

Finance Committee Meeting
10-7-2025 3:15 p.m. Village Hall

Present: Chairman Canton, Council Member Porter, Mayor Koons, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Engineer Haibach.

Visitor: Misha Alexander

Chairman Canton called the meeting to order. The Fiscal Officer reported she was working on the budget and there were still a lot of unknowns. Due to the uncertainty with the fire and ambulance contract, she budgeted for the proposed Chagrin Valley Fire Department (CVFD) contract. She would need to amend the Certificate of Estimated Resources with the county because she had accounted for all the EMS billings, which would not be the case if the Village goes with this contract. Additionally, the Chief put in \$20,000 for phones, but it appears it may be more. With the paving of Bell Rd. east, the Village now knows that there will be charges for Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to administer the project as well as the expense to engage a third-party reviewer. The same is true for the trails. These were unplanned costs. For Bell Rd. east paving, it will be about \$165,000 for ODOT admin plus third-party costs, which were not budgeted. Porter asked about the third-party reviewer and the Fiscal Officer explained that the Village must advertise statements of qualifications. Council must approve this at the October 13th meeting and decide the dates it will run. The Engineer offered to provide contact information for some additional businesses to send the advertisement as well. He explained that the third-party reviewer is a firm that is qualified for ODOT surface level design. This process is new and just began with ODOT last year. The Fiscal Officer said this was an unexpected cost and she had no idea how much it would be. The Engineer said there would not a lot of review work and thought perhaps it would be \$5,000 - \$6,000, although ODOT thought it would be more. He suggested using \$10,000 as a placeholder. The Engineer summarized that the purpose of the third-party reviewer is to review the plans and confirm they meet all ODOT's design criteria and do not appear to have any glaring defects. Then the project is bid and managed by ODOT. This will occur in the first quarter of 2026. Paving will occur in September/October 2026. Porter speculated that the Village would then be doing its Road Program before the Bell Rd. east project begins. The Engineer said yes, but that would depend on finances and whether the Village elected to do a Road Program.

Canton noted that in doing Bell Rd. east, it would behoove the Village not to add silt to Paw Paw Lake. The Engineer advised that there will be no digging, and it will be all pavement work. Silt fences would not be needed. There will be road grinding, repairs made, and repaving of the road. The Mayor clarified that this was grinding but not recycling, and the Engineer agreed and added that there will be chipseal. Porter asked what the Village's share of the paving project will be, and the Fiscal Officer said the Village's share is 20% and the Village is receiving \$1,019,000 and then \$300,000 from OPWC. In reality, the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) funding is really just paying for ODOT. The Engineer thought the project would come in around \$1.23

million and the Village will get 80% up to \$1.2 million. Porter thought the Village's share would be \$250,000 to \$300,000.

Porter noted that the 2025 Road Program would be paid this year, and Bell Rd. east would be next year. The Engineer added that Hazelwood Storm Sewer project and roadway repair will also be happening. Porter suggested notifying residents of the upcoming project. The Engineer explained that the Hazelwood storm sewer project has a \$700,000 estimate. OPWC will pay half, which consists of a \$300,000 grant and a \$50,000 0% loan. The Village's share will be the matching \$350,000 which is in line with the Road Program amount. The Fiscal Officer verified that this project could not be awarded until July 1, 2026. It would start in September 2026 and go through the spring of 2027. The Engineer explained that only the OPWC preapplication had been submitted so far for the Hazelwood storm sewer and roadway project. If the Village does not think it will have the money to do it, the Engineer said he could submit an even stronger application for it next year. If the Village is interested, then legislation, etc. would be done for the final application. This would not be until after October 15th and before December 15th. The Fiscal Officer recognized that some of these expenses would hit in 2026 and asked how much this would be. She also recalled the Engineer saying that the Village should have budgeted some money for this year. The Engineer agreed and said \$50,000 in 2025 if the Village wants to move forward with it. The Fiscal Officer verified it would be another \$85,000 in 2026 just for engineering, design, and full-time inspection for the underground work. She verified that the project would begin in 2026, and the Village must budget for the whole thing in 2026 and encumber it over to 2027. The Engineer agreed.

The Fiscal Officer said that ODOT administrative and the third-party reviewer costs are uncertain for the trails because the project is not in the queue, but is estimated to be 15%, which would be about \$150,000 plus the third-party costs. She thought this project would be happening in July 2027. Porter said that Council received a recommendation from the Safe Bicycle and Pedestrian Transport (SBPT) Committee as to where the trail should go and how it should be set up. The Engineer said no one had shared this information with him. Porter explained that at the at the last meeting they voted in favor of a trail from Spring drive, cross the street, down the south side by the park, up the hill by the Cemetery, continuing up to the east on the south side of Bell Road essentially to the corner lot. He thought plans will need to be forthcoming sooner rather than later. The Engineer agreed and said that survey work needed to be done. The Mayor said he thought they wanted to look really hard at the whole idea of putting it on the south side and he thought it was a big mistake. The Engineer said there were compelling arguments for and against either side. There was further debate about which side to put the path on, and the Fiscal Officer reminded the committee that this was a Finance Committee meeting. Regarding the trails, the Fiscal Officer asked what expenses the Village could expect for the trail in 2026 if the project does not start until 2027. The Engineer said there would be surveying, but he would need to speak to Rich Washington about preparing those numbers. There was further discussion about the portion of the proposed trail that would run through the park and the necessity for the Village

to pay for this separately. Porter noted that the Village would be paying some amount for the trail from Alderwood to Gurney, which is not very far, and it would be partially funded by the Northeast Ohio Area Coordinating Agency (NOACA) but wondered if the Village would end up paying a lot more for the rest out of pocket. The Engineer would need to compile numbers to provide a fuller financial picture. Porter noted that there is a recommendation from the SBPT Committee that Council needs to vote on, but currently there is no officially adopted path for the trail.

The Fiscal Officer explained that in her report to Council for the October 13th meeting, she will have a list of the items that are still hanging out there in terms of the budget and hopefully have a draft budget at the second meeting in October. For the month of September, the cash balances were down \$157,000 from the previous month. For the year, the Village is up \$1.2 million. As of that morning, there was \$800,000 in Huntington and the rest in Star Ohio and Meeder. She moved \$200,000 from STAR over to Huntington.

Canton addressed finances for the Fall Festival. He verified that \$10,000 was budgeted for the event and asked how much it cost this year. There was discussion about the lack of hotdogs at this year's event. The Fiscal Officer verified that \$10,000 was budgeted and as of 10-7-2025, it was just over \$6,000 spent.

The Mayor brought up that the Police Chief had obtained four quotes for tree trimming around the solar panels for the school signals and wanted to know if they could make the process easier for the chief. With the garage doors, they have gotten many quotes and now contractors will not provide the quotes because they don't hear back or get the job. The Mayor wanted to know if there was a way to give the department heads some freedom to just go out and get the job done. He reiterated that the Chief got 4 quotes for a \$1,400 job. The Fiscal Officer asked if the Chief complained, because this has always been the practice. There is due diligence in ensuring they are spending the right amount on something. With garage doors, one person will come in at \$30,000 and the next one at \$15,000. Why would they not compare? The Mayor countered that the Chief did not have the freedom to hire Joe's Tree Service at \$1,400. Canton asked if there is a threshold for quotes. Porter stated that department heads have budgetary authority within their budgets and can make decisions on expenses less than \$3,000. The Mayor asked again if the Chief could not have just gone out and hired someone, and Porter responded he could if it was in his budget. The Mayor added that Council also had to approve an ordinance for the tree trimming and it seemed like a lot for \$1,400. The Fiscal Officer explained that the ordinance was needed because there was an agreement with terms.

Porter advised that CMG told the Street Commissioner that the quote for dredging Sugar Bush was still good. Would the Village want to do that this year or spring of next year? \$33,950 was budgeted for next year. The Mayor asked whether spring or fall would be better for the project, and the Engineer said neither is better than the other. Porter said the quote was an 80%-20% split between the Village and Sugar Bush and included dredging and improvements like the

expansion of the silt pond. The Engineer did not think the silt pond was being expanded and explained that the scope of the work was to take the silt pond sediment back down to zero and address the sandbar that is in the lake itself. Porter questioned whether it should be done this year or next year from a finance perspective and suggested doing it before the winter if there was money and the quote was good. The Engineer thought they should consult the contractor and suggested the Street Commissioner make this inquiry. Regarding the financial aspect, the Fiscal Officer thought there was money in the budget under Storm Water. Porter explained that the Village would pay the contractor, and the HOA would pay the Village the 20%. The Fiscal Officer asked why the HOA could not pay the contractor directly for their share. Porter supposed they could, but the contract is with the Village and CMG. The Fiscal Officer said this would involve amending the Certificate because Sugar Bush would be paying part. Porter said it would be a reimbursement to the Village.

Canton adjourned the meeting at 3:54 p.m.