

Finance Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
February 24, 2015

The Finance Committee met in Council Chambers on Monday February 23, 2015 with these members in attendance:

Doug Marmie, Vice Chair
Bill Cost Jr.
Alex Rolletta for Jeremy Blake

Carol Floyd
Ryan Bubb

We wish to report:

1. **Resolution No. 15-15** authorizing and directing the Mayor of the City of Newark to prepare and submit applications to the Department of Homeland Security, for fiscal year 2014 and 2015 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 our annual application that covers three different programs. The upcoming grant that we will be reviewing is the Safer Grant which is commonly known as the hiring grant for Fire personnel. The grant is a two year grant and there is no local match.

Motion by Mr. Bubb to send to full Council, second by Mrs. Floyd

Mrs. Floyd- it is my understanding that we are going to try to get enough to hire two firefighters is that correct?

Barbara Gilkes- that is the number that I heard.

Mrs. Floyd- can we ask for more?

Barbara Gilkes- you can ask for as many as you want

Mrs. Floyd- I know that the concern is that once you get it and then the money runs out

Barbara Gilkes- let's say you ask for 4 firefighters and then when the award is announced and say you are looking at your budget and you say we can't afford 4 but we can do 2 you can go back to them but once you enter into the agreement you have to agree to the terms of the grant for two years. If you have 72 firefighters when you applied for the grant and you were awarded two more firefighters then during that 2 year period you have to make sure you retain 74 firefighters.

Mrs. Floyd- can these grants be renewed?

Barbara Gilkes- you can apply every year, they don't renew the same application

Mr. Cost- if you would try to renew I am assuming it would be based on how many firefighters we are projecting that we would like to have or need but would there also

be a situation where we have had them for two years can it be renewed if we weren't able to keep them if not renewed? Can it have a financial consideration as well as a need for the personnel itself?

Barbara Gilkes- there is a waiver if a city gets in a bind. The waiver is not just for fire it is for over all safety in the city. We have never been in that situation but they do have an out if a city encounters a financial situation where they couldn't fulfill what they thought they could under the terms of the grant. As far as in two years there will be a new application period and you have to make your pitch for why you need additional firefighters.

Mr. Cost- so we are not matching this?

Barbara Gilkes- no there is no local match. When we did the Safer Grant several years ago and we hired three new firefighters there was a local match and there was a retention period that covered the end of the grant. That is not the case with this application. It is a two year grant cycle where all of the salary and benefits are covered for two full years and then after that the obligation goes away. If in two years we ran into a different situation I would have to look at the terms of the grant as far as what kind of pitch we would be making. If it was a retention issue and we were allowed to do that we could apply but I can't project whether it will be the next time we apply, if we are awarded. Most of the fire grants they don't make a single announcement and everybody knows they go through different rounds and right now they are projecting that the Safer announcements will be around the end of September. That is the first announcement they could go over a whole year making announcements. If we are awarded it may not even impact the 2016 budget, it may the 2017 budget. It all depends on if we are fortunate enough to be awarded a grant. We get word then go through the civil service process.

Mr. Cost- if we would get to the end and we have a couple of guys retire would that bottom line number be a factor also in the grant or how many we would be able to ask for?

Barbara Gilkes- any community can decide how many firefighters they want to fund but you want to have the budget. You want to look down the road to look and see if you are going to be able to fund them beyond that period. You won't be penalized if you have a lot retirements two years down the road you can come back if the program is still around you could ask for 5 firefighters because we had x number leave due to retirements or went elsewhere.

Mayor Hall- just additional information, if that happens during the two year period you have to replace them. It is all personnel costs, if there are training costs, equipment costs, uniform etc. those are not covered.

Mr. Rolletta- I want to thank Ms. Gilkes and the administration for their work in putting this together. It is a very good thing and I think we need to take advantage of these opportunities while we have them or we are going to miss out. This question I have is probably for the Safety Director or the Mayor. If the number is two what reasoning went into the number that you all would like to apply for?

Safety Director- Chief Connor and I as well as our Mayor have tried to forecast what we can afford long term. What I don't want to do is ask for 4 then in a year or two

from now realize we don't have the money to keep them around, we don't think that is fair. A young person gets married, has a good job buys a house and then all of the sudden they are in a lurch. I am comfortable with two but as of today we are kicking around whether we go for three but I am uncomfortable with any more than that because I don't think we can sustain them long term.

Motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

2. **Resolution No. 15-16** authorizing and directing the Mayor of the City of Newark to apply for funding from the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance under the Bulletproof Vest Partnership grant program.

Barbara Gilkes- regarding the Safer Grant, we need to waive the two day reading rule. This is our annual bulletproof vest application. The Feds are going to pick up 50% of the cost of the vests for the Police Department, Probation Officers and Arson Investigators. Since we have been applying the City has been awarded over \$78, 732.00 for vests.

Motion by Mrs. Floyd to send to full Council, second by Mr. Bubb

Mr. Guthrie- when the Probation Department gets awarded vests through this grant as far as the match goes does it come out of the Court budget or the General Fund?

Barbara Gilkes- the Courts have to front the entire amount and then I ask for 50% of the funds back. I don't know what constitutes their budget. I don't know if it is all general fund or court costs.

Mr. Marmie- Courts fall under General Fund so it is all General Fund.

Motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

3. **Resolution No. 15-17** appropriating monies for the municipal corporation was considered.

Section 1. A request for an appropriation of the unappropriated balance of the 153, Compensated Absences Fund, in the amount of \$450.00 (Pay out for Pat Connor)

Account	Description	Amount
153.205.5145	Termination Pay Comp	\$450.00

Director Spurgeon- this is for previous Assistant Chief Pat Connor who is now doing an excellent job as our Fire Chief. As you know none of our Supervisory staff are entitled to any compensatory time so we would like to clear this balance and as a courtesy I would ask that we expedite.

Motion by Mr. Bubb to send to full Council, second by Cost

Motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

4. A request for an appropriation of the unappropriated balance of the 334, Construction Fund, in the amount of \$1,000,000.00 (Downtown Fire Station Professional Services)

Account	Description	Amount
334.204.5231	Professional Services	\$1,000,000.00

Director Rhodes- we are just moving funds out of the Construction Fund into the Professional Services account to pay some anticipated bills for the new fire station.

Motion by Mr. Cost to send to full Council, second by Mr. Bubb

Mr. Guthrie- what vendors are in line for those funds

Director Rhodes- the General Contractor, Robertson Construction and the architect who is Wachtel McAnally.

Motion passed by a 4-1(Mr. Rolletta) vote.

Doug Marmie, Vice Chair