-year renewal operating levy. It is not a new tax and would cost the owner of a \$100,000 home, \$110 to operate the schools. Mrs. Ritzinger stated she is in total support of this resolution.

Mayor Robart complimented Dr. Holland on what he has accomplished for the School District. Dr. Holland was able to pass two levies within one year to help get the District back on course. He also complimented Mr. Gorbach who has been actively involved in the process.

***The Committee recommended bringing out Temp. Res. B-61 for approval.***

**Temp. Res. B-62**

A resolution declaring opposition to and urging the defeat of Senate Bill 117, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Arrington stated that the City currently has franchise agreements with certain utilities and receives fees from the utility company in accordance with its franchise agreement. With the passage of S.B. 117, those fees will go away. S.B. 117 takes control away from the local level and places it at the state level. He, along with other municipal law directors, feel this Bill is unconstitutional and, if it passes, will be challenged legally. They all believe it should be defeated.

Mrs. Colavecchio asked if it was a blanket sweep and whether current agreements would be void. Mr. Arrington stated the utility companies would have the option to opt out of the agreements.

***The Committee recommended bringing out Temp. Res. B-62 for approval.***

**Temp. Ord. B-63**

An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cuyahoga Falls approving the FY 2007 CDBG Annual Action Plan Document and Program, and declaring an emergency.

Mrs. Truby stated this is our fourth year for receiving federal funding for CDBG activities. The City will be receiving \$721,032 for 2007, which is a slight increase over the \$719,312 received in 2006. The amount received is broken down into six categories: housing grants (\$100,000), core infrastructure (\$365,000), economic development loans (\$120,000), planning activities (\$20,000), administrative functions (\$98,782), and fair housing (\$17,250). They are also receiving funds from other sources: \$97,437 for Fresh Start which will be added to the CDBG category for a total of \$197,437 for housing grants. Also, they will be receiving \$14,400 in economic development loans which is added to the CDBG category for a total of \$134,400. She pointed out that what is budgeted now could change three months from now if a project does not go forward.

Mrs. Pyke asked if a Fair Housing Advocate had been hired. Mrs. Truby indicated that they are going to use the same firm out of Columbus as last year. Mrs. Pyke felt that firm was instrumental in helping residents and feels they did a good job.

Mrs. Colavecchio asked if there was a deadline. Mrs. Truby indicated it had to be submitted by May 15. Mrs. Colavecchio requested the legislation be held so that she could review the action plan in its entirety. Mrs. Truby was concerned that holding the legislation may cut things too close as the next Council meeting isn't until May 14. Mrs. Colavecchio inquired whether a committee meeting can be held at the next Council meeting. Mr. Arrington stated it would not be necessary to hold a committee meeting because Council could just discuss it when the legislation was brought out for a vote. Mr. Walters was concerned about the strict protocol required for Council meetings and indicated that things are more informal during Committee meetings. Mr. Arrington stated the only rule for a Council meeting is that a member of the public would not be able to speak. Other than that, there is no limit.

***The Committee recommended bringing out Temp. Ord. B-63 for approval.***

## **Miscellaneous**

John Konich gave an update regarding the City's regional dispatch plans. By way of history, the City formed a regional dispatch committee, consisting of himself; Chief Conley and Messrs. Hilbish, Wiggins and Rivers of the Police Department; Chief Snyder and Mr. Moledor of the Fire Department; and Mr. Sabino of Tech. Services. The committee has had discussions with the Summit County Council of Governments (COG) regarding joining COG in its plans for centralized dispatch service. Current COG members are Stow, Tallmadge, Munroe Falls, Mogadore and Silver Lake. The City of Green and Townships of Brimfield and Springfield have recently opted out of COG. In light of recent decisions made by COG representatives, the City has decided to withdraw from plans to join with COG because it feels COG is heading in the wrong direction. The City is going to pursue using Fire Station 5 for its dispatch center.

When Fire Station 5 was designed and constructed, it was done so with the idea that it would one day house a dispatch center. When the City learned of COG's plans to provide centralized service, the City's Dispatch Committee agreed to work with the COG Technical Committee in order to get Fire Station 5 added to the list of locations being considered. COG determined that eight dispatch consoles would be required for current members and that an additional four would be needed due to future growth. Fire Station 5 had the space to be designed to hold twelve consoles. The location being favored in Stow can only hold six. The City's regional dispatch committee could not see how eight or even twelve consoles could be installed at the Stow location without major construction. COG's technical committee ignored the requests of the City's regional dispatch committee to see plans of how the additional consoles would be installed in Stow. Any construction and renovation would be at the expense of COG members. In addition, COG is hiring outside consultants for \$40,000 and also a part-time director, the expenses of which would also be the responsibility of COG members.

In looking at plans to house a dispatch center in Fire Station 5, the City's regional dispatch committee discovered it was actually going to be more cost-effective than joining COG.

The meeting adjourned at 9:29 p.m.