

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
held November 25, 2013  
6:30 p.m. Conference Room

Present: Councilman Young, Councilman Clark, Councilman Tadych

Also Present: Finance Director Mahoney, President of Council Paul Koomar, Councilwoman Karen Lieske, Councilman Clete Miller, Fire Chief Lyons, Police Chief Spaetzel, Operations Manager Landers, Fleet Manager Scott White

Audience: Tom Henderson, Paul Vincent

Mr. Young opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

**2014 Capital Requests**

**Police Department – Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS) Radios-** Mayor Sutherland stated that there could be funding for these radios. The city was required by the Federal Government to narrow band our radios. What nobody realized at the time is that it has interfered with operations. As a result of that, there have been instances where our officers and responding communities’ officers that were providing back-up were put in very compromising situations because they could not communicate. As a result, our neighboring communities are beginning to transition to the MARCS radio system. The Fire Department has already transitioned. An application has been made to the county for 12 radios for the Police Department.

Chief Spaetzel stated that the department has three radios that are sitting at Rocky River Police Department that were obtained through an earlier grant. When the accessories come in for those three radios they will be delivered to Bay. To outfit the department and transition from the current system to MARCS, 15 portable radios and two base stations are needed.

Mr. Koomar asked how many radios the number in the budget represents. Chief Spaetzel stated it represents base stations, portables and mobiles combined for a total of 24 portables, 3 base units and 14 mobile units. The budget has been revised from an original amount of \$180,000 for these units, down to \$120,000. The grant that has been applied for is due in the beginning of December.

Mr. Clark asked when the purchase of the radios will be processed. Mayor Sutherland stated that it is a critical item, and is a Number 1 priority. Mr. Young suggested purchasing the minimum number required now, and waiting for the remainder until there is word about the grant. Mayor Sutherland will check with the county on the time frame for grant notification and criteria. She noted that some communities are going with the Cleveland 800 system, but the administration does not think that is the way to go.

Fire Chief Lyons commented that he is a member of the County Communications Subcommittee and typically they make these decisions rapidly. The bids are already in from the County for the radios. It is generally a quick turn-around.

Mr. Clark asked if the entire purchase needs to be done at one time; or if it can be done in segments. Chief Spaetzel stated that the minimum they could get away with at this time is the 15 portables. The portables are carried around by the officers; the mobile units are for the cars. Fourteen portables would be for the 14 police vehicles. Mr. Young asked if the amount of \$120,000 includes installation. Chief Spaetzel stated that there would be an additional cost for the installation of the mobiles.

The Fire Department has 42 to 44 units including all the mobiles and the portables.

**Patrol Cars - Two** patrol cars are requested in 2014 at \$35,000 each. Approximately the same purchase was made last year. Mr. Young asked what is being asked for in the new vehicles. A list of the older vehicles and mileage is also requested.

Chief Spaetzel stated that they are currently looking to purchase two Ford Explorers. Two vehicles that will be replaced have more than 100,000 miles. A Ford Explorer costs \$1,600 more totally outfitted than an Interceptor. Chief Spaetzel stated that he could not recommend purchasing another Interceptor, which is basically a Taurus police vehicle. The front wheel drive has been a disaster in the rain and snow, and for handling characteristics it is not a good car. The Ford Explorer is an all-wheel drive vehicle, which accounts for the additional \$1,600. This has a great deal to do with officer safety. The Interceptor has many blind spots. Mr. Koomar asked the difference in gas mileage between the Interceptor and the SUV. Chief Spaetzel stated that it is only a couple of miles because it is the same engine and the same frame, just a bigger body.

Mr. Koomar asked how the police equipment transfers over to the SUV's. Chief Spaetzel stated that if they purchase two Explorers there is one light bar that will transfer over. The SUV's are new vehicles and because of the size require new cages and new equipment.

Mr. Koomar asked if other manufacturers have been looked at to compare vehicles. The Dodges and Chevrolets have been considered. Many departments are now moving away from the Dodges because of the sight lines. The Chevrolets are too small.

Avon Lake is going to the Ford Explorers. The City of Avon purchases Tahoe's. The trend is to go to SUV's because they are now downsizing police vehicles and it is difficult for departments to operate with downsized vehicles.

Mr. Clark stated that Chief Lyons has put together a report to show the status of all the vehicles in the Fire Department. It would be beneficial to have the same report from the Police Department in order to capital budget for the next few years. Mr. Young would like the vehicle numbers, year purchased, model, and current mileage.

**Dispatcher Chairs-** Chief Spaetzel stated that the chairs are used 24/7. A more recent quote is \$1200 to \$1300 per chair. Life expectancy for the chairs is seven years.

**Fire Department – Facility Assessment.** Chief Lyons stated that the Fire Station is now 40 years old and there have been quite a few developments in the industry in those 40 years. While the building is still a good, solid building we are in need of taking a look at it and getting some renovations. The turn-out gear is supposed to be located in a negative pressure room. Many of the stations in the area have some of these, but it is not something we can possibly have in our current fire station so we would need some re-design. The gear is located in gear lockers on the apparatus floor, exposed to the exhaust of the vehicles on a day-to-day basis. That shortens the useful life span of the gear which is very expensive, and endangers the firefighters. The Chief would like to consult with an architect who has experience in fire station design and fire station renovation to see what our needs are.

Chief Lyons stated that regionalization would not have any effect on building design going forward. The concept of regionalization would still need to keep the station running and staffed with approximately the same numbers as we have now.

**Swim Rescue, Rope, and Ice and Surface Rescue Equipment –** Mr. Clark stated that these are things the Chief requested last year and were passed over because of the significant purchase of the new pumper truck. Mr. Clark stated that we should probably look at prioritizing the needs, and asked Chief Lyons to review his report with those prioritizations. Chief Lyons stated that the guidelines for Capital requests are that if they are significant requests for health and safety they are rated as a “1”. However, he realizes the constraints of budgetary concerns, and for the top three of his list he would like to have a facility assessment done. Maybe in the next few years as the economy improves something like that could be considered. In regard to the water rescue equipment (surface/ice rescue, rescue swimmer equipment), the fire department members will be receiving training that they have never received before. Three members of the department will be trained as advanced water experts in each of those disciplines and they, in turn, will train the department members on shift, avoiding overtime costs. There are two square miles of Lake Erie in our city and it is an issue that has been struggled with by the department over the years. This solution will deal with water rescue threats for the department, for which the equipment is necessary. Resurfacing the apparatus bay floor could be included later if we are looking at renovations of the station. Rope rescue equipment is old, but still serviceable, and could be deferred for another year. The Voice Emitters is ranked as No. 4; we are one of the few departments without them. These are essential for on-the-ground fire communications. When using radios in the middle of a fire it is hard to transmit clear communication unless a voice emitter is used. Twenty-four, one for each firefighter’s mask are needed.

**Apparatus Replacement –** The vehicle the Fire Chief is driving is borrowed from the Police Department. A vehicle for emergency response for the Chief is needed. Expected cost is \$427,000. Medic 12, the ambulance, is still in good condition. A seven year replacement cycle is recommended but the department can make it last longer. The suspension issues can be fixed. Mr. White noted the importance of keeping on track with the replacement cycle to avoid making all of the large purchases in the same year. Diligence is needed to stay on schedule. Mayor Sutherland reminded everyone that the large (\$995,000 estimated) truck is coming up for replacement in 2016 and they may want to explore a different arrangement and share the purchase with a neighboring community. The City of Rocky River’s replacement of their truck is coming up at the same time.

Chief Lyons stated that he will try to get 17 years out of the new pumper that was purchased this year.

Fire Department vehicle C-18 is due to be replaced in 2014, and is in poor condition. Vehicle C-19 was decommissioned July 1, 2013 and the estimated replacement cost is \$20,000. The vehicle is used as an emergency response vehicle and also used for fire inspection purposes.

Mr. Clark asked if Vehicles C-18 and C-19 could be replaced with one vehicle. Further consideration will be given to this suggestion.

**Service Department Equipment Replacement Schedule-** Scott White reviewed his replacement schedule. The largest purchase in 2014 is the purchase of a composter with the City of Westlake, at a cost of \$500,000, or \$250,000 for each city. Bay Village brings in a higher percentage of leaves for composting than Westlake. The existing equipment was purchased in 1989.

There are nine 5-ton dump trucks in the Service Department. A salt spreader for Vehicle 35, 5-ton dump, was purchased in 2011 and is still viable. This vehicle is prioritized as "1" for replacement with an estimated cost of \$150,000.

There are no EPA changes that will affect the equipment this year. This may change in 2016 or 2017.

A Super Duty dump truck to replace a 2001 Ford F450 is also prioritized as a "1" at an estimated cost of \$60,000. The truck is used for plowing, but has not been used for that purpose due to its condition for the past four years. It is currently pulling the roller for the asphalt crew.

The Community Service Department Bus 10, a 2004 vehicle, is due for replacement.

The life of a 9-ton dump truck is 10 years. Mr. Clark noted that this would require replacing one per year. One was replaced in 2013. If Westlake commits to the composter this year, the replacement of a 5-ton dump truck will be held till 2015.

In 2015 a large aerial work truck (to a height of 65 feet) will need replacement. Mr. Landers noted the need for this truck due to the large number of high trees in the city.

### **2014 General Fund Budget**

Mrs. Mahoney did not include any transfers from the General Fund for Equipment Replacement or Street Construction.

Mr. Sears will address the Finance Committee regarding the needs for street resurfacing when he returns from vacation.

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Mr. Young stated that he will discuss the increase in payments needed to the Rocky River Wastewater Treatment Plant in this evening's Council Committee session. It is estimated to be 8% of \$600,000, or \$48,000.

The budget for the Fire Department in 2013 was \$1,337,000 not including the Paramedic Unit. Projected expenditures for 2013 are \$1,195,000. (Down 3 firefighters) The proposed budget for 2014 is increased by 8 ½%. Mr. Young suggested looking at this further.

The same situation exists for the Police Department with an 8% increase for the 2014 budget.

The Service Department was similar, but not as high of an increase.

Legal has been decreased because there will not be union contracts in 2014. Mr. Young would also like to see a breakdown in Outside Law. Mr. Tadych asked if we are assuming that everything that is owed now in this category gets paid before the end of the year. Mr. Clark stated that there are large cases this year. Mrs. Mahoney will investigate further.

Central Dispatch budget in 2012 was \$120,000. The budget for 2013 was \$155,000. (18% increase in one year) Mr. Koomar asked the approval process for the budget. Mayor Sutherland stated that it is included in the Westlake budget process but there will be a meeting with the communities that participate to look at the budget by line item. Mr. Koomar suggested that the approval of the budget should be a decision by all of the communities who participate.

A sizeable increase in Parks and Recreation is due to moving things that were historically charged (hospitalization for park employees) to Administration to Parks.

The ordinance for ambulance fees is written to collect the maximum allowable by Medicare.

Mrs. Mahoney will provide the numbers to increase the Cable TV fee from 3% to the maximum 5%.

The cost of the operation of the shooting range is \$14,000 annually for replacing filters and cleaning the trap. It is hope that some of this can be recouped from the other police departments that use our shooting range.

Mr. Clark suggested transferring money from the General Fund to the Accrued Benefits Fund in 2014.

The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be held on Monday, December 2, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. and will cover costs for Service Department, Fire Department, and Police Department. Capital Requests will be further reviewed, with information coming from Mayor Sutherland concerning fiber optic. The remaining topics are building improvements, sewer improvements, and streets. The Mayor asked that the building improvements topic be deferred until the return of Assistant Service Director Sears.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

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Michael A. Young, Chairman

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Joan T. Kemper, Secretary