

Finance Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
March 19, 2024
5:45pm

The Finance Committee met in Council Chambers March 18, 2024 with these members in attendance:

- Doug Marmie – Chair
- Jonathan Lang - Vice Chair
- Bradley Chute
- Bill Cost Jr.
- Michael Houser

We wish to report :

Mr. Marmie - The unappropriated balance of the General Fund is \$722,915.00 and the balance of the Budget Stabilization Fund is \$1,619,238.00

Resolution No. 24-24 Exp APPROPRIATING MONIES FOR THE CURRENT EXPENSES OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Section 1. There is hereby an appropriation of the unappropriated balance of the 100 General Fund, in the amount of \$4,260.79 (Overpayment of Claims from Molina Healthcare for EMS runs from 4/4/18 - 12/15/21)

100.115.5611.100	Refund of Payments	4,260.79
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Tim Hickman, Safety Director – Thank you Mr. Chairman, this is a request for overpayment of medical claims/EMS billing to Molina Healthcare. I can give a little background on this if you’d like. Back in November of 2022 Molina reached out to us and said they had conducted an audit of EMS billing from April 4, 2018 through December 15, 2021 and as a result of that audit, they determined we owed them \$73,530 in overpayment. So we pushed back on that asked for appeal and it came back in October 2023 that lowered the demand to \$20,130, so we pushed back more and then February 22nd of this year they dropped their demand to \$4,260. After talking with our Law Director’s Office and with our medical billing provider we think that’s a fair settlement especially staring from \$74,000.

Motion to send to full Council by Mr. Lang, Second by Mr. Houser, Motion passed 5-0

Section 2. There is hereby an appropriation of the unappropriated balance of the 100 General Fund, in the amount of \$182,647.15 (EPA Market Development Grant - Star Wipers)

100.601.5621.765	Reimbursement of EPA Grant)	182,647.15
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Barbara Gilkes – This request pertains to the market Development Grant for Star Wipers who is a local employer. The project will be purchasing equipment so they will reduce the amount of material coming to landfill.

Motion to send to full Council by Mr. Lang, Second by Mr. Houser

Mr. Houser – Thank you so much for your work on that, I appreciate it.

Motion passed 5-0

Section 3. There is hereby an appropriation of the unappropriated balance of the 100 General Fund, in the amount of \$4,350.00 (The PD will be changing case mgt. software systems from Civica CMI to OCSS by Step Mobile, there is a 1 time conversion cost of \$29,000. ODRC has agreed to pay 85%. Director Saad is asking the city to pay \$4,350 of the 1 time cost)

100.116.5536	Computer Hardware/Software	4,350.00
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Kevin Saad, Director Adult Probation – I am here this evening to ask for \$4,350.00, we would like to replace our current case management system with a new one. We currently use a company called Civica CMI, we would like to change to a system called CSS, which is a Step Mobile product. Seventy four different community entities across the State of Ohio have CSS, it's highly endorsed by Director Chris Scally from the Bureau of Community Sanctions, Chris Scally has been trying to get us to convert to this for years, but I've always told him I'm not going to come to the City and ask for a \$30,000 conversion fee. He has said that he will give us 85% of the conversion fee, so the conversion fee is \$29,000, it's the first time he's ever done that it will be a one time payment of grant, it won't be money we already have in a grant it will be money in addition to the grant. He said if we can get this pushed through by May 1st we would then have the money in our account by May 1st. We could then get the (inaudible) to come in, I think it's a 90 day process for the entire conversion to happen, but we're super excited about it. Cliff Brannon is here from the Court's IT Department. We had a conference call with the Chief operating Officer from Step Mobile and we were quite impressed with what this can do. The main benefit to this is it's cloud based, where now if we want to get on the Courts Probation System we have to use the VPN and we have to have a court device. We can't do a VPN from a phone, now we can access the Probations Office System with our cellphones which would be tremendous for field work and being away from your desk and not having access to a laptop or things like that. So, Cliff and I are here to answer any questions that you may have about it.

Motion to send to full Council by Mr. Lang, Second by Mr. Cost

Mr. Lang – Just curious, once we do the implementation is there a savings between the Civica CMI upkeep and the CSS System?

Director Saad – Thanks for asking that. It's going to be a reduction in maintenance fee cost. We

can actually combine some of the other services that we have. We have a text messaging service that we pay separate for and we have a kiosk service that we pay separate for, this new system incorporates both of them in the system, so we'll eliminate those costs and we did a comparison for 2025 and it will be about \$200-\$300 less, but as I told Doug, I had a meeting about this, we can actually add the maintenance fee into our grant. So, the next grant cycle FY26-27 will add the maintenance fee into the grant so the City won't even have a cost anymore for this. I'll have to look at current grant funds now, we could do a budget revision to pay for the maintenance fee in 25, I'll just have to look at the figures, but the City won't even have a cost for this in the future.

Mr. Lang – Just curious and I'm sure you've looked at the security of it. I'm assuming if your accessing it from your phone then there is an additional authentication to get into the Court System from a mobile device like that.

Cliff Brannon – It's my understanding that there is additional authentication for it and the way this software is hosted is on a State server, it's the same thing that hosts LEEDS and other police agencies, so it's very secure. It's treated as a 24/7 operation just the same as LEEDS and any other State application.

Mr. Lang – My only reason for asking was I was just curious if we would need to push out any additional security measures to the phones that are accessing that system. I know from my own company if I need to get on my email system I need to have passwords etc. on my device, so I'm just curious if there is anything like that is required.

Mr. Brannon – I'm not sure I can answer that I don't know their securities, but they do have to the State's. This company is certified through the State to have access to their servers.

Mr. Marmie – I'll just kind of piggy back on that a little bit. For our own security and making sure, we should make sure that first of all, they're going to have to maintain any updates or things like that because usually in an authenticator app or anything like that there's a requirement for constant updates, you can't get behind on your updates. So, I think that we should make sure that we maintain at least tracking of who's using personal devices if they are there needs to be some kind of making sure we're aware of it because the security of that phone is definitely something, I know that my company the same way as soon as I say I am putting anything from my company onto my phone or actually just accessing it, then I have to go to a six digit passcode, it automatically times out after a certain amount of time I don't have any choice in the matter. So, they control that as far as being able to access it.

Mr. Brannon – OCSS would control all of the access through the State and then like you were talking about, with our current email system a lot of our probation officers have that and our email system will allow me or Alpha Link to completely wipe someone's phone remotely. Obviously security is something that Kevin and I have talked a lot about and that's why we're using a VPN to access anything and it's only on court equipment. Now with this being installed on people's cellphones the State will have control of that and it does keep track of who logs in

and when. I believe they probably follow the same standards as LEEDS.

Motion passed 5-0

1. Resolution No. 24-25 APPROPRIATING MONIES FOR THE CURRENT EXPENSES OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Section 1. There is hereby a disappropriation of the appropriated balance of the 100 General Fund, in the amount of \$8,035.00 (Purchase of Truck for Cemetery)

100.121.5331	Machinery & Equipment	8,035.00
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David Rhodes, Service Director – I do not need that appropriation and I do not have a truck to purchase right now.

Mr. Marmie – Okay, we'll allow that to die for lack of a motion.

Director Rhodes – I'd like to do the disappropriations.

Mr. Marmie – Okay, so we will do the disappropriation in the amount of \$8,035.

Motion to send to full Council by Mr. Lang, Second by Mr. Houser

Director Rhodes – There is an old PO here from 2022 that was made up of a couple different funding sources that we were going to use to buy a truck. We didn't get the truck, so I don't want to re-appropriate any of it quite frankly, I just want to disappropriate the old PO, it's kind of confusing, I tried to get with Jackie earlier today and she wasn't in, I think she's just off this week.

Mr. Marmie – So this \$8,035 is just for machinery and equipment, not actually for a truck?

Director Rhodes – Well, that was to supplement, when it was going to be re-appropriated that was going to supplement the purchase of the truck.

Mr. Marmie – Okay, so we just need to put it back, with the disappropriation.

Mr. Houser – Just a quick clarification, where are the funds returning to I guess?

Mr. Marmie – Just going back into Capital Improvements. Now it's currently tied to a PO as an appropriation and we just need to move it back.

Motion passed 5-0

Mr. Marmie – So, you do not need the appropriation.

Director Rhodes – That is correct.

Section 2. There is hereby an appropriation of the unappropriated balance of the 100 General Fund, in the amount of \$8,035.00 (Purchase of Truck for Cemetery)

100.111.5901335	OPT	8,035.00
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Mr. Marmie – You don't need the appropriation so, it will just die for lack of a motion.

Section 3. There is hereby an appropriation of the unappropriated balance of the 221 Street Fund, in the amount of \$1,000.00 (PEP Grant to purchase Safety Signage)

221.302.5315	Street Supplies	Maint.	1,000.00
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Director Rhodes – This is a grant for signage. It’s a PEP grant to purchase safety signage.

Motion to send to full Council by Mr./ Lang, Second by Mr. Houser

Mr. Marmie – Where is this grant coming from?

Barbara Gilkes – That’s through Workers Comp. the insurance, they offer a program every year for \$1,000, it usually goes to Buster, the money came in, but Dave’s doing the appropriation.

Mr. Houser – Is that just for workplace signage for informational purposes?

Ms. Gilkes – It’s for traffic signs. You can do a lot of things with the PEP grant, but we give it to Buster every year and he typically does some traffic signage.

Motion passed 5-0

Section 4. There is hereby an appropriation of the unappropriated balance of the 100 General Fund, in the amount of \$58,761.05 (Amount was received as reimbursement for 2023 CPT trng. From the State of Ohio, money must be kept separate from the General Fund and only used for authorized law enforcement training purposes)

100.203.5220.2	Continuing Professional Training	58,761.05
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Tim Hickman, Safety Director – The State of Ohio requires mandatory training for the Police Department, Continuing professional Training, at the completion of that year the State reimburses the PD for the number of people that attended that training, so this is the money we received from the State for that training that we would like to appropriate back into our training fund so we can use it for this years training.

Motion to send to full Council by Mr. Lang, Second by Mr. Houser, Motion passed 5-0

This Section 5. There is hereby an appropriation of the unappropriated balance of the 665 CSO/Sewer Projects Fund, in the amount of \$57,000.00 (Change order #2 and #4 for UV Project. Memo expense reimbursed through OWDA Loan)

665.764.5000764	Memo Expense UV Upgrade WWTP	57,000.00
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David Rhodes, Service Director - This is a memo expense for the UV upgrade at the wastewater treatment plant. What we’re doing is the change orders move the money

from the OWDA loan to the UV project, it's just a memo expense, it will be reimbursed through the OWDA loan and that's where we get 90% of our money for Water.

Motion to send to full Council by Mr. Lang, Second by Mr. Houser, Motion passed 5-0

2. Consider **Resolution No. 24-29** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NEWARK TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE STATE OF OHIO 2024 NATUREWORKS GRANT.

Barbara Gilkes – This year for the Nature Works project we're looking at working at Newark Station to create a new park and the allocations have not been released for Counties yet, but it's going to be a 75/25 and the proposed plan is to put it towards a type of climbing wall for the facility.

Motion to send to full Council by Mr. Houser, Second by Mr. Lang

Mr. Marmie – My question would be we are going to apply for a grant to put a climbing wall up in a private enterprises location?

Ms. Gilkes – Newark Station is going to have apportion of that is either going to be owned by the City or the City is going to have an irrevocable 15 year lease.

Director Rhodes – The side of the old Westinghouse site where the fire was at, that side is going to be leased or turned over to the City and we are proposing as Barbara says, a climbing wall, it's a bouldering wall where you can climb up on top of the boulders. We're proposing three of them where you can climb up and climb down without ropes so it doesn't have to be manned and then we'll put a pup track around there too, also, when you go across the bridge, we're proposing at some point to put in a parking lot there, so people can come park, walk across the bridge, use the climbing walls, use the pup track. So, it will be another City Park, we're just piecing it together now and we wanted to use part of this grant to help off-set the cost. It'll be one of the parks and I will use like pickleball courts where we went out and raised all the money, we're going to go out to the community to raise a fair amount of money for this, but it will be City controlled. If you look at for example the skate park on Everett, the City doesn't actually own the land, the School Board owns the land, but that's a City Park on that land. This is a new style of park we are proposing to put together.

Mr. Marmie – Liability?

Director Rhodes – No, our liability, as a matter of fact, we had our insurance guy on Horns Hill and we just got an excellent rating on the safety of Horns Hill. You think about that, the extreme mountain biking which I'm not going to do, I challenge anybody to go do it, but anyways, they're real happy with the safety of the park, the signage, the care and maintenance. It will be a similar thing, a climbing trail risk, sign a waiver, come at your own risk and there will be a soft padding around it similar to what you see at Rotary park over there, so if you do fall, but if you get into ropes, then you get into employees manning it. There's a similar park in Columbus, the name escapes me, but it's at a metro

park. So, that's what we're proposing, we're in the beginning stages of identifying it to lease, sort of like what we have at Everett, where it's a partnership.

Mr. Lang – So, I just wanted to clarify, you said the way this would be set up it wouldn't need to be manned, then you mentioned a climb at your own risk you would need to sign a waiver, does that mean somebody is going to be collecting that waiver or limiting access to the facility.

Director Rhodes – It might be a similar thing to where you can sign up on the website to sign those, that's what we're going to say at the dive area up there at TJ Evans Park, or fishing permits where you can sign up online, so we hope to continually move towards that direction.

Mr. Lang – So, if you did an online thing someone would still need to go check if the people doing it are signing waivers, right?

Director Rhodes – Similar to like the dive park, we randomly check yes, does it need to be manned full time no, and that seems to be okay with the insurance company. That's what we do at Horns Hill too, we ask people to sign waivers.

Mr. Lang – Presumably there would be a way to lock it up and shut it down during off hours.

Director Rhodes – Yes.

Mr. Houser – Will Newark Station still own the land it's located on or will it be turned over to the City?

Director Rhodes – We're in those discussions now, whether it will be a lease or if it will be a transfer. We're working those details out now, like at Everett Park, the School Board owns the land, we have a perpetual lease.

Stephen Smith, 237 Violet Ct. – First you mentioned comparing it to Rotary Park, the situation there.

Director Rhodes – The padding at Rotary park, the soft padding.

Mr. Smith – Okay. One of things I sort of wonder about is what sort of maintenance there is going to be for keeping this safe. I heard Rotary Park, I like Rotary Park a lot we take our grandson there pretty regularly, but there are some facilities, toys and other activities there that are broken and I fear they're not safe. There doesn't seem to be a lot of work on maintaining that and I realize it's not a City Park, but I do want a climbing wall, to be maintained to make sure it's safe for everyone. I want to make sure that happens.

Rochelle Volen-Smith, 237 Violet Ct. – Usually when schools have climbing walls and stores and that sort of thing, they keep them supervised and I can't imagine in this particular location that it would be well supervised and maintained, so, I just don't think it's a good idea.

Motion passed 5-0

Meeting stands adjourned

Doug Marmie, Chair