

## Finance Committee Minutes

Honorable Council  
City of Newark, Ohio  
March 5, 2019

The Finance Committee met in Council Chambers on Monday March 4, 2019 with these members in attendance:

Doug Marmie  
Jeremy Blake  
Ryan Bubb  
Bill Cost Jr.  
Mark Fraizer

We Wish to Report:

1. **Ordinance No. 19-07** to provide for the issuance of \$850,000.00 of bond anticipation notes in anticipation of the issuance of bonds for the purpose of paying a portion of the city's cost, and a portion of the property owners' cost in anticipation of the levy and collection of special assessments for horns hill road sanitary sewer project improvements, and declaring an emergency was considered.

**Stephen Johnson, City Auditor-** this issuance of this bond anticipation will allow for the beginning of the construction of the project. The \$850,000.00 is the only amount that we are borrowing at this point. This will eventually be bonded and a portion of it will be special assessments the rest will be general obligation.

**Motion by Mr. Fraizer to send to full Council, second by Mr. Cost**

**Mr. Bubb-** I will be abstaining from voting on this ordinance

**Motion passed by a 4-0-1**

2. **Resolution No. 19-16** authorizing and directing the Mayor of the City of Newark to prepare and submit applications to the Department of Homeland Security, for fiscal year 2019 Fire Act Grant Programs, in support of training programs, equipment purchases, funding for personnel, fire prevention, and fire safety programs throughout the city was considered.

**Barbara Gilkes-** this is the all-encompassing Federal FEMA Fire Act resolution.

**Motion by Mr. Bubb to send to full Council, second by Mr. Fraizer**

**Mr. Fraizer-** what is the time frame for this?

**Barbara Gilkes-** it is Federal Fiscal year 2019 and you know the Federal Fiscal year is October through September. The problem in the recent years has been when the

appropriation goes through. I can't tell you when each application is going to come out because it always gets hung up.

**Mr. Fraizer**- in previous years that we have got funding how much was that for?

**Barbara Gilkes**- right now we are working on an application for 5 new firefighters under the 2018 SAFER grant. That application is going to be due this month. We are also waiting on an application for AFG equipment that I submitted several months ago. Keep in mind that the government was shut down for a month. For the people who work in those departments that actually do the work that is a big impact.

**Motion passed by a vote of 5-0.**

3. **Resolution No. 19-17** appropriating monies for the current expenses of the municipal corporation was considered.

Section 1. There is hereby an appropriation of the unappropriated balance of the 334Construction Note Fund, in the amount of \$306,798.59 (New Fire Station)

Account	Description	Amount
334.204.5238	Services General	\$306,798.59

**Director Baum**- there was some wording in the original legislation that the Auditor's office didn't like and they would like to move this to a project accounting PO as opposed to a standard purchase order. So we need to disappropriate \$306,798.59 and reappropriate it on to a project accounting PA01 we will be the first ones to use a project accounting for this purchase order for station 5. This money can only be used for the construction of the fire station it is money left over from the purchase order from the construction of the downtown fire station.

**Motion by Mr. Fraizer to send to full Council, second by Mr. Cost**

**Mr. Marmie**- he mentioned a disappropriation, all we have is an appropriation.

**Stephen Johnson**- for now that is all you need.

**Mr. Blake**- Director Baum, this is \$306,798.59 for this project what is the total cost of the project?

**Director Baum**- I don't know that yet.

**Mr. Blake**- are you expecting to come back to Council for the remainder?

**Director Baum**- yes

**Mr. Blake**- that will be a new loan?

**Director Baum**- yes, I would assume so. I will have to talk to the Auditor and discuss how he would prefer to do this.

**Mr. Blake**- I am going to vote in favor of this but it does concern me about the staffing levels for the department. My understanding from hearing from the Fire Chief two weeks ago they are at 79 budgeted positions and then there is the prospect of getting 5 SAFER grant positions which will help, the SAFER grant positions are three year

temporary positions but at some point we need to have a discussion about increasing our permanent staff. I think that is a discussion that we need to have as a community, as a Council. Stretching the number of current permanent staff members really concerns me to staff this new building. While I am going to be supportive of doing this because I know that this has been discussed for some time; at some point we need to have a discussion about how we are going to properly staff this without having all the additional stress on these employees.

**Director Baum-** the only comment that I would make to that is that I don't think anybody has the idea that we are going to layoff these 5 firefighters when the grant runs out so you are moving the number from 79 to 84.

**Mr. Blake-** from my understanding the SAFER grant is typically when someone retires and that position is filled by the SAFER grant so you're not really increasing numbers, those people are around and when someone retires you are filling in that spot. It is still a temporary position you are not ultimately increasing the number from my understanding of how we have used the SAFER grants in the past. Additionally I am concerned about what equipment is going to go into this fire station. Where are we going to be pulling from the other stations to equip this new station?

**Mr. Marmie-** from what the Chief's said during his presentation two weeks ago he said we only have two anticipated retirements in the next year and if we hire five we are at least increasing it by three if those two retirements even come through correct?

**Director Baum-** if you increase your staffing to 84 you are not going to lower your staffing back down to 79, if you are increasing it to 84 then 84 is your new number. Could you? Certainly you could lower to 60 if you wanted but nobody is going to do that either. So if 84 is the new number 84 is the new target number now if it drops to 82 or 83 while we are trying to fill positions. We can only work the applicants that we get. We fill to a point of 84 if we get 5 SAFER's then 84 is the new number and that is the number that we will fill to. During the three years if you drop below 84 you have to get back to 84 or you have to increase the grant. If it takes you 6 months to get back to 84 you are kicking the grant out 6 months. You have to match your 84 during that grant time or I am sure there is a penalty involved at some point or it inhibits your ability to get future SAFER's. 84 becomes the new number. Nobody is laying anybody off and nobody through attrition is going to let the number of firefighters drop below 84 aside of temporarily because I don't want this to come back and bite me at some point if we have a couple of retirements we have to get those positions filled again but they will ultimately work towards 84.

**Barbara Gilkes-** with our 2015 SAFER I added in an extension and they allowed it for 6 months, we really need it through September but somebody higher up on the pecking order has to do the blessing for the additional. We are short now 1 with the level we should be at but with our new application that Steve talked about some of the rules has changed a little bit. This is a three year grant and there is a cost share with this one but they will grant no extension so if there is an issue with two or three of them leaving and we fall below the staffing level 84 as you mentioned earlier if we don't get somebody back on board we are going to forfeit down the road part of that SAFER grant.

**Director Baum-** that being said what I will tell this body is that I would urge the Fire Chief and the Mayor to allow for more liberal use of the lateral transfers so we can pick people up immediately rather than go through a long and exhausting Civil Service hiring process.

**Mr. Fraizer-** what are the next steps in this process since you have this money in the right project fund?

**Director Baum-** we will have to get a hard bid, come back to this body, put it out for bid and once we get a bidder that is approved and if we get the go ahead from Council the first step would be demolition of the current building. The demolition of the current building is in the Property Maintenance budget and then we would have this \$306,000.00 to begin with.

**Mr. Fraizer-** is there a timeline that you are anticipating for?

**Director Baum-** I would like to break ground by September and 9 months to a year for construction but those are loose numbers.

**Mr. Blake-** what equipment will be in the new station?

**Director Baum-** that would be up to the Fire Chief. I don't tell the Fire Chief where to put what. I know that sounds like a non-answer but that is the truth. I don't tell the Police Chief where to put his cruisers either.

**Motion passed by a vote of 5-0.**

Doug Marmie, Chair