

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 18, 2022, 8:00 a.m. Village Hall

Members Present: Chairman Galicki, Councilman Berger, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Fiscal Auditor Lechman, Mayor Koons

Galicki called the meeting to order and read the roll.

The Fiscal Officer reported she is working on the 2021 State report and hopes to file it by next week. It is due February 28th.

She advised that the County Auditor's office indicated the Tax Budget hearings this year will occur August 15th and 16th.

In the past, employees were given \$100 for getting a physical exam and this was done by motion. The motion had not been done, and she wondered if Council wished to continue this practice. Five or six out of 16 employees do it each year. Berger thought this was an HR issue and he would put in on the agenda.

The Fiscal Officer explained that the Village uses Microsoft 365 and pays \$99 per year for five computers as a family plan. Because it is a family plan, she and the Chief have been paying the sales tax for it. She is conducting research into business accounts to have tax exempt status. However, some of the business plans are expensive. The committee discussed an offer for Microsoft 365 Apps for Enterprise. Berger suggested going up to the business level, although it would be more expensive, but would make things right from a licensing standpoint and eliminate the need to pay sales tax.

The Fiscal Officer addressed legislation to create a new fund for the Parkland Dam project. If the committee agreed, it would be on the agenda for the February 28th Council meeting.

Regarding the State legislation to reinstate virtual meetings, the Fiscal Officer explained that the Governor signed off on it February 17th. She explained that the next Council meeting could be done by Zoom, or with Microsoft Teams or Google Meet, both of which are free. She suggested setting up the Council meeting as a hybrid so that Porter and Cavanagh, who were scheduled to be out of town, could participate. It would be set up as a hybrid through Google with Zoom as a backup in case there were issues with the Google Meet platform. The Fiscal Officer and Police Chief would set up some trial meetings in the meantime. The Mayor suggesting doing a test run with the Lake Louise Homeowners' Association (HOA) meeting on February 27th with both Zoom and Google Meet. The Fiscal Officer would notify Porter and Cavanagh. She added that virtual meetings will only be allowed until June 30th.

The Fiscal Officer had been in contact with bond counsel about the Parkland Dam residents' petition and the issue of residents getting the money submitted within 45 days of the completion of the petition. The Fiscal Officer would provide the revised petition when it was made available by bond counsel.

Galicki asked if there was any new business, and the Mayor stated that the Geauga County Auditor's Office was one of 15 entities in the State that received a clean audit. The Fiscal

Officer agreed that it is one of the best and added that although its requirements made for more work, the County Auditor's office ensured that things were done as the State wanted. The Mayor stated that the Village should send a congratulatory letter to the Geauga County Auditor's Office. The Mayor said the Auditor made arrangements to meet with him for breakfast to discuss the Special Improvement District (SID).

Regarding the Budget Commission hearing the previous year, the Mayor stated that he thought the Village could have sent a project list to the commission in July. The Fiscal Officer explained that by July 20th, it is necessary to have the Tax Budget adopted by Council and filed with the county. This year, she is planning to have a full budget list and give a report as an attachment to the budget to explain the Village's projects. Lake Louise Bridge and the full repayment of the Bell Rd. loan will be complete as promised and the Central Detention Basin should be underway. Additionally, if the Road Program also increases, these will all be things to show to the Budget Commission. The Mayor asked about setting up a reserve fund for Bell Road East. The Fiscal Officer advised that she will be able to address this after the reserve fund training provided by the Auditor takes place. The process and requirements are very specific and not for the purposes of hiding money.

The Fiscal Officer also received information from the County Auditor regarding SID's and saw it as something that could benefit the people in the county while removing the Village from the process. The committee discussed the mechanics of a SID.

The Mayor asked if there should be a petty cash fund for the end of the year to repay the Fiscal Officer and the Chief for all the tax money they pay over the course of the year. The Fiscal Auditor agreed it would be great to reimburse them for the sales tax they pay but did not think this was allowable. The Fiscal Officer agreed and added that the Village is not supposed to be paying sales tax. The Fiscal Officer said it could be done as a bonus, but then that would create questions as to why they received a bonus while no one else did; and it would be circumventing the rules.

The Mayor said that the meeting with the bond counsel was confusing, and the Fiscal Officer agreed. She suggested arranging in-person meetings moving forward instead of virtual.

The Mayor stated that SID's had been around for years, and the Fiscal Officer agreed but explained that in terms of water projects, this is new. Although it may be too late for the Parkland Dam as Council wants to move forward more quickly, she ultimately saw the SID as being a beneficial tool for residents.

The Fiscal Auditor stated that as part of his financial report at the previous Council meeting, he said the Village would have about \$2.5 million at year end based on the budget. He was curious about whether there would be a five-year plan so the Treasury Investment Board would know how much of this could be invested. Galicki asked the Fiscal Officer how the current projects impact this sum, and the Fiscal Officer explained that she would make this determination after completing the amendments to the budget. She hoped that after finishing the State Report, Council could work on the five-year plans whereby current and anticipated projects were identified and for which reserve funds could be created and funds then invested.

The committee discussed the topic of a new Service Department building which was mentioned at the previous Council meeting. The Fiscal Officer had been unaware of the plan, and the Mayor thought it was poor planning to throw in a building in the middle of the year. The Fiscal Auditor suggested the Village could look into a capital improvement levy if the Village were considering a new building.

Galicki adjourned the meeting at 8:30 a.m.

Dennis M. Galicki, Chairman

Prepared by Leslie Galicki