

Cuyahoga Falls City Council

Minutes of the Finance and Appropriations Committee Meeting

July 19, 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 July 6, 2004 Finance and Appropriations Committee meeting were approved as submitted.

Legislation this evening (second readings):

A-112	An Ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts with an engineering firm or firms to provide professional engineering services for replacement of substation #2 and building new substation #13 on Bailey Road, and declaring an emergency.
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Mr. Bye indicates this is for an engineer to help rebuild the old substation in Oak Park along with the old Downview Property, which was torn down a few months ago. This will be totally underroof and enclosed in brick with new technology. Mr. Flinn indicates it is safer and Mr. Pierson is pleased with the location.

The committee recommends bringing out Temp. Ord. A-112

A-113	An Ordinance amending Section 151.01 of the Codified Ordinances and declaring an emergency.
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Virgil indicates the cash out benefits of the ordinance were not as intended on sick leave cash out. The same language from the union contract was put into this ordinance. Non- bargaining employees who are not PERS were excluded and now we have included them with this ordinance. You can cash out on your accumulated sick leave in the last 3 years vs. after you retire.

The committee recommends bringing out Temp. Ord. A-113

A-114	An Ordinance authorizing the sale of certain real property known as 2730 Front Street upon terms and conditions as negotiated by the Community Improvement Corporation, and declaring an emergency.
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Jennifer Syx indicates the property at 2730 Front Street was the old Crockers Restaurant and was recently appraised for \$210,000. Totally Cooked Inc. looked at this property and with the limited parking provides their catering business a potential for growth in the next years. Totally Cooked has a unique long-term plan for the area. Dante Davello, 1746 10th Street, (owner of Totally Cooked) indicates he will be coming over from Stow, however in 2006 we would like to turn it into a market for pick up of gourmet food and seafood. Mr. Gorbach welcomes a hometown guy and looks forward to seeing him down there.

The committee recommends bringing out Temp. Ord. A-114

Sub.A-115	An Ordinance amending the Staffing Report for 2004 as the same relates to the Human Resources, Utility Billing, Finance and Income Tax Departments, and declaring an emergency.
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Mrs. Carr thanks Mr. Flinn for the substitute Ordinance. One correction is a staffing change and the other is a change is in the Electric Department. There will be a need for an Electric Engin. Draftsman and is a critical position that needs to be filled & cross-trained. It is temporary that we will need three employees at this position and we will eventually go back to two draftsman. Mr. Bye indicates he will be losing a lot of people through retirement over the next year. His intention is to start training and get someone to take over if they decide to leave next year. Mr. Gorbach indicates the crossover training is necessary for the skills of an electrician.

Secondly, Mrs. Carr indicates is the situation with Human Resources. The switchboard operator is not optimal under Human Resources since it is downstairs and is the main section that takes calls with overload from Utility Billing. We are simply moving it from Human Resources to the Utility Billing Department.

There has been some double work through Human Resources/Payroll. In the overall scheme we are switching from clerical to more professional tasks for this individual. Since 1980, there have not been any big changes. The diversity of Human Resources has changed tremendously. Debi Megenhardt indicates the activities and responsibilities of this position has so much depth. We really need a professional leveled employee to handle this.

Mrs. Hummel clarifies that the 20-hour part time HR person will be replaced with a full-time HR Coordinator. Mrs. Carr confirms this change.

The committee recommends bringing out Temp. Ord. A-115

A-121	An Ordinance levying special assessments for the reconstruction of High Street from Tallmadge Road to Taylor Avenue including Sill Avenue from the intersection of High Street to its eastern termini, including concrete curbs, catch basins, water lines and storm and sanitary sewers where required, roadway asphalt or concrete paving, concrete driveway aprons and concrete sidewalks where required, together with necessary appurtenances incidental thereto, and declaring an emergency.
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Mr. Bell indicates this is the last piece of legislation for this project that will finalize the assessments for the residents. Mr. Barnhart has some concerns about \$522,995.43 that requires 30% must be assessed to the property owners. With the equalization process the percentage is only 22% which is inconsistent with the 30% figure. When a property owner requests an equalization process it was his understanding that the process would be consistent, but the average frontage size according to his calculation was 71 ft. but the figure used was the average lot size, which was 66 ft. This issue is a done deal and we have approved the deal along with the equalization numbers. I am requesting when we pass an ordinance and state 20-30 or 40%, we should assess this amount. I feel we need to look at the project and analyze the numbers ahead of time for accurate figures and accountability to our residents. He supports these reconstructions and wants to continue to support these in the future with more consistent equalization process.

Virgil indicates the original resolution indicated it was a 30% process. After the Equalization Board, City Council approved the report reducing the owner's portion to almost 23%. This is not illegal and is in accordance with the Equalization Board. Mr. Arrington states that Mrs. Klinger has appointed a committee to review the Equalization Process and this Board will develop consistent measures for future assessments.

Mr. Flinn asks how many more streets are in this process? Mrs. Carr indicates Williams and Albemarle are going through the process. City Council will vote on the equalization process. If we reject it, the process starts all over again. Mrs. Pyke indicates there are only 3 ways to assess. This formula is fair to the benefit for the residents. Williams is still hanging out there and until we have an actual formula, it would have been easier to take the numbers to the residents AFTER the equalization process. Mary Ellen states Mr. Smith was treated as a corner and there is an error on this charge. Virgil states the Equalization Report is correct at 1.7%.

Mayor Robart states the need to review the system but in the early days, it was like pushing a peanut up a hill. It was tough and this format was an incentive to do these improvements.

Mr. Gorbach indicates the process may need tweaked and would like to have Mrs. Klinger get the committee to be involved so we don't run across this speed bump in the future.

Mary Ellen asks about hardship. Virgil states they can apply. Joe indicates the bills won't go out from the county until January. The hardship committee can be handled through January for those affected residents.

Joyce Michniak 525 Taylor Avenue has some issues with corrections the city needs to address. Mrs. Carr will personally talk and handle the issues.

Finance and Appropriations Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.