

Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Minutes of the Finance and Appropriations Committee Meeting

March 18, 2024

Members: Mary Nichols-Rhodes, Chair
Mike Brillhart, Vice Chair
Meika Penta, Brian Ashton, Joe Siegfert

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes of the March 4, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting were approved as written.

Legislation Discussed

Temp. Ord. A-36

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. A-36

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, without competitive bidding, with The Cope Salt Company for bulk salt used in the water treatment process, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Russ Kring, Water Utilities Superintendent, presented Temporary Ordinance A-36 to Council. The City needs to purchase bulk salt on an emergency basis for the Water Treatment Plant, The Cope Salt Company can provide the salt in a timely and effective manner. The Director of Public Service will be authorized to enter into a contract or contracts, without competitive bidding, with the Cope Salt Company for bulk salt used in the water treatment process. The Director of Finance will be authorized to make payment for same from the Water Fund, Line Item Other Operations.

Mr. Kring stated that they normally use brine from their brine well to regenerate the water softeners. Due to a problem with a nearby gas well, they had to get their brine well suspended from ODNR until they fix the nearby gas well. In order to make brine, they are currently buying salt and mixing it with fresh water basically to make brine to regenerate the softeners.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes stated that they do not know how much they will have to buy because they don't know how long it's going to take to fix. She asked who is repairing it. Mr. Kring stated that it is a Park and Recreation well. They are also working with a third-party company that is going to cap the gas well. They will have to conduct a sonar and integrity test of the brine well before they will be allowed to put it back into service.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes asked when the problem with the well was discovered. Mr. Kring stated that it was February 15th. The natural gas well started having an oil-looking substance come up from below. They conducted tests and discovered that the pressure from the brine well was affecting the gas well. The two caverns may have connected, so when they pressurized the brine well, it caused this fluid to come up from below. That is why they are going to put the gas well out of service.

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Ms. Nichols-Rhodes stated that the cost to purchase the salt is \$150,000. The cost of the salt is \$189 a ton and they use 10 tons a day, so they are going to buy as they go and just keep going until they reopen the brine well.

Mr. Kring stated that they hope to get everything done to get well back in service. Whenever the natural gas well gets capped, they can jump back into using brine. It is not a cheap solution, so the sooner the better.

Mr. Brillhart moved to bring out Temp. Ord. A-36 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. Siegferth. Motion passed (5-0).

The meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.