

**Village of Mantua
Finance Committee Meeting
November 15, 2008**

Call to Order- 8:02 A.M.

Roll Call: Ben Prescott, Roger Hawkins, Jim Rogers was absent

Others: Jenny August, Clerk-Treasurer, Marty Hura and Giles Seith, Council Members, Donna Hawkins, Mayor, and Ed Trego, Village Administrator.

Motion to approve Minutes from Oct. 18th Finance meeting by Roger Hawkins, Seconded by Ben Prescott.

Jenny's reports:

1. Review of the Finance reports for Council. Jenny said funds are still all in the black. Checking balance is \$466,147.44 Total receipts were \$153,549.50, and expenses were \$97,655.87, so we did real well.
2. Review of the legislation for the November Council meeting. Discussion ensued about Ordinance 2008-45, the 2009 Appropriations.

2009 Appropriations:

1. Ben explained that we are doing a full year appropriation instead of temporary appropriations. We will do an amendment in January that shows the carry-overs.
2. Jenny said we did not appropriate any money for Franklin-Regan Storm Sewer because it is not likely that we will get to it. If we do start this project, we can amend the appropriations. Ed Trego said he is not trying to obstruct the project, but wants everyone to be clear that this project has a lot of issues because costs have increased since it was proposed two years ago. He feels that we would not have the cash at hand to proceed. Ed said our "in house" cost would not amount to the \$30,000 of in kind work that we need to do. Jenny said if we did not proceed, we could be liable for about \$2500.00 in expenses that have been paid to CT. Ed recommends that we submit an extension until July 1st, and work up a current actual cost budget. Donna said she would contact Brian to file an extension. Donna said she overheard Jenny talking to Brian on the phone, and she heard me say \$4,500.00, not \$2,500. Jenny explained that the total costs are nearly \$5,000 and we have to pay half.
3. Ed said the Village Hall wages were too low. Jenny said she would increase that line item. He questioned the Treasurer and Staff wages. Are we splitting Clerk's wages into Water & Sewer? Ed wants documentation that the Clerk is actually doing this amount of work. Roger said Ed should get documentation. Ed said the rates should be increased to offset the costs of the Clerks wage. Roger said it's not fair that Ed should have to pay. Jenny explained that the General Fund pays the Service Department every time they shovel, weed or do any work to the Village Hall building.
4. Ed said at a previous meeting it was mentioned that the Service Department got a 5% raise and it is not true. Ben explained that the spreadsheet of wages for the last 5 years shows increased wages of 5% from overtime or whatever, but it increases 5% a year.

5. Roger asked if we can get our \$300.00 per year back for housing prisoners from fines or something. Jenny explained that we get about \$1100. per month from fines.
6. Donna questioned the Zoning Inspector appropriations. She wondered if he gets \$400.00 for spending aside from getting wages and OPERS.
7. Donna asked if she could have the appropriations in advance so she could review it with the Department Heads since she has to sign it.
8. Ed asked what the estimated annual loss is from Eaton. Jenny said we got a little more money than we expected since they stuck around longer than expected. She did not have the actual dollar amount. Ed said we will see a decrease in most tax money we receive.
9. Jenny said we just have to cut our budget until we get through this. Jenny asked if we could cut any services temporarily. Perhaps remove some trash bins so the guys have less to empty, let the trees go, or something along those lines. Ed said he produced a document previously of services they could reduce down to save money and Council rejected it. He recommends as far as the Franklin project and the Glacial project – if your broke your broke. People see the Service Department working on these projects and don't believe we are broke.
10. Roger asked how much we spent on leaf bags. Jenny said it was about \$2,000. Roger asked if we could have volunteers like laid off people or prisoners pick up leaves. Ed said extra staff may be required for prisoners.
11. Roger asked about people that are delinquent in taxes. Jenny said she has Tom working on something now that would bring us some extra income. Roger asked if we can collect the money ourselves instead of having Tom do it? Jenny said she is working on payment plans with several people that owe. Marty said we used to give David Benjamin a cut in what he collects. Ben said we need to put some changes in Tom's contract before we renew him. Ben said we need to really negotiate with a new attorney.
12. Roger asked what help we are getting from being on Fiscal Watch. Jenny said that is only free help from Local Government Services. Donna questioned about paying for the day Ed Rance was here. Ben explained that he works for the Auditor, not Local Government Services.

Bills of Resolution:

1. Discussion about the Postage machine. Jenny said whenever the contract is up, we are sending it back.
2. Ed asked if Jenny certified letters to the County Auditor for collection of unpaid water-sewer bills. Jenny said she is not aware of anything like that at all. Jenny didn't recall getting anything like that from Donna. Ben asked how the collection is done. Ed said Jenny certifies it to the County Auditor, and it goes on their tax bill.

Motion to approve by Ben, seconded by Roger.

Ed requested that he gets some documentation on how much time Jenny spends on his departments by the Council meeting Tuesday.

Leave time:

1. Ben said we have liabilities of \$72,000 for accumulated leave time for all employees. He recommends that we start a fund for people that may retire. Ed said vacation time will be awarded in January.
2. Marty said the Fire Department started a fund because when the Chief retired, it cost them a fortune.

Professional Services:

Donna said she is working on the Bina Coit Trust. She wants to dissolve this trust which is worth \$4800.00. Kevin Poland is asking for \$1000.00 since he has not been taking any money from this trust for five years. Tom felt this is a reasonable amount. Donna wants to know if she should go forward and dissolve the trust. Ben asked where the money would go. Donna said it would have to go in Cemetery.

Jenny asked if it needs to be run by the Cemetery Board, and Donna said no. She said she would ask Tom. Jenny said Lisa Zamecnik told her that anything about the trusts should go through them. Donna said she didn't think so. Donna said she asked Kevin Poland about the missing stock certificates, and he said he hadn't had time to look into it. She recommended that he get some interns to look into it. She spoke to Tom and he said there wasn't a whole lot that could be done on it at this time. Ed recommends that we bring that trust back to our local bank and handle it internally like we used to. Ben said he is willing to go talk to the judge about this missing money.

Donna met with Tim O'Brien from CT Consultants and they are willing to negotiate. She recommends that we don't pay anything at all on the \$66,000 past due amount until negotiations are approved. The plan discussed was a lump sum right now of \$20,000, June 2009 a lump sum of \$5,000, Dec. 2009 a lump sum of \$8,000 and June of 2010 a lump sum of \$11,000. Throughout this time period, we would pay \$100 every month as well. That would pay down the debt by \$44,000. At that time, they would write off the rest. This is the agreement that Mr. O'Brien is going to take back to the board. We should know in two weeks. Donna mentioned that for some reason we have a past due balance in the 91-120 days column of \$300.00, and in the 30-60 day column of \$362.00. Jenny said she explained to Donna just yesterday that we never got those bills, and when Brian reproduced the original invoices, they actually were misaddressed and that is why we never got them. Donna said she was told by the Clerk's Office that we don't get statements every month, but CT said they send them every month attention Jenny August with the correct address, but she requested that they e-mail them to me so I can keep track of when they are in arrears.

Jenny reviewed the payment plan for CT, and then asked if it's necessary to keep them on retainer since we are not going to take on any new projects. She explained that Hiram gets the same opportunities for grants without an Engineer on retainer. Roger asked who orchestrate their applications. Jenny replied that the Village Administrator does. Roger asked if it is in his job description. Ed said it is not a good comparison because Mantua is a much more complex operation. Marty said we would be in trouble without CT Consultants helping us with our projects, and it would be bad to enter into an agreement with them where they might write off \$22,000 and not keep them on retainer. Jenny said if we are putting projects on hold, why do we need an Engineer? Donna said they cut their fee's for us. She feels they are vitally important.

Tom's bill: Ben said we have gone nearly \$14,000 over.

Jenny said Jim Rogers asked her to collect bills for CT and Tom's work on the County. The total is almost \$5000.00. Ben said to give them to Jim and let him send the invoice.

Purchase Requisitions:

Jenny said Sue suggested we have those faxed up so we know the minute they arrive. She admitted that she has not sent them to Ed and Harry yet, but will do so.

Raises:

Ben said Jenny wants to see everyone get raises for next year somehow. Cost of living goes up 2.5 percent. Donna said we all want to see our hard working people get raises and it is Jenny's job to determine if the money is available.

Comments:

Ed said when the Cemetery Board is brought up, there are two issues here; One, there is a board that needs to be established to handle trusts. We have an incorporation document that speaks to that. The other is, if you look in the Codified Ordinances, there is a Cemetery Board that has never been established. To this date, you have a body in this public sector taking actions and setting policies that don't even adhere to sunshine laws. There are no minutes on file. This needs to be cleared up and cleaned up.

Temporary appropriations. Ed said there is not much difference between amending them in January and doing temporary appropriations. Jenny said the only amendment will be the carryovers. Ben said we should just do the appropriations once, amend the carryovers, and be done with it.

New hire; Ed has someone and has the authorization from the Mayor. He asked Jenny directly if she has a problem with a new hire coming on. Jenny says she knows he needs someone, but hasn't figured out how he will pay him. Ed said he is not certified in anything, and Ed wants to try him for a year and if he is working out, he wants to send him to school later. Ben said get him hired.

Donna said it would be advisable to do a workshop on the Cemetery Tuesday. She said this Cemetery Board is nothing more than a volunteer citizen group. Marty said we should take it off the agenda until we can get to the bottom of this. Donna agreed. We need to set up a workshop to work on this issue. Donna thinks we should have Tom at our workshop to get everything straightened out as far as ORC and Codified issues.

Motion to Adjourn at 10:00 by Roger, seconded by Ben

Ben Prescott, Chair of Finance

Jenny August, Clerk-Treasurer