

**The FINANCE COMMITTEE held a Meeting on
MONDAY, MARCH 14TH, 2022 beginning at 7:05 P.M.**

FINANCE PRESENT: Chair Stewart, Tollett, Cerra, Davis, Schneider

CD PRESENT: Chair Callahan, Mitchell, Lipian, Oswald, Schneider

OTHERS PRESENT: Law Dir Deery, Safety Service Dir Brubaker, Mayor Whitfield, Finance Dir Pileski, Asst Finance Dir Farrell, Asst Dir Calvert, Asst Dir Williams, Engineer McKillips, WWPC Supt. Korzan, HR Dir Yousefi, Building Official Farkas, Parks Dir Reardon, Fire Chief Pronesti, Council members Simmons and Corbin

1. Approval of the Regular Finance Meeting Minutes ~ February 28th, 2022.

Mrs. Mitchell moved and Mr. Oswald second to approve the 'said' Meeting Minutes.

2. The matter of a Moral Claim as submitted by Eric and Cheryl Greenly.

Referred By: Safety Service Director Brubaker

Cheryl Greenly of 104 Cumberland Ct. came to the podium to speak to the committee regarding the incident that happened at her home.

Mrs. Greenly said she and her husband have lived at this home for over 20 years and never had a problem like what they discovered on the morning of September 14, 2021. When they went into their basement they found three and a half inches of water covering the basement floor on a beautiful sunny day, no reason for flooding, it wasn't raining. They called a plumber, the City, their insurance company. They had no reason why there was flooding. She thanked the City for sending out crews so quickly. First the Waste Water group came then the Water Dist. Crews. They took measurements and tried to figure what was going on while the water continued to rise in the basement. They spent the entire day moving everything out of the basement. They are asking for out of pocket expenses to be reimbursed from the City of \$7,180.02. To fix the damage. Mr. Kothe from Water Distribution Dept said the issue was a water main, a thrust blocker at the end of the water main which is in their front yard near the fire hydrant which broke and the high pressure water burst through tiles into their basement. It took them some time to figure that out. They had to turn off the water in the meantime they had pumps in their basement and had to bring in Service Master to help dry out the basement. They lost their appliance; hot water heater, the washer and dryer were destroyed. That is their claim and request to the City.

Dir Brubaker said what Mrs. Greenly shared are the reports he got back from Waste Water Dept. and Water Distribution Dept. The Greenly's live at the end of Cumberland Court and at the base of their driveway there is a Fire Hydrant. There was a water leak which was underground so no one knew about it. And it backed up into their tiles and it went around the tiles in their basement and ultimately into the crock of their property which caused the flooding in their basement. Waste water gets called first in situations like this, Chris Werling showed up and saw that it was clear water, not waste or sewer water. His team responded and dug up to find out the problem and determined that underground, there is a pipe that had a cap on it that is old and the cap had rested and came off and that is what caused the leak to flow into other areas and caused that water to back. The Greenly's were the only ones that were affected. There was no knowledge that this was going on. When they dug up by the fire hydrant, that underneath the fire hydrant there was a large gap which means the area underneath the hydrant was not back filled the correct way from many years ago. That caused it to 'give-way' and eventually that pipe broke. Both Mr. Werling and Mr. Kothe said there is not much that could have been done to stop this, even if they had a sump pump in their crock, probably would not have been able to keep up with the amount of water that was flowing. That's a main water line that feeds that fire hydrant.

It ran from approximately 6:00 P.M. to when the Greenly's discovered it at around 6:00 the next morning, which when they made the phone calls.

Dir Brubaker said the City's process for claim for damage requests; they come into the Safety Dir Office and Dir Brubaker reaches out to the department, he gets a report, he then submits all the information the Law Director's office. The Law Dept reviews the information. In this case, the Law Dept did approve the \$500 which is what they are allowed to approve. They recommended to the Greenly's that they could file this moral claim.

Dir Brubaker recommends that the City pay this claim, though the City didn't know about this but it's the City's moral responsibility to pay this claim. And this is not anything that an insurance policy would've covered.

Finance Dir Pileski said this payment would come out of the Water Fund, Water Misc Dept., Operating and Maintenance Account and the motions do concur.

Mr. Cerra moved and Mr. Tollett seconded to authorize an ordinance authorizing the payment of the 'said' moral claim.

MOTION MADE COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

Finance Dir Pileski said this payment would come out of the Water Fund, Water Misc Dept., Operating and Maintenance Account and the motions do concur.

3. The matter of a Moral Claim as submitted by Rick and Darlene Cross.

Referred By: Safety Service Director Brubaker

Richard Cross of 777 Arlington Dr., Vermilion told the committee what happened on the afternoon of January 17th as his wife was driving to work. She was heading East on Route 2 (I 90) going to Westlake and approaching Gulf Road and saw a wave of white ice hit the windshield and crushed the windshield. She swerved off the road and called the police and she was told since there was no injury and with the snow storm they couldn't come out and she was able to call a friend who was able to help her. They filed a claim. There is fencing over the overpass and the plow truck was probably at a high rate of speed and the ice hit the top of the fence and went down onto her windshield.

Director Brubaker said this incident was described by Mr. Cross. Mr. Brubaker said he was in that area of Gulf Road over I90, there are concrete sides which are 32" in height and a tall fence which goes straight up and has small holes. He said he did speak to the drivers that may have been in that area at the time and neither one could say they were driving the truck at that time in that area. They did say that going across that bridge they do slow down to 25 miles per hour because with the blades on the plows they need to be extra careful.

Chair Stewart said that the amount that can be paid by a claim is \$500, but the Cross's are asking for the full amount of \$1,035.00. The original claim was denied. If the committee chooses, the City can pay what they are asking which is \$1,035 or we can pay up to \$500 or we can chose not to pay. Those are the options.

Mrs. Davis stated that she has noticed a lot of ice if falling off of bridges and her car has been hit just by the ice falling off the bridges. No trucks or anything around. She asked if Mrs. Cross was able to continue driving her car?

Mr. Cross said she pulled off the road and called him pretty frantic and a friend was able to pick her up and took the car to the shop where the cost of the windshield was estimated. A phone call was made to the Police but they couldn't come out to the location for a couple of hours, so she never pursued a Police report.

Mr. Tollett said this was the snow event where there was a lot of ice in the snow and there were reports of snow plows causing damage to windshields. It's his opinion we move forward with paying this claim.

Mr. Tollett moved and Mr. Cerra seconded to authorize an ordinance authorizing the payment of the 'said' moral claim.

MOTION MADE (one NAY on this vote - Davis) COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

4. The matter of inactive/delinquent EPU Accounts to be certified to Lorain County Auditor's Office. (Standing Referral)

Referred By: Public Works Supervisor Conner

Dir Brubaker said this matter is standard procedure and he has no additional comments.

Mr. Tollett moved and Mr. Schneider seconded to recommend a resolution authorizing the 'said' delinquent utility accounts to be certified to the Lorain County Auditor's Office.

MOTION MADE COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

5. The matter of the purchase of a 2022-2023 dual axle plow truck for the Street Dept.

Referred By: Safety Service Director Brubaker

Dir Brubaker said this is part of the budget process they've been working on and ties into several snow storms ago and he talked about adding a dual axle plow truck to Rt 57 route. He's asking to utilize ARPA funding to get this truck purchased, it will take 9 - 14 months and it will add an additional truck to the Street Dept.

Mr. Lipian wanted to note for the record, they've had conversations about ARAP funds and he'll remind the committee what was read by Finance Dir Pileski, and he quoted, 'while the public health emergency affected many aspects of American life, eligible uses under this category must be in response to the Disease, itself or the harmful consequences of the economic disruptions resulting or exacerbated by Covid19'. Mr. Lipian said asked if we can't use ARPA funds for Ukrainian other refugees, because it's not related directly to the disease, how do we justify buying a snow plow with it?

Dir Pileski said this falls under the revenue replacement general services category. There's a calculation that he went through to calculate lost revenue due to covid and those dollars can be used for general services which is basically normal business that the City conducts and includes pay as you go Capital items. Last year we purchased a fire truck with covid money in revenue replacement category, and this plow truck will also be in that category.

Mr. Lipian thanked Mr. Pileski and he said that there are other calculations that can be done, it seems to be a bit of a stretch, which is what is possible with this money, and let's keep that in mind. Speaking of fire trucks, in the Port Authority building we have a very old Elyria Fire Truck that is a historic vehicle. At one point there was a buyer for this and he asked what became of that?

Chair Stewart asked if the Dir can look into what happened with that old fire truck. For now, we're discussing the dual axle plow truck.

Mr. Schneider moved and Mr. Tollett seconded to recommend an ordinance authorizing the purchase of the 'said' truck under State Purchasing Program in amount of \$225,000.

MOTION MADE COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

(there was one NAY, which was Mr. Lipian, though he is not on this committee)

6. The matter of applying for The 'Healthy Places Grant' through Lorain County Health District for security gates at City swimming pools.

Referred By: Parks Director Reardon *[This matter passed by Utilities Committee on 3/9/22]*

Parks Dir said this is a grant that they've already applied for, which was already due. It's not a matching grant, there are no funds needed. It's for 2 self locking gates, one at each pool. This was something that was suggested by the Health District.

Mr. Schneider moved and Mr. Cerra seconded to recommend an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to submit the said grant and accept the funds.

MOTION MADE COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

7. The matter of an ODOT Grant Application for the ‘Safe Routes to School Program’.

Referred By: Engineer McKillips

[This is a continuation of the discussion on this matter from Feb. 9th and passed by Utilities 3/9/22]

Engineer McKillips said this was presented prior to the committee and it was pulled because thru discussions with ODOT District 3, Safe Routes To School Project Coordinator, they determined that the scope of work that they previously had in the proposal wasn't the best scope so they re-worked the locations of the sidewalks and came up with new locations that worked better for scoring as far as the application. The actual application has already been submitted, March 4th. This is retroactive. It will replace sidewalks that are past their useful life and installing new sidewalks where none exist. It will remove trees and stumps that are inhibiting the sidewalks. It will upgrade crossings to be ADA compliant around 3 schools; Hamilton, Eastern Hts and Northwood. Main roads include Middle Ave., West Ave., Garford Ave., Prospect, Hilliard. Construction will begin in 2024. Budget is \$400,000, which is the maximum amount and there is no City match.

Mr. Lipian thanked Engineer McKillips on the development of this grant there was only a small portion of sidewalks in the first ward and then he had conversations and are now significant increases in the amount of sidewalks that would be impacted if we get this grant it would be a tremendous win for the safety of the children of the first ward around the Eastern Heights campus.

Mr. Tollett moved and Mr. Cerra seconded to recommend an ordinance ratifying the Mayor’s submission of an application and authorizing the acceptance of funds for the ‘said’ program.

MOTION MADE

COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

8. The matter of the 2022 Permanent Appropriations. *[Annual Budget]*

Referred By: Finance Directors Pileski and Farrell

Mayor Whitfield began the discussion. He said part of the role as Mayor is presenting the annual budget. He met with department heads to share their goals which they submitted along with their budgets. He thanked Council for the Issue 6 process which was expedited by them. They worked with the Finance Department to get revenue figures and projections for 2022 and then the Finance Dept worked to get those budgets cut down to the amount that is available. Then they looked at the gaps that existed after making cuts. And he said they could use ARPA Funds to close those gaps. There’s a clause and a calculation in ARPA that can show what revenue you would’ve gotten as a City had it not been for the pandemic. And you can use that number, that calculation to do any sort of general government service. The Mayor said they looked at using those resources to plug those gaps. They also looked at where they can accommodate for the loss of Bendix and raises as well. The Mayor said it’s been great working as a team, with John Farrell and Dir Pileski. He said he learned a lot from them.

Finance Dir Pileski thanked the Mayor. He began with the appropriation process centers around the General Fund and includes about 50 other funds. There are about 30 Special Revenue Funds, Enterprise Funds, Internal Service Funds, Trust Funds. The challenge for the General Fund this year was two fold, we had the loss of Bendix which is ongoing, so he had to account for lost revenue which means there is less to appropriate. On the expenditure side they had to include a three percent raise across the board for everyone. For the General Fund that amounts to about \$850,000 per year. Between Bendix and the increased expenditures, they moved about 2.5 million in the wrong direction. When the requests came I at \$37,567,920 it was 3 million higher than what we had available to appropriate. At that point they went through it, they look at prior year expenditures and the requests and asks questions. He was able to cut that deficit in half, so we’re still at a million and a half to the bad as far as what’s over appropriated. At that point, they looked at the ARPA Fund and we could use for General Services under the Revenue replacement category.

They settled on including in this appropriation spending 2 million for Police which would ease a little on the General Fund. They decided on 1 million for Fire for existing personnel and also 1 million for new hires that have never been in the General Fund before. They were able to balance the General Fund Budget by lowering the appropriations in the General Fund due to appropriating under ARPA. That being said, the balance left to appropriate in the General Fund is about 1.6 million as opposed to a negative 1.5 million.

Dir Pileski said he hopes revenues are going to come in better than anticipated. We are still getting some monies from Bendix and we don't know when that will end. Some of their employees are working from home and if they live in Elyria, they should be withholding from those employees. We used to get \$125,000 withholdings per month from Bendix and last couple months we've gotten around \$70,000. It's dropped 50 - 60 percent.

Mayor Whitfield said on the ARPA side, with 2 million going into Police, 2 million to Fire and 3 million of that is actually offsetting the General Fund with the 1 million in Fire actually going toward new hires. They also requested, (which have already been approved), 1 million for the Small Business Program, 1 million for Essential Services. 1.5 million for Parks & Recreation, to be utilized to update and renovate Oakwood School. As well as any balance to be able to support staffing for programs. The 1 million around the Qualified Census Tract Development Initiative which was already discussed earlier. The 1 million to set aside for Sanitation, since that fund has been struggling and by using this money to keep rates down so they won't have to raise those rates to residents.

Dir Pileski said that they did put 1 million in to Sanitation Services think that they'll spend a third of that this year and a third in 2023 and final third in 2024. If they do that there will be 600 plus that goes unspent that they will carry over into next year's budget. They also purchased 3 garbage trucks that we're taken out of Issue 6 Funds. Typically they would pay for these out of Sanitation, the cost is \$350,000 per truck and the money isn't there. He did issue notes for \$350,000 and purchased 1 truck out of Sanitation and now we have to pay that note back over a period of time.

Mayor Whitfield said they put 1 million into Capital Expenses which has already been approved; a Fire Truck and a Plow Truck and Capital Improvements at Muni Court which equal around \$900,000. And want to allocate \$500,000 for the Home Beautification Program that Councilman Oswald recommended. It's one of the restricted eligible uses of ARPA Funds. There is a 'Lost Revenue' category of ARPA for any general service and then there is 'Restricted Pot' that is very specific, around and responding to covid and there are certain things that can be done in these qualified census tracts. And then they want to set aside \$500,000 for Miscellaneous General Government Services. Such as if we want to do something around the Refugee Program or other programs, as well as using it to off-set some of the General Fund. Even with all of that we still haven't allocated all of the Funds. We believe that we shouldn't try to spend everything right now because we don't know what the future holds.

Chair Stewart asked about the Beautification Program.

Dir Pileski said that's on page 27 and it's under qualified economic improvement and qualified census which is the 1 million. And the Beautification Program falls under the negative economic impact - \$500,000.

Chair Stewart asked where we're at with that program?

Mr. Oswald said it's all set. The CD Department is all ready to go. They were waiting to find out if they can use ARPA monies.

Mr. Oswald had a question about the million dollars that's going into the Sanitation Fund, and asked if it goes for their payroll?

Chair Stewart asked if the Home Beautification Program went to a committee?

Mayor Whitfield said no, it hasn't come to committee but they wanted to get it on the Budget to make sure the money is there before they propose the program.

Dir Calvert has been working with this program with the Community Development Department. They've drafted the guidelines and they are ready to come before the committee for discussion. They wanted to make sure those funds were able to be used for this program.

Chair Stewart said even though something isn't appropriated it's still there in that line item and we can come back to it. His concern is that down the road in a couple years, if we need this money for something else so that we understand that we can move that around if we don't utilize that. And he'd rather not appropriate it at this particular time or maybe we use a lesser amount to start the program off.

Mayor Whitfield said that's true, if we don't utilize the money we can move it around and the other suggestion of lowering the amount and if there's momentum we come back and say, let's add to the fund.

The question of how the one million dollars that's going to the Sanitation Fund is those monies would be used to pay salaries. So every \$300,000 we spend with ARPA, that \$300,000 stays in the Sanitation Fund and after 3 years that fund will be one million dollars stronger.

Dir Pileski said on page 56, under WWPC Fund is the Fund where we were required to do a lot of EPA Mandated sewer projects. There is \$24,676,656 of Capital which would be new sewer projects plus carried over encumbrances from the prior year. There will be a lot of sewer projects continuing on in the City.

Chair Stewart wanted to continue the discussion on the Oakwood school. There's been conversations in the past with Ms Mitchell and Ms Davis and our potential non-profit working that through. There was a referral made to make those initial improvements in the amount of \$750,000 and in working with Save Our Children and where those numbers are and where that agreement is for those expenses. Mr. Stewart said that he would rather not appropriate that money at this time. Because we don't have an agreement and where are we at with these estimates that are coming through.

Mayor Whitfield said in terms of taking a step back from the specifics and that we've acquired this building that we have to stabilize. He doesn't know that the plan was before ARPA, but now we have some resources that we can use to replace the roof and windows and getting it ADA compliant. That's what the team has been focused on. We know long term, we have this intergenerational concept of having seniors and Save Our Children. Again, who's going to make a commitment to a space without saying we're going to do something to fix it up. The building belongs to the City to manage how we see fit.

Chair Stewart said they would like to see this work, but the big concern is investing in this in a long term capacity. Are we able to operate it? There were conversations even before. Should we take a portion of the building, demo some of it, or use it as storage? Those were prior conversations with the prior administration. A big concern is that we're going to put this money into it and are we going to be able to operate the building? The costs for just the utilities alone is \$3000.00. Those are numbers we have to look at to see if we're going to be able to handle this in the next 2 - 3 years and beyond and making that investment.

Law Dir Deery said for detail purposes this is listing as a Capital Outlay for Parks & Rec but she needs to double check because she's not sure this property has actually been designated a Park by Council. It's owned by the City and not sure if that makes a difference for ARPA Funds.

Asst Dir Williams gave an update on this project. He said the initial costs are for stabilization. We have this building that is in disrepair. The roof is in poor condition. There are leaks. The roof, the windows, ADA accessibility of the restrooms and the HVAC are the main projects at this time. There are a number of perspectives, whether we do one or if we only do two. The \$750,000 initial cost was; \$300,000 for the roof, windows about \$200,000, restrooms @ \$89,000 each. That is what consumed that amount. We've worked with architects and had renderings and we're pretty confident to make sure it's safe and regardless what the long term use is, in terms of an asset, we have to stabilize it, otherwise it will go further into disrepair. He said he is working with Save Our Children and other community partners.

He has received support letters from other organizations. Save Our Children would be the primary tenant which is how we're expanding into this intergenerational dynamic. There will be a dedicated senior center as well as other community engagement opportunities so it's truly a partnership. There will be some speculative work, but we do have willing partners who will have the capacity to serve our community. They are currently working with the Save Our Children Board to figure what that document looks like, what the terms will be, what will be expected of them and what's expected of us. There will be many discussions with Save Our Children and Council on how we'll move forward. He believes they have allocated in the budget monies toward maintenance, outdoors, grass cutting, etc. Yes, there's a long term expense and we need to vet that out and figure out how those costs are shared. They are also looking to apply for a Capital Budget Grant thru the State and there are some philanthropic organizations that may want to help. In phase one, it's the stabilization, phase two will be looking at some of the remodeling pieces which will be based on collaborative partnership grants and other investments.

Mrs. Davis said she's hearing the big question that we have not confirmed that Parks & Rec will be the director over this building, will Parks & Rec be in charge of this building?

Mr. Williams said in terms of the expectation, that question will be answered that Parks & Rec will have a roll in it and we expect that the tenant 'Save Our Children' will be the Primary responsible piece and the City will work as a partner collaboratively with them. Those details will need to be worked out. We don't anticipate being there alone, they will be the occupant that will be there for the most duration of time. They are anticipating that some of the current senior programs will be hosted there. So the Parks & Rec will have a direct role. And they are anticipating that this will expand the City's West Park area.

Mrs. Davis said the initial reason for acquiring Oakwood School was to be part of Parks & Rec of the City so they don't leave out the seniors in the area. She is hoping that it's not drifting away from Parks & Rec where seniors can have the opportunity to go there without being worried who else is there.

Mr. Williams said that is absolutely the priority. They have selected a friendly tenant, especially when it relates to the inter-generational relationship between Save Our Children and our seniors. There is dedicated space specifically allocated for seniors.

Mrs. Mitchell said she concurs with everything that Mrs. Davis just said and she wants to go on record saying that she wants the seniors to have more than one room, they should have the space to do their programming which is important because as Mrs. Davis said when we purchased the school it was with the understanding that it was going to be a senior center. Mrs. Mitchell asked if ARPA funds can be used for this?

Finance Dir Pileski said yes, ARPA funds are appropriated to do this structural work. It's under the revenue replacement category.

Mrs. Mitchell said again that they want to ensure that this goes to Parks & Rec and that they run the building in conjunction with Save Our Children, but we need to have discussions about who will pay the utilities, what kind of rent will they pay.

Mr. Schneider asked if we've considered with the updates that have to be done, going into a geothermal or a solar system, maybe there will be grants available for that. If we look at avenues like that we may be able to offset some costs.

Mr. Williams said they will be looking at many opportunities, some certifications that you get for the efficiency. They've gotten quotes and the trend is going toward those efficiency components.

Law Dir Deery said that if this property is not designated by Council as Parks & Rec Property and asked that would be an issue as it's laid out on the budget?

Finance Dir Pileski said that he really didn't consider that and he doesn't really know if that matters or not. He did say that seeing how we're discussing Parks & Rec, the General Fund; Parks & Rec spent \$1,054,000 in 2021. The budget request was \$1,344,000 and he cut \$164,500 to shrink the gap between what was appropriated and what's available to appropriate.

He cut money out of their operating budget.

Mr. Oswald said when Northwood school was up for sale and someone approached him and said that it would be a good place for a senior center. This person was interested in donating money and putting his name on the building. He asked if the City has any philanthropist like would like to do something like that?

Chair Stewart said there was a referral made for \$750,000 to stabilize the building. Then there is now another referral for \$750,000 and he asked what that's for? Because there is a total of \$1.5 million in the budget request.

Mr. Williams said they hadn't had all of the estimated come in yet. The amount of the roof replacement came in by the architects at \$800,000 and just got a bid for \$300,000 so there is some range. Also, they hadn't had estimates for doors and for the HVAC. They knew they were in that \$750,000 range. They knew that the architects had placed it at a much higher amount. This overall project is larger than that portion they thought would accommodate the stabilization. And the bathrooms, the amounts are \$89,000 each and do we do two or do four? There is lots of decision making within that budget.

Chair Stewart said that kind of leads to his point where there's still a lot of unanswered questions that need to be answered with this and discussion in regards to, are we able to operate this building, that's a big concern, it's a big building. That needs to be looked at before this money gets appropriated and have conversations with Save Our Children, this is a big concern. After all these improvements are made are we going to be able to function it?

Mr. Schneider said he agrees, he has concerns with the over size of the building and the initial upkeep and the upkeep over time. When the cost for the roof came in lower, was that just for patching?

Mr. Williams said it was for full replacement. He said the striking thing is the disparity, we have a number over here and over there. Both could be real numbers depending on a lot of variables. He concurs that there is still a lot to be determined. The building is ours and we have to stabilize and make it safe.

Mr. Cerra asked if there is a time limit as to when we have to use these ARPA Funds?

Mayor Whitfield said the monies have to be spent by December 31st, 2024. If we've decided on a project and we've encumbered it by December 31st, 2024 and it has to be spent by December 31st, 2026.

Mr. Cerra said if we want to stabilize this building, it would not include bathrooms. If we went with the original amount of \$750,000 to stabilize it and save any further destruction, at least with the roof and windows, he would be in favor of that.

Mr. Oswald said he agrees with Mr. Cerra. He asked if we have to allocate those funds or leave them sitting there and then use them when we need them.

Mayor Whitfield said the philosophy is to allocate the funds, they will have to bring every contract back to Council no matter what. We will also go out for some grants and see if there's other ways and when we come back we may only have to spend \$700,000 but we're projecting up to that amount, so let's put that in the budget so that we can have the freedom to go out and get the bids.

Mrs. Mitchell said she's had calls from neighbors regarding neighborhood kids going up onto the roof, just what kids do. Her concern is that a child could fall and get hurt.

Mr. Lipian mentioned West Park and the new paths and he had representatives from the Elyria Soccer Organization, in particular Andy Fifa, who is in his ward. Mr. Fifa was concerned whether or not these paths and these improvements would displace the soccer fields?

Mr. Williams said he can confirm that those fields won't be affected.

Parks Dir Reardon said that she cannot say that 100% because nothing has been designed yet. They are keeping that in mind. They've been discussing other locations for soccer fields or a complex. The goal is to keep the number of fields that they've had in the past going forward but she can't say 100%. They did get a survey back which showed some wetlands, so there are some areas that have to be avoided.

Mrs. Mitchell asked Dir Reardon if the City can have a conversation with Amware, they have all that land that they aren't using, maybe they can give to us.

Dir Reardon said, that's a good idea but there are a lot of wet areas back there so there is already some areas that we looked into last year, but they're too wet and flooded. That's not to say we couldn't get that land and do some fixing as far as drainage, we can look into that.

Chair Stewart thanked everyone for that dialogue. At this time, in regards to this line items that are here with reference to Parks & Rec and The Home Beautification Program. There were talks about not allocating the full \$500,000 and the full \$1.5 million for the Parks & Rec. This is the time to make those changes so that we can approve the budget.

Finance Dir Pileski said they can amend the permanent appropriations at any time.

Chair Stewart said that for the Beautification Program, maybe we can start with \$200,000 or \$150,000 to start that program.

Dir Pileski said they can change the exhibit.

Mr. Tollett said on behalf of the committee he recommends to scale the \$1.5 million to \$750,000 until we get more clarity on the use of the building. Then we could go back with those replacement ARPA Funds depending on what need to be done.

Chair Stewart said we can put this money into it and we don't even know if we can operate it. That's a big thing, operating this building after all these improvements and we don't have the money to operate it in a few years now.

Mayor Whitfield said there is a rep from Save Our Children to speak on this.

Mr. Williams requested that we look at \$1 million. The HVAC and the doors were not included in the \$750,000. They expect that costs could come in a bit over based on all the things happening economically, so he would feel safe that \$1 million would get us where we need to be.

Chair Stewart said it's for the stabilization of the roof and the windows and bringing the restrooms ADA compliant.

Mr. Tollett said that we would have to include HVAC so the building can be heated and so that pipes won't freeze.

Dir Reardon said they're still waiting for the HVAC estimates to come back. When the school left, the heat was working but there was no AC. Since they want to use the building year round, which is why they are looking into AC. She said they've looked into other options and what is the most efficient way to utilize the HVAC and they're still waiting on those numbers.

Mr. Oswald stated that the most important thing is to stabilize it and figure out what the other options would be and go from there. He thinks the \$750,000 should be good.

Mrs. Davis said the Fin Dir Pileski already cut the Parks & Rec budget so we do have to be clear who will pay for this building and what budget it will be paid from. Utilities are \$3000 a month and no one is even in the building.

Dir Pileski said he cut that budget \$164,560, part is salaries, fringes and part is operating costs. He said that all these costs for the building will have to go out for bids.

Mr. Schneider asked if anything will be required for asbestos or lead abatement?

Dir Reardon said that has been brought up from many of the contractors and the feedback that they have been given is that they don't know until they get into the project. So that is a possibility.

Chair Stewart said that at this point we're bumping it up to \$1 million based on what's being talked about. His opinion is that he thinks we should not appropriate at this time.

Mayor Whitfield said it doesn't have to be allocated, they just need to hear that there is a desire so we can come back to council and we can say here's the package.

Chair Stewart said at the end of the day when this is done are we going to be able to function the building?

Mayor Whitfield said that by putting this in the budget, they know that council made a statement, it's in the budget, it's a value and then we can go do the work.

Mr. Oswald said the question that isn't being answered is, how much will Save Our Children pay in rent?

Chair Stewart said that conversation needs to be had.

Mr. Williams said those conversations are underway. What they have is a commitment in terms of intentions. The details have to be worked out. Whether it's Save Our Children or another organization, we took that building and so whichever partnership, it's still our building. He would hate for us to stabilize it and then not program it. To say that we want to serve our seniors but we don't want to pay anything just doesn't work. We have to have partners and possibly partners who can be sponsors. Multiple streams of revenue will be needed to maintain the facility.

Chase Ferris of Save Our Children said they have a very strong interest in this building and to be able to partner with the City. As they presented last year this move into this building will allow them to double their capacity as they continue to have a wait list in each class. They are looking forward to making this a win-win for everyone. They are not trying to negate any costs that they will be responsible for. When it comes to partnering with the City and figuring out what costs work for them and they want those costs to work for the City. Coming into a building and doing a Capital Campaign to raise funds to approve something that's not ours and dumping our own funds and coming into a building because like he said they can't move into this building until they have a kitchen so they have to incur funds to get a commercial size kitchen before we can even run the programming. There's things they have to do at the same time okay we're going to raise these funds, but never mind, we can't do it. So, those are conversations that have to be had with everyone.

Chair Stewart said there will be another conversation on the 28th to be sure that Mr. Ferris is given the information and maybe there will be more of an understanding of what's going on.

Mayor Whitfield asked if the Committee agreed on the \$750,000 or the \$1 million?

Chair Stewart asked what that answer was. Mr. Tollett went on about an amount but he did not have his microphone on and I was unable to hear it.

Mr. Cerra brought up the matter that if we're going to at least use it as a senior center he would not be opposed to putting the roof on.

Mr. Schneider said that he would hope that if we put a million dollars into it that we don't think about tearing something down. So it either we take it and tear it down or we take it and we fix it and utilize it, those are the options.

Safety Dir Brubaker said that if there is any inclination by this body that this building can be used, the roof has to be addressed. When he was on the school board in 2016 and they were patching that roof at that time and the levy passed and less maintenance was getting done because they were building the new school. A leaking roof will cause more issues for us down the road. We still have to come out for bid, we still have to come back to council for permission. That roof is definitely a concern.

Chair Stewart said that they will dedicate the one million dollars for this.

There is a motion made by Mr. Tollett to appropriate \$1 million dollars on the budget for the stabilization of the Oakwood School and second by Mrs. Davis.

All in Favor; Davis, Tollett, Schneider, Cerra, Opposed: Stewart

Mayor asked about the Home Beautification Program.

Chair Stewart asked how much they are talking about for this program.

Dir Calvert said they drafted a program to be a \$5000 grant.

Mr. Oswald said he would think if we're giving \$5000 as the maximum amount and that resident would have to do \$10,000 worth of work and that would be the average amount. At that point there could be 40 residents who could get work done on their homes. And if it takes off maybe it's something we can continue. So, if we start with \$200,000 it would be good.

Mrs. Davis asked if there will be a criteria to apply for this program?

Mayor said that will be the referral they'll be bringing for that program.

They can meet between now and then and even at that committee meeting and the they will look at the feedback from the committee once the money is there.

Mrs. Davis made a motion that they move this down to \$250,000 instead of \$500,000. That motion was seconded by Mr. Schneider.

All in Favor; Davis, Tollett, Schneider, Cerra, Opposed: Stewart

Chair Stewart said he's not against it, he just thinks that we need more specifics.

The next part of the discussion was on Issue 6 dollars.

Finance Dir Pileski said there's a page that shows how the money is going to be spent and it ties to what's been proposed on the budget.

They have the list of all the projects. Part of Issue 6 was hiring 10 Police Officers, we are keeping the 10 newest officers on roster in that fund and the next 25 are in the Police Levy Fund and the highest are in the General Fund. The total request for EPD Issue 6 is \$1,625,362 for those 10 officers, training uniforms, fringe benefits, various operating costs.

Next is Parks & Rec, there are a lot of proposed projects as well as carried over encumbrances. Next is Economic Development, requests is \$1,556,572 and there is a list of items that will be used for. The next one is the street program, we have \$1,750,000 for the new program and there are unpaid bills from the prior year of \$1,078,099. Total budget request is \$2,834,999. Also, they've been paying street lighting out of basic city services and tree maintenance, computer costs, total budget request is \$1,000,541.

Next is Misc Capital items - \$1,719,664 carried from last year and this year's request are for \$1,439,216.

Next there is a one year note for the fire truck and will mature after one year and he's going to roll the note for \$400,000 and paying the interest plus the \$100,000 in principle so that note is paid off when this round of Issue 6 matures in 2025. That total is \$13,491,910. That sounds like a lot because it only brings in about \$7 million a year but we carried over \$6.7 million. That leaves a balance of \$268,518 to appropriate.

Chair Stewart said they've had discussions about a new Central Maintenance Garage. They've invested money into trucks and vehicles. He asked where that's at now.

Mayor said they are still assessing about renovating current location versus building a new building. The cost to build something like that right now is pretty high. We hope to get some direction on that this year.

Dir Brubaker said he and Mr. Strohsack met with the architect people that we had chosen to do the complex last year. They're evaluating and hopefully in next few weeks they'll have a report what the potential cost for renovations and some additions would be.

Mayor Whitfield said in the General Fund and the ARPA Fund to make sure they didn't allocate everything. Even with the requests they've made, they still made sure everything wasn't allocated so that they could be responsive to market changes and opportunity changes.

Dir Pileski said there are some items, like fuel and gasoline which has increased. We were spending \$15,000 in gas a month for the Sanitation Dept and that will most likely go up this year, possibly to \$20,000 a month or more.

Chair Stewart asked if there is anymore discussion on the budget? It's a fluid document, he explained that he voted against certain items because he's trying to be cautious about what's going on in the future.

Fin Dir Pileski said that we focus on the General Fund and there are many more funds that we have. Some of the Special Funds at Muni Court require moving cash around because some of the fines they bring in aren't enough to cover all the expenses. Most of these other funds are in pretty good shape.

Mr. Tollett moved and Mr. Cerra seconded to authorize an ordinance authorizing the Permanent Appropriations for the City for the Year 2022 with the two changes that were recommended and voted on during the discussion.

MOTION MADE (all Ayes)

COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

9. The matter of Amendments to the 2022 Temporary Appropriations. [Standing Referral]

Referred By: Finance Directors Pileski and Farrell

There were no amendments to the temporary appropriations this evening.

10. The matter of the EPPA Contract [Standing Referral]

Referred By: Director Brubaker

Motion

A motion was made by Mr. Tollett and second by Mr. Cerra to discuss this matter in Executive Session and a Roll Call Vote was taken to go into Executive Session at 9:02 P.M.

All Ayes; Tollett, Schneider, Cerra, Davis, Stewart

The Executive Session ended and a Roll Call Vote was taken to come out of Executive Session at 9:10 P.M.

All Ayes; Tollett, Schneider, Cerra, Davis, Stewart

Mrs. Davis moved and Mr. Tollett seconded to recommend an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to Approve the Elyria Police Patrolman Association [EPPA] Contract.

MOTION MADE

COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

Mr. Tollett moved and second by Mr. Cerra to adjourn this evening's Finance Committee Meeting at 9:15 P.M.

MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully submitted by,

*Colleen Rosado,
Council Clerk Secretary/Administrative Assistant*

CMR/