

**Finance Committee Meeting (FO Notes)**  
**July 18, 2024, 10:00 a.m.**

Present: Chairman Berger, Council Member Galicki, Fiscal Officer Romanowski

Subsequent to the review of the check register report, Berger inquired about Assurevault. The Fiscal Officer explained that this is a service that creates a digital searchable database of Council minutes and ordinances and resolutions. It is for internal use. The codified ordinances are available and accessible through the website through American Legal, which is different. The Fiscal Officer verified that Assurevault charges are more than reasonable.

Berger asked the Fiscal Officer if she had moved any money to STAR Ohio recently. The Fiscal Officer said no and explained that July is the high point of the year and then balances begin to decrease the remainder of the year. There are outstanding engineering projects that include the Bell Rd. east culverts and repair of the Central Retention Basin that are proposed for this year, but without knowing when they will be complete and require payment presents a challenge with knowing how much money can be moved to STAR Ohio. Berger acknowledged that he needed to determine the status of these projects with the Engineer. Berger noted that the Village has \$1.3 million in Huntington Bank and asked the Fiscal Officer what her thoughts were about moving more money. The Fiscal Officer reiterated that if she knew what project was happening and when, she would be better able to answer this. Berger said he would defer the question of moving money until he heard from the Engineer.

Galicki asked about a charge on the check register report for scrap tire removal. The Fiscal Officer explained that this is from Trash Day, and the Village ultimately receives a grant for this, but did not know if it covered the full amount. Berger recalled that the previous year, the net was a cost to the Village. The committee discussed items taken at Trash Day, the expense to the Village, and the value of this service to the community.

Galicki asked the Fiscal Officer if there was anything to worry about with the upcoming budget either for this year or next year in terms of the ability to fund projects as well as any potential issues with the upcoming Budget Commission hearing with the county. The Fiscal Officer did not think there would be a problem with the county because the predicted cash balances are lower than past predicted valances, partly because there is money sitting in the Large Equipment Reserve Fund. There is also Bell Rd. east paving coming up as well as the salt dome. When she did the Tax Budget initially, she put in \$550,000 instead of the \$775,000 because the actual amount is not known yet. There are normally cash balances at the end of the year, so it will be necessary to amend in January once the cash balances are certified. The Bell Rd. paving must happen next year as well as the salt dome. An amendment will be made at the next Council meeting for the \$140,000 for the park restroom. She did not have anything from the properties committee relative to the details of the restroom. She had asked the Street Commissioner to contact the vendor to determine if the prices were still valid because the vendor told her in May the prices would be increasing in June. The Fiscal Officer is waiting for this information to

prepare legislation. The committee discussed that all the specs were to be provided to Council for the next meeting in August.

Berger verified that the Village would be prepared for the Budget Commission hearing in August, and the Fiscal Officer concurred.

The Fiscal Officer did not include the Hemlock Road culvert project in the Tax Budget because receipt of grant funds was unknown. She reiterated that since the salt dome and Bell Rd. east were the priorities, she wanted to ensure there was enough funds for those projects. Berger advised that the Engineer had not heard from Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) about the grant. Councilman Porter and the Mayor plan to meet with Russell Township on August 1<sup>st</sup> to discuss sharing the costs of the project. Russell Township's share would be about \$23,000.

OPWC notified the Fiscal Officer that they are waiting for the Mayor's signature on paperwork for the grant funding for Bell Rd. east. The paperwork went out on July 1<sup>st</sup> and the Village has 45 days to complete it. Once it is signed, the Fiscal Officer will sign and it will be submitted, which will finalize the process.

Berger addressed the upcoming budget planning in October. The Fiscal Officer said that with the salt dome and Bell Rd. east projects happening next year, there will not be a lot of room for other things. Galicki added that for the last two to three years, the Village has had aggressive Road Programs and perhaps it could return to historical levels. The Fiscal Officer explained that next year's Road Program is Bell Rd. east only. Berger added that in 2026, the Village would catch up on any of the small roads for the Road Program. In 2027, Hazelwood would be repaved, which would entail first replacing 1,700 feet of the stormwater pipe. It currently is a hodgepodge of 8 to 12-inch pipe that runs in a zigzag underneath the road. It is part of the reason back-ups occur in the area with big storms. Replacing it with an 18-inch pipe would be the plan, with a projected cost of \$150,000.

Another issue, which is nebulous, involves the industrial park off East Washington St. After a large storm last year where flooding was experienced in this area, the Village determined the storm water system is undersized and needs to be upgraded. This will involve Chagrin Falls because it would mean dumping a ton of water on them. The potential impact on Chagrin Falls was discussed, and Berger said although the Village wants to be a good neighbor, it also wants to take care of its businesses there. A quarter mile of 30-inch drainage pipe would need to be installed and is estimated to be a \$1 million project. Galicki asked what the size of the Chagrin system is, and Berger indicated that there would be a coordinating meeting with Chagrin Falls. In terms of the three-to-five-year budget, he would anticipate this project in 2028 or 2029. The Engineer thinks there would be OPWC funding available for half of the project, which would mean a cost to the Village of \$500,000. Berger suggested conveying the Village's plans to the businesses to let them know of this goal.

The Fiscal Officer asked that the dates for the upcoming budget work session be determined. Monday, October 7<sup>th</sup> was discussed.

The Fiscal Officer raised the question of purchasing a laptop for the Chief. Galicki offered that he had no problem purchasing a dedicated laptop for the Chief to be able to work with the phone systems. Berger agreed. Berger asked whether one of the former Council laptops could be used, and the Fiscal Officer explained that it needed to be one issued by the county, which would cost around \$1,200. It would be necessary to amend the budget for this. Berger asked about the former Council member laptops, and the Fiscal Officer explained they would be put on GovDeals once legislation is prepared.

The Fiscal Officer reported that she has been subpoenaed for a trial that begins July 29<sup>th</sup> and may go through August 9<sup>th</sup>. It is related to taxes, and she cannot provide details as it is confidential.

Berger asked for the status of the proposal by Chagrin Valley Dispatch (CVD) to adjust billing. The Fiscal Officer had not heard an update. The committee discussed determining the exact anticipated increases and the potential impact on communities like Cleveland Heights that are facing dramatic increases. Berger offered that the vote on the proposal was to have taken place on July 9<sup>th</sup> at which time the actual numbers would be obtained by the Chief.

Regarding the solar panel project for the Police Department, Berger reported that YellowLite said that if the Village planned to do a service upgrade, it should be done before the solar panels are installed. This was based on a conversation between YellowLite, the Building Inspector, the Street Commissioner, and the Chief or Lieutenant. The upgrade to the power is estimated at no more than \$5,000 to run the new line and add a subpanel. The Street Commissioner is working on getting quotes for the next Council meeting. YellowLite would like to have the solar panels installed by the end of August or beginning of September.

Berger addressed the proposed Police Department garage. The Chief and the Building Inspector have been working together to get quotes for what it will cost to build the structure. As long as it is within the donation amount, it is not an issue. However, a consideration would be if the Police Department building would need to be replaced within the next five years. Galicki saw the value in looking ahead for planning purposes. He expressed concern about whether the roof could support the panels. Berger said that according to YellowLite, it can. Berger concluded that as long as the garage stays within budget, he would like to see it proceed so that the drone vehicle is underroof for the winter. He added that the Village should also proceed with the Reserve Study.

The Fiscal Officer advised that a downpayment had been made for the Reserve Study, and someone from Columbus would be spending several days assessing the Village properties. The condition of the Police Department was discussed.

Berger adjourned the meeting at 10:42 a.m.