

Cuyahoga Falls City Council

Minutes of the Finance and Appropriations Committee Meeting

June 7, 2004

Members: Mr. Flinn, Chairman; Mr. Barnhart, Vice Chair; Mr. Gorbach, Member.

Mr. Flinn called the Finance Committee to order at 6:46 p.m. The minutes from May 17, 2004 Finance and Appropriations Committee meeting were approved as submitted. Mr. Gorbach was absent.

Legislation this evening (second readings):

A-85	An Ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to purchase certain property located at 1816 Front Street, Summit County Parcel #0212842, and declaring an emergency.
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Sue Truby indicates this property is in Ward 2 (C-U). The property has been vacant for over a year and is currently being sold by JAH Properties. Jack Haag, the President of JAH Properties and Dave Kunce are here this evening. The owner offered to sell this property to the City for \$475,000. It is a 15000 sq. ft. building in good condition that sits on .98 acres. The CIC met on May 25, 2004 and unanimously supported to purchase this property with land preservation funds of \$350,000 and the CIC funds of \$125,000. This was not budgeted for yet this unique timing has allowed us this opportunity to potentially purchase. The goal is to have the property resold for uses that conform with the Ward 2 Charrettes. Fred Guerra indicates this property is a key component to the south end of Front Street. Over the next few months, you will be able to see what the mixed-use zoning will bring to this area. This can be redeveloped into a mixed-use site very easily. Sue indicates the goal is to turn around and sell this property and reimburse the land preservation fund/CIC funds. Ken questions if we sold the building below \$350,000, would the CIC reimburse the land preservation fund? Mrs. Pyke indicates and reiterates the Ward 2 Charrettes Newsletter with the mixed-use zoning and fully supports this decision. Mrs. Pyke indicates this is an opportunity that has been a long-term goal for the residents. George indicates he has concerns about the land preservation funds and is not confident they can be used this way. If the property were on the other side of the street, he would feel differently since it would be adjacent to the river. George questions why the city is jumping in to buy this property since the owner has a potential buyer (cabinet maker) that could occupy this building. Sue indicates she is using Land Preservation fund and will be reimbursing those funds when the sale of the building is complete. Sue indicates the building is currently zoned for industrial use but the timing is here for the city to purchase and help define what type of business could occupy it. There are certain things under the 1992 regulations that a business could not do. The school tax abatements are also a concern for George. Sue indicates the market price was set when there was a willing buyer/seller at \$475000 and therefore an appraisal was not done. Mrs. Truby indicates the easiest scenario is to turn around and sell it as is. Kathy Hummel indicates she has heard from a potential industrial buyer who was interested and was told of restrictions for this space. Sue states in 1992, we set the dimensions for the use of this area. Mr. Walters states the County Tax records state the value of this building/property is \$170,200.00. Sue states the charrettes were a voice of the people and we are trying to direct this area to conform with the charrette outline. George questions why aren't we matching a seller/buyer and leave the city out of it? The city would offer tax abatements and if the current interested party purchases the building, the school would continue to receive its share of taxes. He feels the two parties should negotiate. George doesn't feel it would be offensive to have a cabinetmaker in town. Carol indicates we are trying to move this area into a new direction. It will take years to do this. It is a roll of the dice, but this opportunity doesn't come often. She envisions a unique opportunity for this property. The city needs to take the extra step to control the destiny of this area. SGS Tool vacated this building on March 31, 2003 and it has not lost its nonconforming use according to Fred Guerra. Mary Ellen feels that we have a great opportunity to let the community know we are serious about the rebuilding of the south end of Front Street. Debbie Ritzinger asks when the city purchased the Prospect Property. Sue states we purchased in 2002 for a park area with a bridge. Also, Debbie questions why reimbursement to the Land Preservation fund is not in the ordinance. Joe Brodzinski states a substitute will be coming to include that language. Sue indicates there are skeptics about the city's planning process but the purchase of this will set a tone to the people of Ward 2 and to the developers that we are serious about developing the south end of Front St. Kathy feels we have taken a giant step with the residents with the purchase of the Prospect Mold and Die along with the Brownfield project. The city is sitting on the Prospect property and it continues to not generate taxes. Carol Klinger indicates the Brownfield cleanup is taking some time because there was a lot of damage to the river. We have also taken steps to make sure the residents are

aware of our seriousness. George feels the tax abatements we will be discussing this evening will be an important step vs. this purchase. Jack Haag, 3302 Purdue Street, indicates he does have someone to buy the property. He is frustrated because he has had six potential buyers with legitimate offers that are being chased off by the city. He finds it hard that things are twisted against a potential buyer. There is a long way to go on this area. He is paying maintenance/taxes on the building and needs relief on this subject. Mr. Haag confirms a cabinetmaker is interested in the property.

The committee recommends bringing out Temp. Ord. A-85

A-86	An Ordinance authorizing payment of the Moral Claim of Vicki Quinn, and declaring an emergency.
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Virgil Arrington indicates this was a sewer back up into a home and our sewer was plugged up. There was \$4700 claim for new carpeting. We typically depreciate items such as carpet. We approved \$3500 in Moral Claims and she was satisfied. This was an isolated incident on January 5, 2004.

The committee recommends bringing out Temp. Ord. A-86

A-87	An Ordinance authorizing payment of the Moral Claim of Joanne Dowdy, and declaring an emergency.
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Virgil indicates this is a strange claim. Mrs. Dowdy purchased a home on Hudson Drive and went to England immediately. A final read on the utilities is typically done, but the prior owner didn't show up for the appointment. The utility employees put hangers on the door supposedly, but the new owner was in England. Therefore, the city turned off all her utilities. When we turned off the utilities, the sump pump was turned off and the basement flooded. We cut the claim in half and she was happy with that. Her and her attorney appeared at the moral claims hearing.

Don Nelsch, North Haven Blvd., questions why the electric was turned off when the meter is outside? Virgil indicates the only meter that needed read was the water and it was easier to turn off the electric to get their attention. This is what resulted in this claim. Virgil indicates he is reviewing procedures with the utilities manager for future incidents.

The committee recommends bringing out Temp. Ord. A-87

A-88	An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor, as Director of Public Safety, to enter into a maintenance service agreement for the multi-jurisdiction mobile data system, and Cuyahoga Falls owned Mobile Data Hardware and Software and declaring an emergency.
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Chief Conley indicates this is for maintenance support for the mobile data system. This contract will be for three years at \$25000. New World will upgrade our software, etc. for the Mobile Data Hardware System with the support of this ordinance.

The committee recommends bringing out Temp. Ord. A-88

A-89	An Ordinance creating the positions of PC Specialist and Web Developer in the Information Services Department, and changing the title of Assistant Information Services Manager to Network Systems Administrator, and declaring an emergency.
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John Konich distributes a current organizational chart. John has a strategic plan over the next few years to implement. The web developer and pc designer will become full time positions. Financially and organizationally the handout shows the changes.

The committee recommends bringing out Temp. Ord. A-89

A-90	An Ordinance amending the staffing report for 2004 as the same relates to the Information Services Department, and declaring an emergency.
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Virgil indicates this is to adjust the staffing ordinance with regards to the previous ordinance, A-89.

The committee recommends bringing out Temp. Ord. A-90

Finance and Appropriations Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.