

## **City Council Finance Committee Meeting Notes**

Tuesday, June 24, 2014

7:00PM

Hurley Building

Present: Finance Committee members: Taylor, Terwilliger, Wade, White  
Council members: Bucci, Cutri, Mayor Polimeni, Whitcomb  
City Staff: Clerk/Treasurer Abdallah, Public Works Director Sprague, City Attorney Smith, Fire Chief Marentette

### 1. Support for NYS Abandoned Property Neighborhood Relief

City Attorney Smith introduced a proposed resolution supporting legislation being considered in the NYS legislature. The legislation under consideration is known generically as the “Zombie” property law. It would hold a lender accountable for maintenance of vacant/abandoned properties prior to foreclosure, which can take many months and sometimes years. Such a law would significantly improve neighborhoods and overall quality of life.

Action Taken: Committee agreed 4:0 to recommend to Council, in the form of a resolution, that this NYS proposed legislation be supported by the City of Canandaigua.

### 2. Request for Two Part-Time Firefighter Positions

Fire Chief Marantette proposed adding two additional part-time positions (to the two already approved as part of the 2014 General Fund budget). These positions were justified to increase flexibility in staffing in order to ensure a two-person minimum staff on duty at all times. The alternative is to fill structural holes in the schedule using fulltime career firefighters on overtime, which is more costly. It was also explained that such use of part-timers would decrease the cost generated when a third person is used for incident command in the absence of Chief Marantette or volunteer Chief Dorn. The Chief indicated that approval of these two additional positions will not increase costs beyond the 2014 budget.

Action Taken: Committee agreed 3:1 to recommend to Council, in the form of a resolution, that the two new part-time positions be authorized.

### 3. CFD Captains

Volunteer firefighters Bob Palumbo, John Thompson, and Dave Dorn and Fire Chief Marantette again addressed the Committee to make a case for restoring the 4 captain positions that were eliminated in the 2010 staff reduction. The justification included 1) creating a reporting/supervisory structure in a department consisting of 9 career and 29 volunteer firefighters plus the chief; 2) assigning administrative responsibilities for looking after the facilities, equipment, communications, and EMS; and 3) aligning captain responsibilities with incident command in fire scene situations in which the Chief is not available.

Additional cost for 6 months in 2014 was estimated to be \$12,523 (\$25,046 for full year). Full year costs in 2015 and 2016 included the 2014 base plus compensation inflation adjustments plus about \$10K-\$11K/year to cover overtime for training. Full estimated cost numbers for the Captain positions and year-to-date costs for overtime were presented by Clerk/Treasurer Abdallah. She also presented data on the supervisory structure in all other City departments along with associated compensation for internal benchmarking purposes.

Committee/Council opinions were divided between full support on one end and the expectation that such duties should be performed with no additional pay or title on the other end.

Action Taken: Committee agreed 3:1 to recommend to Council, in the form of a resolution, a compromise position that two Captain positions be authorized.

#### 4. Repeal of 2015 Tax Levy Cap Override

City Attorney Smith proposed that Council repeal an earlier local law that authorized an override to the 2015 tax levy cap. Reason – In April, the NYS legislature passed and the Governor signed tax-freeze legislation that provides rebates equal to the increase in municipalities' 2015 property tax levy as long as 1) the levy increase stays below the 2015 cap, and 2) there is no municipal override local law in place for 2015. Given that there was no intent to exceed the 2015 cap, passing a repeal is necessary for City taxpayers to be eligible to receive a 2015 rebate.

Action Taken: Committee agreed 4:0 to recommend to Council, in the form of a local law, that the 2015 override be repealed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40PM at which time the Committee went into Executive Session to discuss potential real property transaction issues. No action was taken. The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 22 at 7:00PM at the Hurley Building.

Respectfully submitted,

James Terwilliger  
Finance Committee Chair