

Finance Committee Meeting
January 16, 2024, 9:00 a.m.

Present: Chairman Berger, Council Member Galicki, Police Chief Rizzo, Mayor Koons, Fiscal Officer Romanowski

Berger called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

In preparation for the meeting with ADP on 1/17/24:

- Berger was contacted by an IT company that provides services to the Geauga County Courts. They have nowhere near the levels of security that ADP has. He is not saying one is right and the other is wrong or vice versa, but if the Village wants to talk to another company for IT services, he could arrange that. Chief and FO have met with other IT service providers, and perhaps the Finance Committee would want to meet with these other companies as well.
- Other companies talked to do not require all equipment not to be Chinese made. Understand why the County requires what they do but question if that is appropriate for SRV.

Questions / Concerns discussed included:

- Customer service. Are ADP services appropriate for SRV?
- Would the Village be at more of a risk being a part of the County network since they are a bigger target?
- What is the worst that can happen if the Village gets attacked if it is backed up to the cloud? It was explained that the attackers sit and watch for a long time before they make their move. When they finally attack, they corrupt backups and/or hold ransom for information.
- ADP is not a sales company and does not customize their services. The services they provide are what they provide, take it or leave it. The Village may get much more coverage than what officials believe it needs, but the costs are less than if the Village went to a private company. Since ADP is not in it for profit; they cannot make money off what they charge the Village.

Questions for ADP:

- If an SRV computer gets compromised, does ADP in fact remove it from the premises to repair it and if so, how long does the Village lose access for?
- Can the Village access programs such as Adobe without having to call in for a service ticket?
- What is expected service turnaround time and response protocol?
- What can the Village expect the transition turnaround time to look like in terms of the process, length of time, and examples of some challenges that can be expected?
- Are the quotes still valid?
- Is the County too big for what the Village needs?
- Is the Village at a greater risk for an attack by being connected to the County network?
- What is the hierarchy of service tickets?

Other Business:

- There have been some issues with HOAs attempting to use Village Hall computer and electronic equipment. A locked computer cabinet will be purchased with codes given to Village employees that need to access the equipment.
- The proposed OP&F increase was discussed. No action has been taken by the State on the issue as of this time.
- Property and Casualty insurance property numbers were reviewed by the Chief, Street Commissioner, Building Inspector and FO. Information was forwarded to the insurance company that is putting together the Village's renewal quote. The current policy expires at the end of February.
- The year end cash balance report was shared with the committee. The Village ended the year down \$232,000 and ended the year with a balance of \$2.8 million.

- The year-end cash balances report will be completed and filed with the County. Once the Budget Commission certifies those balances, Appropriation Amendments can begin for projects including the salt dome, road program along with many other adjustments.
- The Finance Committee is meeting with the Streets Committee on Friday January 19th to discuss the salt dome. The Engineer is going to be present with information and real numbers for a salt dome replacement. The Village tends to approve a project for one amount, and then runs into issues and the final cost is significantly higher than originally expected. The Finance Committee wants real numbers. The Mayor encouraged the committee members to drive past the salt dome in Orange Village – it's very nice and will meet the Village's needs. Galicki said a Mercedes meets the needs of transportation, but sometimes you can get by with a Toyota.
- Given the significant increase in cost for the proposed restroom for the park, the Properties Committee is discussing the possibility of building a real bathroom with running water for less than the previously proposed restroom that has a waste collection type system.
- Mayor reported that former part-time police officer Steve Balaban is retiring and starting a grant writing business. He will meet with him and get more information.

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Finance Committee Meeting
January 17, 2024, 9:00 a.m.

The meeting was held at the ADP offices on Ravenwood Drive.

Present: Chairman Berger, Council Member Galicki, Police Chief Rizzo, Mayor Koons, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Auditor Walder, ADP Administrator Antenucci, Pam from the Auditor's office.

Berger called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

- ADP staff are housed at the Ravenwood Drive offices as well as Chardon Square and many are in and out of the office around the county on calls.
- Bainbridge and Chester were set up under the old IT service system. ADP now sets up the various sites independently and spools them to the county. This type of set up allows for easy release if either party wants to separate. An entity could easily separate and get new vendors for security or their own accounts for CrowdStrike & Gatekeeper which are tools ADP uses for security purposes.
- Since it is a more fragmented system with three separate internet connections, SRV is more of a challenge than Bainbridge and Chester for setting up into the ADP system. It can be done; it is just a bit more challenging. ADP would recommend the Village eventually consider fiber with one internet connection point for both ease and speed.
- ADP service calls are handled on a priority basis with triage always having first priority. ADP has 24/7-hour coverage for emergencies. There is always an employee on call for true emergencies.
- Walder explained that the frequency of hack attempts is constantly increasing. When asked if the Village would be at more risk of threats with the county, being part of a larger network, Walder explained that while there may be more attempts with a larger network, the protection coverage would be on a much larger, greater infrastructure base. Smaller entities might be at a lower risk for the number of attacks they receive, but they typically have less protection in place and therefore tend to experience successful hacks and lose more money because they are an easier target since the attacker doesn't need to be as sophisticated to get through.
- ADP follows the guidelines of the Secretary of State for cybersecurity protection.
- The Village could download programs such as Adobe to the computer and access programs.
- If an SRV computer is compromised, it would be immediately isolated from the system. ADP may need to take it off site to make repairs and address the issue, but the Village would have another computer available to continue business.
- Using cell phones to access email and Microsoft documents would not need special anti-virus software as those contain information stored in the cloud. They would require dual authentication to access.
- SRV officials were given a tour of ADP offices and server and network rooms.

Meeting adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

Finance Committee Meeting
January 19, 2024, 8:45 a.m.

Present: Chairman Berger, Council Member Galicki, Police Chief Rizzo, Mayor Koons, Fiscal Officer Romanowski

Visitor: Street Commissioner Alder

Berger called the meeting to order at 8:46 a.m.

- Mayor said the meeting with ADP went very well and they are professional.
- Chief said all of his questions were answered. He was enthralled with their knowledge and the facilities and believes the Village should move forward with ADP. He was impressed with how the Auditor handled an issue with the backup computer for another entity. He felt he went above and beyond to assist them and that showed him their dedication to work for the benefit of the entities covered.
- FO said her questions were answered and believes the Village would be safe under ADP services. She will follow up with her financial software company about licensing and ask what would happen if her computer were hacked and ADP had to take it off site to repair. (As a note, FO did contact software company after the meeting. They said they could easily download the software to the loaner computer and work with ADP to upload the backed up financial records. They said she could be up and running in an hour).
- Chief said regarding ADPs comments on the Village's system being fragmented necessitating more difficulty in getting set up, that perhaps the Village should look into going with fiber. The last estimate he received was expensive, but he could reach out to a vendor ADP recommended and get a quote from that company.
- All agreed that the Village should move to ADP for IT Services. The Chief will contact Frank at ADP and notify him that SRV is on board and ready to move forward; and will ask for updated hardware costs. Additionally, he will get the name of the vendor for boring fiber for the Village along with monthly costs for fiber service as it would be beneficial to have fiber in place for this project.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Joint Finance and Streets Committee Meeting
January 19, 2024, 7:30 a.m.

Present: Porter (Streets), Berger (Finance), Galicki (Finance), Canton, Mayor, Streets
Commissioner Alder, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Engineer Haibach

Berger called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. The topic of the meeting was the salt dome and its replacement. Berger provided the following policy statement: from a snowplow perspective in South Russell, clean roads. The Street Commissioner thought this was an unwritten thing. Berger said in defining the policy, the Village uses more salt than neighboring communities on a per mile basis. The Street Commissioner said that they use more than Russell but not Chagrin or Bainbridge. Berger clarified that the statement was saying the Village wants the roads as safe as possible for residents. The Street Commissioner concurred. Berger concluded that the Village may have more equipment than it needs and may have more salt than it needs and as a result a bigger place to store it than the Village needs. But this is the Village's commitment to its residents. Berger said that if the Village is going to have this policy and needs all the equipment to make it happen, then it needs to store salt in such quantities to ensure it can implement the policy. Porter felt the Village is committed to this policy. The Village has not used as much salt in recent years, but that does not mean that it will not go back to what was previously needed. Long term, the Village wants to have a resolution about what the storage facility will need to be. The current one needs to be replaced because the foundation is questionable, and the options considered to repair the building would be higher than building a new one. The Engineer concurred. Porter continued that what needs to be determined is the size of the salt dome, the costs that will be incurred, and the source of the money.

The Mayor thought there was an effort that would continue by the State of Ohio and Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) to reduce the amount of salt used by municipalities. He thought the Village should look into ways it can reduce the amount of salt. The Mayor added that he thought the discussion should include design, whether to include tarp or roof and the associated costs. He brought up the Orange Village salt dome that has a truss roof with wings. He thought it was dumb to have three or four vehicles sitting out in the winter.

Berger said the second component of the issue is the constraints that the State puts on the Village for purchasing salt. The Village pays the lowest price in the State for salt, but the terms dictate that the Village commits to a quantity and the shipment period is January to March. The salt providers will store the salt for the Village, but not well. The Street Commissioner advised that the Village has committed to 1,000 tons of salt for 2024. Currently, there is a little more than half in the salt dome. Berger concluded that the salt will be delivered between now and the end of March and that the salt dome will be full. The Street Commissioner said he was going to try to delay delivery until the construction was done. Berger asked if this was possible, and the Street Commissioner said they could do an extension, but he did not know for how long. The Engineer cautioned that there would be a big lead time on the project and the Village would be lucky to have it done by fall.

Berger verified that the current capacity of the salt dome is 2,000 tons and the Village buys 1,000 tons per year. He asked if the Street Commissioner had any numbers of the amount of salt used. The Street Commissioner explained it has been going down and that the dome is full at the end of the year. He thought between 1,000 and 1,500 tons per year were used.

Porter stated that the Engineer had provided estimates for 2,000-ton, 1,500-ton, and 1,000-ton facilities. The Engineer reviewed the estimates (Attachment 1). The estimate developed in 2022 by the CT Consultants structural department was \$703,000 with a 20% contingency bringing it to \$844,000. He asked them to refresh that number given a year has passed, and with increased costs, they said it would be between 5% and 8% which would bring the cost to \$772,000 plus contingency for 2024 for a 2,000-ton salt dome. For a 1,500-ton facility it would be \$667,000 and \$547,000 for a 1,000-ton facility, plus contingency. Galicki asked on what salt dome design the costs were based. The Engineer said it was based on a rectangular hard surfaced salt dome. The sidewalls would be made from reinforced concrete, a wood framed and trussed upper section with a shingled roof, and a big rectangular opening at the end. Domes are no longer being constructed as they are more complex and expensive to build, and the expertise is lacking among contractors. He explained the history and rationale behind the salt dome trend and why ultimately problems resulted.

Galicki verified that the quote provided by the Engineer was not based on a salt facility in one of the Village's neighboring communities, with wings for parking. The Engineer said this salt facility was used as the model for the quote because it was a good bang for the buck and a smart design. Galicki clarified that he wanted to ensure that if amenities like wings were added there would be additional costs. Galicki asked if the wings were enclosed, and the Engineer said they were open to the air. Galicki verified that the vehicles would still be exposed to the weather, and the Engineer said initially, it was not thought that vehicles would be put in there, just peripherals that go with the salt dome. Galicki explained that he had heard that for the new drone team unit, a climate control area was needed, and he again verified that none of the cost estimates include any provisions for enclosed storage or climate control. The Engineer said absolutely not. Berger asked if some portion of the wing could be enclosed and the Engineer said in the future, it could be framed with an overhead door.

Berger asked about salt facilities with tarps, and the Engineer looked into this and said the tarp storage facilities are constructed much more quickly and can be disassembled and moved more quickly as well. The longevity of the tarp itself varies greatly. The lifespan depending on damage is 10 years. A wood truss facility will last 50 or more years. He could not pin down the cost for the tarp due to the variety of sizes. His impression from Streets Committee is that the Village wants a permanent storage facility. Berger still wanted a quote for a tarp facility for comparison and to be able to justify the cost to the residents. This is the biggest out of pocket project the Village is likely to ever do unless it replaces the Police or Service Departments or build a campus.

The committees discussed that the current salt dome is 30 years old and has been reroofed at least once, which was expensive. Porter thought that a truss facility would provide for better containment of the salt and would not get as beat up as a tarp facility. Berger felt that a quote

should be obtained for a tarp facility and that an analysis is due to the residents. He did not think it would change the desire to go with a fixed structure, but there needed to be a record showing an analysis was done.

A decision also needed to be made about building capacity. If the Village planned to continue to purchase 1,000 tons per year to meet the policy statement, he did not think the Village would want a 1,000-ton storage facility because it would run out of space. Berger asked how much the Village paid for salt on the 1,000-ton contract, and the Street Commissioner said \$45. If the Village were to buy less than 1,000 tons and then run out, Berger asked if the Village could purchase more. The Street Commissioner explained that they would have to pay the going rate, which he did not know. Berger said the committees need this information for cost analysis. Would the penalty paid by the Village exceed the savings of having the smaller salt dome? Porter recalled a time when the Village was running out of salt and could not get it delivered and the price was tripled. Berger reiterated that an analysis was still needed.

Salt pricing was discussed.

The Mayor summarized that the committees want to know the age of the present salt dome and the cost of the tarp dome. The Mayor was also concerned about the view of the salt dome from neighboring residents. The Engineer said a hard sided shingled building would be less visible to the surrounding area than a bright white or blue tarp. The Street Commissioner explained that topsoil, gravel, the backhoe for the Cemetery, etc. would be stored under the wings. The Mayor thought the information could be available for the February 12th Council meeting.

Salt purchasing was discussed.

The Engineer explained the timing of bidding for the project.

The committee discussed the wisdom of having the ability to store 2,000 tons of salt. Canton asked how much the Village provides to the schools. The Street Commissioner thought it was a couple hundred tons per year. Galicki verified that at the end of the season, the Village typically has 1,000 tons left, and Porter explained that this serves the purpose of weather that may hit in the fall and before January. Galicki asked how much salt is used a day during a snow event, and the Street Commissioner thought it was between 30 and 50 tons.

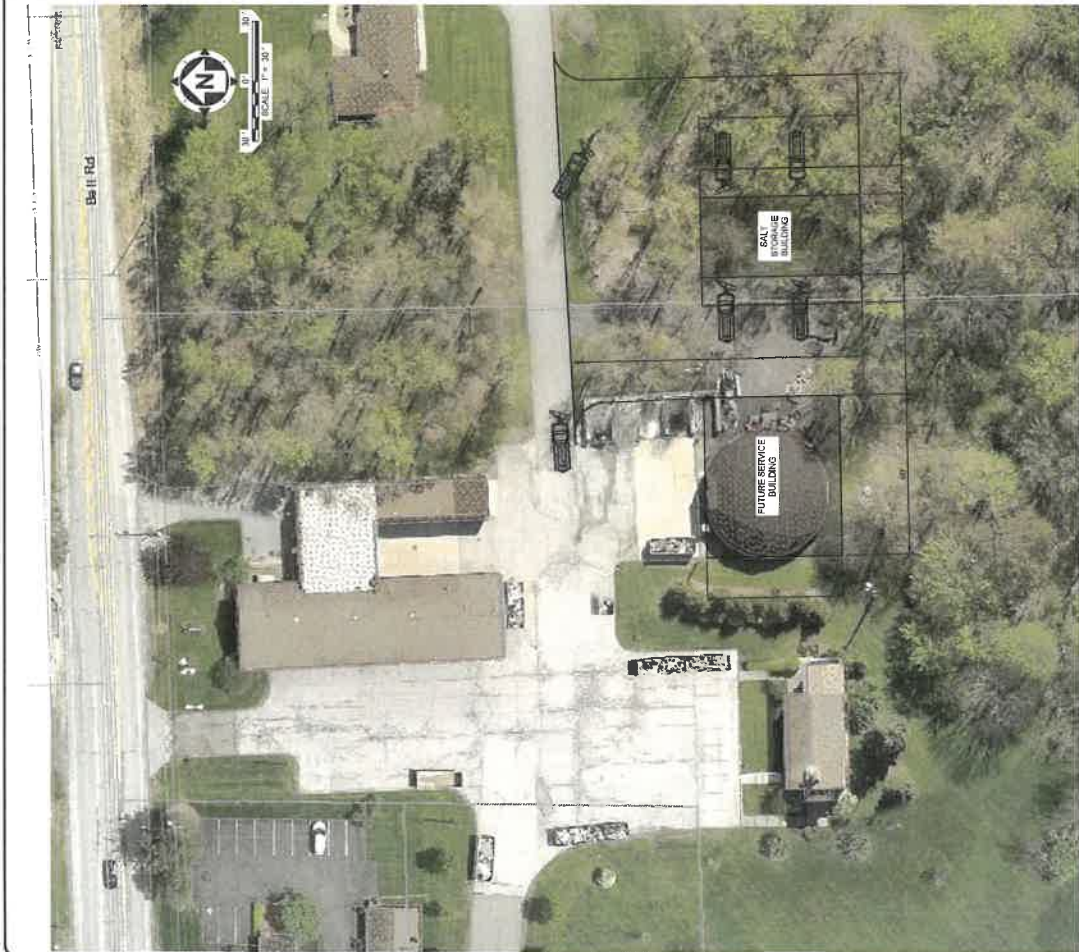
Berger verified the Engineer, and the Street Commissioner could obtain the numbers requested by the committees which could then be emailed to Council to allow the committees to make some recommendations by the first meeting in February. Porter summarized that the goal would be to decide the size of the facility, create the bid specifications, bid it out, build it this year, and have it done before November 1st.

Berger added that the additional goal would be to take down the existing salt dome in 2025. The Mayor asked if vehicles could be stored in the old salt dome. The Street Commissioner said they could once it was cleaned out. Porter questioned whether they would want to, given the building is being replaced due to safety concerns. The committees concurred that the salt dome should remain until the salt is transferred to the new facility and then demolished in 2025.

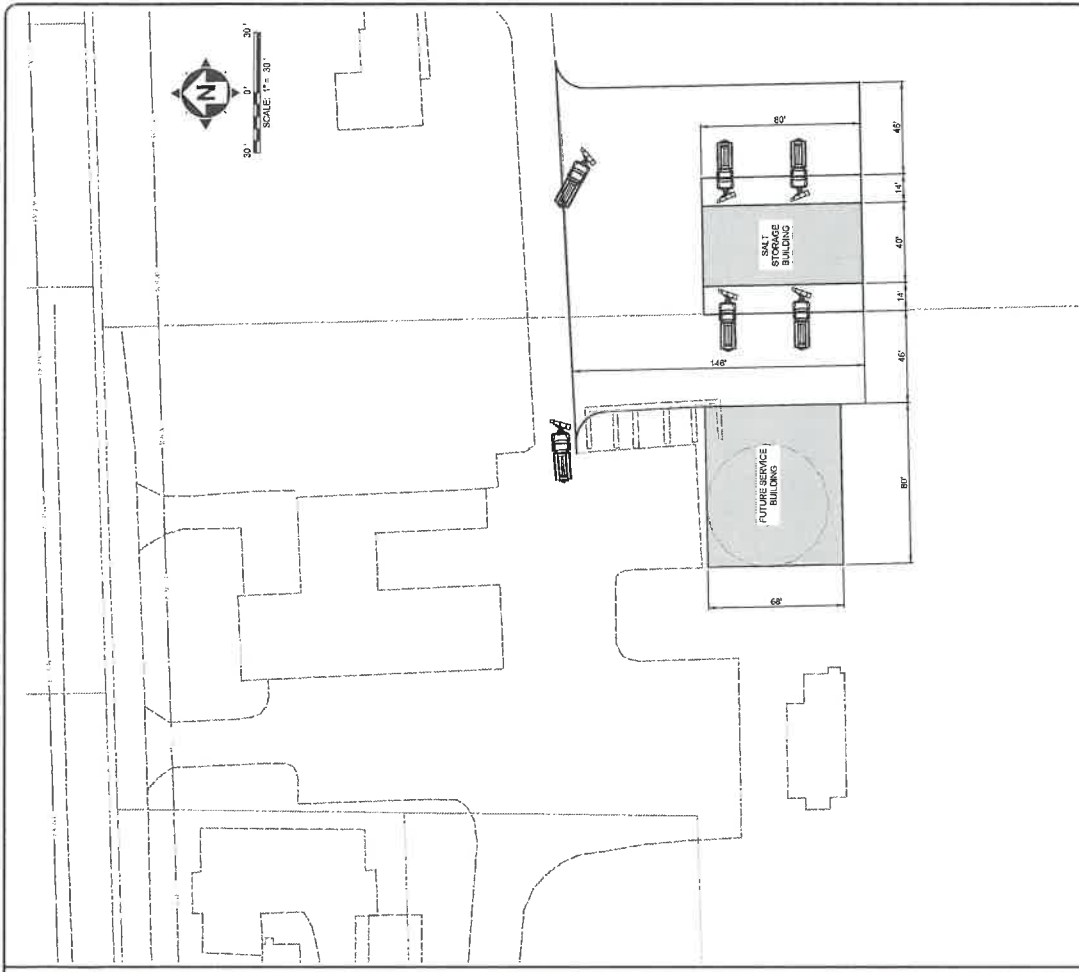
Porter asked about the portion of the quote that pertained to land clearing and thought that the Service Department personnel could do it. Porter noted this was a \$60,000 cost that could be eliminated, and the Engineer said that the contractor would still want to grade the site and do the excavation for the foundation. Galicki noted that it would really be a matter of moving costs, not reducing costs because of the cost of the Village's labor.

The visibility of the structure was discussed, and the Street Commissioner did not think it would be visible to Kensington Green.

Berger adjourned the meeting at 8:22 a.m.



SITE PLAN WITH AERIAL PHOTO



SITE PLAN

PRELIMINARY



NO	REVISION	DATE

VILLAGE OF SOUTH RUSSELL
SALT STORAGE BUILDING
IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT
 GRAUGA COUNTY SOUTH RUSSELL, OHIO

PREPARED FOR: SOUTH RUSSELL
 ISSUE DATE: 9/18/23
 SCALE: AS SHOWN
 DESIGNED BY: JSD
 DRAWN BY: JSD
 CHECKED BY: JSD

PROJECT NO.	230202
DATE	9/18/23
CIVIL	
MECHANICAL	
ELECTRICAL	
PLUMBING	
LANDSCAPE	
TRAFFIC	
OTHER	
SITE PLAN	
SHEET	1
OF	1

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12/2022 Salt Storage Estimate 2000 Ton

\$652,303.60 Construction Cost

\$51,000.00 Design

\$703,303.60 Subtotal

\$8,000.00 Geotechnical

\$5,000.00 Houly Svcs During Construction

\$716,303.60 TOTAL

01/2024 Salt Storage Estimate 2000 Ton

\$705,000.00 Construction Cost

\$54,000.00 Design

\$759,000.00 Subtotal

\$8,000.00 Geotechnical

\$5,000.00 Hourly Svcs During Construction

\$772,000.00 TOTAL

01/2024 Salt Storage Estimate 1500 Ton

\$600,000.00 Construction Cost

\$54,000.00 Design

\$654,000.00 Subtotal

\$8,000.00 Geotechnical

\$5,000.00 Hourly Svcs During Construction

\$667,000.00 TOTAL

01/2024 Salt Storage Estimate 1000 Ton

\$480,000.00 Construction Cost

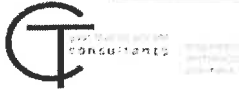
\$54,000.00 Design

\$534,000.00 Subtotal

\$8,000.00 Geotechnical

\$5,000.00 Hourly Svcs During Construction

\$547,000.00 TOTAL



PROJECT: SRV Replacement Salt Storage Barn
New
PROJECT #: 22003601

OPINION OF CONSTRUCTION COST

Item No.	Spec. No.	ITEM		Unit of Measure	Unit Cost	Item Cost
COSTS FOR BIDDING						
CONSTRUCTION COST:						
1		Clearing	1	Unit	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
2		Site Grading - 34,000SF, 2,500CY cut	1	Unit	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
3		Concrete Paving	4,550	SF	\$10.00	\$45,500.00
4		Gravel Paving	16,500	SF	\$2.50	\$41,250.00
5		Mobilization and Construction Aids ³	1	Unit	\$4,930.00	\$4,930.00
6		Wood Scissor Trusses at 2'-0" o.c.	4,230	SF	\$9.00	\$38,070.00
7		Wood Flat Bottom Trusses at 2'-0" o.c.	2,120	SF	\$7.00	\$14,840.00
8		Wood Beams	220	LF	\$47.00	\$10,340.00
9		Wood Stud Walls	3,210	LF	\$23.00	\$73,830.00
10		Wood Posts	0	MBF	\$6,438.00	\$1,287.60
11		Interior Concrete Push Walls	86	CY	\$807.00	\$69,402.00
12		Exterior Knee Walls	50	CY	\$598.00	\$29,900.00
13		Wall Footings	163	CY	\$540.00	\$88,020.00
14		Isolated Footings	4	CY	\$696.00	\$2,784.00
15		Reinforced Concrete Slab	118	CY	\$325.00	\$38,350.00
16		Reinforced Concrete Apron	4	CY	\$325.00	\$1,300.00
17		Concrete Delivery	425	CY	\$180.00	\$76,500.00
18		Roof (plywood decking and shingles)	6,400	SF	\$6.00	\$38,400.00
19		Siding (architectural plywood)	1,900	SF	\$4.00	\$7,600.00
20		Misc. Electrical and Plumbing	1	Unit	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
21		Design Fees: Survey, Civil, Structural, Architectural, Plumbing, Electrical ⁴	1	Unit	\$51,000.00	\$51,000.00
					Subtotal =	\$703,303.60
					20% Contingency =	\$140,660.72
		PROJECT SUB-TOTAL ^{1,2}			Rounded to Nearest \$100 =	\$844,000.00
PROJECT TOTAL^{1,2}						\$703,303.60
PROJECT TOTAL WITH 20% CONTINGENCY^{1,2}						\$844,000.00

Notes

- ¹ The construction costs shown herein are not guaranteed and are budgetary estimates to assist in determine the next course of action for this facility.
- ² The construction costs herein are approximation of the project requirements as determined from the sample set of drawings for the subject facility. The actual construction costs may change or fluctuate from the shown values once all project elements have been determined and finalized.
- ³ Construction Aids includes, but is not limited to, cost for aerial lifts, shoring, and equipment to construct repairs.
- ⁴ Design Fees do not include construction administration services.

Village of South Russell

5205 Chillicothe Road
South Russell, Ohio 44022
440-338-6700



Service Department
Tim Alder-- Street Commissioner
streets@southrussell.com
Direct Line 440-338-3891

Questions from streets/finance meeting 1/19/24 7:30am

- 1) Can we postpone ordering salt until the new salt storage building is completed ?

Yes, 2024 Road salt order can be postponed no later than thanksgiving.

- 2) Will the state store our salt order?

No, the state will not store your nondelivered salt order quantity; however, you can reduce your order by 25% but you must pay \$7.00 per ton for the non-delivered quantity.

- 3) Can we order more salt over the requested quantity?

Yes, any salt ordered over the requested amount (over 1000tons) will be invoiced at \$15.00 per ton over the quoted amount $\$46.81 + \$15.00 = \$61.81$ per ton.

Crawford	City of Bucyrus	1,000
Crawford	City of Galion	500
Crawford	Crawford County Engineer	1,000
Cuyahoga	City of Bay Village	900
Cuyahoga	City of Bedford	2,800
Cuyahoga	City of Bedford Heights	2,000
Cuyahoga	City of Brook Park	3,000
Cuyahoga	City of Cleveland	55,000
Cuyahoga	City of Cleveland Heights	5,500
Cuyahoga	City of East Cleveland	1,200
Cuyahoga	City of Fairview Park	2,200
Cuyahoga	City of Garfield Heights	3,000
Cuyahoga	City of Highland Heights	3,800
Cuyahoga	City of Lyndhurst Service Department	2,500
Cuyahoga	City of Maple Heights	2,500
Cuyahoga	City of Parma	9,000
Cuyahoga	City of Parma Heights	3,000
Cuyahoga	City of Pepper Pike	3,200
Cuyahoga	City of Richmond Heights	3,000
Cuyahoga	City of Rocky River	2,200
Cuyahoga	City of Seven Hills	2,000
Cuyahoga	City of Shaker Hts.	8,000
Cuyahoga	City of Solon	10,000
Cuyahoga	City of South Euclid	3,500
Cuyahoga	City of Strongsville	7,000
Cuyahoga	City of University Heights	2,500
Cuyahoga	City of Warrensville Heights	4,200
Cuyahoga	City of Westlake	4,500
Cuyahoga	Cleveland Metroparks	1,000
Cuyahoga	Cuyahoga Community College District	1,000
Cuyahoga	Mayfield Village	1,500
Cuyahoga	Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District	154
Cuyahoga	Ohio Turnpike Commission	4,200
Cuyahoga	Olmsted Township	1,500
Cuyahoga	Orange Village	1,000
Cuyahoga	Strongsville Board of Education	250
Cuyahoga	Village of Bentleyville	100
Cuyahoga	Village of Bratenahl	250
Cuyahoga	Village of Chagrin Falls	1,200
Cuyahoga	Village of Cuyahoga Heights	400
Cuyahoga	Village of Gates Mills	1,400
Cuyahoga	Village of Glenwillow	400
Cuyahoga	Village of Hunting Valley	1,000
Cuyahoga	Village of Moreland Hills	1,800

Cuyahoga	Village of Newburgh Heights	250
Cuyahoga	Village of North Randall	75
Cuyahoga	Village of Oakwood	700
Cuyahoga	Village of Walton Hills	1,500
Cuyahoga	Village of Woodmere	350
Darke	City of Greenville	850
Darke	Darke County Engineer	500
Darke	Village of Versailles	150
Defiance	Defiance County Engineer	1,000
Defiance	Village of Hicksville	50
Delaware	City of Delaware	1,200
Delaware	Delaware County Engineer	7,000
Delaware	Genoa Township	800
Erie	City of Vermilion	1,000
Erie	Margaretta Township	150
Erie	Ohio Turnpike Commission	5,500
Fairfield	Amanda Township	50
Fairfield	Berne Township	100
Fairfield	Bloom Township	750
Fairfield	City of Lancaster	1,000
Fairfield	City of Pickerington	700
Fairfield	Clearcreek Township	200
Fairfield	Fairfield County Engineer's Office	3,500
Fairfield	Greenfield Township	175
Fairfield	Hocking Township	100
Fairfield	Liberty Township	100
Fairfield	Pleasant Township	300
Fairfield	Richland Township	50
Fairfield	Village of Baltimore	100
Fairfield	Village of Carroll	22
Fairfield	Village of Lithopolis	70
Fairfield	Violet Township	500
Fairfield	Walnut Township	300
Fayette	City of Washington Court House	400
Fayette	Fayette County Engineer	800
Franklin	City of Canal Winchester	250
Franklin	City of Columbus	13,432
Franklin	City of Dublin	4,000
Franklin	City of Grove City	2,000
Franklin	City of Groveport	600
Franklin	City of New Albany	1,700
Franklin	City of Reynoldsburg	1,100
Franklin	City of Upper Arlington	1,500
Franklin	City of Westerville	1,500

Franklin	Columbus Regional Airport Authority	500
Franklin	Franklin County Engineer	4,000
Franklin	Franklin Township	150
Franklin	Jackson Township	100
Franklin	Jefferson Township	400
Franklin	Ohio State University	500
Franklin	OSU Airport	30
Franklin	Prairie Township	200
Fulton	Amboy Township	125
Fulton	Dover Township	30
Fulton	Franklin Township	24
Fulton	Fulton County Engineer	1,000
Fulton	Fulton Township	25
Fulton	Ohio Turnpike Commission	1,400
Fulton	Pike Township	25
Fulton	Swanecreek Township	100
Fulton	Village of Fayette	25
Fulton	Village of Lyons	22
Fulton	Village of Swanton	50
Gallia	Gallipolis Township	50
Geauga	Auburn Township	2,000
Geauga	Bainbridge Township	3,000
Geauga	Chardon Township	1,000
Geauga	Chester Township	3,000
Geauga	City of Chardon	3,100
Geauga	Geauga County Engineer	6,000
Geauga	Hambden Township	800
Geauga	Munson Township	1,500
Geauga	Newbury Township	1,050
Geauga	Russell Township	1,600
Geauga	Thompson Township	450
Geauga	Village of South Russell	1,000
Guernsey	Cambridge Township	100
Guernsey	City of Cambridge	750
Guernsey	Jackson Township	100
Guernsey	Village of Byesville	75
Hamilton	City of North College Hill	250
Hamilton	Colerain Township	1,000
Hancock	City of Findlay	1,500
Hancock	Hancock County Engineer	1,000
Hardin	Village of Ada	80
Harrison	Harrison County Engineer	800
Harrison	Village of Cadiz	200
Harrison	Village of Hopedale	25









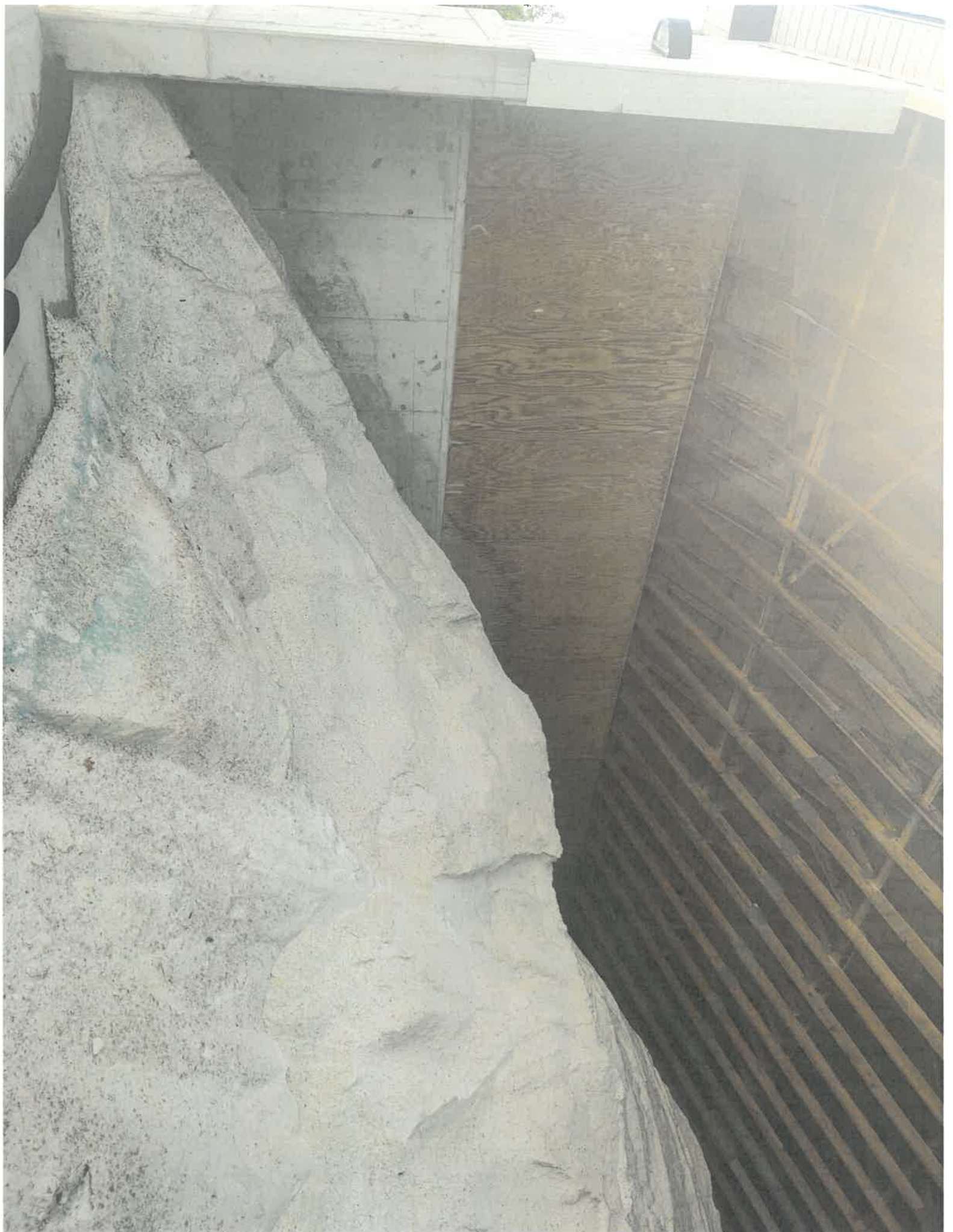
ORANGE VILLAGE SERVICE CENTER

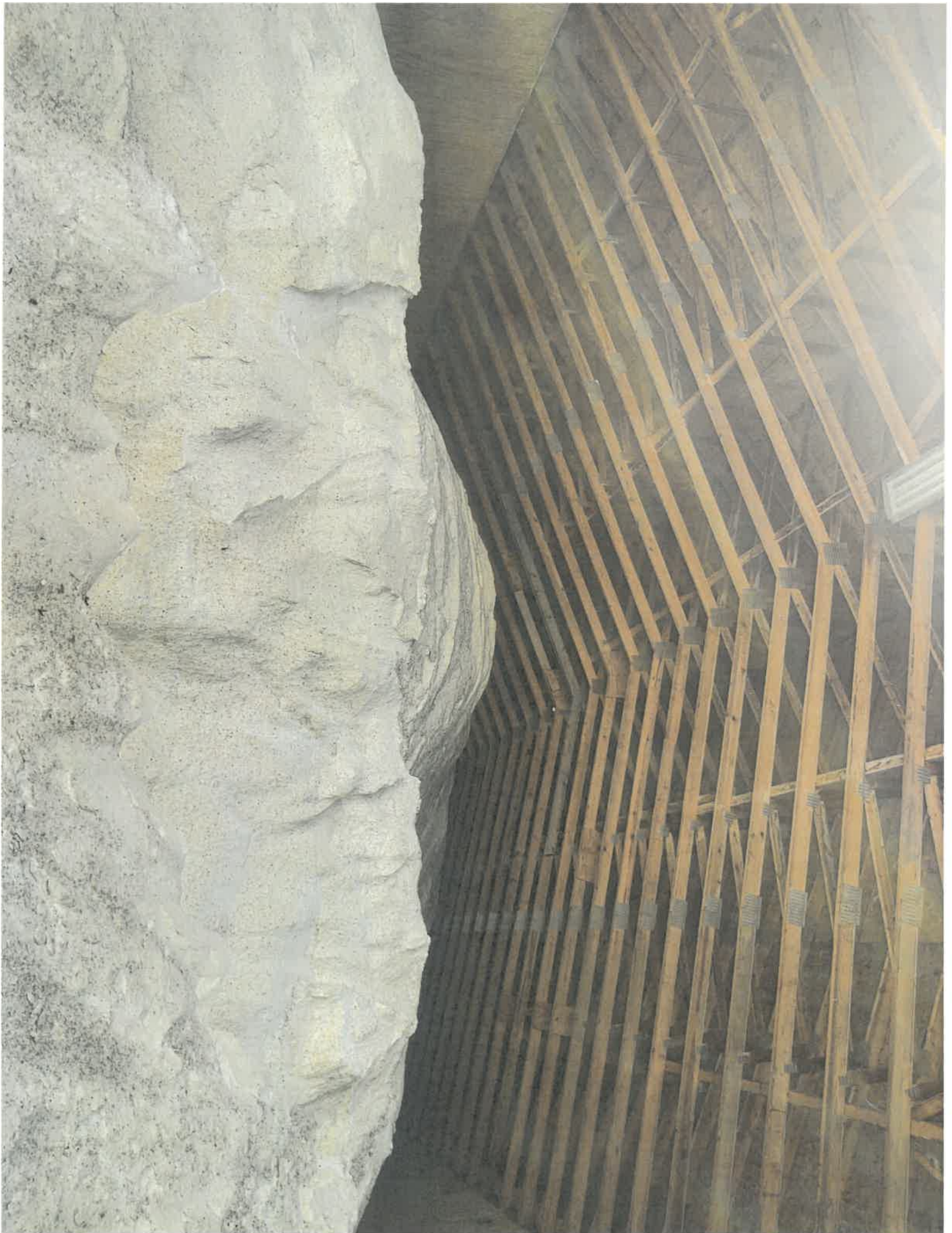


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Special Finance Committee Meeting
January 30, 2024, 1:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Berger, Committee Member Galicki, Mayor Koons, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Council Member Cavanagh, Police Chief Rizzo

Visitor: Stephen Balaban, Pine Valley Consulting

Berger called the meeting to order at 1:12 p.m.

- Berger stated the purpose of the meeting was to talk to Balaban about the opportunity to work with the Village to do grant writing.
- Balaban said he has been very successful in receiving grants for Hunting Valley, his present employer. He will be retiring from Hunting Valley in June and has started a company doing grant writing because he is good at it. He has experience writing federal, state, and local grants and has worked with local governments and non-profits. He has worked with Chagrin River Watershed Partners (CRWP), and Notre Dame Elementary. He has not worked with CT Consultants or the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA).
- The Village could give him potential projects and he would research what grants may be available. Additionally, if he comes across a grant and thinks it might be something the Village would be interested in, he can contact SRV and let officials know.
- Balaban reported he has an 80% success rate getting grants.
- The proposed agreement reflects a \$1,000 retainer which includes five hours of work per week to search for and research grants, and correspondence and meetings with the client. Additional expenses would include mailings, postage, etc.
- Balaban explained that state grants are easier to get than federal grants. His rate is \$75/hour for writing federal grants which usually takes about 100-120 hours to complete. The rate for state grants is \$50/hour and averages about 15-30 to write. He does not receive a percentage of the awarded grant as that could pose an ethical issue.
- Grant management and administration is not included in the retainer but can be done and charged on an hourly basis.
- The Village would designate which Village representatives would be the contact point to ensure transparency. The key to the process is communication and ensuring time is not wasted on finding grants for projects the Village has no interest in pursuing.
- The Village would also want to ensure tasks, such as engineering, are not done twice. Oftentimes, CT does pre-project engineering so that the Village has an idea of the scope of the project and estimated cost. The committee does not want the Village to pay for CT's work and then Balaban get his own engineering done for the grant writing specifications.
- The Finance Committee asked Balaban to redraft the proposed agreement to list what is included in the retainer and what is not as well as the cost for what is not included. Berger said he envisions the Village would need a grant writer to do the work from start to finish; research, write applications, manage, and administer. The Village does not have the manpower to do this work with the current staffing.

Meeting adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

Finance Committee Meeting
February 15, 2024, 9:00 a.m. Village Hall

Members Present: Chairman Berger, Council member Galicki, Fiscal Officer Romanowski

Budget issues were addressed. FO advised legislation was passed and will be forwarded to the county for the Budget Commission who will be meeting next week. FO reported that all amendments that have been approved were included in the legislation passed. Berger asked about the crosswalks, and the FO said they had not been approved.

FO discussed the \$121,000 in Permissive Tax money the Village was supposed to receive relative to the paving of Washington St. The Village has yet to receive it from the county. There apparently is a problem with the paperwork submitted to the County Auditor by the County Engineer for the reimbursement to the Village. Communication with the Engineer's office indicated the paperwork has been corrected and will go to the County Auditor for approval and then to the County Commissioners. She should know more next week.

Galicki advised that the Mayor is talking with citizens like the crosswalks have been approved. Berger thought one of the two had been approved as a starter project, but perhaps this was in committee and did not go through Council. Galicki recalled that it was discussed by Council, but thought the Mayor said he was kicking the issue back to the committee. The Safety Committee thought it was a done deal, but then it did not happen. The FO stated she recalled it was discussed in Council, but it was decided to wait until the Village received the Certificate of Estimated Resources from the Budget Commission before any amendments would be made. She said she could amend the appropriations at the next meeting if Council approved moving forward. However, she would need a dollar amount as numbers thrown around ranged from \$18,000 - \$50,000 each. Berger asked that it be put on the agenda. The committee had concerns about the numbers that have been shared and what all it included, e.g.: lights, paint, signs. It was decided to reach out to the Engineer and Chief to ask for realistic numbers for the project so Council could determine whether the Village is ready to send the project out to bid. The FO said it was her understanding that the Mayor already told the school the Village would be doing the project, and that the Village was getting a grant for part of it. She did not know anything about a grant and asked if the committee had any insight into the grant details. Galicki stated there was never a discussion about a grant with the Safety Committee. They had discussed a crosswalk like the one on Route 44 as you enter Chardon with flashing lights. Then there was discussion in Council about just putting a crosswalk in without the lights but maybe some signage. He thought proposals should be developed for both types and then discussed by Council. Berger wanted a not to exceed number for the crosswalks for the budget. The FO added that if there was a grant, they needed to know this ahead of time because they have different requirements that can affect the way the project is approached. She concluded that it would be put on the agenda and once a decision is reached, it can be put in the budget. The committee continued to discuss crosswalks. Galicki asked if the crosswalk at the school and the crosswalk at the park would be packaged together and Berger said yes, if there were a discount. However, for \$40,000 a piece, perhaps the Village does one now and the other next year depending on what is observed as far as usage. Galicki concurred.

Regarding the budget, Galicki asked about the unexpected \$14,000 expense for the hydraulic system on the truck. He thought it was half of the Vehicle Maintenance budget and asked what the impact was. The FO said that in 2019, vehicle maintenance was about \$12,500. Between 2020 and 2022, it went up to \$20,000, \$29,000, and \$26,000 respectively. The FO explained that the Street Commissioner believed he had enough in the line item to cover the expense, so the budget was not amended for this. It will be a matter of seeing how things go throughout the year. Berger attended the Streets Committee meeting and shared that they had increased the budget for maintenance and anticipated adjusting other line items if the maintenance line item ran out. Berger believed that the net operating cost of the Streets Department should not increase because of this. Galicki appreciated that they were taking this approach.

Berger addressed the grant writer. Berger had suggested to Council that the committees develop a list of proposed projects. He thought crosswalks would be on this list. Galicki reviewed that the discussion was for the lists to be developed so that Council could assess whether there was value in hiring a grant writer. Galicki was concerned about a misconception that the grant writer would just be randomly looking for grants. Berger acknowledged it would be a targeted approach. He estimated 5% of the total project would be the cost of the grant writer and thought this was reasonable. In looking at Balaban's proposal with \$1,000 monthly retainer and an hourly rate, he would need to obtain \$360,000 in grants per year. If it is a matching grant, the number goes higher. Would the Village have a yearly need for this amount in grants for projects? Galicki added that grant money is not free and for all the projects where the Village has utilized grants, it has also invested a lot of Village funds. Berger thought that Balaban had obtained \$400,000 to \$500,000 in grant money for a neighboring community over 12-18 months. Berger concluded that research needed to be done by the departments before determining if it would make sense to hire the grant writer.

Regarding the salt dome, Berger reported that the Streets Committee met with a contractor that also has a consulting component to it. They have done projects for over 150 communities in Ohio. They are an approved contractor under Sourcewell. They reported that there is State money to build salt domes ranging from \$200,000 to \$400,000. Berger said it seemed like they thought they could do this. The application is due at the end of March or beginning of April and they were confident they could get it done in time. Berger thought there was a potential benefit to the Village but could also see that it might be a situation that would not fit the Village's needs. Galicki thought there was flexibility in that the Village could also modify the design if the Sourcewell price came back high. Berger advised that the Streets Committee asked the contractor to look at quotes in the 2,000-ton, 1,500-ton, and 1,000-ton capacities. He thought the bid proposal would be available for one of the March Council meetings. This would be for the contract price and then they would have to see what happens with the grant. Berger relayed that the park restroom project was also discussed with this contractor and a quote was requested. Berger verified there was a line item in the budget for the salt dome, and the FO concurred.

Berger reviewed the 2024 Road Program proposal, which provides some flexibility from a number perspective. The FO advised there was \$350,000 in the budget. Berger said Southwyk is estimated at \$357,000.

The FO addressed the topic of solar panels and roof replacement for the Service Department. She recalled that there was discussion about redoing the roof, but then it was determined the roof had a few more years left on it. However, if the plan was to put solar panels on the roof, it should be replaced now. Currently, there are bids being provided for the roof and she wondered whether this meant the Village would be doing solar panels as well. Galicki thought this topic was still under consideration. According to the Mayor, he and Porter were going to meet with Mayors of neighboring communities that had solar. Berger explained that the committee has spoken to three vendors. None of the original proposals made sense in terms of savings and payback duration. One vendor provided a \$2 million dollar proposal. It would involve a solar array, but no panels on the buildings. Right now, there are no viable proposals in his opinion. As far as the roof project is concerned, it probably does not have to be done in 2024, but it makes sense to replace the roof prior to installing solar panels in the event a solar project was identified for the Village. Galicki recalled discussions a year or two ago when part of the roof of the Service Department needed to be repaired. At that time, Galicki proposed replacing the entire roof but was told that the entire roof did not need to be replaced. He thought if it was not a pressing matter, it should be put in abeyance until there is a definite conclusion to the solar project issue. Berger was not opposed to this. Berger noted that the best quote was \$27,000 but did not view this as a priority at this point.

The committee discussed the status of the restroom for the park. The FO stated that the current quote was \$110,000 or \$117,000, up from the original \$86,000. There is no quote for the building proposed by the Street Commissioner and Building Inspector. Berger advised that one of the architects who sits on the Architectural Review Board (ARB) was willing to help with plan drawings but understood that this would be a conflict of interest. Berger thought that until Building and Streets came to the Finance Committee with a viable project, he was not jumping up and down about spending \$120,000 for that. Galicki hoped that when they put together their cost estimate if it were to be done in-house, that the entire cost is captured, to include labor, equipment, etc. Berger agreed.

The FO reviewed the following projects being discussed: park restroom, \$117,000; salt dome, \$770,000; solar project, no number; roof project, \$28,000; and crosswalks. Galicki asked if there would be culvert replacements in 2024. Berger differentiated between driveway culverts and culverts under Chillicothe Rd. His understanding from the Street Commissioner was that much of the driveway culvert work was knocked out last year. 60-70 were done. He understood the number this year would be about 10, but if the Road Program is expanded, he did not know how this would increase. One of the two alternate roads has no driveway culverts. However, Berger indicated that there was still 180 feet of pipe to be installed at the park as part of a drainage project as well as drainage work on Fairview. There is no quote for this yet. The FO asked about the work behind the homes on Chillicothe Rd. and did not know if this was already in the budget. It was supposed to be done under last year's budget.

Berger thought there should be a list of projects and a status report on each. Galicki's concern was with projects that are unbudgeted and growing where costs have not been forecasted.

Berger relayed that with one of the last heavy rainstorms, there was a significant problem in the industrial area near Burntwood and Hunan with 8-10-inches of water. This would be a million-dollar project to expand the culverts in the area and would involve coordination with Chagrin Falls. It is a project that could be on the list for the grant writer. He would put it back on the Public Utilities agenda to discuss what kind of priority it is.

He concluded that the salt dome, crosswalk, and park restroom, would be done and the Village would still be within its financial limits. Tax revenue was discussed. Berger did not see the Village's revenue being cut in half despite the trend of people going back to work. Wages have also increased. The budget should be okay, and they will maintain balances. The FO advised that the Road and Bridge Levy collection was reduced for one year. This year, Council can decide if it wants to continue with the reduction or gradually increase it. Subject to the State making adjustments, Berger thought the Village would want to consider a three-year phase in at 33% per year to lessen the shock.

The FO addressed the Waste Management Agreement. Waste Management locks the Village into a contract for several years at a time. The Street Commissioner contacted the company and said they agreed to keeping the rate at \$110 per month. The FO asked the Street Commissioner to obtain a quote from Dumpster Bandit or another company that would not lock the Village in to a lengthy contract. The FO would have the Solicitor review the agreement.

The FO is working on the tax exemption paperwork for the corner lot. Galicki asked about the merging of this property. Berger said if it can be done at a nominal cost, it would be worth doing, but not if it was going to cost the Village \$25,000 in legal bills. Galicki agreed. The committee thought it was worthwhile to determine the process and potential cost.

Regarding Automatic Data Processing (ADP), the FO advised the equipment is coming in soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:04.

Finance Committee Meeting
Monday, March 11, 2024, 9:00 a.m.

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

Discussion was held regarding the cost for the Village using Paychex payroll services and whether that was a good use of money for the Village. Fiscal Officer explained that previously the Village used ADP Payroll Services and the costs were close to \$10,000 per year. The cost for Paychex is still significantly below that and they provide great service to the Village. There are aspects of the Village's payroll that are more complex, and the Fiscal Officer is able to input information and review that everything is properly applied before the payroll is processed. Paychex processes payroll and prepares and files the associated taxes as well as preparing and mailing W-2s. Additionally, they have online resources available to the Village such as handbooks, sample policies, training and templates. Fiscal Officer said she believes the costs are well worth the services and resources the Village receives.

Regarding Star Ohio, Berger noted that the Village has accumulated \$30,000 in interest within the past year and a half. The interest rate is 4.18%, and he had seen higher rates. The Fiscal Officer advised that she had been in contact with Meeder Investments about a meeting with the Treasury Investment Board (TIB). Berger wondered if Meeder is being competitive. The Fiscal Officer clarified that the 30-day yield for STAR Ohio was 5.49%. She would work on arranging a TIB meeting with Meeder.

The Fiscal Officer said that work with Automatic Data Processing (ADP) with the county is progressing. They are in the process of getting the emails set up and have all the equipment. The next step is to set up a date to do the changeover. ADP staff came out to the Village to establish what it would cost to have one modem. Right now, the Service Building and Village Hall would have two separate modems and ADP would prefer one. This was not part of the original quote. Berger asked if the Village had paid the county yet, and the Fiscal Officer said not until after installation.

Regarding the Village Agreements List that was shared with Council, the only upcoming agreement is the Farmers' Market, which is pending updated insurance and a diagram of the market setup. It should be on the next meeting agenda.

According to the Fiscal Officer, the Mayor requested that Ann Dunning be put on the March 11th Council meeting agenda relative to creating drawings for the proposed park restroom. She was uncertain whether there was an agreement involved or if the purpose was to identify a price to have this done. Galicki asked how much money was in the budget for this, and the Fiscal Officer explained that although there was money in the budget for the restroom, there was not specifically for architectural drawings. Berger responded that it was incumbent on the Park Committee to provide a budgetary number to Council. He did not think a specific breakout of the various costs was necessary and just wanted a total dollar amount for the package. Galicki asked for clarification about Ann Dunning, and the Fiscal Officer said she is an architect who was a former resident who served on the Architectural Review Board (ARB) for many years. Galicki clarified that these architectural services were for the restroom the Village would build as

opposed to the prefab drop-in model. Berger added that it would be necessary for the plans for the restroom to be reviewed by the ARB. One member of the ARB had said he would do the drawings free of charge, but this would be a conflict. So, another architect was found, but he did not know the fees that would be charged. It is necessary to have drawings in order to get approval to do the project. The Fiscal Officer thought that the drawings would be for a restroom that would have running water and sewer. Galicki was aware that there had been discussions about the project being cheaper if it were done in-house. He hoped that the Village would first obtain architectural, material, and construction costs because they may find that the total was a wash with the prefab model. He was concerned that Council would opt to go with Ann Dunning's plans without realizing how much the rest of the project would cost. Berger advised he had requested the all-in budget number for the project but had not seen it yet. Galicki did not want to provide checks to people to later find out that it would be so much more expensive. Berger would discuss this with Councilwoman Cavanagh since she is the chair of the Parks Committee. The Fiscal Officer understood that drawings were necessary to go out to bid, but hoped Dunning would not be too expensive and would provide adequate information for Council to know whether it wanted to go out to bid or not. Berger reiterated this was up to the Parks Committee to at least put a rough number on paper comparing the costs of the prefab project and the in-house project.

The Fiscal Officer advised that the paperwork had been submitted to the county to make the corner lot tax exempt and she is working with them to make sure the application is correct before they submit it to the State. Berger said that after this is done, the Village needs to decide whether to consolidate the lots. Fiscal Officer discussed estimated costs for consolidation with the Solicitor and was told it would be simple and not too expensive. It would include a surveyor and the Planning Commission. Since the Village campus is made up of multiple lots, there was discussion on whether it made sense to consolidate all of the lots at the same time. Consolidating would make sense from a finance and ease of administration perspective, but it was felt that it should be directed to the Properties Committee to come up with a 5, 10, or 20-year plan about what makes sense as it is seen today. Looking forward, would it make more sense to have individual parcels or one large piece of property?

The Fiscal Officer asked Berger about a Whitetail Homeowners Association (HOA) study he sent to Council. Berger explained that he shared it as an example of what can be done to look at the useful life of capital and equipment for planning purposes. Galicki thought it was a great study and noted it could be beneficial for the Village to look strategically in determining priorities with its needs and to help with the budgeting process. The Fiscal Officer saw the benefit of doing a study in terms of creating a five-year budget and saw merit in creating a long-term master plan for the Village. Berger thought this would be a discussion for the Properties Committee, but the Finance Committee could ask the Engineer what CT Consultants would charge for a reserve study and then decide when Council would want to do it. The Fiscal Officer advised that having this type of information would have been helpful in projecting the need to replace the salt dome. She said that Russell Township had a study done, and she would reach out to them for information.

There was discussion about the grant writer and whether a revised agreement had been submitted. It has not. The Village would need \$350,000 in grants to justify the expense of having a grant writer. Berger said no one has responded to his request for a list of potential / upcoming projects. If this could be done with the salt dome, that would make sense. There is a firm that has come up with a proposal, and they are looking for grant money. If the salt dome is not part of the project list, then what else does the Village need to do? The Fiscal Officer reiterated that it is better to have the list of projects and then find a grant that fits the project rather than finding a grant and then putting together a project to fit the grant. Berger added that he did not see the benefit in having the writer sit at a computer for five hours per week to see what he could find, or to give him a list of 50 potential projects that would have to be sorted to determine if any were worthwhile. Berger did not think this was the way to go. Galicki added that when the subject of a grant writer came up, it was perceived that the grant writer would be looking for money for which the Village could apply, but during the presentation by the grant writer, the grant writer indicated he would require direction. Berger did not want the grant writer to be the forward thinker of what the Village would be doing. Therefore, it is incumbent on the committees to identify projects that are of value to the Village. The Fiscal Officer referenced the recent proposed grant for a solar project, and asked if this was really a project the Village wanted. Berger thought it was worth the effort, but said it was a one-off deal and would not propose the Village do business this way on a regular basis. The Fiscal Officer explained that if there were a list of projects, then the Village would be ready for when a grant opportunity is available, rather than trying to put something together just to get grant money. Berger said that he challenged the Wisers about how the payback of the projects they proposed did not make sense for the Village. He told them that the only way the Village would do a project with them is if they found a grant, and then they came up with a potential grant. Berger concluded that he would ask again for a list of projects. Until this was provided, he did not know why the Village would go forward with a grant writer. The Fiscal Officer raised the possibility of identifying a grant writer who could explore grant opportunities as needed by the Village. She added this had been a function of the Engineer and CT Consultants in the past as well as CRWP. The Fiscal Officer clarified that the services are available, but the Village is not charged if they are not used.

Regarding other Village projects aside from the salt dome, Berger noted that Manor Brook II is in the mind of some people. He hoped that the Village had learned from the first project to do better with number crunching. There is also Fox Run and other stormwater projects. However, he would like to see how effective the first projects are before going further. The Fiscal Officer advised that grant money is not really free money, there are usually strings attached. The Village could have done Manor Brook in a different way for less money, but the Village took grant money and as a result, it raised the costs to do the project to the specifications of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant requirements. In considering grant money for Manor Brook II, what are the requirements, and would there be a better, less expensive way to do the project that would accomplish the goal? The Central Retention Basin was done with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money, so there were no restrictions. With the park, the Village agreed to an easement, so the Village is very restricted in what it can do on the park land. Berger said that unfortunately, through changes in elected officials, the Village does not retain

the soft knowledge to fully understand these ramifications. Council needs to do a better job of understanding restrictions when considering grant funding.

Berger adjourned the meeting at 9:54 a.m.

Joint Finance Committee/Treasury Investment Board Meeting
April 11, 2024, 1:00 p.m. Village Hall

Members Present: Chairman Chris Berger, Council Member Dennis Galicki, Mayor Koons, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Solicitor Matheney

Visitors: Eileen Stanic, Meeder Investments; Council Member Canton, Police Chief Rizzo

Berger asked how Meeder Investments stays ahead of the curve in terms of investment strategies. Stanic advised that the services of Meeder Investments start with the discussion about cash flow. Last year, this was a key point in that some of the dollars in the portfolio would be spent down so there was a need to make certain the funds were available. What she would hope to gain from today's discussion is whether this is still the case, and what the Village saw in terms of cash flow over the next few years. Taking the cash flow into consideration, Meeder then looks at what is happening in the economy and interest rates. Two components drive what the Federal Reserve does: inflation and jobs. Jobs have been strong, and inflation has been very high. It has come down, but recently is showing signs of being at higher levels than the market and Fed would like to see. Structuring the investment portfolio involves anticipating the future in terms of where the economy and inflation are headed and how this translates into structuring the investment portfolio in terms of long-term or short-term investments. Currently, there is an environment where interest rates exist that have not been seen in 15 years. Cash flow permitting, this provides the opportunity to lock in the rates providing stability to the interest income component. The economy fluctuates and experiences downturns, which is the reason for taking a long view and providing the buffer.

Stanic distributed and reviewed a handout (Attachment A) analyzing the \$1 million investment portfolio. Currently, a fair amount of the portfolio, based on last year's discussion, is set to mature in the next 12 months. The balance is spread out over the next four years. The investments were made with the direction of the Treasury Investment Board (TIB) based on timing. The Fiscal Officer noted that interest rates with STAR Ohio are high right now. Stanic concurred and added that STAR Ohio is a liquid investment that maintains short-term maturity because funds must be available to immediate liquidity needs of the participants. Consequently, the rate will follow what the Federal Reserve does with the overnight rate. She explained that there was a period where the Federal Reserve embarked on the fastest rate hiking cycle in 40 years, going from 0 to a range of 5.25 to 5.5 percent. After July 2023, they stopped raising rates after seeing evidence of a banking impact in March with bank failures. The economy was going a little sideways and inflation numbers were starting to come down. She further advised that monetary policy works with a lag, and it takes time to work its way through the economy. The Fed determined it was an appropriate time to maintain the status quo. Fast forwarding to October 2023, the market and Fed were communicating that one additional rate hike would be warranted. Economic data continued to soften, and inflation dropped. By December, the Fed pivoted its message as well as the market. The next move would be a rate cut, instead. This is the current environment. Rate cuts may be in order in 2024. The expectation at the beginning of the year was that there would be three rate cuts. This has changed to one rate cut in 2024, and the market is aligned with this expectation. The current environment would be characterized as a period of transition with rates that shot up to combat inflation and then inflation dropping and stabilizing. Job and economic growth have remained solid. The expectations are that things will slow down gradually and that lower interest rates are on the horizon starting some time this year and continuing into 2025.

Berger asked why more money had not been moved out of the securities portfolio and into STAR Ohio since it is clearly earning a higher rate of return than the securities. Stanic explained that the reason for this has to do with the way that public entities operate. The books are kept on a cash basis and do not realize losses. In the fixed income market, as interest rates rise, the market value of the securities drop. In order to make a big shift, losses would have to be realized on the Village's funds. Even though there is a gap between the overnight rate versus the portfolio rate, as the interest rate environment changes, that dynamic also changes. Berger asked what the securities are. Stanic replied that they are bonds. Berger concluded that this was why the market value of the bonds had gone down because the rate of return was not keeping up with the market. Stanic concurred. He further verified that Meeder would let those cash out over time as they expire and then put the money into STAR Ohio since the rate of return is higher than the bond market. Stanic, explained that this is not necessarily the case. If the direction of the Village is that it will be spending down the money, it would be logical to move the funds out of the investment portfolio and into STAR Ohio. If the direction is that the Village will be able to have the \$1 million around for some time, they would look to keeping it lower within the short term and potentially add to get close to the STAR Ohio rate because the expectation is that the STAR Ohio rate is going to drop. This would have an immediate impact on the interest income earned by the Village.

Berger asked if Stanic had seen the Village's 2024 budget, and Stanic said she had not. Berger noted it is currently April, and how would she know what the investment strategy should be if she has not looked at the budget and what the Village expects to spend. Stanic explained this was the reason she requested a meeting. Berger asked when the last time was that she saw a monthly financial statement from the Village, and stated that on a monthly basis, the Village knows where its cash is and would this not impact the investment strategy? Stanic said that it would but added that knowing the cash today is part of the equation, but from her perspective, the bigger piece is where the cash is heading. Berger said the budget and what the Village expects to spend would be two important pieces of the discussion. Stanic agreed. The Fiscal Officer stated that this is why it is important to put the salt dome and all the other expenses in the budget. She estimated that there were \$926,000 in possible additional projects that are not in the budget. Until those decisions are made, it makes it difficult to identify what money can be invested without clarity on what the Village is doing in terms of projects. The Mayor stated it was not Stanic's fault but the Village's fault. The Fiscal Officer concurred and clarified that giving Stanic the monthly financials would not tell her about plans to spend another million dollars. Berger concluded that it is the Village's job to communicate its expectations so that they can make the best investment decisions. If they are not told, they cannot be blamed for what they do. From her perspective, Stanic tries to prepare for the unknown based on previous conversations, which was, to the Fiscal Officer's point, that there were pending additional projects where no decisions had been made and therefore a conservative approach was needed. Otherwise, she would be looking at investing funds further out term wise inside of a three-year period. Berger asked what the longest period of time they would consider from an investment perspective. Stanic explained that the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) limits investments out to five years. It limits the types of securities with which the Village can invest to bonds, predominantly U.S. Government Treasury securities and government agency securities as well as FDIC Insured CD's. These are the primary investment options in addition to municipal securities.

The Mayor provided observations about the performance of the Village's investments over the past year. He noted that \$500,000 will be maturing this year and asked where Stanic saw this money being invested. Stanic explained that if it can remain in the investment portfolio, then she would consider extending a portion of it and keeping a portion very short-term with being in the transition period with interest rates.

Berger stated that Council agreed that the Village would keep a \$1 million safety net and would not spend down cash balances below \$1 million unless there were an emergency. He did not know what the emergency would

be. From an investment standpoint, Berger said the \$1 million is long term. Beyond that is a budgeting question. He referred to the March income tax receipts and noted that in five years there had been a 45% increase. Berger indicated that in the last two years, there had been a 20% increase. The Mayor agreed and said the Village is in a flush situation that will continue. That being said, Berger said that at the end of March, the Village was sitting on almost \$3.5 million in cash. \$1 million is in securities. How much is needed for monthly operating expenses? According to the Fiscal Officer, there is what the Village has certified from the county in revenues the Village expects this year minus what is currently budgeted, plus the other potential projects which leaves \$1.5 million. The Mayor clarified that this is if the Village were to do its Christmas list. The Fiscal Officer agreed. The Solicitor asked if this included the \$1 million in investments, and the Fiscal Officer concurred. Berger observed that there is \$1.8 million in the Huntington checking and wondered how much could go to STAR Ohio at 5.47% since this is liquid. Stanic explained that the rule of thumb is to maintain 20% total cash in the checking account, which would be \$700,000 for the Village. The balance could be kept in a combination of STAR Ohio and securities. However, she would defer to the Fiscal Officer who knows the cash flow of the Village. Money in STAR Ohio can be taken out on the same day and local banks may also require certain balances to offset service charges. Berger asked about service charges, and the Fiscal Officer said she would need to inquire. Berger proposed moving \$800,000 to STAR Ohio. The Mayor proposed keeping 800,000 in checking, and Berger said it is \$1 million and \$800,000 to STAR Ohio. Berger further explained that as the \$1 million in investments roll over, they should continue to look at long-term investment strategies.

Berger commented on utilizing short-term investments while interest rates are high. Stanic added that this can be risky from the standpoint of when they shift. It can result in missing out on opportunities with term rates, which can drop as well. This is the reason for a balanced approach.

The Solicitor advised that the TIB would make a recommendation to Council, potentially at the next meeting. Berger clarified that this would be at the April 22nd meeting. The recommendation would be to change the fund structure. The Solicitor stated that the Codified Ordinances state that no investment of Village funds in excess of 20% of the ending fund balance of the last day of the preceding calendar year may be made without the approval of the majority of Council members. Berger thought that they would exceed 20%. The Fiscal Officer offered that this would just mean Council would have to approve it. The Solicitor further advised that technically the other changes do not require Council approval which is part of ORC. Berger said this would be put on the April 22nd agenda to move funds as discussed and ask for Council's approval. Then the Fiscal Officer can let Stanic know. The Fiscal Officer said that this is good for now because STAR Ohio has high rates but what happens when they start coming down and the Village does not have things invested for five years. It would be beneficial for the Village to be able to get a better rate of purchasing when things are low because it will start turning around. This is where the plan of the Village comes in because if they know what projects are coming up in the next couple of years, then they will know what cash they need and what they can invest. Berger agreed and said they need to continue to press forward for the Master Plan.

The Mayor asked if the Village set a limit with STAR Ohio as to when the Village pulls back. Berger responded that the STAR Ohio rate will always be higher than the Huntington rate. The question would be whether they should take those funds and put them in longer term investments. However, the Village cannot do this because they do not know what money the Village will need. Until there is a better four- or five-year plan, it is hard to direct Stanic to lock the \$1 million up for four years. Stanic said that as the Village's advisor, she would not recommend that in view of the conversation of the cash flow. Berger suggested that as the budget is updated as well as the monthly financial summary along with the key events like income tax receipts that this information is passed along to Stanic.

The Mayor asked Stanic if there are things the Village is not doing that it should be doing. Stanic said what they had been discussing was the biggest priority. Secondly, it will be for the Fiscal Officer to reach out to Huntington Bank to inquire about the service charges. Meeder can help determine whether the relationship between the level of service charges and balance maintained in the account is appropriate. The other piece would be to ensure there is no money left on the table.

Stability and interest rates were discussed. Stanic explained that rates can be volatile and are dependent on many factors to include global, fiscal policy coming out of the White House, funding from the states, as well as what happens with consumers and businesses. No one has a crystal ball, and the way they counter this uncertainty is to have a discipline plan. This is to have the investment portfolio diversify across maturities so that they are not subjecting monies to a high degree of reinvestment rate risk.

Stanic concluded her presentation.

The Fiscal Officer informed the Committee that Tom King, the resident member of the TIB, had moved. There was a second candidate, Jim Thie, whom the board interviewed. She asked if the board wanted to reach out to him to see if he was still interested. The Solicitor reminded the board that the requirements were for the individual to be a Village resident with a background in finance. Berger agreed that they should reach out to Thie and if he is interested, invite him to the next TIB meeting. The Mayor said he would call him. Stanic offered to bring the new member up to speed with what ORC limitations are with investment of public dollars. The board agreed that the whole board would benefit from a refresher at the next meeting.

The Chief referred to an email with Automatic Data Processing (ADP) and advised that ADP wanted to install a fiber optic cable from Village Hall to the Service building. The project will cost \$10,500. The Village would save \$1,956. on one internet connection per year and the license fee per year. This would be a \$2,300 savings. It is not a deal breaker. It would involve removing one more firewall in the system. One bigger firewall would be required and an annual maintenance fee of \$595. He questioned whether this would be worth spending another \$10,000. ADP believed it was important. From the Chief's perspective, it meant one less entry point for the bad guys to gain entry as well as modernization of the Village. However, it was not included in the original proposal, and he did not know if it was on ADP's radar at the time of the proposal. If the Village were to do it, it would not hurt, but it is an additional cost. The Chief thought the Village could go either way. Transitioning to fiber would eliminate one piece of equipment at the service building.

Berger did not recall a \$10,000 cost estimate of running the line during initial discussions with ADP. Galicki could not recall how this matter evolved and thought it was initially presented as an option. Berger recalled a conversation with the Street Commissioner about a channel under the parking lot that could be used for the cabling. The Chief said ADP was talking about fiber optic directly from the provider, and there would be one fiber optic connection for all three buildings. They never discussed one connection from Village Hall to the Service Department. This is different. Berger asked the Chief if having this done would put the Village in a better position for the future. The Chief said that if a municipal center were being considered in the next five to ten years where this cable would have to be torn out, then no. If they are thinking more than five to ten years out, then it could be helpful in the future. His personal opinion was that it was a lot of money for what it would accomplish, and he did not like that it was presented after the fact. However, ADP has indicated it is not a deal breaker. The Fiscal Officer pointed out that with advances in technology, is it better to do it now. Berger did not see the municipal center being a reality in the next 10 years. It was discussed that this would also facilitate eventually running the line to the Police Department. Berger and the Chief discussed the possibility of installing a faster connection. The cabling proposed by ADP would help with this. Berger concluded that if

higher speed internet services are a potential, the cabling proposal makes sense as a long-term investment for the future. Galicki concurred. The Chief indicated that it is a private company with whom the Village could contract directly or ADP could modify its agreement with the Village. There was discussion as to whether there was a not to exceed dollar amount in the ADP agreement, and the Chief advised the purchase order would be short \$3,500 with the cabling charge. Berger suggested amending the not to exceed to read not to exceed \$50,000. The Solicitor stated that the Village has the proposal and agreement from CCI, the private vendor. She thought it would be cleaner to go directly to CCI. The committee discussed the necessity to obtain three quotes, and the Mayor suggested it would be cleaner to go through ADP. Liability was discussed. It was noted that the email said that ADP could arrange for the work and incorporate the cost in the Village's final expenses. Berger said to communicate with ADP the Village's preference and to generate an additional purchase order. The committee will present it to Council on April 22nd.

The Chief offered that the Village should be prepared for next year when it would be billed the recurring costs less the second firewall that will not be needed.

The Chief addressed body cams/video cams with the Police Department. As background, when the bodycam project started, the department decided to go with a centrally located server at the Police Department to avoid paying the cost of a subscription. The server was due to be replaced next year, and the Chief found that he can no longer manage it locally and has to get a subscription. There are two options. One choice is having another server at the station that is subscription based. The other is going 100% to the cloud with no server in the station. The cost of this is astronomical with a five-year plan costing \$76,000. The other option is to have a server at the station with a subscription cost of \$36,000 for five years. It includes the equipment, but there is a catch. The Chief explained that when they originally got the system, the company sent a server that they did not use. The Chief thought they had purchased it, but apparently this was in error because they received a bill for \$6,800. They can pay for the server now and start to migrate to the new system or he can just send it back. There is the potential to save thousands of dollars on a new server, but this one is a year and a half old. He is not happy with subscriptions, but this is the direction things are going. Body cams and in-car video are necessities for the department, but he cannot squeeze more time out of the local server. The Chief said the initial cost would be just under \$7,000. Going forward, however, there would be the annual expense for the subscription. The Fiscal Officer advised that in the long term, it appears everything is going to the cloud.

The committee discussed the price of the server. A new server could be obtained for \$8,295 and Berger supported getting a new server for an extra \$1,500. There was further discussion of equipment and subscription options. Berger concluded that the recommendation should be that the Chief should buy the new server at \$8,295 and purchase the five-year subscription plan. At the end of five years, he assumed they would end up with the cloud. Berger asked if there was any grant money available. The Chief had looked but was unsure they would qualify again. Berger suggested calling Steve Balaban to see if he was aware of any. If Balaban found there was, then the Village could look at contracting with him for those services.

The Chief discussed software used for redacting camera footage. It is very expensive, and Orange Village has offered to do it for the Village. Berger proposed a regionalized program. The Chief said that the Village can go in with another municipality to share the software. The Chief said he would look into grants regarding the upgrade to the server and check with Geauga County about shared redaction software.

The Fiscal Officer addressed the Bell Road East Reserve Fund which expires in 2024 in relation to the Bell Road east grant which would not be available until 2025. The Solicitor explained that it would be necessary to repeal the resolution setting up the reserve fund. In the resolution, Council would authorize the Fiscal Officer to

close the fund and deposit any balance in the fund from which it was originally taken. Once the resolution is rescinded, it is sent to the Geauga County Auditor. The Fiscal Officer questioned closing the fund in light of some expenses already incurred for Bell Road East. Discussion ensued about Bell Road East paving and Bell Road East culvert. The Fiscal Officer concluded that she would consult with the Auditor for guidance.

The Fiscal Officer advised that the 2.75 mill Safety Levy can be put on the ballot this year for renewal. Legislation will be on the Council agenda to get the Auditor's certification on a renewal.

There was discussion about the proposed Reserve Study for the Village and entities that perform such a service, to include CT Consultants. Berger clarified that in previous discussions, it was not his intention to suggest that the Village should use the Russell Township Reserve Study as a template and do the project internally. His intent was to suggest that the Village identify a similar contractor to conduct the study. He hoped the Properties Committee will make a recommendation to Council that the project be put in the budget in 2024 or 2025. The Fiscal Officer explained that there are two pieces, a reserve study that addresses current assets of the Village and a strategic plan to identify items/projects that the Village wants moving forward. Berger agreed and offered that the results of the Reserve Study would drive the strategic plan.

The next Finance Committee meeting will be changed from May 16th to May 9th at 10:00 p.m.

The Fiscal Officer addressed the Building Committee discussion about the use of credit cards for payment through the City Force software. The Building Department Administrative Assistant would explore the associated costs for doing this. The Fiscal Officer reached out to colleagues in surrounding communities, and no one uses credit cards for their Building Departments. She further explained that a lot of the money taken in through the Building Department are refundable deposits. This would lead to the question of how refunds would be done, and how associated service fees would be covered. In discussing the matter with the Building Department Administrative Assistant, it was conveyed that people have to bring in their plans anyway. She had concerns that once a payment was made, the individual might think they are finished when there may be more paperwork that needs to be completed. Berger explained that he brought this issue up based on conversations with the City Force software personnel who demonstrated all the bells and whistles of the software. They were pushing for permits that could be done online which would then require online payment. If it does not make sense, he had no problem with it, but this was one of the justifications for transitioning to this software program. The Mayor stated that Chris Bell thought taking credit cards would be a great idea so it is something that should be hashed out at the next Building Committee meeting. The Solicitor asked if pavilion registrations would be included in the permits that could be acquired online with credit card payments. The Fiscal Officer said that was another discussion point of whether someone would reserve for multiple dates and then only use one.

Galicki asked the Fiscal Officer about the list of unbudgeted projects that are currently in the mix. The Mayor suggested she send it out to Council in the next month. She agreed she could send something out showing where the Village would stand with the budget if all the projects were included. Her concern, however, is that without the plan, decisions are being made to do individual projects without the committees having the knowledge of what other committees are planning to do. Galicki acknowledged that there are a lot of things on the table and not as much money as people think. A written explanation would help Council prioritize and focus on what projects can happen this year, and which can wait. Berger addressed the problem with the salt dome of budgeting with pending grant applications. The Solicitor advised that the existing proposal for the salt dome is through SourceWell, the joint purchasing program. There is an Ohio Attorney General communication that was released in March that said that because it involves construction costs, it is not permissible to use the joint purchasing program. The Village is required to competitively bid the project. This will add time to the project

timeline. Berger suggested having a conversation about this with the Street Commissioner. He further concluded that the Village would have to go through the competitive bid process for the restroom in the park as well.

The Fiscal Officer advised that even with the projects that are below the threshold for competitive bidding, contractors are watching. The Village has received a couple of calls and complaints from contractors about the projected big solar project and wanting to have had the opportunity to bid on it.

Canton addressed the proposed park restroom. He advised that the Village had been using the "Vega" of restrooms in the park and he would prefer the "Buick." It does not have to be the "Cadillac," although that would be nice. Regarding the crosswalks, he spoke with the Chief to get an idea of the current cost. The Chief provided the Safety Committee with an estimate of \$32,000 each. Canton wanted two crosswalks, but in consideration of the budget, would be agreeable to one at the park. Perhaps the crosswalk at the school could be next year. He further advised that the Gurney principal did not think there is a need for a crosswalk at the school. The greater need appears to be at the park. The Solicitor asked how this correlates to the survey, and Canton explained that there was little response to it. Furthermore, one individual initially brought the crosswalk proposal forward, but no longer lives in the Village. Canton wanted to make a motion, have discussion, and vote about it at the next meeting. Berger cautioned that they need to put the numbers on paper so everyone can see it. There is a hard floor of \$1 million and they are not going below it. The salt dome is a necessity and probably one of the biggest Village projects. Canton advised that he would like to see a very nice and appealing restroom in the park that would be easy for the Service Department staff to clean. It would be nice if the money were there to have running water and electricity. The Fiscal Officer asked if the committee had a dollar amount. The budget was \$86,000; \$6,000 was approved for Ann Dunning's designs. Canton wanted to have a discussion with Council to determine definitively to go forward with it or not.

The Mayor referenced recent grant applications for the salt dome and park restroom. He asked if the Village would have been better prepared for situations like this if the Village had a grant writer employed. Galicki said not necessarily. The Fiscal Officer said that the Village needs to know what its projects are and then find applicable grants. The Mayor said the Village is scrambling around. The Solicitor offered that the Village acted on the grants as soon as they were identified. She concurred with the Fiscal Officer about the necessity to first have projects identified. The Mayor said his concern was that if they had somebody out there looking, the Village would be better prepared. Galicki pointed out that the Village would have to direct the grant writer, which was the whole issue with the grant writer they interviewed. He would not be looking for monies for undisclosed projects. The Village would need to point him in a specific direction. The Mayor said that the grant writer asked if the Village wanted him to look into the NatureWorks grant for the restroom on his own. The Fiscal Officer pointed out that the grant writer knew this was one of the Village's projects therefore had some insight into a possible grant. Galicki indicated that the Village applied for the previous NatureWorks grant for the restroom and it was denied, which delayed the project. Had the Village just gone with the prefab building, they would have a structure in place and would not be faced with the increased cost. Canton concurred. Galicki concluded that they are their own self generating delay system with continuously asking about running water, heated seats, finding more grants, etc. Meanwhile, time marches on and expenses increase. The Fiscal Officer relayed that at the Local Government Conference, there were many training sessions on grants and their emphasis was that municipalities should have a list of projects they are looking to do, and then look for grant funding available. They stressed there is a lot of grant money out there, but it is important to have a forward-looking detailed project list ready for when the right funding is found.

The Fiscal Officer reported that CT Consultants has merged with another company, but the Engineer will continue to work for the Village under the CT name for the foreseeable future.

Berger adjourned the meeting at 2:52 p.m.



APRIL 11, 2024

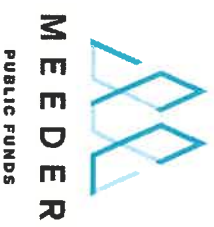
Village of South Russell Investment Strategy Update

PRESENTED BY:

EILEEN STANIC, CTP
REGIONAL DIRECTOR, ADVISORY SERVICES



MEEDER
PUBLIC FUNDS



ECONOMIC UPDATE

Economic Growth



US QUARTERLY GDP CHANGE

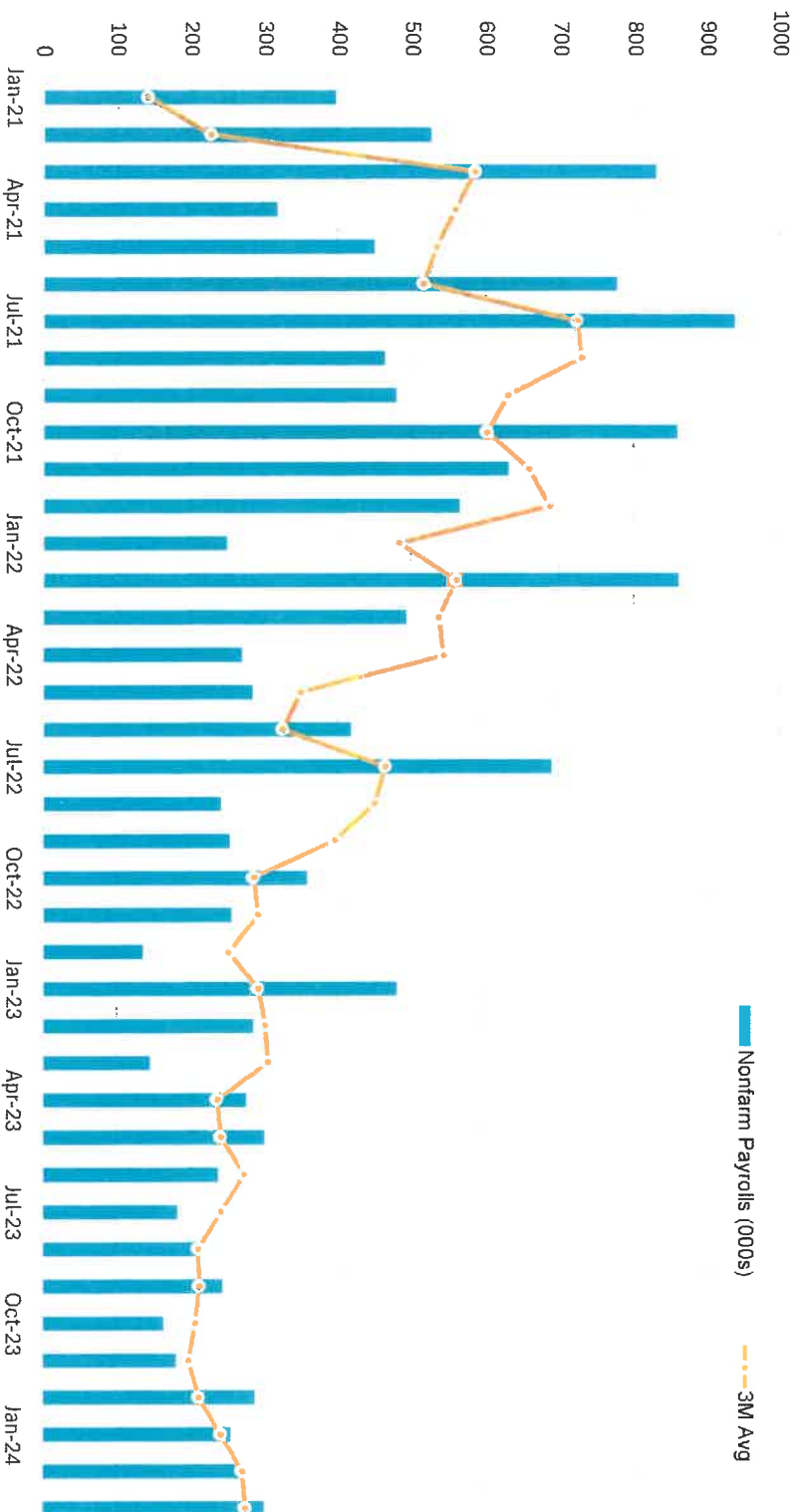


SOURCE: BLOOMBERG

- The U.S. economy grew much faster than expected in the third and fourth quarters of 2023.
- Economists and strategists surveyed by Bloomberg expect GDP to slow below trend during 2024.
- This slowing growth is due to a few factors; one primary one is less stimulus from the federal government as compared to the previous few years.
- The estimates for the decline in GDP has been one of the contributors to lower intermediate-term interest rates since last October.

Job Market

Nonfarm Payrolls



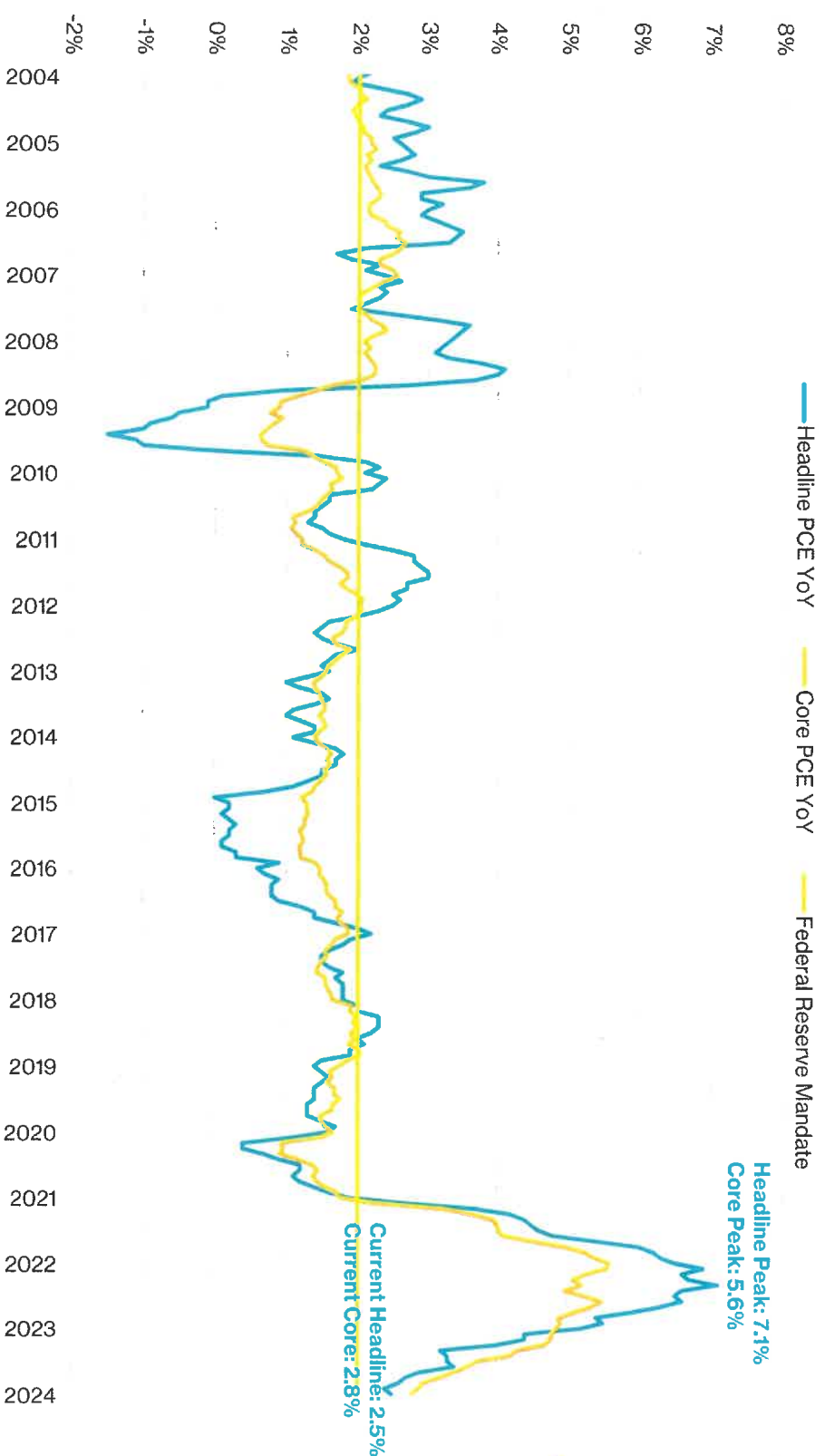
SOURCE: BLOOMBERG



MEEDER

- The U.S. employment sector remains robust.
- The U.S. economy has experienced 38 consecutive months of job growth.
- The 3-month average job growth has accelerated since the later part of last year.
- Job openings have declined but remain well above pre-pandemic levels.
- The healthy job market has helped keep consumer spending at a high level.

Inflation



5 SOURCE: BLOOMBERG

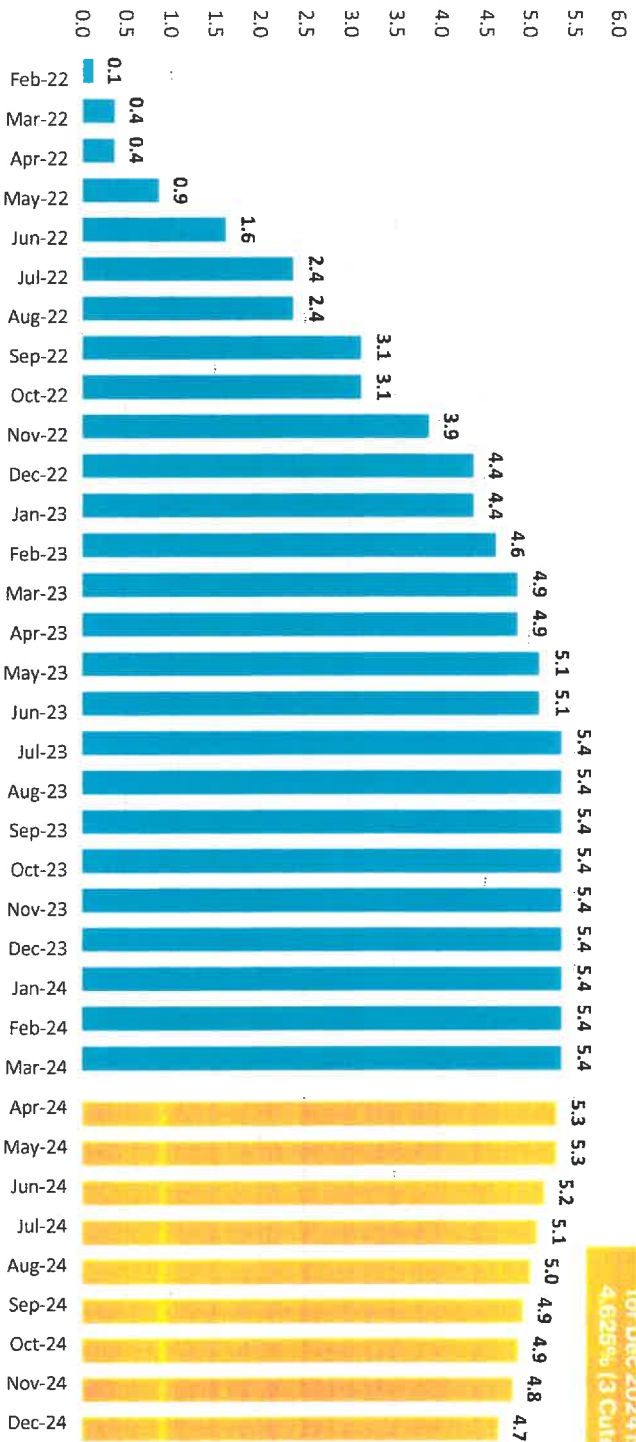


- The Consumer Price Index (CPI), has shown signs of stickiness the past six months, averaging about 3.2% since last September.

- The Fed's preferred inflation metric, Core Personal Consumption Expenditure (excluding food and energy prices), continues decelerating, but is still above the Fed's 2% target level.

Fed Funds

Fed Funds Mid-Rate Actual History and Fed Funds Futures



Meeting Date	1/31/24	3/20/24	5/1/24	6/12/24	7/31/24	9/18/24	11/7/24	12/18/24
Hike/Pause/Cut	Pause	Pause	Pause	Pause	Cut	Pause	Cut	Cut
Basis Point Change	0	0	0	0	(25)	0	(25)	(25)
Fed Funds Mid Rate	5.375	5.375	5.375	5.375	5.125	5.125	4.875	4.625

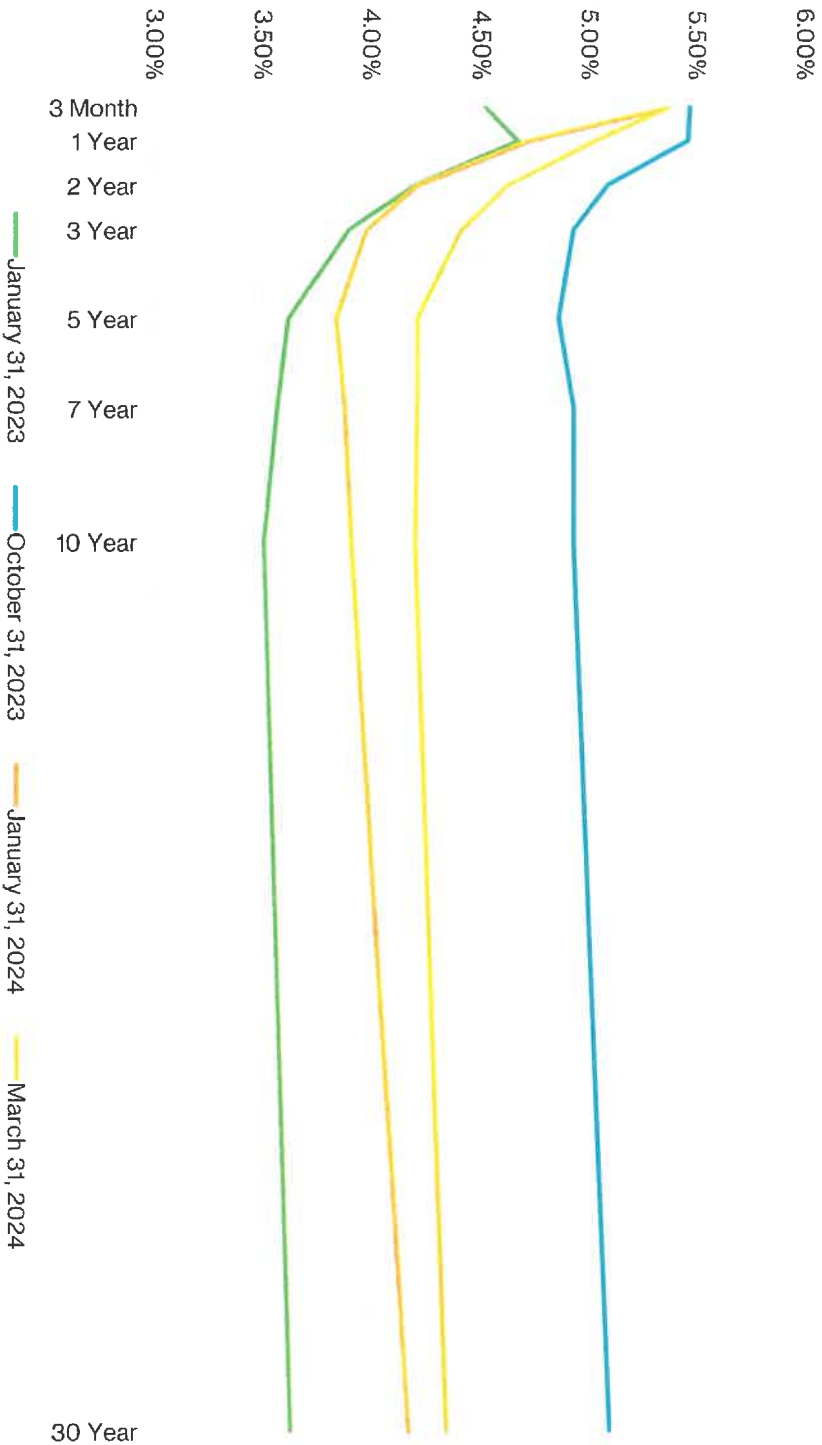
SOURCE: BLOOMBERG AS OF 4/1/24

The Fed Funds futures market is also expecting about 3 cuts this year. However, the futures market was projecting about 7 cuts back in January 2024.

The futures market is currently expecting the first cut to occur at the July 31, 2024 meeting.

Interest Rates

US Treasury Yield Curves



SOURCE: BLOOMBERG



- With growth (GDP) estimates slowing this year and inflation declining materially from the summer 2022 highs, intermediate and longer-term rates have dropped from last fall's peaks.
- Intermediate and longer-term rates are generally much more correlated to growth and inflation expectations.
- Short-term rates, such as the 3-month treasury, generally have a high correlation to the Fed Funds rate.



M E E D E R
PUBLIC FUNDS

PORTFOLIO REVIEW

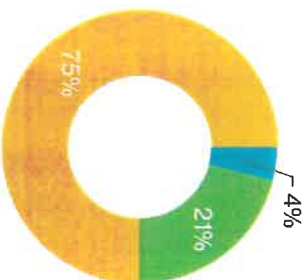
Current Portfolio

Village of South Russell portfolio as of 3/31/2024

Your Portfolio

Cash \$656,715
 Securities \$1,032,074
 Total Portfolio \$1,688,789

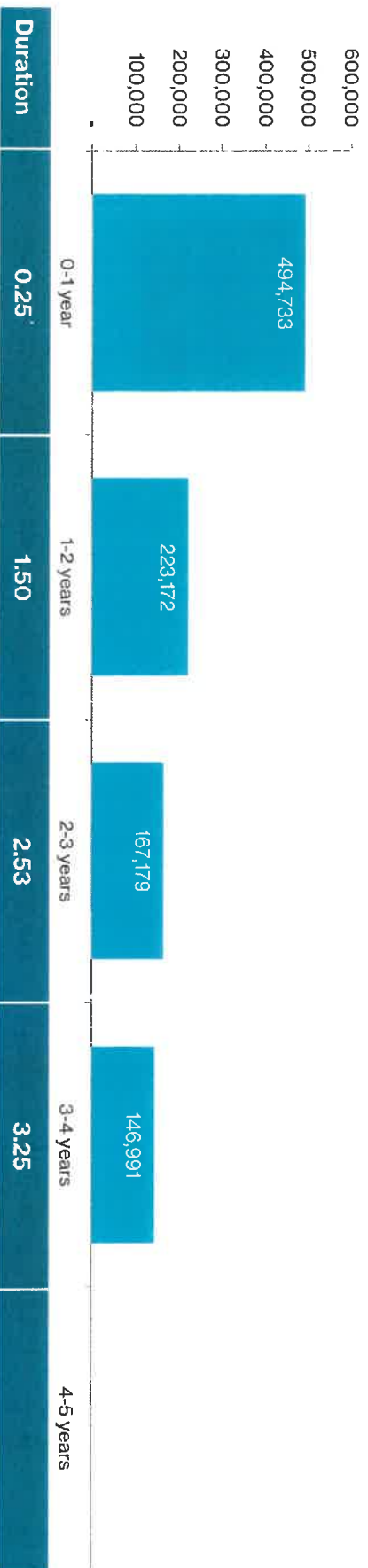
Your Asset Allocation



- FDIC-Insured Products
- Money Market Fund
- US Treasuries

Your Securities
 Weighted Average Maturity 1.35 years
 Weighted Effective Duration 1.28 years
 Weighted Average Yield 4.18%

Your Maturity Distribution



Projected Interest Income



ACTUAL INTEREST INCOME REFLECTS INCOME RECEIVED ON SECURITIES HELD IN THE CUSTODY ACCOUNT AND DOES NOT INCLUDE INCOME RECEIVED ON CLIENT MANAGED ASSETS.
PROJECTED INTEREST INCOME REFLECTS INTEREST TO BE RECEIVED ON EXISTING SECURITY HOLDINGS AS OF 4/9/2024. PROJECTED INTEREST INCOME DOES NOT ASSUME ANY REINVESTMENT OF MATURITIES.

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Finance Committee Meeting
May 9, 2024, 10:00 a.m. Village Hall

Members Present: Chairman Berger, Council Member Galicki, Fiscal Officer Romanowski,
Mayor Koons (arrived at approx. 10:25)

Berger called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Huntington Bank and Meeder Investments were discussed relative to fees. Berger stated that gross interest last month was almost \$3,800 and the Village netted almost \$2,500 after fees, which would be \$30,000 per year. The Fiscal Officer explained that the Huntington charges are dependent on the balances. In January, \$16 was paid and \$27 in February. For the other months, the balance offset the fees. Berger clarified that by State law, the Village's accounts are collateralized dollar for dollar. The FO added that another requirement for government banking is that the institution cannot have more than a small percentage in government holdings. Many banks do not want government business. Citizens Bank got rid of government banking and that was when the Village moved to Huntington. The current agreement with Huntington Bank is from August 2021 to August 2026. Berger suggested that the committee consider whether Huntington Bank is the right bank for the Village. The FO advised that changing banks is complicated. Berger understood this and also acknowledged the cost of the security the Village has with collateralization. However, he noted that the interest being paid by Huntington is much lower than that offered by other banks. The FO agreed and explained that this is the reason money would be shifted to STAR Ohio. Berger offered that the Village would then be paying more fees to Huntington and getting less interest because the Village would have less money in the account. He assumed that going from .5% at Huntington to 5% at Star Ohio will cover the fees, but it will have to be watched monthly. Berger asked if it was a requirement to utilize a bank in Geauga County. The FO explained it had to be a bank in the State.

The balances were discussed in relation to maintaining the \$1,000,000 balance. The FO explained that she had done her bank reconciliation and determined what funds could be transferred to STAR Ohio. She would do this in the next couple of days. Berger noted that if the balance dropped due to a large check that money could be moved back to Huntington from STAR Ohio. The FO concurred. Berger asked if there would be an instance where this system did not work, and the FO advised she would have to watch the bank balances more closely. Galicki noted that a lack of accountability and attention to detail could result in the system not working, much like what occurred in a neighboring community. However, it would appear that through the processes the FO has in place, there is a good handle on it. The FO concurred it would be a matter of her watching the accounts and letting the Finance Committee know if it was necessary to move money around. Berger offered that even if the balances dropped to \$700,000, there would still be money to pay the bills. The FO advised that this is where better communication is needed with the Village departments with the various projects. There should be a better understanding of when the projects are happening. Berger concurred and said that if it were necessary to cut a \$700,000 check, that would be the red flag. He asked the FO how many times she had had to cut a check over \$500,000. She replied that this could occur, for example, with a Road Program or a large project, although oftentimes this gets broken into

smaller incremental checks. However in April there was a \$300,000 check issued for the last road program. Berger acknowledged that better communication was important and there should not be an expectation of the DH to walk in and ask for a large check to be cut tomorrow. The FO added that another example is walking into a Council meeting and asking for a new piece of equipment for \$150,000 that no one knew about, and it wasn't budgeted. This throws everything off. Berger said better planning is needed.

Berger advised that it did not seem worth it to shop for banks since it was State controlled. The committee concurred.

Galicki addressed the salt dome and unbudgeted projects that are in the mix. He was worried that the committee handling the project was behind the power curve in getting it rolled out this year, particularly since it had to be competitively bid. The FO attended the Streets Committee meeting, and the salt dome was discussed. There is an assumption that the Village will be going with the wooden structure, but this is not documented. The Streets committee will be discussing this at the next Council meeting. First, Council must decide and commit to what it will be doing. At the 2023 Tax Budget Hearing, the FO reported the salt dome was failing and the Village would need to do something about it. The 2025 Tax Budget Hearing is coming up, and nothing has been done. Council must move and do something. The Street Commissioner said that according to Blue Streak, it is not necessary to go out to competitive bid, but the Solicitor disagrees according to the Attorney General. The Engineer suggested that in order to move the process faster, instead of going with the three-phase process of design, bid, build, the Village can have CT Consultants come up with specs and then bid/build it. The committee seemed to think it would happen by year end, but the Engineer did not seem so sure that would occur. Galicki acknowledged that this was the source of his concern. The FO clarified that once Council determined the type of building it wants officially, then CT could do the specs. Berger said this needed to happen at the next Council meeting. He added that the hope was that in the not-too-distant future, the Village would know whether it would get the grant. The committee discussed the implications of getting or not getting the grant and seeing how the bids come back in terms of what the Village will really be able to build. The FO provided the Street committee with research information about the recommendation from a state study that the concrete salt structure with the tarp is recommended in terms of stormwater. She concluded that whatever the Village is going to do, a decision needed to be made. Berger thought that the Street Commissioner knew what he wanted and that the Village should go out to bid to determine financial feasibility.

Berger asked whether tax collections were ahead of last year, and the FO advised they were by about \$30,000.

The FO reported that the Village received the tax certification from the County Auditor for the 2.75 Safety levy, which would bring in about \$425,000. The legislation will be on the agenda for Monday night's meeting. Typically, it would go through three readings. This would be on the November ballot. The Village would be going out a year early in case it does not pass. The FO thought the deadline to submit is the end of July.

The FO addressed the status of considering the Reserve Study, which was referred to the Properties Committee. Berger asked the Mayor if the Finance Committee could take over the Reserve Study project. The Mayor said this would not be a problem because Properties Committee is overwhelmed. Berger asked if the FO could reach out to the Reserve Study business to see if they could provide a high-level presentation on Monday in a Special Finance Committee meeting.

The FO addressed the crosswalks, which are not budgeted. Galicki said the Mayor wants the Safety Committee to discuss it later in the day. The FO added that the park restrooms would not be happening this year based on the information provided by Ann Dunning at the last Council meeting. Berger suggested asking the Parks Committee what their expectation is, and then take it out of the budget. The FO explained in taking it out of the budget now before going to the Tax Budget Commission would enable her to have the money to put in the budget for next year when it more realistically might happen.

The FO referred to Berger's previous statement that he had received no response from the departments as far as what they wanted. In a dream perfect world, the administrative staff would like to be in one office, perhaps in a new facility. This is something that could be addressed in a master plan. Berger clarified that the FO was saying that Building and Admin would be consolidated. The FO clarified that the administrative staff discussed that it would make more sense to be in close proximity to cover for each other. Also with a consolidated building, it would cut down on the number of copiers and equipment needed, and there would be better coverage. She reiterated this would be in terms of long-term planning, and Galicki added that this may be where a facilities study may lead. Berger thought he knew what the Streets Department wanted but had not heard from the Police Department.

The FO addressed her upcoming medical leave and coverage, and reminded the committee that this was not the first time she had been out. The FO advised that in 17.5 years, she had not cut an emergency check. Checks are issued on the 15th and last day of the month. The recent matter with the excavation necessitated a purchase order be issued, not a check. In the case of an emergency, if the Department Head knows there is money in their budget, they can formally request a PO, let her know personally of the need, but move forward without it in hand. The FO can then cut and approve a special Then and Now purchase order after the fact. Additionally, although the Administrative Assistant is not qualified to be a Fiscal Officer, she has a good understanding of many policies and procedures, and if there are any issues she can get ahold of the FO. Galicki added if there were an emergency that the Village could also contact the county. Galicki noted that in the event of an issue with the FO, the Village would be hurting, and it is a vulnerability. FO said she has repeated for years there needs to be a succession plan but she didn't have any help. She is very appreciative for having a full-time assistant and it is a personal goal to get a succession plan together. Berger noted that a written succession plan should be created for both Admin and Service Departments. This will be a monthly agenda item for the committee in the next year.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55.

Finance Committee Meeting
Thursday, June 13, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Present: Chairman Berger, Council Member Galicki, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Mayor
Visitors: Council Member Cavanagh, Police Chief Rizzo

Berger called the meeting to order. The Fiscal Officer reviewed the May report that the Village started the month of May with \$3,138,000 and ended the month with \$3,361,000, which was an increase of \$222,000 in the balances. The Village received about \$1,200 in interest by moving the money to STAR Ohio.

Berger asked about the status with the transition to the Geauga County Automatic Data Processing (ADP). The Fiscal Officer described the process, which included not only new equipment but a change from the Google Suite to Microsoft 365. A period of adjustment is to be expected. ADP staff have been responsive to questions. Berger asked if there had been any particularly troublesome issues. The Fiscal Officer said no. The Chief advised the Police Department will begin to transition emails to Microsoft on Monday. He asked how long the Google Suite would be maintained, and the Fiscal Officer explained that the Village pays by the user, and once the transition is complete, the lesser used accounts can be eliminated but the main accounts in each department kept until there is a comfort level with the new system.

The Mayor asked about the status of the display screens in Council chambers for upcoming board meetings, they have not worked for several weeks. FO would let ADP know of the issue.

The Tax Budget was discussed, and the Fiscal Officer explained that she received the required information from the departments. Compiling the Tax Budget primarily involves the big projects. She was able to confirm with the Engineer that the salt structure will be a 2025 project. The Fiscal Officer also spoke with the restroom vendor and to Steve Balaban. From the conversation with the vendor, she found that he would hold the price of the restroom until Council met in July. The Village can order the restroom, but first Council must agree to the model they want. When ordering the restroom, the Village can specify that it does not want it until after January 1st, which is the budget year. The vendor said that was fine. The Fiscal Officer also spoke to Steve Balaban, who said that if the Village elected to order the restroom, this would negate the NatureWorks grant. With the grant, it is not permissible to take any action before finding out if the Village received the grant. The Fiscal Officer questioned Balaban about the grant amount of \$150,000 and asked whether this was per grant or per county. Last year it was only \$16,000 for the county. Balaban said he would investigate this, but assumed it was \$150,000 per grant. Berger stated that the Village cannot wait to find out whether it will receive the grant money. The Fiscal Officer said her point was that if the Village planned to order the restroom, it would not qualify for the grant and so there was no reason to engage Balaban. Berger agreed.

Galicki asked if the Fiscal Officer was able to obtain an accurate dollar figure that included site prep for the restroom, potential fees to store the building until the Village is ready to install, etc. The Fiscal Officer explained that the Village would have to select all the options for the restroom, to include color, texture, where the vents will be located, the locks, etc. She referred to a quote previously received from the company and asked the representative if this included the earthwork and he said no. She recalled that there was previous discussion of Village personnel preparing the ground but added that the company could do it for \$6,500. Berger indicated that this figure could be added to the \$111,751 restroom price, equaling \$118,000. The Fiscal Officer asked for clarification as to whether the Parks Committee wanted electricity run to the restroom, and the Mayor said this was a Properties Committee issue. Galicki explained that it involves determining costs for the budget. Berger asked if there was anything additional to the \$118,000, and Cavanagh reminded the committee that the Service Department wanted a well. Berger recalled this was \$12,000 which would bring the total to \$130,000. Running power to the facility could be about \$10,000, which would increase the project cost to \$140,000. Galicki asked about storage fees in the event the Village was not prepared to install it in January, for example. The Fiscal Officer advised that the site must be prepped, which is part of the agreement. She proposed it would be better to have the vendor do the earthwork, so it is prepared to their specifications. Galicki agreed. The Mayor reiterated that this is a Properties Committee issue and not a Finance Committee issue. Berger and Galicki reminded the Mayor it is a money issue and a number is needed for the budget. From a finance perspective, Berger thought this should be a 2024 budget item, and Galicki agreed. The Fiscal Officer advised that the Village would be paying for the restroom when it is received, which would mean November or December. Berger explained that his concern was that the Village would order it and there was the potential for it to be delivered this year, but the money would not be in the budget. The Fiscal Officer provided a detailed explanation of the ordering process and subsequent requirements of the vendor to produce plans according to Ohio's Building Code. It is not known how long the approval process would take for the plans. The vendor thought if the Village ordered it in July, it might be received in November or December.

Berger concluded that the budget number would be \$140,000 and would be presented to Council on July 8th. He further stated that it would be the responsibility of the Parks and Properties Committee to get all the details to the Fiscal Officer to complete the paperwork. The Fiscal Officer added that with all this information, the Village will need a final number from the vendor and ultimately a contract that will require legislation at the July 8th Council meeting. Additionally, it will be necessary to amend the budget.

Berger asked if the salt dome was in the budget for 2024, and the Fiscal Officer explained that \$60,000 was budgeted for engineering. \$86,000 was included for the restroom, but part of it is being used for the solar panels and the Service Department roof. She has a lot of amending to do. The Mayor asked if the Fiscal Officer knew whether the Village was the recipient of the \$155,000 grant for the salt dome. The Fiscal Officer explained that the verbiage on the Senate

Bill 288 Capital Budget funded projects list for Geauga County was ambiguous, and she had not heard back from the Engineer about it.

The Fiscal Officer explained that for the Tax Budget, she only needed to know about the big projects, but unfortunately the Village currently has a lot of big projects, and things are not getting done. She must estimate where the Village's cash balances will be at the end of the year and then estimate what next year's expenses will be before going to the Tax Budget Commission.

Galicki brought up the crosswalk project. The Fiscal Officer said the budget had been amended for the crosswalk. Regarding the cost, the Chief asked if the Engineer should be engaged to prepare bid specs. The Fiscal Officer relayed that the Engineer did not think there was much in the way of bid specs. It is \$33,000, which falls under the requirement to go out to bid. The Chief would handle contacting the contractors for quotes since the money is coming from his budget.

The Fiscal Officer said that tentatively, the Tax Budget Hearing with the county is August 20th. She will confirm a time once it is received.

The Reserve Study would be \$13,500 and can be done quickly, according to the Fiscal Officer. Galicki verified Council did not approved this expenditure yet, and the Fiscal Officer concurred. Galicki supported having this done. Berger suggested presenting it at the July 8th meeting and getting it started before the Street Commissioner left in September. The Mayor verified Russell had used this service and the Fiscal Officer added that they also had done Bainbridge's. Berger indicated these studies should be done every 3-5 years as they are very instructive.

Berger stated that correspondence was received from the county asking the Village to consider extending the abatement of the tax collection for 2025. He asked what the impact would be. The Fiscal Officer planned to reach out to the county to determine the numbers for the different abatement percentage options. The Mayor thought it was \$122,000 the Village did not collect last year. Berger said the counter point is that Income Tax collections went down county wide, although not in South Russell. Galicki suspected the county was anticipating that the State House would be taking no action to help the taxpayers. The Village initially abated last year for one year hoping the State House would take action, but nothing has been done. Berger offered that the Village is \$50,000 ahead in Income Tax collections over last year. The question is whether to keep the abatement the same or taper it. The Mayor said the Village is running about \$600,000 per year extra. The committee reviewed Income Tax for 2019 to 2023 and agreed to recommend that Council keep the abatement for another year for the same amount.

Berger noted that the Mayor had reserve funds on his list. The Mayor said he was concerned about the \$800,000 that the Village will be getting from the Northeast Ohio Area Coordinating Agency (NOACA) for a path because the Village did not know what it was going to do with this money. Berger asked the Mayor to clarify the information and the Mayor stated that the Village received \$1.2 million from NOACA for Bell Rd. and they threw in an additional \$800,000 for a

path. Berger asked if this was a bike path, and the Mayor said they were flexible and did not really say. He thought the idea was that they would love to see a bike path. Galicki clarified that this would be along Bell Rd., and the Mayor said it could be for any path. The Fiscal Officer thought it was along Bell Rd. since the paperwork indicated Bell Road Bike Path. She further recalled that the Mayor had been surprised the Village got since it did not apply for it. Berger offered that there is a limitation on Bell Rd. because there is a point where the road cannot be widened to accommodate a path. The Mayor agreed and said it would be cost prohibitive. Galicki added that the bike path minimums are 10 feet with a buffer area on either side which would be taking up peoples' yards. He thought it was a non-starter. The Mayor wondered whether the Village should get a reserve fund ready for the \$800,000. The Village could always give it back. The Fiscal Officer cautioned against establishing reserve funds and then deciding they were not needed since it had already done that once. Galicki said there was no functional plan for a path anywhere, so he did not see the logic in putting money in a reserved fund just because the Village had it. Practically speaking, where would the path go and how would it impact the property owners? Is there enough room in the right-of-way in the street? There are many questions without answers right now. Berger said he would hate to give the money back and then find out six months from now that they had a project for it, but agreed with the Fiscal Officer that they should not create a reserve fund without a reasonable expectation. Cavanagh asked if it had to be specifically earmarked for Bell Rd., and the Mayor said no. The Fiscal Officer recalled that it did. Berger asked when it would be happening, and the Fiscal Officer replied 2026. Berger proposed referring the matter to the Properties and Parks Committees for a plan once it is clarified that it is not specific to Bell Rd. Once a plan is developed, a reserve fund can be established. The Fiscal Officer added that there is a lot of time involved with engineering the projects, so they should get started. Berger summarized that first, it should be determined if the funds can only be used for Bell Rd. If this is the case, it is a no go. Galicki concurred.

The committee discussed a replacement for the resident member of the Treasury Investment Board. Berger suggested Chuck Hauser. The Mayor said he would contact him.

The Mayor asked for the dates for the fraud training mentioned in her report. She would look into this and added that it was mandatory for every employee and pertains to the legal responsibilities of reporting fraud.

The Fiscal Officer addressed an item on the Mayor's agenda about food and explained that the cost of food is included with each event. If the food is separated out, the actual cost of the event will not be known. Berger proposed creating a line item for each event. The Mayor wanted to do what was easier instead of nickle and diming people over buying donuts and sandwiches for the police and first responders. If they had a food line item, would that be all that was necessary? The Fiscal Officer explained that with Cops and Kids Fishing, for example, it just goes into the fishing line item. Berger added that it is easier from a budgeting standpoint to do it by event, so that is how it will be done.

The Mayor verified that the Fiscal Officer had sent the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) information to the Russell Township Trustees. In August, he planned to ask them for the \$23,100 for the Hemlock culvert. Berger said that at the last Public Utilities Committee meeting, Porter agreed to make the presentation to Russell Township, and Berger asked the Mayor to coordinate with him. Cavanagh added that regardless of their willingness to share the cost, the project would be going forward. The Fiscal Officer clarified that currently, the Village has only applied for the grant and is waiting to find out the results. Additionally, the project itself has not been approved.

Berger adjourned the meeting at 10:48 a.m.

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 1st 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 1st 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 7th 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 29th and may go through August 9th. 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 9th 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.

Finance Committee Meeting

August 15, 2024, 10:00 a.m. Village Hall

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

Visitor: Jerry Bock, Miller Dodson (Reserve Study)

The committee discussed what information Bock would need to conduct the Reserve Study. Galicki explained that historically the Village tended to approach projects with respect to the facilities and the physical plant by attacking immediate needs without a comprehensive plan that anticipated and prioritized the repair/replacement of all the facilities in the short and long term. From the study, the Village would like to see the current state of the physical plant, issues that the Village are facing with it, and the priorities the Village should be utilizing in the coming years to best use taxpayer dollars. Galicki referenced the Miller Dodson Reserve Study for Russell Township and said he viewed it as a tool to strategically look at the township's needs instead of throwing a dart or listening to the person who makes a better argument.

Bock needed to know how detailed the Village wanted the study to be. For example, regarding the interior of the buildings, he would typically provide a general number for renovation, lighting, furniture, and things that will be replaced at a certain time. He would provide a 10-year schedule for interior upgrades. Galicki clarified that Bock would be looking at structural issues, and Bock said he would take a general look at this. He is an architect by trade and will make recommendations if he sees anything troubling. Galicki hoped the study would also incorporate IT infrastructure needs.

Berger suggested using the Russell Township study as the template. He thought the study would not be exactly the way the Village wanted but felt it would serve as a roadmap that could be used to develop a financial plan for dealing with the Village's assets. The Fiscal Officer added that the Village set up two reserve funds with the County Auditor's Office. At the time, they did not know how much should be put aside yearly for large equipment and arbitrarily decided to put \$100,000 per year in the fund. Now, there is a lot of money sitting in the fund that could be used for other things, and she thought this study would help the Village plan properly. The Police Department has a regular schedule for replacing vehicles, but with the Service Department, the Village typically uses the vehicles until they are close to death. The Village needs to get them on a schedule.

Galicki provided Bock with the example of the donated drone vehicle which then needed protection from the weather, so the Village is building a garage for it at the Police Department. However, Galicki questioned the logic of building such a structure onto a building that might need to be replaced. Bock explained that during his study, he will provide lifespans of the buildings. Galicki also cited the situation where in the recent past, a portion of the service building roof was replaced with the rationale that the remainder of the roof was fine, but then within several years it was decided the entire roof needed replacing. He saw the need to standardize. Bock said he would develop a schedule for things like this. The Fiscal Officer asked about creating a cycle for computer equipment as well. Bock said he likes to provide a three-to-five-year budget for purchasing equipment rather than determining replacement of each individual computer in the Village. Berger added that ADP should provide the expected costs because the Village is limited in what it can buy by ADP due to concerns of foreign components, cyber warfare, etc. Bock said his report would just provide a number and a year.

Bock added that facility security will also be covered in his report. He provides a general number for plumbing and electrical. He will also examine the HVAC systems. Berger brought the elevator to Bock's attention for review. Bock reiterated that his main objective is to get what the Village physically has, but if the Village thinks it will need to build something new, he will need to know if he should include a budget for future expansion and wanted specifics. Berger referenced past discussions about building a consolidated facility, and the potential of needing a new Police Department, for example, and whether the Village should consider a separate building or consolidation. These are the types of questions the study should help answer. Bock advised that the Village will be provided a draft of the study that it can edit.

Regarding the Village roads, the Fiscal Officer explained that assessment of the roads is done by the Engineer. Although the main road through the Village is not the Village's responsibility, the traffic light is and was just replaced. Bock clarified that the Village wanted a single report and not divided by department. Berger suggested it be one report with sections. Bock asked about reserve funds and the Fiscal Officer said that Bock should start at zero and not count what is in the current Large Vehicle Reserve fund because this was arbitrarily determined.

The Fiscal Officer reminded the committee the Tax Budget Hearing will be Tuesday, August 19th. She did not anticipate any issues with high balances since the balances are lower projected than in the past. If there are any issues, it would be good to let them know that Miller Dodson has been hired for a reserve study, the salt structure being replace, and Bell Rd. east project. Typically, the Budget Commission reviews the Tax Budget before the hearing and will notify her of any problems. They did not indicate there were any significant issues.

Berger verified the salt structure is now in the 2025 budget. The Fiscal Officer explained that because of the balances, she was only able to put \$550,000 in the budget for it. Hopefully the year-end balances will be higher than anticipated so that amendments can be made in January once the balances are certified. Berger advised that in the original budget, there was a proposal from the Street Department to replace the one-ton truck, which was deferred because of the salt structure. Berger clarified it was originally on the schedule for 2024. If the salt structure will be in 2025. He asked if the one-ton truck should be purchased this year since it is on the schedule. The Fiscal Officer said this was up to Council since it is in the Large Equipment Reserve Fund. Berger's concern was that there was also a salt truck on the schedule for 2026. Berger said the one ton is the smaller truck but will still be \$100,000. The Fiscal Officer explained that the salt structure is estimated at \$775,000. She was only able to put \$550,000 in the Tax Budget because of the balances. Since then, the budget had been amended for the park restroom. She felt it would be wise to just wait until the Village has an actual number for the salt structure since it could come in higher and must be replaced. Berger noted that the Engineer had been authorized to get the drawings so the Village could obtain a hard number quote. They could wait, but his concern is that if they keep backing these things up, there could be a problem with equipment that is not operational or be overloading 2026 if a salt truck also needs to be replaced. The salt truck will be at least in the \$160,000 range. Galicki wondered about the condition of the truck but acknowledged that they would not want to push too many expenses down the pike. Berger said the replacement schedule provided for the one-ton truck to be replaced this year, and the backhoe next year. The FO asked who put this schedule together, and Berger said it was the Street Commissioner. FO said considering the reserve study was literally getting started that day, and would provide a schedule for replacement, her recommendation was to wait until the study results were received. Additionally, knowing that the salt structure will be more than what is currently in the budget and the

Village will also be paving Bell Rd. east next year, it would make sense to wait for the study results. Additionally, there is a new Street Commissioner coming in and he should be allowed to weigh in on any proposed replacement schedule. Galicki shared the Fiscal Officer's concern about the potential costs of the salt structure. The Fiscal Officer added her concern for the cost of Bell Rd. east paving project because prices had skyrocketed since the estimates were provided several years ago. Furthermore, the project must be done in 2025 because that is when the funding will be provided. These are two very large projects and she cautioned it could go bad. Berger concluded that the recommendation of the Finance Committee is to wait until there are better numbers on the salt structure and the Village has the results of the Reserve Study. Berger added that there was not an issue of availability of a truck, so this was not a factor. To his knowledge, the current truck has no issues, so pushing it off six months to a year should not be a problem. However, he wanted to try to maintain the salt truck schedule if possible and not push any of the trucks beyond 20 years.

Galicki asked if funding-wise the Fiscal Officer saw anything for the remainder of this year for which the Village would have trouble covering costs. The Fiscal Officer did not think so. She spoke to the Engineer about completing the Central Retention Basin work and the Bell Rd. east culverts, and he assured her they would be done prior to yearend.

Berger reviewed the Income Tax collection and thought he misspoke at the Council meeting. The Village is actually ahead \$63,000 year to date through July and thought he quoted a higher number. He thought by the end of the year, it would be about \$130,000 ahead of last year. The Fiscal Officer addressed the ongoing issue of the State potentially taking over income tax collections and noted that it is unclear whether the Village would have the authority to review the tax returns and she questioned how they would know if the State was properly taking the money in. Will there be a fee associated with it? She felt it was better for the Village to control it on its own, but every three to four years the State starts the discussion again.

Berger relayed that in the Streets Committee and the Public Utilities Committee meetings, it was revealed that the City of Solon received a letter from the county stating that it was now going to charge the city for maintenance of their share of Route 422. The bill was for \$80,000. They sent a similar notice to Orange Village for Route 422 and Highway 271. The state and county appear to be making an effort to charge the local municipalities for the maintenance of the state roads. For the Village, it is Chillicothe Rd. The push back is that they will take over maintenance of 422 after the state brings it up to state standards. Chillicothe Rd. was discussed by the committees in that there are problems with the paving that was done last year. Currently, the state gives the Village money for salting and cleaning parts of Chillicothe Rd. The Fiscal Officer clarified that the Village gets money from the state for motor vehicle and license plate tax. A certain percentage of it can go into the Village's Street Maintenance fund. 7.5% must go in the State Highway Fund so that if the state ever came to the Village claiming it owes the state money for taking care of the road, the Village could give it to them. The Village used it for replacing the traffic light and justified it by the fact that the Village salts the intersection.

Galicki addressed a request by the Police Chief for administrative help. Galicki proposed that since the Village would already be advertising for a part-time administrative assistant, perhaps it could be a shared position. The Chief wanted a dedicated administrative assistant and is proposing six hours three days a week at \$18 - \$20 per hour. Berger suggested the Safety Committee develop a job description and submit it to HR to determine how to best fill the need. If there is a need, his inclination is to figure out how to combine that need with the one in

Administration for one person for a designated number of hours a week. Galicki concurred and questioned whether two part-time administrative assistants were really needed. Sharing the duties would be a compromise. Berger offered that HR would put the matter on the agenda. There was discussion about determining the job requirements so as to effectively advertise for it as well as budgetary considerations.

Berger adjourned the meeting at 10:54 a.m.

Finance Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 12, 2024, 10:30 a.m. Village Hall

Present: Finance Chairman Berger, Council Member Canton, Council Member Galicki, Mayor Koons, Chief Rizzo

Berger called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m.

The Fiscal Officer provided the committee with the monthly credit card invoice for review. She reported that the budget worksheets were distributed to the departments the previous day and she requested they be returned by October 3rd. She explained the process to the new Street Commissioner. The Budget Work Session is on October 7th at 5:30 p.m. Food will be served at 5:00 p.m.

The end of month cash balance was \$3.9 million. The balances will decrease from this point until year end. Per the Engineer, the Village will receive the road program bill before the end of the year. She is still trying to determine when Mr. Excavator will complete the Central Retention Basin work. There is approximately \$24,000 in work that needs to be completed on it with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money. The Engineer is trying to determine the completion date.

Berger recalled that the County Budget Commission had indicated the Village should maintain 20% for year end balances. He said that in total, the Village currently has more than 20%. The Fiscal Officer agreed that it was in totality, but not by fund. Berger asked if it is difficult to move the money to achieve 20%, and the Fiscal Officer explained that every fund is limited. In a Village, the income tax money goes into the General Fund. At Tax Budget time, she is told what the departments want for the following year, and she figures out the projected expenses against the levy monies to determine how much must be pulled from the General Fund for each of the other funds to cover the costs. At the first swipe of the budget, they must work within those parameters. This is why cash balances come into play. If there are cash balances in those funds, the budget can be amended in January. Berger asked if it is possible to move money from the General Fund to another fund or vice versa before this time. The Fiscal Officer said it can move money from the General Fund to other funds, but the Budget Commission wants a specific percentage in each fund to begin the year. This is what she tries to do at the beginning of the year. She cannot amend it now since it has been approved. The Fiscal Officer said now that she knows they want to see 20% in each fund, she will attempt to transfer money accordingly. She addressed the salt structure and explained that although they know it will be expensive, she was only able to put aside a certain amount for it and they will have to rely on cash balances for the remainder. She concluded that the Village needs to complete the projects that are budgeted for to show the Budget Commission the Village is doing what it said it will. The reserve study will come into play with it as well.

The Fiscal Officer suggested that the Village try to get the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) grant money for the Hemlock culvert instead of going ahead and funding it on its own. Berger explained that the Engineer communicated that he received a favorable response from OPWC and \$92,000 is currently projected. The Engineer must complete the full application now. Berger

explained that with this \$92,000 grant, the Village would receive \$46,000 and \$23,000 from Russell Township, leaving \$23,000 for the Village to pay. The target is July 1, 2025, for project completion.

The Fiscal Officer advised that the Village received \$8,300 in interest last month. She thought the Treasury Investment Board should meet with Meeder Investments since interest rates are projected to come down over the next year. Short and long-term investments were discussed.

Berger asked for the status of ADP, and the Fiscal Officer concluded that it is just a different way of doing things. The Chief expressed issues with ADP with outside vendors installing software. He expressed additional issues with delays with shared documents. The Fiscal Officer reported that she and the Administrative Assistant now have the Adobe software, and the legislation was mailed to the company. Berger suggested that the Fiscal Officer and Chief keep a daily log to track the issues with ADP to facilitate a meeting with them. The Chief added that it would be helpful for he and the Fiscal Officer to have some level of facilitator status so that they can add programs and/or work with the vendors so they can bypass the process of creating a call ticket and appointment. Berger suggested meeting in 45 days to discuss this with ADP. Galicki speculated that the Village should not anticipate being given this sort of authority since it was that very situation that led to intrusions with the Water Department system. The Fiscal Officer noted that the real difficulty is when dealing with outside vendors because it is necessary to set up joint meetings because ADP which wants to watch what the vendor is doing. Berger concluded that it is necessary to articulate to ADP that better response time is needed to resolve these particular issues.

Berger asked how the reserve study evaluation went, and the Fiscal Officer had not heard back yet.

The Mayor said that the Village's CVD channel costs \$392,000 and the Village pays 6% of that which is 6% of the Village's calls. \$88,000 is the Village's fair share for the channel. The Mayor explained his math, but Berger noted that 6% of \$392,000 was not \$88,000. The Mayor said he would look again.

Regarding Cintas, the Fiscal Officer verified that it is being addressed by Streets Committee. Berger concurred that they have it until they reach a recommendation. Then the ordinance will be amended for the contract.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

Joint Finance and Safety Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 12, 2024, 9:00 a.m. Village Hall

Present: Finance Chairman Berger, Safety Chairman Canton, Council Member Galicki,
Police Chief Rizzo, Mayor Koons, Fiscal Officer

The Mayor explained that the Chagrin Valley Dispatch (CVD) Executive Committee met on Tuesday, September 10th, and the recommendation was for 32 different units to take half of the administrative costs. \$22,184.72 is the total cost divided in half for each community. The total cost for administration is \$709,911.02 and this was divided by 32 entities. He explained how the communities are grouped into channels for police and fire. The change that is occurring is due to inequalities that occurred when new groups joined CVD. For Gates Mills, Woodmere, Moreland Hills, Hunting Valley, and Bentleyville, costs are going down, but when it comes to South Russell, the costs are going up 48% or \$28,752, which is the big change. It is just equalizing what was done. He asked the Chief to explain the Village's history with CVD. The Chief said over the years, there have been minor fluctuations. In 2024, it is \$59,000. He expressed confusion about how the Village ended up with a 48% increase. In examining the activity on the channel #6, with the exception of Chagrin Falls Township and Bentleyville, South Russell has the third least amount of calls on that channel. The Chief asked CVD for clarification about why the Village was seeing an increase when everyone else on the channel who had more call volume than the Village decreased. He did not get an answer and did not understand if it is because of the new formula that was created and perhaps the Village was paying much less than it should have. The decrease he noted in the other communities on the channel totaled about \$98,100. The total number of increases equals about \$103,000. He wondered if there was a model that evenly applied a smaller increase, which would be a much easier pill to swallow. He did not understand how they landed on South Russell for one of the biggest increases. The Fiscal Officer asked if call volume was taken into account. The Mayor stated that call volume was part of the formula. The Chief observed that on the first version of the formula, the admin costs were \$44,369.44 per agency. They cut that in half and made it 50%. They took the balance and formulated it into the percentage of call volume that each agency had. In looking at the Village's call volume, the only municipalities lower are Bentleyville and Chagrin Falls Township. He did not understand the logic. He asked CVD to double check the numbers and formula, and he verified that this was the model that was being proposed. It is his understanding that this proposal will be taken to all the mayors next month for a final decision. The Mayor said that would occur next Wednesday. The Chief asked the Mayor if he thought it would pass with all 32 of the communities. The Mayor said he thought it would pass because it was the best effort to make it fair. There are some glitches, to include South Russell. They will have to go back and look at some individual situations, but the best thing will be for the communities to get it approved so budgets can be made. 2025 will be spent correcting some issues that may come up. He added that this has always been the best possible use of the Village's money. They have

looked long and hard at different cities and found that it is not exclusively call volume. It will pass and then there will be adjustments made. Perhaps the Village had been underpaying.

The Chief explained that in 2013 – 2015, it is what it was. As CVD continued to grow and other communities were included, deals were worked just to get them to come over and now they are paying the price for the acquisitions. Another thing that plays into the mix is that CVD purchased a new software program that they were convinced was the solution to everyone's problems, but some of the agencies declined to go with the program due to its complexities, to include South Russell and Euclid. The program cost CVD quite a few million dollars and that has a substantial impact. He asked if taking a three-year approach to this could be considered instead of going from \$59,000 to \$88,000? The Mayor said it had not been proposed and that there was a time crunch since budget numbers are needed and this was the best they could come up with. A lot of people are happy with it. He concluded that this would be a pretty good solution to get us into 2025 and then take another look at it. The process has been going on for months.

Canton asked if it was a majority vote. The Mayor concurred and said each community has one vote. Canton thought it would make more sense to base the charges on the call volume. There was discussion about the history and how the situation came to be. The Fiscal Officer recalled that the Village was assured in the beginning with CVD that over time as more agencies joined, the costs would come down or at least not increase. The Chief agreed and added that the argument is that over time, the Village had saved a lot of money.

Berger asked if there were any complaints about the quality of service, and the Chief said no. Berger concluded that this was strictly a financial consideration. He understood that there may have been inequities, but Council is responsible to the people of South Russell. A 48% increase is untenable. They can discuss what can be done to change the proposal that has been presented, or they can talk about other options. Canton asked if CVD had a monopoly. Berger explained that the Village can go back to Geauga County Dispatch, which costs the Village nothing. There are other complications, but that would be a way to save \$88,000. The Chief explained that Chagrin Valley Fire Department (CVFD) is still dispatched by CVD. Even if the police pulled out of CVD, the Village would be paying about \$69,000 for fire only with this model, which would still be an increase to what is currently being paid. The only way to get out completely would be to have the Village's fire contract with Bainbridge or Russell Township. Canton asked which of the two fire departments has the best staff, equipment, etc. The Chief said that Bainbridge would be his first thought since they are well staffed. But the Village would also have to consider response time. Canton asked when the CVFD contract ended, and the Chief explained it was at the end of 2025. The Fiscal Officer added that the projected budget for 2025 for CVFD is \$531,000.

The Mayor suggested that they should vote for the CVD proposal to get started for 2025, which would give the Village a year to consider alternatives. Berger clarified that the Mayor was

suggesting that the Village vote for it today and ‘trust me’, we will make this right at some point in the future. He did not know how you do business that way. Galicki added that it is disturbing that the Chief could not get an explanation as to what was behind the increase for the Village. The Chief pointed out that with the second version of the plan, it appears that the Village is in line with the other call counts, but somehow, the Village is one of the most negatively impacted communities. Canton observed that there was no distinction between the communities based on affluence. The Chief explained that if the model was strictly based on call volume, a large municipality like Euclid would be charged \$3 million and would leave the group. The Chief discussed some of the other elements of the formula and concluded that it is terribly complex.

The Fiscal Officer asked about the software to which the Chief referred and verified it had been approved by the Council of Government (COG) but was not being used by some of the communities.

The potential for additional future increases was discussed, to include considering the impact of larger communities leaving the group. Berger proposed approaching CVFD and expressing the Village’s dissatisfaction with the CVD increase and the potential for the Village to seek other services with both CVFD and CVD. Galicki noted that the Village is one of the only municipalities with the flexibility to leave because Geauga County Dispatch is an option. Many of the others are connected to Cuyahoga County and would have to go back to having their own dispatch.

The Fiscal Officer clarified with the Chief and Mayor that the CVD is an annual contract.

Galicki asked the Chief to provide a history of the Village with CVD and the original benefits. The Chief explained that Geauga County did not have technical advances when CVD was created. They have since updated their system and are more equal to CVD. To change over would involve a software change, but not equipment change so there would be no expenses. The radio system is already the same.

Galicki asked if any of the other municipalities involved in the change are balking, and the Chief said Chagrin Falls Township is suffering the most. The Chief asked the Mayor if he knew of other communities that were unhappy, and the Mayor said that the vote with the Executive Committee was 4 to 3. The Chief asked who this consisted of, and the Mayor explained it was Solon, Euclid, South Russell, and Independence that voted for it. Canton verified the Mayor was on the committee, and Galicki observed that the Mayor was the determining vote. The Mayor agreed, and Galicki observed that he could have voted the other way. Canton asked the Mayor what his thought process was in voting as he did, and the Mayor said it was because it is September, and this is the best effort that their people have been able to develop, and they should go with it knowing that there is a year to look back. He knew Highland Hills was screwed up and maybe South Russell was too, and they can go back and correct it. Canton asked what the next step would have been had the vote been different. The Mayor thought there would have just been a percentage increase for everybody, like a 7% increase and then they would worry about it

in 2025. Berger said that 7% sounded really good compared to 48%. The Mayor said he was just pulling that out of the cloud. Berger continued that even if it were 10%, it still sounded better than 48%. Given what was presented, Galicki asked the Mayor what his determining factor was to vote as he did. The Mayor said it was to get it to move on and have a decision made now because it was better for most communities.

Galicki was concerned about the lack of explanation of how CVD arrived at the figure it did for South Russell. He thought it seemed evasive. There was further discussion about the elements of the formula and admin costs. Berger did not like the flat admin fee but noted that this was what they were proposing, and he did not think there would be a flexible proposal. The Mayor said they were very willing to find something to help 32 different units and this was the best at this time. The Chief observed that in looking at the spreadsheet, the costs of 17 municipalities will be dropping. 14 will be increasing, and of those 14, some are small increases. If those communities decide to take it, it brings the vote closer to half. Berger asked if there were concerns that Euclid would leave CVD because of the proposed increase, and the Mayor said no that it was still a good deal for them. The biggest complaint was from John Finley of Chagrin Falls Township because they are facing a 966% increase. Berger expressed sympathy for them, but stressed his focus was with the Village of South Russell. The Mayor thought the original six was out of whack in terms of Chagrin Falls Township and South Russell and needed to be looked at. Berger questioned whether the Village would have gone with CVD in the first place had they known the numbers were not correct in 2013, and the Chief explained that the numbers were right. Berger pointed out that the Mayor was saying that the pricing was out of whack from the beginning and that the Village had been underpaying. The Mayor said that 11 years ago, it looked like a good deal.

Galicki acknowledged the Mayor's concern for the greater good for other communities. If the Village were put in a position to increase taxes to support this, the argument would be that South Russell would be seeing an increase, but it would benefit all these other communities and make it fairer. Would this be something the voters would buy into? He thought Chagrin Falls Township was doing the right thing by being vocal. The Chief pointed out that Chagrin Falls had no other options, and this could break them.

Canton brought up the implications of property revaluation and tax increases. Galicki noted the compensation package for dispatchers was \$95,000, which was more than some police and fire.

Berger asked if this was a matter of a vote to recommend to Council to accept the proposal. The Fiscal Officer advised that there would be no Council meeting prior the CVD members voting on the proposal unless Council held a special meeting. Canton concluded that the Village would be stuck with it for a year and had that time to make other decisions. Berger questioned whether the Village was stuck with it for a year. The Village can go back to CVD and say the Village does not accept this and they should come up with a better answer. Berger further stated that Council should have had the vote to ask the Mayor to vote according to Council's wish before the last

Executive meeting. He thought Council would have gone the other way. As representatives of this Village, Council has a responsibility to the people here. His vote is no, he did not accept the proposal.

The Fiscal Officer explained that when she and the Chief went to the CVD meeting a couple of weeks ago when a different formula version was presented, prior to the Executive Committee vote, there were enough vocal people that it was not accepted, and a new version was developed. It is now up to the mayors to decide whether to accept it, and if it is not accepted, then another plan will need to be developed. If it passes, the Village would be stuck with it.

The Chief suggested that a plan that allowed the communities to ease into the increase might be beneficial.

The Mayor thought the Village was stuck with it for six months. The Fiscal Officer asked for clarification, and the Mayor explained that if the Village were to leave CVD, it would have to provide a six-month notice. The Fiscal Officer said that it is not about leaving CVD. She explained that currently, the Executive Committee passed the version that will be presented to the group. If the overall group passes it, then the Village is stuck for a year and Council can then choose what will be done. The alternative is that the group will not pass it and then the Finance Committee of COG must come back with another option. The Mayor thought they would come back with a percentage to get through 2025. Berger reiterated that this would provide a year to have discussions with Bainbridge about fire services. If the Mayor said it would be a 7-10% increase, he would live with that. Then again, Bainbridge could say they would charge \$1 million per year for services. Berger concluded that the Village should push back against the 48% increase. Canton suggested negotiating with CVFD to subtract a portion of the increase from the current contract price. The Fiscal Officer explained that those are two different entities. Right now, the options are to accept the proposal or not accept it. There is the option of holding a Special Council meeting to discuss the recommendation of the Safety and Finance Committees.

Canton felt that it is important for the voters to know that this increase is being shoved down the Village's throat and not surprise them with the increase. Galicki agreed with Berger, but wished he knew for sure what the alternative would be to the proposal if it did not pass. He did not think the Village received an adequate explanation. With Council's responsibility to the taxpayers, he took issue with telling them that the Village voted for the increase because it was fairer to other people. The Chief proposed having the CVD director attend a special meeting so Council can ask for clarification.

Galicki stated that most of the increased costs proposed for the Village and for Chagrin Falls Township are the administrative costs. This may be the factor that is off because it cannot be justified with call volume or other formulaic ways. However, this has not been articulated to the Village.

Berger suggested a Special Council meeting to discuss the matter with the CVD Director. He added that the Village's dispatch and Fire/EMS services options can also be conveyed to CVD. The Mayor proposed having the six Chagrin Valley entities come for a presentation. The Chief pointed out that these other municipalities are not affected. Berger stated it is an open meeting and all are welcome, but it is a South Russell issue since it is the residents who are paying. Monday, September 16th at 7:00 p.m. was proposed for a meeting.

Berger further offered that a phase in of a certain percentage increase per year over four years would be entertained. The Fiscal Officer reviewed how CVFD did this.

The Chief presented a five-year Axon agreement for body and in-car cameras combined with cloud service for \$26,000 per year. After the fifth year when a new contract is signed, the body camera amount doubles to \$196,000 for the next five years because the quote he received is an acquisition quote since they are new in the game. Berger noted this was a 50% increase. The Chief continued that the second option would be to go through CVD as the distributor. There would be one-time costs of about \$69,880 and then a subscription fee of \$8,295 per year. This equates to \$395 per device. Over a five-year period, the recurring costs is \$43,000. The final quote is from Motorola Direct. It is a five-year plan. The body cameras are \$14,900 per year and \$2,440 per year. The five-year total would be about \$141,000. The best deal would be with CVD, with the second option being Motorola. Berger asked about the life expectancy of the equipment and the Chief responded five to seven years. With the CVD model, Berger verified that new equipment would need to be purchased after five to seven years, and the Chief concurred. This would be another \$75,000. Berger observed that CVD would be \$21,000 per year. Axon would be \$26,000 per year, and Berger asked who would own the equipment. The Chief said that the Village would and explained that with both Motorola and Axon, the Village would get an automatic refresh of equipment after five years. The only difference with CVD is that the Village would have to pay for the equipment up front where the other vendors are financing it over the life of the contract. Given the current issues with CVD, Berger asked how this contract ties in, and the Chief explained that if the Village left CVD, it would redirect its uploads to Motorola instead of CVD. The Village would not have a contract with CVD and would be free to go anywhere for cloud storage. The annual subscription cost would then be with Motorola. It would cost \$20,000 for licenses. Motorola's cloud fees are substantially more than CVD. Berger asked when a decision needed to be made. The Chief thought it would be early next year, and Berger concluded that by that time the CVD issue would have been decided. The Chief proposed that the Village go with CVD and said it would be an easy switch if the Village left CVD. Berger noted that it would be necessary to put a line item in the budget for the equipment. Berger asked if there was an option to purchase the equipment upfront with Motorola and then just have the subscription fee. The Chief did not know, but reminded the committee that after five years the equipment was refreshed. If the equipment was still in good shape at the end of five years, the Village could continue with just the server license with Motorola. The Chief offered that all the agreements offer a five-year warranty on the equipment.

The current equipment, which the department has had for six years, is having issues. Berger concluded that a decision could be deferred but should be brought up in the budgeting process. Berger proposed putting \$70,000 in the budget for equipment and \$10,000 for subscriptions on an annual basis for five years. It will have to be revised if they go with a different plan.

Berger adjourned the joint meeting at 10:31 a.m.

Finance Committee Meeting
Thursday, October 17, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Present: Chairman Berger, Council Member Galicki, Fiscal Officer Romanowski,
Police Chief Rizzo, LT Pocek, Mayor

Berger called the meeting to order. The Chief advised that the Safety Committee discussed the situation with Chagrin Valley Dispatch (CVD) with the increase in costs. He and LT Pocek have been in conversation with Geauga County Dispatch as well as the Finance Director of CVD. If the Police Department left CVD to go to Geauga County, it could save the Village \$45,000 per year. The Police Department would be dispatched by Geauga County for free. This option has been available, but in the past the county's technology was not sufficient. However, that has changed and since CVD has gone to the Motorola system, it has been an epic failure. It is a multimillion-dollar program that is not working out for the Village and many other agencies, which have gone to other records management systems. The Chief suggested moving police services only to Geauga County. This does not mean the Village needs to change anything with fire services. If the Village is happy with Chagrin Valley Fire Department (CVFD), it can continue to use it except dispatch fees would basically be cut in half. Currently, the Village is paying \$59,000 per year for both police and fire. The Village is slated to go up to almost \$90,000 for 2025. Taking the \$45,000 out, the fire only fee would go down to \$48,000. The Chief further explained he had met with the Sheriff, Chief Deputy, and the IT person and they are very much entertaining the situation. The service has always been there, and whenever the Village is ready, it can come aboard. They are welcoming the Village with open arms and will be sending the Village a letter to let Council know of their intent to provide services for the police. The Chief further advised that it should be a smooth transition. Currently, all cell phone calls already go to Geauga County when 911 is called. Then it gets transferred to CVD. With the police being part of the Geauga County dispatch, when a 911 call comes in, they can immediately dispatch police before fire even gets the callout. It will be much more efficient in getting the calls sooner. They have used their software for many years. Half of the police department has utilized this software previously and can train the new people in a reasonable amount of time. There have been a lot of software issues with CVD recently making extraction of data very difficult. He suspected that part of this was because CVD did not want the municipalities to see some of the information like the length of time to put a call out. The Chief thought they would see improved times under the county. Additionally, other services include payment of monthly subscription fees for radios to the state. The mobile data air cards would not be paid, but it is at a reduced rate and the budget would remain the same. The Village would not have to pay for software, which it is currently doing through CVD. It also raises the IT issue. The police could drop CVD since it would not be using the CVD system and could implement ADP so the Village as a whole would be on the same network. He recognized the struggle with ADP, but also acknowledged that the Village was covered by cyber security.

Berger asked if there would be any additional costs, and the Chief said no. He discussed the savings which included \$40,000 for dispatch, \$5,000 for software, and additional fees in the dispatch contract for mobile data fees. This would be transferred to the county and the Village would be billed about \$100 per month to access LEADS. It would mean great savings, better service, technology, and Geauga County already does the expungement orders, sealing of cases, etc. He also shared that the county will be going to the program the police currently use for tickets and accidents so now the tickets will be written in the cruiser and electronically

transmitted to Geauga County Court, and it will not be necessary to send an officer up to court a couple of days a week.

Galicki relayed a discussion the Safety Committee had about the breakdown of the savings. The Chief verified with the CVD Finance Director what the savings would be. Currently, to keep CVFD, the Village's current rate is \$59,393 which would drop to \$47,914 and all police services would be at no cost. Galicki added that the discussion also included that the quality of fire services in the area are not all equal. There is a wide disparity in professionalism, response times, as well as training levels. He thought that the Village is currently engaged with the most professional of available fire services. He was glad that the option provided by the Chief allows the Village to remain with CVFD. The Chief added that the police have had a great working relationship with CVFD, which will continue. Galicki added that Chief Zupan reached out to the Safety Committee Chair Canton and wants to discuss the matter with him as well.

Berger asked what the downside would be to the change. The Chief explained that the Village is under contract with CVD and there is a 6-month notification clause to pull out. It would still be necessary to pay for the IT and dispatch costs through April. Galicki offered that the question had not been asked of CVD to see if they would make an exception. The Safety Committee discussed that CVD did not give the Village six months to review the contract before instituting new charges that have a significant impact on the community. The Chief will be engaging the Solicitor to see if it is possible to negotiate the terms. Furthermore, the Chief advised that after talking with the Sheriff and the Chief Deputy yesterday, Chagrin Falls Police Department inquired about Geauga County Sheriff dispatching for Chagrin Falls, but the Sheriff declined since they are not in Geauga County. South Russell is the only county entity not currently dispatched by Geauga County. Berger concluded that from a finance perspective, there is no downside. He proposed making a recommendation at the October 28th Council meeting to move the Police. Assuming there is no objection by Council, Berger advised the Chief to prepare for the change, and the Solicitor will be engaged to address the 6-month clause. Berger asked how quickly the switch could happen and verified it would be within 30 days. The Chief concurred and clarified that even if the Village is stuck with the six months, going forward the money being saved will be significant. By the end of this decade, the Village will be looking at paying \$100,000 per year otherwise. Galicki asked the Chief to whom Nick Diccio was accountable other than the mass conglomeration. The Chief responded that he and the Fiscal Officer attended the CVD Finance meeting and there were a lot of unhappy people whose hands were tied because they had nowhere else to go. Galicki noted that the Village had the deciding vote with the CVD proposal, and the Chief agreed that this was unfortunate.

The Chief advised that the committee discuss making a recommendation at the next Council meeting. Berger requested that he get the Solicitor involved with negotiating the terms. The Chief asked the Fiscal Officer to forward a copy of the agreement. Galicki wondered what would happen with the additional costs that were to have been paid by the Village, and the Chief said the \$40,000 will be broken up in between the remaining 31 agencies.

The Fiscal Officer suggested that if the Chief could have all the information for the Budget Work Session, it can be discussed there with action to follow at the Regular Council meeting. The Chief advised that he included both options for Council to compare.

There was further discussion about the benefits of going with Geauga County.

Berger reviewed that the Cintas agreement issue is being handled by the Streets Committee and Solicitor. He also understood that the Street Commissioner would be making a budget request at the Budget Work Session that eliminates Cintas and goes to the purchase of uniforms. Galicki said his understanding is that the uniform purchase would only be for the three workers and the Street Commissioner does not intend to wear the uniform. The Fiscal Officer concurred. Galicki added that this would mean the Street Commissioner would not get the allowance. She concurred and added that another issue with the Cintas agreement that was signed is that it was for four uniforms.

Regarding Meeder Investments, the Fiscal Officer advised that interest rates would be going down over the next year and the suggestion is to lock in. Eileen Stanic will be coming to the Treasury Investment Board meeting on November 7th. Berger concluded that the curve had flipped and returned to normal, so longer term interest rates are higher than short term. Globally, interest rates are going down. He anticipated that it would be Meeder's recommendation to consider longer term investments. The Fiscal Officer advised she is in the process of compiling a cash balance history report for Stanic so that she can make a recommendation.

The payment for the Reserve Study is due per the agreement, although the company will be making the revisions provided by the Village. Berger and Galicki thought it was a good first cut. Berger wanted Department Heads to verify the information provided in the report. The cost of the road programs, paving of Bell Rd. east, and reserve funds were discussed. Berger wondered if the Village roads were included as an asset in the Reserve Study. Galicki did not think they needed to be since the Engineer already conducts evaluations of the roads. Berger expressed the need to identify this separation for future Reserve Studies and felt that keeping everything else under one study made sense. He noted that a reserve fund of \$274,000 was recommended, and Berger concluded that the Village could have multiple reserve funds, but they should equal the recommended amount. The committee discussed the best way to identify and create these reserve funds.

The Fiscal Officer relayed that she needed new financial software. Russell Township uses the state software, and she plans to meet with the Fiscal Officer to see how it works. Additionally, Russell Twp. has had the reserve study done and has set up reserve funds, which the Fiscal Officer will inquire about.

Berger thought that once the Finance Committee creates the structure of how to deal with the reserve study, then it could be turned over to the Properties Committee for implementation and prioritization. Berger stated that a memo should be generated stating that revisions to the reserve study are due by December 1st.

Regarding the finance software, the Fiscal Officer explained that it was installed a couple of years before she started with the Village and has not been upgraded. Tyler Technologies will provide the new software, but it would be necessary to learn a new software system. Most of the people in Ohio have UAN, which is the state's software program. It would make her reporting easier at the end of the year. The problem would be in taking every line item and getting it into the new system. It would be time consuming initially but will ultimately be easier. As previously mentioned, the Fiscal Officer will observe the software use at Russell Twp. and plans to meet with the Gates Mills Fiscal Officer, who had gone through the transition. The Fiscal Officer will also do a demonstration with Tyler Technology to get the prices on their new software. Berger asked if the County Auditor had a recommendation, and the Fiscal Officer explained that almost everybody uses UAN, which would mean that she would have help if needed. The cost of the software would be about \$4,500/year, which includes the computer and printer, and must be acceptable to ADP since everyone has it. The software is specifically installed on the computer provided, but the Fiscal Officer could use the computer for everything else as well.

The current costs for Tyler Technologies are in the \$4,000 range, so there would not be much difference with the state software. Regarding the timing of the transition, the Fiscal Officer explained that a decision should be made before the end of the year, because the state is currently booked into February or March before the Village could get online. Berger asked for a recommendation from the Fiscal Officer by the November Finance Committee meeting.

The Fiscal Officer proposed that ultimately, the new part-time Administrative Assistant could use her computer once she is provided with the UAN computer. In the meantime, she proposed that the part-time Administrative Assistant use one of the old computers slated for sale on GovDeals. Berger thought this made sense. The Fiscal Officer further discussed the breaking down of the charges involved with sharing the part-time Administrative Assistant between the different departments. It would be easiest to put it through the General Fund rather than tracking the time she spent with each department. Berger agreed, but for tracking purposes, it should be reflected on her timesheet.

The Fiscal Officer described the CIMS Cloud Cemetery software add-on that would enable the public to search specific South Russell Village Cemetery records. It would cost \$500 per year. Berger asked if it would be for both cemeteries, and the Fiscal Officer explained it would only be for the new one because the Village does not have records for Rarick Cemetery other than names. This list is available on the Village website. There is a lot of money in the Cemetery Fund, but this money can only be used on the South Russell Village Cemetery. Therefore, this expense can come out of this fund. The cemetery fund balances will be used at some point in the future for expansion.

Since the Village will no longer be doing a physical newsletter, the Fiscal Officer reached out to two companies, one of which does text messaging to the public and the other does an app. The text messaging initially sounded promising as they are able to get about 50% of the phone numbers of the residents. It is possible through this system to have back and forth communication. However, after reviewing the information about the app, it has many great features, but it must be downloaded onto the residents' phones. It allows the Village to distribute information five or six ways according to the chosen settings. The app costs \$4,300 per year and the text option is \$6,500 per year with a three-year agreement and the requirement to post the company's logo on the Village's website. The Fiscal Officer spoke to Council Member Bell, who is more tech savvy, who will help with reviewing the options. Ultimately, regardless of which option the Village chooses, it would be using the money formerly earmarked for the newsletter. Berger thought getting Village residents to download an app would be challenging. The Fiscal Officer has further questions for the vendors and anticipates Bell will help provide clarity.

Berger addressed Health Insurance. The Fiscal Officer explained that the Village has been with Medical Mutual for a long time. The initial quoted rate, which is based on the health of the employees, was 7.48%. Through inquiries by the Village's broker, Medical Mutual said they would possibly reconsider this rate if the Village agreed not to shop other vendors. Knowing that Medical Mutual has historically been lower than anyone else, the Fiscal Officer instructed the broker to see what Medical Mutual would offer. They came back with a renewal rate of 4.48%. If the Village chooses to shop, Medical Mutual can go back to the rate 7.48%. She further explained that the deductibles have gone up over time and in 2024, they were \$3,180 for a single person, and \$6,380 for a family. Of the \$3,180, the Village gives the employee \$2,000, so out of pocket, they would have \$1,180. For the \$6,380, the Village provides \$4,000. Federal law changes this year, and the new deductible amounts will be \$3,500 and \$7,000. The employees will be responsible for an additional and \$320

and \$620 respectively. The renewal is due December 1st. Berger said HR will make a recommendation at the next Council meeting.

The Fiscal Officer provided the State Employment Relations Board (SERB) report to the Committee as well as the Finance Committee. She also provided an analysis of historic insurance increases and salary increases for the last few years.

Berger reviewed an agenda list provided by the Mayor. The Mayor conveyed there is a problem with the committees and departments not doing the work that needs to be done in preparation for the Budget Work session. The Mayor scheduled a Special Streets Committee meeting for this purpose. The Fiscal Officer offered to attend committee meetings next year to help with this issue.

The Mayor noted that on the minutes of the County Budget Commission Meeting, Mike Carroll was listed as having attended, and he asked the Fiscal Officer to notify them of their error.

Municipal Income Tax collection by the State was listed as an agenda item by the Mayor. He said he would look into it next Thursday at the Ohio Municipal League (OML) Conference. The Fiscal Officer relayed her experience in dealing with the state about a tax refund where very little information was provided to her as the Tax Administrator for the Village, where CCA is forthcoming with pertinent information.

The Mayor stated that Galicki's comment about the burn training should have been made at the Finance Committee meeting and not at a public meeting. Galicki explained that he was segueing off a discussion about having a burn in the park. He was aware that the Village planned to send some people to the training, and he did not think it inappropriate to ask if anything was gleaned from it. Furthermore, from the Finance Committee perspective, if the Village is paying for people to go to training, they either have an obligation to go and/or offer that training to another employee, Council member, etc. Someone seemed to have dropped the ball on this, but how was he to know that nobody went to the training? He thought the Mayor's comment that it should have been addressed at the Finance Committee was out of order. The Mayor disagreed. Galicki pointed out that the Mayor had prior knowledge that no one went, and perhaps he thought it was an embarrassment to whomever was supposed to go. All he was saying was that the Village paid for the training, and it is a waste of money if no one goes. The Village has a responsibility to the taxpayer to ensure that if the Village is paying for training, someone attends. It does not appear to have been a priority and could have been offered to a plethora of people who could have attended.

Berger adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Finance Committee Meeting
November 12, 2024, 10:00 a.m. Village Hall

Present: Chairman Berger, Council Member Galicki, Fiscal Officer Romanowski,
and Police Chief Rizzo

The committee discussed the 2025 Budget. Berger stated that if the Village will be following the guidelines of the county at 20%, the simple answer is to defer the large equipment purchases out of the Street Department for a year. The Fiscal Officer explained that the Village budgets by fund. This is not one of the funds that would be below the 20%. Capital projects are only funded for projects, so there is no need to worry about the 20% in those funds. This applies to funds like the Street Maintenance, Operating, and Police. The committee discussed end of year balances and projects that would be encumbered to next year which included the park restroom, police garage, and the crosswalk. The Chief relayed that the tornado siren project may be completed this year. It will be approximately \$5,820.

Berger asked whether they would be able to accomplish having the 20% threshold in each fund across the board. The Fiscal Officer did not think this was possible, but said there would be money to carry over from the General Fund. Parks and Recreation typically is funded as needed, and Safety is the fund that is only at about 6%. The Operating Fund is at 19%. She further explained that these percentages include her amendments eliminating the proposed studies. These can be discussed further when the end of year balances are known. The Large Equipment Fund is a reserve fund, and the Village is committed to putting \$100,000 aside for five years. There is one more year for that. Technically, the Service Department could get its equipment, but what would happen if the salt storage structure came in at \$775,000 or \$1 million and the Village did not have it? It is possible to close the reserve fund and use it for the salt structure. Furthermore, the Fiscal Officer had no quotes which would be used just for budgeting. It will still be necessary to go out to bid. Galicki thought the salt structure was the biggest issue, and a valid estimate was needed. Design and size were discussed, and Berger clarified that the question was whether the price differential justified going smaller. Until they have some numbers, they cannot decide on the size. Galicki asked if the design included the exterior wings, and Berger said it did. Galicki asked about the design with regard to placement of the proposed storage containers, and the Fiscal Officer said it was in the design, the plans of which cost the Village \$19,000 from CT Consultants. The Fiscal Officer stated that she was only able to budget \$550,000 for it so if it comes in at \$775,000, the \$400,000 from the Large Equipment reserve fund could possibly be used. Berger asked for clarification between reserve funds and restricted funds. The Fiscal Officer explained that all funds are restricted, and reserve funds are created for very specific purposes that allow the Village to put money aside for large purchases. Currently, there is only \$550,000 in the budget for the salt building and the Service Department wants \$325,000 in Large Equipment. If the salt structure comes in at \$800,000, the \$325,000 could help. Berger said that although delaying the purchase of the large equipment for a year messes up the replacement schedule, the rebuilding of the salt structure will only occur once in their lifetime. In 2026, they can get back on schedule. Galicki concurred. Berger thought that the Village had a reasonable explanation to the County Auditor as to why the Large Equipment reserve fund needed to be closed if it's necessary. The Fiscal Officer further

advised that depending on the year-end balances, it would be possible to amend the budget and put it in later.

The Fiscal Officer verified that the committee agreed with taking the proposed CT studies out of the budget at this time, and Berger said that until they know more, these will remain wish list items. He proposed making a list of wish list items that did not make it into the budget and the dollar totals.

The Fiscal Officer asked the Chief to explain his proposal to delay going forward with the body worn cameras. The Chief explained that to ease the burden of the potential that the Village would not be getting out of the contract with Chagrin Valley Dispatch (CVD) and migrating to the Geauga County Sheriff's Office (GCSO) dispatch, there is \$40,000. For 2025, he budgeted the video system upgrade to move everything to the cloud. He offered to postpone the project to put the \$46,000 back into the General Fund to ease the burden on the budget. In 2026, the \$40,000 will be off the table and they will be back on track. He added that the chances were slim in his opinion that the Village would receive an exception from CVD with being released from the contract early. Galicki hoped that Berger would attend the meeting with the Mayor to plead the Village's case, but also said the meeting would serve as a formal request to disestablish the relationship with CVD. Berger asked about the implications of delaying the upgrade in terms of safety, and the Chief explained that he was able to mitigate the issue with the purchase of a large hard drive. Ultimately, though, the department's current equipment cannot be upgraded for cloud storage. He concluded that the equipment is still functioning, and the safety of police personnel and the community are not an issue. Galicki added that the Safety Committee also discussed this proposal and agreed that there would be a minimal issue with the potential degradation of services. The Committee also appreciated the Chief's efforts to save money. Berger concurred that the upgrade could be deferred until 2026.

The CVD issue was discussed, and the Chief stated that regardless of how the matter is resolved, he recommended pushing forward to get the Police Department a transition date of December 1st. They had already transitioned to the GCSO software, and it has been working phenomenally. They are looking forward to getting it into the cars where the problem is most pronounced. There is an officer safety issue when the mobile data terminal is disconnected, to include with traffic stops. He reiterated the financial savings to the Village by making the transition. Berger did not think the Village would have a chance at getting a CVD contract exception especially if they already know the Village is leaving. However, the Village could convey that they could be enticed to stay with a smaller increase. There is no leverage if the Village says it is leaving. He needed 10 days to have the meeting. Galicki agreed and said by deferring it a month would give the Village time to negotiate. Berger clarified that he has asked to attend the meeting with the Mayor. The Chief said he took exception with the timing of the CVD increase that did not allow anyone the opportunity to provide notice. Galicki and Berger concurred. The Chief added that it is not just about the increase. He felt the department would have a better level of service and it would be better for the community with improved response times. Berger agreed. The Chief further expressed concern that since the last Council meeting, there had not been any movement on meeting and having a conversation with CVD. There is a sense of urgency to push forward to get the mayors together for the meeting. The Mayor must make the Village's case to the mayors.

Berger addressed the Reserve Study and the recommendation to put \$274,000 in a reserve fund for replacement costs of all the items they examined. He was unclear of potential overlaps. Is the Village already budgeting for replacing snowplows, for example? The Fiscal Officer advised there is no schedule for snowplows, only the police vehicles. Berger thought it was every five years. His point was that some of the items are already budgeted for replacement, so it will be necessary to review the study to determine what items the Village has not considered that were included in the study that make up the \$274,000, which is not in next year's budget. The Fiscal Officer would look at this. She explained it would take years to understand the study and get it working. Berger said the Properties Committee has been tasked to do this.

The Fiscal Officer addressed the proposed increased contributions to Ohio Police and Fire (OP&F). It is expected to go forward and will go from 19.5% to 24% over the next four years beginning in 2026. Berger estimated the increase would be about \$40,000. Council should be made aware of this because it will be a significant hit. Galicki learned from discussions at the Ohio Municipal League (OML) Conference that there are municipalities that will have to close their police departments and go with the county sheriff jurisdiction due to the increase. The Chief added that he felt confident that if a new levy were needed, it would pass. Berger cautioned that Council must be cognizant that given the increase in property taxes, the residents do not have an endless supply of money, and all expenses are going up.

The committee discussed the Villages Road Programs. Bell Rd. east will be the Road Program next year.

The Fiscal Officer reported on her exploration of the UAN state financial software that will cost approximately \$5,000 per year which includes the computer, printer, and support. She may have to increase this line item slightly to include training. To upgrade the current Fund Balance software would be about \$20,000.

Regarding STAR Ohio, the Fiscal Officer verified the amount to be moved over. Berger reviewed that Council would be asked to approve decreasing the threshold from \$1 million to \$400,000. The Fiscal Officer said this will require her to watch the balances more closely and move money back and forth. She was comfortable with the Treasury Investment Board (TIB) discussion about not looking for long term investments. Knowing what the budget is looking like; she would not want money tied up for five years. STAR Ohio provides daily access to the money. Berger discussed the bond market. In the TIB meeting, he specified that the investment period would be a maximum of two years at 4%.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

Finance Committee Meeting
December 12, 2024, Village Hall, 10:00 a.m.

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

Meeting called to order at 10:28 a.m.

The committee discussed project funds that will be encumbered to 2025 which include the park restroom. Berger noted that even if these items had been paid for in 2024, the Village's cash balances would only be down about \$250,000 from the beginning of the year. Galicki added that given this situation, things may not be as rosy as they appear, and for Council members who think there may be money to spend, this may not be the case. Berger agreed and said from a committee standpoint, there is acknowledgement about why the Village is where it is at and that there was a plan to reduce the cash balances, but this would be happening in 2025 instead. Galicki raised the issue with having to wait for information for the proposed salt structure. Although there was a concept, there were no good quotes. Berger said that the suggestion is to ask Council to approve going out to bid at the first Council meeting of the year. The Engineer has tried to get quotes, but there is a reluctance to provide hard numbers by the vendors. The Fiscal Officer explained that the fear is that if they give a quote, competitors will know what they would bid on the project. Berger felt it was best to go to bid and if none of the bids are acceptable, the Village can redo the specs and bid it again. Galicki concurred. Berger continued that with this information, the Village would then have a better ballpark figure to clarify what money is available to do other things that are currently on hold. Berger further explained that the Public Utilities Committee discussed the salt structure matter because there was discussion about putting solar panels on it. This might involve turning the building 90 degrees in order to have the solar panels face south. The conclusion was that the salt structure should be built to be most effective as a salt structure and solar panels can be considered later. Galicki added that this would provide the opportunity to see the value added by the Police Department solar panels. Berger further explained that Porter was supportive of waiting a year to see the efficacy of this project.

The Fiscal Officer explained that regarding the potential quote for a new insurance carrier, the Administrative Assistant reached out to a number of the references provided and the insurance they had with this vendor is for Volunteer Fire Departments. However, the Mayor still planned to make his calls. She reached out to the insurance agent to convey the Village's time constraints, and the agent agreed to get back in touch after the holidays and said perhaps they can be considered for 2026. Galicki noted that when he reviewed the list of references, he saw that most were small fire departments. The Fiscal Officer noted the advantages of the Village's current insurance, PEP, but advised it is good to get information.

Regarding financial software, the Fiscal Officer reported that her software will be faded out in December of 2025, and the best option would be to go with the state software, UAN. The state created the software, and the state conducts the audits, so it makes sense. She will have the

Solicitor review the agreement and get more information about how the transition would take place. She anticipates a lot of work to get it set up and for the first couple of years of reporting, but ultimately contemplates it will be a beneficial change and save time.

Galicki asked if there were any unresolved issues for the 2025 Budget. The Fiscal Officer thought everything that needed to be done had been completed. Galicki mentioned that there may be an unbudgeted project from the Police Department.

From a budgeting standpoint, there was discussion of the Fiscal Officer attending more of the committee meetings. Berger said he will inform Council of this in January and stated that in the event the Fiscal Officer is not at the meeting, the committee should make an effort to alert her the status of budgeted and unbudgeted projects. The Fiscal Officer explained that this is beneficial not only from a financial perspective, but also from a legal perspective given the need for legislation to be generated, agreements to be reviewed, etc.

ADP services were reviewed. The Fiscal Officer noted the benefit of having ADP handle the systems with the ever-increasing threats. No new computer needs are anticipated for 2025. Galicki offered that the Chief worries about the priority the police will receive for trouble calls if they switch to ADP. Berger thought there needed to be conversations with the Chief, who internally has handled the Village's IT issues. At some point he will leave the Village, and it would be good to have an idea of what the next iteration should look like. Galicki thought there were options available to the Village and that it did not have to be someone in-house. As a Safety Committee member, he would initiate these conversations with the Chief. The committee further discussed succession plans for the Fiscal Officer. The Fiscal Officer explained that the Village is statutory, which means state law is followed. There is a manual that explains how to do everything, and the state has travelling clerks or finance people who would come in to help. This is also another advantage to having UAN; it's the state's software. Berger cautioned, however, that even with state help, there is no one the Village could immediately plug into the Fiscal Officer's position. She is the only person who knows the system. The police have a transition plan, and this is something that should be considered and addressed for the fiscal office.

The Fiscal Officer advised that she had received no responses about the Reserve Study. Berger said that the Properties Committee will start with it in January as the top priority. The Fiscal Officer shared that Russell Township cautioned that it would take a few years to really understand it.

Berger adjourned at 10:55 a.m.