

Minutes of the Finance Committee of Stow City Council Meeting held on Thursday, August 13, 2015, at 6:35 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Razor, Costello, Lowdermilk & Riehl

Other Council Members Present: Adaska, D'Antonio & Pribonic

City Officials Present: Mayor Drew, Finance Director Baranek, Law Director Zibritosky, Director of Budget & Management Earle, Service Director Wren, City Engineer McCleary, Director of Information Systems Germano & Clerk of Council Emahiser

Press Representatives: Stow Sentry

Call to Order

Mr. Razor called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION:

Mr. Costello moved and Mr. Riehl seconded to approve the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of July 23, 2015 as circulated.

Yes Votes: Razor, Costello, Lowdermilk & Riehl

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

Budget/Financial Report

MOTION:

Mr. Costello moved and Mr. Riehl seconded to acknowledge receipt of and approve the Budget/Financial Report dated August 3, 2015.

Yes Votes: Razor, Costello, Lowdermilk & Riehl

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

Business Items

Authorize Reimbursement for Flu Shots

Mayor Drew stated they were looking to have Giant Eagle provide this service to City employees and elected officials this year. That covered all City employees, court employees and elected officials. The cost was \$22.00 each.

One of the biggest benefits that it provides by having Giant Eagle do it was not only was it at a lower cost, but if an employee was on vacation or out sick on the day that they were here, they could get a voucher and go to any Giant Eagle to get their flu shot. That should increase compliance with our Flu Shot Program.

MOTION:

Mr. Riehl moved and Mr. Costello seconded to assign a number to the sample legislation and send it on to Council.

Yes Votes: Rasor, Costello, Lowdermilk & Riehl

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

Amended Contract – Ohio Edison Company – Electric Service for 2015

Mr. Wren stated this reflected an increase over the City's projections at the beginning of the year. It reflected basically a rate increase from Ohio Edison. That was why they were projecting it more than they did at the beginning of the year. They went from \$.059567/kwh to \$.079833/kwh.

Mr. Lowdermilk stated the legislation says to amend the contract. He asked if we weren't locked in for a certain period of time? Mr. Wren stated no. This was just to amend the amount of money that was appropriated this year by City Council.

Mr. Lowdermilk stated but it was due to a price increase from them. Mr. Wren stated yes. They did have a three-year contract at this kilowatt hour price.

MOTION:

Mr. Riehl moved and Mr. Costello seconded to assign a number to the sample legislation and send it on to Council.

Yes Votes: Rasor, Costello, Lowdermilk & Riehl

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

Authorize Expenditures – Time Warner Cable – Cable, TV, Internet & Phone Service for
2015

Mr. Wren stated this was to cover the cable, internet and phone service for certain portions of the City.

Council could see at the bottom on his letter the increase in 2014. That was when the courts went on with their cable, internet and phone service. That was why there was a big increase in 2014.

They were projecting they were going to have enough to cover it, but they were just doing it so they didn't have to come back a third time. Their projection right now was right around \$18,500, so it would be close. They wanted to make sure that they had enough to cover the bill.

Mr. Razor asked what the variable portions of the bill were that they couldn't really project with precision? Mr. Wren stated he was sure there was a slight raise in the fee from Time Warner Cable, but generally the bulk of this was court expense. To be quite honest, he didn't have 100% knowledge of that, but they consist of about 66% of this bill.

Mr. Costello asked Mr. Germano if Council hadn't earlier authorized the school to put an internet line thru here and they were going to hook-up with it? Mr. Germano stated they did.

Mr. Costello asked if we did? Mr. Germano stated the deal with NEO-NET was they were going to run a cable. The vendor they chose has been unable to do that. Therefore, they did not have that connection. They were looking at some alternatives to get them connected to them.

Our bill to Time Warner for City Hall was \$420/month, as it has been for the last couple of years. They were talking to several people trying to find another way to connect to them.

Mayor Drew stated the City was not paying anything to NEO-NET because they were not providing a service.

MOTION:

Mr. Riehl moved and Mr. Lowdermilk seconded to assign a number to the sample legislation and send it on to Council.

Yes Votes: Razor, Costello, Lowdermilk & Riehl

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

Authorize Expenditures – H. M. Miller Construction – Emergency Waterline Repair – Hudson Drive

Mr. Wren stated this was an emergency repair out on Hudson Drive by Instant Whip. City crews went out on April 18th and did the repair. In very close proximity, they had another blow-out on May 13th.

Our in-house equipment wasn't big enough to do the job. They had struggled on the earlier job. Therefore, they had to call in a third-party contractor that had the appropriate size equipment and printing boxes. That was what was before Council this evening.

MOTION:

Mr. Riehl moved and Mr. Costello seconded to authorize expenditures in the amount of \$18,923.29 with H. M. Miller Construction Company for emergency waterline repairs on Hudson Drive.

Yes Votes: Rasor, Costello, Lowdermilk & Riehl

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

Appropriate Funds – Snowplow Assistance Program

Mr. Wren stated this was the City's annual program that Council had approved in the past.

There had been several discussions last year with several different Council Members about the set-up of our program. Administratively they weren't happy with it. He knew some Council Members weren't happy with it. Therefore, they were making some vast changes this year.

The requirements for being in the program remain the exact same. The difference this year was that we will be going to a voucher system.

Before in the program you were allowed up to six plows. Once Mr. Brooker or him decided there was 4" of snow city-wide, they would activate the system. They, many times, received complaints that there were 4" on one side of the City when maybe there was only 2" on the other side.

With the voucher system, each participant in the program would get six vouchers. It would be up to them to determine when they wanted their driveways plowed and they would contact the contractor directly.

The voucher would be left for the contractor, dated and signed. The contractor would give it back to the service department to act as an invoice and to generate payment to the company.

The second major change that they were in the middle of processing was our average per plow was about \$16. Our average per plow when we include sidewalks was about \$27.

Therefore, he has been in discussions with Mr. Feldman, the Athletic Director at Stow High School. They had a meeting with a couple of the coaches, as well as their Director of Operations, on Tuesday. They were looking to institute a program where they would use high school athletes to clear the sidewalks for people involved in this program.

This was multifaceted. They would get the volunteer hours that they needed. Obviously, it gets the sidewalks cleared for our senior citizens that are unable to do so for themselves. In return, they would give a donation to the athletic department.

They figured last year out of about an \$11,171.10 expenditure for this program, about \$3,400 was just for sidewalks. So, by eliminating that portion, they would get more bidders, last year they had only received one bidder because they didn't want to do sidewalks, by going this way, they would be able to hopefully establish a long lasting program with our schools, the kids would get their volunteer hours and the people on this program would be taken care of just as they were in the past.

Mr. Rasor thought that was the most creativity of any legislative proposal he had seen in six years. It may not be something that had a great impact on the City's budget, but he appreciated the work and the thought Mr. Wren had put into it. He wasn't saying that it would work perfectly, but he thought it was worth trying.

Mr. Pribonic asked, concerning the voucher system, if they had a terribly snowy winter and people used up all their vouchers, would they still be able to pay that \$16 for a plow? They were going to be in the habit of calling that person to plow their driveway. We were paying them \$16 to do that. Mr. Wren stated that was \$16 last year.

Mr. Pribonic asked if they had a terribly snowy winter and there was ten times that needed to be done, would it be included in the bid that if they wanted to have their driveways plowed, it would be at that preferred price? Mr. Wren stated they encouraged their contractors to do that. They could not tell them that they had to. However, ever since he had been in the service department that was exactly what had happened.

Obviously, they were familiar with the area. They had plowed it before. We had had the same contractor do all three zones the last two years. Even before that, when they had multiple contractors, they had all done that in the past. When we had exceeded the limit of the plows that we would approve, they had always, in the past, done it at the exact same price as the bid price that they had received.

Mr. Pribonic asked if there was a way to put that into the bid? Mr. Pribonic stated no. He was just looking at it saying they were doing a great thing with six, but if they had a terribly snowy winter, he wondered what would happen? If that person called, the price might then be \$25 or whatever. That was his concern.

Mr. Wren stated he would feel comfortable putting it in the bid as an item of note and to see if bidders would do that. His only fear was that the contractor last year didn't want to do Zone 2 and gave them a much higher price in Zone 2. He was the only bidder, so they went with it. As long as they could insure that they were still going to get multiple bids to make this a competitive process, he would be happy to include that in there as an option for at least the City to consider when they were awarding the bid.

Mr. Pribonic stated he would appreciate it if they considered that safeguard. It was no different to him than the City's trash collection as a preferred provider. He was just looking to protect the residents. He wasn't saying that they were getting ripped off. He was talking about the future.

Mr. Lowdermilk stated he didn't necessarily want to add any complexity to this program this year, but he thought something they may want to consider was just like they do with the trash, electric and gas aggregates, he asked if it would be possible to contract with a preferred supplier whether you were on this program or not? Therefore, people could sign-up prior to winter to get their driveways plowed.

He was sure there were a lot of residents that would hire somebody to plow their driveways if there was a fixed rate on an on-going basis. He didn't know if this program was the thing to tie that too. It would be something similar to the trash pickup. However, it might turn out to be a good thing where they could get one or two preferred plow people where residents could sign-up at a City negotiated rate. It was just something to think about.

He also wanted to commend Mr. Wren for working with the high school and looking at volunteer hours. He thought there was a former Councilman who had actually mentioned that. That was Mr. Hickens. He didn't have a lot of support. However, they did appreciate Mr. Wren doing that.

Mr. Adaska asked what was the total amount they expended last year with the extras that they had added? Mr. Wren stated \$11,171.10.

Mr. Adaska asked when they should tell people to sign-up for the program? Mr. Wren stated generally it started about the beginning of September. Mr. Adaska stated they didn't want late-comers like they had last year.

Mr. Wren was hopeful. He couldn't commit to it before they had seen the bids. However, he was hopeful pulling out that sidewalk portion that they could expand the program to offer it to more residents than they had in the past.

Mr. Pribonic stated again he applauded Mr. Wren for his creativity of utilizing the students. However, he asked if they would have any type of liability issues with having them go out and do this? Mr. Wren stated Mrs. Zibritosky was shaking her head no. So, he was going to go with that. However, honestly, he hadn't gotten that far down the line.

We have to involve the football team in this because they are the largest pool that they could pull from. They were scheduled to meet on Tuesday to kind of hammer out the logistics. He was kind of waiting until after that meeting to get Mrs. Zibritosky involved in the liability standpoint.

Mrs. Zibritosky thought there was very little risk of liability in general, but even to any extent that there was one, they could easily work around that by having them sign waivers. She wasn't really concerned.

Mr. Pribonic didn't want to be a downer. He thought that was a great program. He was just looking at it from that standpoint.

Mr. Razor asked Mr. Wren if these were physical vouchers or were they just something that they kept internally? Mr. Wren showed him a copy of a voucher.

Mr. Razor stated then they hand those to the contractor. Mr. Wren stated currently in the bid specifications they leave them in their storm door or their door closest to the driveway. Each zone would be a different color, which would help them from a billing standpoint.

When the driver pulled up, he would pull the voucher, keep it in his car and at a minimum monthly he would need to turn that into the service department so they could track the program. This was the way they got paid, so he expected them to be doing it a lot quicker than that.

Mr. Razor stated so the resident would call the contractor and also stick that in the door. Mr. Wren stated that was correct. They would call the contractor. He wouldn't come if they didn't call. Then, this was basically their payment to the contractor, which he would then pass on to us and we would obviously make payment for.

Mr. Razor agreed with Mr. Pribonic that we should try to lock in any bidder. He would also defer to Mr. Wren's judgment as far as what could get the most competitive price on the initial six vouchers.

MOTION:

Mr. Costello moved and Mr. Lowdermilk seconded to assign a number to the sample legislation and send it on to Council.

Yes Votes: Rasor, Costello, Lowdermilk & Riehl

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

Authorize Contract – Thomson Reuter-West – Legal Reference Materials

Mrs. Zibritosky stated this was a request to enter into a three-year contract with Thomson Reuter-West for legal reference materials. She thought they would be getting a superior service that was more honed in on what they actually really needed and were saving more than half as much.

MOTION:

Mr. Costello moved and Mr. Lowdermilk seconded to authorize expenditures in the amount of \$15,192 with Thomson Reuter-West for legal reference materials.

Yes Votes: Rasor, Costello, Lowdermilk & Riehl

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

Authorize Hiring – One Part-Time Crossing Guard

Mayor Drew requested authorization to hire one part-time Crossing Guard. These were people who were very underpaid and worked in the worst of weather. We are lucky to find good people.

We have a tremendous pool of talent of mostly seniors, but not all, who were willing to stand out in the cold weather and the hot weather and work split shifts, because they work in the morning when the kids go to school and again in the afternoon when they come home from school. It was not an easy job as well as there was the safety consideration.

The City had a need for a part-time Crossing Guard. Ms. Christ, who supervised them, would like to proceed with hiring one.

Mayor Drew stated if there was anyone in the community who had a burning desire to apply to be a Crossing Guard given the description she had just given, we are always looking for qualified candidates and we truly, truly appreciate the effort that they put in.

She asked for Council's favorable consideration of this particular hiring.

MOTION:

Mr. Costello moved and Mr. Riehl seconded to recommend to Council that they authorize the hiring of one part-time Crossing Guard.

Yes Votes: Razor, Costello, Lowdermilk & Riehl

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

Adjournment

MOTION:

Mr. Costello moved and Mr. Lowdermilk seconded to adjourn.

Yes Votes: Razor, Costello, Lowdermilk & Riehl

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Bonnie J. Emahiser
Clerk of Council

Mike Razor
Chairman