

Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Minutes of the Finance and Appropriations Committee Meeting

October 15, 2018

Members: Tim Gorbach, Chair
Jerry James
Mary Ellen Pyke

Mr. Gorbach called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. Mr. James was absent.

Legislation Discussed

Temp. Ord. A-88

Temp. Ord. A-89

Temp. Ord. A-90

Discussion:

Temp. Res. A-88

A resolution accepting the amounts and rates of taxation as certified by the Summit County Budget Commission, authorizing the necessary tax levies, certifying such authorization to the County Fiscal Officer, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Bryan Hoffman, Finance Director, stated that this is a routine resolution the City does every year. This is to satisfy ORC 5705.34, the certification of a levy. The City's charter states that the City has an 11-mill inside levy. The County Fiscal Office puts together a projection on the City's property tax levy dollars that will come into the City for 2019, and City Council needs to certify that by resolution.

Mr. Gorbach stated that it is a resolution merely for the fact of Council formally acknowledging that they received this information and they are going to adhere to what the Ohio Revised Code says. It's state law, so Council is not making law. They are acknowledging, as a Council, they are going to formally adopt these certified numbers. Mr. Hoffman stated that that is his understanding of why it is a resolution and not an ordinance.

Mr. Gorbach moved to bring out Temp. Ord. A-88 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mrs. Pyke. Motion passed (2-0).

Temp. Ord. A-89

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the demolition and removal of demolition debris from dangerous building (house) located at 1413 Ritchie Street and certifying the cost thereof to the County Fiscal Officer for collection in the manner provided by law, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Tony Demasi, City Engineer, stated that the house located at 1413 Richie Street has been vacant since at least 2011. That is when the utilities were shut off by the Utility Department. The Housing Division has been working with mortgage companies, tax lienholders and the Summit

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County Land Bank hoping to bring the home up to code. The house has been posted by the Housing Department several times, including in 2012, 2014 and 2017, all of those postings with no response from the property owner, the mortgage companies, or the tax lienholders. On August 1st, 2018, the Housing Department asked the Summit County Building Department to condemn the home. They did so on August 22. They condemned it based on the structure being open and unsecured, holes in the roof, gutters, window and siding missing, wood rot and foundation cracks. Following demolition, costs will be certified to the Finance Department. Estimated cost for demolition is about \$8,000, but if there is asbestos in the property after the abatement, then that will be added to cost on the house.

Mr. Gorbach stated that Council has seen a few of these now. These homes need to be cleared out to hopefully get the neighborhoods back on track. The City's hands were tied in the earlier years because of these tax liens. Mr. Demasi stated that the way he understands the law is when somebody comes and purchases a tax lien on a property, they become the certificate holder of that. They have four years to file a foreclosure on the property. During that time, the Summit County Land Bank does not want to get involved in purchasing the property because of those certificates that are on file; however, the City can still proceed with demolition and certifying costs. It will just be another lien to the property.

Mr. Gorbach moved to bring out Temp. Ord. A-89 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mrs. Pyke. Motion passed (2-0).

Temp. Ord. A-90

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Finance to enter into a contract or contracts, without competitive bidding, with Wichert Insurance Services, Inc. for the professional services necessary to manage the City's risk management and insurance program and for the purchase of public entity insurance coverages, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Hoffman stated that this is the City's annual insurance renewal every year with Wichert Insurance. Wichert Insurance has been the City's provider for insurance services for many years. Wichert Insurance selects the best insurance companies for the City's insurance program. Cuyahoga Falls is a unique in that it handles a lot of claims through the Law Department. The City works very closely with Wichert Insurance on claims issues. The insurance renewal this year came at flat, so they wasn't any increase. There was a slight increase in dollar amount just due to some valuations. The City had a little bit of an uptick in the total value of its properties this year. Mr. Hoffman stated that one item he wants to make everyone is aware is there was a Cyber liability insurance that was started in February 2016. They tried to get that on this schedule, which means from October to October, so that it all corresponds on the same timeline. They did a 20-month insurance premium in 2017, which did add additional cost that year, but, in 2018, all of those insurances are on the same schedule. Mr. Gorbach stated that Wichert Insurance is the manager of this insurance and risk. The ordinance says, "without competitive bidding," but they are bidding out the actual back-end insurance that the City is using. Mr. Hoffman stated that was correct.

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Mr. Gorbach moved to bring out Temp. Ord. A-90 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mrs. Pyke. Motion passed (2-0).

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.