

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
SPECIAL MEETING – 2023 BUDGET WORK SESSION
MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2022 - 5:30 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Koons, Bell, Berger, Canton, Cavanagh, Galicki, Porter

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Chief Rizzo, Street Commissioner Alder

The Mayor called the Special Council meeting to order. The Fiscal Officer read the roll.

Galicki provided a third reading of an Appropriations amendment increasing Manor Brook Stream Headwater Restoration project expenses \$40,000 and declaring an emergency. Galicki made a motion to adopt, seconded by Porter. Roll call – ayes, Porter, Bell, Cavanagh, and Galicki. Berger and Canton abstained. Motion carried. **ORD 2022-81**

Porter provided a third reading of an ordinance approving the amendment to the agreement between the Village of South Russell and Mr. Excavator, Inc. for the Manor Brook Headwater Stream Restoration project allowing Mr. Excavator, Inc. to install the required plantings, authorizing the Mayor to execute the amendment on behalf of the Village, and declaring an emergency. Porter made a motion to adopt, seconded by Bell. Roll call – ayes, Porter, Bell, Cavanagh, and Galicki. Berger and Canton abstained. Motion carried. **ORD 2022-82**

Police Department/Safety Fund

The Chief submitted a budget change worksheet which was distributed to Council. He reported that Ford has cancelled 400 orders for police cars and will not honor the 2022 pricing. However, one of the two vehicles is being built. It is possible that the department will get the car by the end of the year, but the money for the second car may have to be carried over or re-budgeted. The Fiscal Officer said it would be best to re-budget next year. The 2023 prices are not available.

The Chief addressed the line for Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) Software and Cameras. He and the Fiscal Officer discussed combining some previous line items, which then reflected as a \$45,000 increase to that line item. He provided a supplemental sheet to Council to identify what is now in that line item. The department is only asking for a net increase of \$14,450, which is primarily for the Motorola CAD software that Chagrin Valley Dispatch (CVD) will be using next year, the additional Flock cameras, and the MDT net motion client. This also pertains to the CVD costs.

The Chief concluded that it is an overall decrease in what the department asked for in 2022. Galicki noted that the committee supports the Chief's recommendations. There was discussion about the benefits of the Vacation Watch program.

The Fiscal Officer asked the Chief to explain a reimbursement grant for which he applied. The Chief said he applied for a body camera grant, the first phase of which was \$17,095. This money will not come in this year since the reports are submitted quarterly. After December 31st, the Village's payment should be received in the first quarter of next year.

Streets Department

With the 75 PCI goal for Village roads, the Street Commissioner would like the 2023 Road Program to be higher. The larger amount would also cover potential price increases, Washington St., and hopefully the Village campus parking lot.

Regarding road salt, the price is \$45.89 which is \$8.42 over last year, but under the State average.

The 2015 loader is undersized for the needs of the Streets Department. It still has good value, and the Street Commissioner was sure the Village could get a lot of money for it with a trade-in. According to a Caterpillar sales representative, in ordering a new loader, the Village would not know when it would be built, delivered, or the cost. When it becomes available, a price and delivery date would be provided, and the Village would have the option to either purchase it or pass on it. Porter suggested looking into a used one and Berger suggested that used equipment had also probably increased. Parts availability for the current loader was also discussed. Galicki asked what the disadvantage would be to keeping the loader the Village currently has. The Street Commissioner said it was too small for what they use it for like lifting salt, and that there is a mechanical issue from past damage as well. He explained that the loader is more appropriately sized for a landscaper. Galicki clarified that since 2015 it has done the job, and the Street Commissioner said it was purchased because of its size so that it could go up and down driveways on Trash Day two days a year. Galicki asked what was used for salt at that time, and the Street Commissioner said it was this loader. Galicki asked what was used previously to move the salt, and the Street Commissioner said it was a smaller loader. Galicki concluded that effectively, the job was getting done. Galicki clarified that the previous damage to the loader was not due to an oversized load, and the Street Commissioner said no. Rather, he saw the problem as being an issue of it being loaded to the maximum over time. **Correction – “Pin on loader was sheared.”**

The Street Commissioner reported that the backhoe is 20 years old and with the schedule for large equipment replacement, it was due to be replaced in 2023. It is still in really good shape and replacement could be pushed back to 2025. Berger asked what the life expectancy was of this equipment, and the Street Commissioner said typically 20 years.

Regarding the one ton, it is a 2012, has 115,000 miles, and is used daily. It is due for replacement in 2023 and the cost is \$90,000. The Street Commissioner said replacement could be delayed until 2024. The cab and chassis are roughly \$60,000 and the package with the stainless-steel bed, hoist, lighting package, etc. would be an additional \$45,000. The Fiscal Officer verified the prices and that the total would be \$105,000 and the Street Commissioner said roughly.

Research was conducted by CT Consultants and the Street Commissioner for the replacement of the salt dome. The current dome structure design is no longer being built. Galicki asked about the estimated cost and verified it was only through discussions with the Engineer and not through discussions with builders or obtaining quotes. The Street Commissioner concurred. Galicki wondered how valid the estimate was, and the Street Commissioner said that cost would depend on the elevated cost of concrete. Galicki asked where the salt dome would be located, and the Street Commissioner explained it would be to the east of the existing one. The current one would then be torn down and potentially a building would be constructed there with a lift so the department could work on larger trucks. Galicki referenced past discussion of the proposed area having been a leach field and asked if there was concern with construction in that area. The Street

Commissioner said no. Galicki noted that the proposed design for the salt dome also contains two additional bays for storage, and the Street Commissioner said that per stormwater regulations, it would serve to cover the gravel.

Regarding the proposed new Service Building, the Street Commissioner explained that it was needed to house the lift to work on the big trucks. Currently, they use a bottle jack to lift the big trucks for maintenance or repair. Galicki asked if it would be feasible to add a bay to the existing structure instead of a whole new building. The Street Commissioner said it was a possibility, but the garage was still overcrowded. Galicki suggested evaluating its contents for unused items, and the Street Commissioner advised he had done a lot of that. Galicki expressed concern that in a vacuum, they were planning for the replacement of an entire Service Building without consideration of the future vision for the Village campus. He offered that there might be a valid need, but the Police Chief, too, could demonstrate a legitimate need to replace his building which is an old ranch house. However, the Police Chief and the department are making do. Galicki asked Council to consider the proposed new building strategically. He was not making light of the Street Commissioner's needs but thought a more prudent measure might be to add a bay to provide the capabilities that were needed. He hoped there would be some documentation of the need with which Council could make a wise decision on this line item. The Street Commissioner explained that this was not a replacement, but an additional building. Canton recalled that the Fire Marshall had an issue with the over crowding of the storage. Canton thought Council should take a long look at the possibility of building an edifice that would be for Service and Police because ten to twenty years from now it will cost a lot more than within the next three to six years.

The Mayor said Council has heard the request and should move on and no decision would be made at the current meeting.

Galicki commented that should Council decide to take the route suggested by Canton, it might be necessary to go to the voters with a levy. \$800,000 to \$1 million to build a building is a large expenditure. Canton concurred the voters should have a say.

The Street Commissioner asked to increase storm sewers to \$30,000 to cover unexpected projects and noted that the cost of plastic pipe has skyrocketed.

Galicki noted that in reviewing the Street Commissioner's budget, he realized everybody wants new toys and this budget reflected such, which was ok. However, he asked the Street Commissioner whether consideration had been given to addressing issues that may increase services to South Russell residents. For example, the Village could consider providing a second Trash Day per year, leaf collection, or a Christmas tree drop-off and chipping site. He asked the Street Commissioner to consider budgeting for such things that increase services to the residents where they can feel some benefit.

Bell took issue with Galicki's comments and said that he was insinuating that the Street Commissioner was trying to be destructive or not careful with taxpayers' money. He said the Street Commissioner was trying to do some preventative maintenance and take care of vehicles that provide city services. He acknowledged Galicki's points about added services, but Bell said that one could argue that Flock cameras were an item the Village did not need. He cautioned Galicki to be careful with how he treats the employees. Galicki responded that he appreciated

Bell's comments, but when the citizens are presented with a \$2.5 million budget, he thought it was wise for Council to take a close look at what contributed to those line items. That budget exceeds any others, probably in history, which precipitated Galicki's comments. Bell stated that was why Council was there tonight. Cavanagh stated she would trust the Street Commissioner with his requests because he is the person who uses the loader. Porter said the Street Committee discussed a second Trash Day, and it was deemed unnecessary based on the response to the first one. People were not lined up or turned away. At Trash Day, Porter saw the Russell employees operating their loader, and it is way better than the Village's. That style of loader would benefit the Service Department. Getting better equipment and a facility to service the big trucks is an excellent way to spend taxpayers' money because the Service personnel save them a ton of money by fixing stuff in house. Furthermore, a bay had previously been added, and with the way it was put in, he agreed that if they were going to service the big trucks, they should have proper lifts to do so to ensure no one gets crushed. Spending \$800,000 compared to a wrongful death suit is a deal.

Porter stated that the committee recommended \$850,000 to be divided \$606,000 for Street Maintenance, \$244,000 for Roads and Bridge. He questioned whether Washington Street would be part of this at \$125,000 if done with the county. The Fiscal Officer explained that it must be paid up front and reported in gross. She asked if the committee wanted an \$850,000 Road Program including Washington Street. Porter verified that Washington St. would be offset with Permissive Tax, and the Fiscal Officer concurred. The Fiscal Officer clarified that Porter was suggesting the addition of approximately \$130,000 to the \$850,000. Porter agreed.

The Fiscal Officer explained that on the worksheets, for the salt line item it is appropriated as \$52,000 in the Street Maintenance Fund and \$8,000 in State Highway Fund, which is the way it is typically broken down. For the Safety and Training, the committee recommended \$2,000. There was discussion of Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) training.

Regarding the Traffic Signal, the Fiscal Officer needed to determine the percentages of the project that will happen in 2023 and what portion would occur in 2023.

Porter asked about the six-year reserve fund and said he thought there was \$100,000 in it. The Fiscal Officer explained that the reserve funds were set up to serve as savings accounts of sorts. With the purchase of large equipment, she asked whether Council wanted to use the Large Equipment Reserve Fund to make the proposed purchase or take it out of the regular Special Equipment Fund. By telling the county it is a reserve fund, the Village is demonstrating it is saving for a large purchase and it will not count against the Village at the Tax Budget hearing since it is known that there are big truck and equipment purchases coming up. Porter asked when the next salt truck is due, and the Street Commissioner said 2026. He thought they should leave the \$100,000 in the reserve fund and let it build to buy the salt truck and use the Special Equipment fund this time for the Case loader.

Regarding the salt dome, Porter said the committee's recommendation is to budget \$425,000. Regarding the Chillicothe Rd. culverts, the plan is to do them this year (2022). The Engineer was authorized to go out to bid, and the Fiscal Officer said she would follow up on this.

Regarding the Cemetery Fund, Porter suggested the Street Commissioner track wages and hours because this is money back to the Service Department. The Fiscal Officer explained that right

now, it comes out of the Service Department Fund, which gets most of its money from the General Fund. When something is sold in the Cemetery, it goes into that fund and can only be spent on Cemetery expenses. Previously, hours were tracked and then charged to the Cemetery Fund, and she thought they should go back to doing this.

Porter stated that the proposed Streets building would be \$800,000 and he was thinking 2024 at the earliest since the salt dome will be next year in addition to the massive Road Program. Porter saw the building as a multi-year project.

Porter asked if Village Hall was on the Historic Registry, and Cavanagh said it is. Porter concluded that the Village could not just tear it down. Galicki said he understood that it was not on the Historic Registry, and the Fiscal Officer concurred that it is not certified as a historical building because it was moved.

The Fiscal Officer asked if the \$100,000 loader and \$105,000 truck would be going into the budget, and the Mayor said everything should be left in for tonight. Porter said the committee discussed one or the other and the Case Loader was identified as the greater need. The Fiscal Officer verified it was the loader for 2023 and the truck for 2024.

Parks and Recreation

Canton referred to the Parks and Recreation Fund and said he received a request for \$101,800, \$22,800 under the Tax Budget for 2023, plus \$70,000 for a new restroom facility at the park, \$5,000 to be earmarked for the 100-year anniversary gathering, and \$4,000 for Mr. Timmons. The \$4,000 might be less since the Village is considering conducting burns on different sections of the park.

The Fiscal Officer said that typically the restroom would be accounted for under the Special Land and Building fund, since it would be a new building, and not reflected in the Park Fund. Canton verified the Service Department would be preparing the ground beneath the building.

Regarding the 100th Anniversary, she did not think it should come out of the Park Fund since there might be different events happening in different places. The Park Fund would generally reflect the expenses of the park. Instead, she would suggest putting a budget for the 100th Anniversary in the General Fund.

Canton suggested budgeting \$10,000 for the Fall Festival.

The Fiscal Officer stated that haying went up \$700 from last year and asked if \$4,000 or a little more should be budgeted for next year. Cavanagh said no. The Mayor said it was a good number. Berger thought they should get the cost ahead of time next year.

The Mayor asked about the landscaping plan for the Central Retention Basin. Porter noted that there was a landscape plan for the Manor Brook project but not for the Central Retention Basin. He thought it was something the Village should consider in order to keep the dirt where it is. Cavanagh asked if trees would be planted. The Mayor suggested putting \$20,000 in for landscaping. Porter said the Public Utilities Committee could ask the Engineer about this. The

Fiscal Officer added that it would not come out of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds since those are strictly for the stormwater portion of the project.

Building Department

The Mayor stated everything went up just a hair with the Building Department budget. The Fiscal Officer advised that the numbers being reviewed by Council were those put in at Tax Budget time since the committee had not met in time to prepare the annual budget worksheets for Council. She explained that Council would not need to worry about salary and benefits because once they decide what the salary increases are for next year, everything related to salary and benefits is just a percentage change. The health insurance renewal is 16% although other rates are being gathered. As a place holder with salary and benefits, she used 3.5% until a decision is made. When the decision is made, the numbers will be adjusted.

The committee indicated that they wanted to increase what Inspection Solutions is paid, but the Village has a contract for \$48,250, and the line item should reflect that. Professional Services includes things like when the Village must mow a resident's lawn, or if there is a problem with someone's yard. The committee indicated an increase in computer expenses, but City Force will not cost more, so she did not think it would need to be increased to \$10,000. The Fiscal Officer explained that regarding the gasoline line, this pertained to a vehicle that was formerly used by the Building Department but is now shared. The option would be for each department to track mileage or have it all come out of the Service Department as it has for the past few years. Bell asked if it should be tracked instead of applying it to the Service Department. The Fiscal Officer agreed that it should be tracked. The Fiscal Officer explained that the car is used two days a week by the Zoning Inspector and then the Mayor and Street Commissioner use it. Formerly, the charges went to the Building Department. Now, it is filled at the Street Department with gas. Porter suggested a log, but the Street Commissioner said it is not that much and the car only gets gas once a month. The Fiscal Officer stated that there is \$3,500 budgeted for gas for that department. 2020 and 2021 were \$0 and the Fiscal Officer asked if it was still necessary to budget this for the Building Department. Berger stated that one tank of gas a month is not \$3,500 per year. Berger suggested changing the amount to \$600 instead. Bell clarified that the \$600 was for the Service Department and not the Building Department, and Berger agreed. Bell indicated that it should be eliminated from the Building Department, and Berger said to put it on Service Department.

General Fund

The Fiscal Officer said the significant changes were \$5,000 for the Human Resource (HR) consultant for updating the Employee Handbook and possibly updating job descriptions; \$6,500 for the State Examiners; increase of \$2,500 to the Appreciation line item for the Veterans Luncheon; \$2,565 for the newsletter line item in order to go from four newsletters per year to six for at least next year due to the 100th Anniversary; and an increase of \$5,000 under Miscellaneous/Other for two office desks for herself and the Administrative Assistant. She explained that the floor in Village Hall is not flat and as a result she is experiencing back issues from sitting sideways all day. She hoped to resolve the issue with corner desks. The Fiscal Officer increased the website line item \$1,000 because the contractor updates the software monthly, which the Village did not have in the past.

Porter asked if the issue with Village Hall should be explored, and the Fiscal Officer indicated she had addressed it with the Engineer who suggested she turn her desk to face the window. The Mayor thought it was time to replace the old wooden desks. Berger questioned why no one checked to see if the floor was level when the flooring was replaced. The Police Chief stated that they did leveling in Council Chambers, but he did not know if it occurred in the other offices. The Fiscal Officer advised she had brought a level to work and sent the information to the Engineer who replied that it was an old building that had been moved, etc. Cavanagh suggested putting a pad underneath the desk since previously the carpet seemed to solve the issue. Porter suggested bringing the issue up in the next Street Committee meeting. Bell questioned whether this would be handled by the Properties Committee instead.

The Fiscal Officer reported that Mansour Gavin will soon have the salary tier ready. For Ohio Fire and Police (OP&F), the Village currently pays 19.5% and there is legislation introduced at the State to increase it to 26.5% by 2024. She reflected the 19.5% in the budget since no action has yet been taken on the issue. The 1993 Safety Levy will expire at the end of next year, which means the Village will receive collections through 2024. The Village is allowed to go out a year early, so it could be put on the ballot at the end of 2023. She asked about budgeting for a Strategic Planner. Also, the Mayor expressed interest in doing the Go Green projects, and the Fiscal Officer said it would be necessary to identify what, where, and how much the Village would be budgeting for these.

The Fiscal Officer addressed mulch for the playground. Mr. Tripp was going to give \$1,000 per year to fix the playground, however, he only did it the first year. Last year and this year, it was taken from the Park Fund.

There will be money left from the ARPA funds. She will need to see how much it will cost to fix the damage to the 319 project from the excavation of the Central Retention Basin. Council should come up with another stormwater project to use the remaining ARPA funds.

The Fiscal Officer asked about the status of the well water testing. Earlier in the year, the Village was supposed to go around and test some wells, but that never happened. The Mayor said he wanted to do that through BioSolutions. The Fiscal Officer asked if it would be done yearly, and the Mayor said to leave it in for next year. She asked if she should close the purchase order that is currently open, and the Mayor said no. Bell verified it would not be done this year, and the Mayor said no.

The Fiscal Officer explained that the General budget is basically Council's budget. She addressed items she could, but if they had any additions or changes, they should let her know.

100th Anniversary

For the 100th Anniversary, Cavanagh said she wanted to do a booklet and is comparing it to what was done in 1998 which was an 8.5 x 11 book that was sent out as questionnaires. She had to prod for responses. There was no point in doing a questionnaire because the people who would have remembered the Village in 1923 are gone. She identified and has started to contact a person from every subdivision that she believed to be the longest residing resident to do a questionnaire. She

wanted to give one booklet per household. Berger said there are 1,500 houses. At \$10 each, this would cost \$15,000. She suggested printing 250 initially and telling people they can pick them up. Cavanagh just wanted a record of where the Village is in 2023. She also suggested t-shirts. Cavanagh wanted to do something in Rarick Cemetery like Chagrin Falls Historical Society does in Evergreen Cemetery, but it would involve the Street Commissioner, a bus, and dropping people off at the steps. A person would represent a historic South Russell resident. She had also spoken to the Street Commissioner about sprucing up Rarick Cemetery and addressed work that had already been done.

Canton suggested doing a time capsule. Cavanagh said she needs a Power Point, and the Mayor suggested finding a high school senior who needed service hours. Cavanagh stated that the Mayor mentioned a problem with lacking a venue to have anything. He suggested that the Lantern has a nice room. She suspected it would not attract kids, but rather a lot of older people. Cavanagh also considered finding children who are not shy about performing, and Canton suggested the High School drama club. The Mayor stated that \$5,000 was allocated for the celebration. The Fiscal Officer questioned whether this would be enough with what Cavanagh had suggested. Porter suggested budgeting \$10,000.

Porter asked the Mayor what the next steps would be, and the Fiscal Officer said this was her question as well. She was surprised the meeting was ending so soon. Usually, Council would spend a substantial amount of time and she would have a pretty good idea of what she was supposed to be doing with the budget. The Mayor said that for tonight, they were going to absorb what they heard. He asked the committees to go through what happened at this meeting to make sure everything was fine tuned.

He wanted to see the budget passed by the end of November. The Mayor suggested meeting at 5:30 p.m. on October 24th to work on the budget. The Mayor said they would decide at the October 10th Council meeting.

Cavanagh made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:44, seconded by Canton. Voice vote – ayes, all. Motion carried.



William G. Koons, Mayor



Danielle Romanowski, Fiscal Officer

Prepared by Leslie Galicki