CUYAHOGA FALLS CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & Appropriations Committee Meeting

April 14, 2014

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Klinger, Chair, at 6:36 p.m. A quorum was present.

Approval of the Minutes

Approval of the minutes was deferred.

Agenda Items

Temp. Ord. A-37

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract without competitive bidding with Sherman and Reilly for the purchase of a 7500-pound trailer mounted underground puller diesel engine with air compressor for use in the Electric Department, and declaring an emergency.

The Chair noted that this purchase request is in the amount of \$171,000.

Proponent testimony was offered by Superintendent Michael Dougherty. The City has not budgeted for the purchase of this item because the staff was not aware that it was available and, once it became available the staff was initially unsure if it would meet the City's needs. Rod Troxell visited the manufacturer in Tennessee. This piece of equipment is used for pulling underground electrical cable. The Electric Department has a great deal of underground work scheduled for this year. Only two of these units were manufactured and one has already sold. It was determined to buy this piece before it could be sold to another party, and to put it into service as soon as possible.

Assistant Superintendent Rod Troxell stated that he saw the unit at an equipment show in Louisville, Kentucky. The City sent representatives to the show with the intention of shopping for a dual purpose truck that can be used to pull overhead and underground cable. The existing method of pulling underground

cable involves attaching the cable to a rope and winding the rope around a capstan while a worker guides the rope with his/her hands. This method involves some risk of personal injury if the rope should snap under tension, a type of accident which the City has experienced in the past. This piece of equipment is designed for underground pulling only. and the operator sits in a protective cab instead of being exposed to the rope under tension. This piece of equipment also measures the tension in the rope and provides tension readings to the operator, allowing the operator to shut the machine down if dangerous levels of tension are being generated. These added safety features is another reason the City wishes to purchase this piece of equipment as soon as possible. Knowing the tension under which cable is being pulled also allows the operator to avoid damaging new cable by overstressing it during installation.

The Chair asked Mr. Troxell how the City would handle overhead work if it buys a truck useful only for underground work. Mr. Troxell stated that the City can rent such trucks in the interim, but will probably request the purchase of a second cable pulling truck later in the year.

The Chair asked if Sherman and Reilly is the only manufacturer of cable pulling equipment. Mr. Troxell stated that they are not. Mr. Dougherty stated that there is no other company making a truck with the safety features of this piece of equipment.

The Chair asked how the City would know whether it is getting a competitive price. Mr. Troxell stated that a similar machine, but without the safety cab features of this machine, was priced at \$140,000.

The Chair asked if there was state bid pricing for these pieces of equipment. Mr. Troxell and Mr. Dougherty both stated that they did not know whether this is the case.

The Chair stated that the administration is proposing that this purchase would be funded by taking \$129,000 from the current \$400,000 budget for underground replacement work and \$42,000 out of the \$220,000 budget for 12.5kv system upgrades. Mr. Dougherty stated this is correct.

The Chair asked if the efficiencies gained by acquisition of this piece of equipment would allow the department to accomplish its planned underground replacement work with a smaller budget. Mr. Dougherty stated that a project involving fluid retrofit of existing conduits would be reduced in scope and/or delayed until next year.

The Chair asked what percentage of the City's electric system is underground. Mr. Troxell stated approximately 30%.

The Chair asked if this truck can be used to pull cable that is direct buried without conduit. Mr. Dougherty stated it cannot be used for that purpose.

The Chair recognized Mr. Weinhardt, who asked if the purchase of this piece of equipment would affect electric rates. Mr. Dougherty stated that this piece of equipment will pay for itself through avoidance of injuries and latent cable defects due to damage to cable during installation.

The Chair recognized Mr. Mader, who stated that cable pulling is a source of many injuries, and that he supports this legislation as a means of reducing the risk of injury to line workers.

There was no opponent testimony. There was no public comment.

Motion by Mr. Iula to release Temp. Ord. A-37 with a favorable recommendation. Seconded by Mr. James. Motion adopted by acclamation.

Non-Agenda Items

None.

Adjournment

Without objection, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Carol A. Klinger, Chair

Paul A. Janis, Clerk of Council