

The Utilities, Safety & Environment Committee

held a meeting on **Wednesday, March 6th, 2024** at 6:00 P.M.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Mitchell, Stewart, Armstrong, Davis

Other Councilmembers present: Cerra and Siwierka

OTHERS PRESENT: Safety Service Dir Pyanowski, Law Dir Breunig, Engineer Schneider, Fire Chief Pronesti

1. Approval of the February 22nd, 2024 Utilities Committee Meeting Minutes.

Moved by Mrs. Davis and second by Mr. Armstrong to approved the above minutes.

2. The matter of the purchase of a new pumper truck for the Elyria Fire Department.

Referred By: Fire Chief Pronesti

Fire Chief Pronesti said that the amount of time it takes to build and get delivery of a fire apparatus could take up to 3 years. One of the things they've run into is trying to time the age of where the current pumpers have worn out and the time to receive a new one that's been ordered. He had a meeting with the Finance Director. To refresh everyone, the City has in service three pumpers every day. One at Cedar, one at 57 & Bell and one on N Abbe. The pumper at N Abbe is a 2021, Cedar St pumper is a 2021. The pumper at 57 & Bell is a 2016 which has given them problems and the engine has been replaced. The goal is to replace that 2016 pumper. They do have reserve status where they keep two older pumpers in reserve, currently, they are a 2009 and a 2014, they are fully equipped, but they are not staffed. The goal would be to get the 2016 into reserve with the 2014 and sell the 2009. That would give them a good fleet. They are still up against the problem of high mileage which creates the maintenance issues. He would like to try to get it ordered as soon as possible. The cost is skyrocketing; pumpers that were bought in 2021 were around \$600,000 and 3 years later, the cost is now 1 million dollars. The cost will only continue to go higher. The build time will not change. They are built from scratch. The 2014 and 2016 were leased because they needed them right away and couldn't wait to have them built to their specs.

Chair Mitchell asked if the 2016 is unreliable, why would we keep it?

Chief Pronesti said it's still in service because it's in better shape than the 2014. The reason we would try to sell the 2009 because there are standards that after 15 years, the National Fire Protection Agency Standard says it should go into reserve for 5 years. In three years, that 2009 will be close to the 20-year point. He keeps track of the amount of money that put into each apparatus and that 2016 far out seeds all the other apparatus as far as what we put into it.

Law Dir Breunig asked if we get these through a state purchasing program?

Chief said yes.

Dir Breunig asked if the funds in the temporary budget?

Chief said when he spoke to Dir Pileski they had originally put in for 2016 ½ percent income tax money and Dir Pileski said the amount was too much for that.

Svc Dir Pyanowski said the plan is to allocate \$950,000 from the General Fund so they have the PO to show the manufacturer when they order the truck, that they have the money allocated. Then they would carry it over each year until the truck is delivered. They won't be paying for it, but it will lock in the price and it will be financed internally for those three years. They will carry those over on the budget and then after 3 years when the truck is delivered we would pull that \$950,000 back into the General Fund and possibly bond it over 10 years. We have to set aside that \$950,000 to show we have the money.

Mr. Stewart asked for Chief Pronesti to give the committee a run down of all the Fire Departments equipment.

Chief explained how the 2014 and 2016 was not built to our city's specs, the engines are smaller and the overall wear and tear weren't designed for a city like ours. He gave an example, cities that run fire-based EMS where they run ambulances so they go through ambulances on a regular basis, but in our City, we provide a valuable service with our paramedic engine company. The downside is, we do put mileage on our trucks since we don't have ambulance service. When we have them built to our specs for what we need they last longer. The lead time to have this pumper truck built is somewhere around three years from the order date to when it's delivered.

Motion made by Mr. Stewart and second by Mr. Armstrong to authorize the Mayor to enter into an agreement for the purchase of Pumper Truck for the Fire Department and emergency clause applies.

MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

(this matter was also passed by Finance Committee on March 11th)

3. The matter of the Murray Ridge Water Tower Improvement Project.

Referred By: Engineer Schneider

Engineer Schneider said they are looking to go out for bids for repainting the Murray Ridge water tower. They will also do some safety improvements as well as water quality improvements which is standard when we touch our water towers. That tower was construction around 2003 – 2004, it's part of the southwest pressure district. The proposed not to exceed figure is \$1,050,000 to complete the work. The tower will be taken down for the project. The residents shouldn't notice any pressure changes because the booster pump station that supplies that tower will run it on pressure alone. This is the tower that is near the jail.

Mrs. Davis asked if this tower supplies water to those new homes in the area off West Ridge?

Engineer Schneider said yes, that is the same pressure district. In 2003 ordinances were passed to separate one large district into three pressure districts within the city;

* southwest pressure district which runs West Ridge, Infirmary, Murray Ridge to Lowell.
* southeast pressure district which has a pump station at the base of Clark Street and supplies Taylor St, Ternes, Chestnut Commons, everything south of Chestnut Ridge and into the township and it supplies to N Ridgeville.
Engineer Schneider didn't speak on the third pressure district.

Dir Breunig asked what the timeline is for bidding on this project is?
Engineer Schneider said as soon as possible. And this tower is one of the smaller towers and they hope to complete this in early fall of 2024.

Mr. Stewart asked is this is a smaller tower how is that if there continues to be development?

Engineer Schneider said it's supplied to a booster pump station so the water tower acts as a pressure relief as well as fire protection so the booster pump stations take care of the heavy lifting as far as water.

**Motion made by Mrs. Davis and second by Mr. Armstrong to authorize the Mayor to advertise for bids and enter into a contract for 'said' project emergency clause.
MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

4. The matter of discussing the selection process of reviewing residential streets for street paving projects.

Referred By: Ward 7 Council Rep Cerra

Mr. Cerra said since he's been on Council they had few dollars to work with during his first few years and then we got Issue 6 passed and since that time we been trying to divide the money equally every year. But the numbers he's starting to see aren't adding up. His ward, (Ward 7) has 28 streets on the street list that was handed out last week. He feels if we keep doing this equally he doesn't see where he'll ever get caught up. some wards may be doing streets for the 2nd time by the time he gets to his first list of streets. He didn't know if there might be some other way to do this. Maybe the engineering department can pick the worst 10 streets throughout the City regardless of what wards they are in. And any money left after that, could be divided up equally between the wards. It's a difficult situation. He doesn't know why his ward is so far behind, but it was like that when he came in. He asked Engineer Schneider if the age of the streets has something to do with their condition?

Engineer Schneider said yes, some wards have newer roads, concrete roads, some have better drainage, a lot of factors that make a road to stand up to the test of time. Chair Mitchell asked with all the construction projects going on in Mr. Cerra's ward, are some of those streets going to be resurfaced as part of the construction project once it's completed?

Engineer Schneider said yes, some of those streets will be completed once the projects are done. Lots of projects going on.

There are a lot of streets of the street list, but they are seeing less ranked as 1, (which is the worst).

Chair Mitchell said she doesn't know how to make it anymore fair than it already is.

Mr. Cerra said the downside of those projects is the streets are taking a beating because of the heavy equipment and excess traffic. For example, Harwood is part of the detour and Harwood isn't part of the project. That will be another one that will have to be added to the list.

Mrs. Davis said she doesn't feel we're utilizing our street department as much as we should. They should be able to do more than to patch the holes. Don't we have equipment to do blacktopping on some of the streets? She has a street that is so small, only has 6 houses on it and it shouldn't even be on her list, the City should be able to do that street.

Engineer Schneider said potholes is a complaint driven process. The City of Lorain has 30 employees in their street department. They have a mill machine and a paving machine. They are doing more things and their employees have the experience. If there is on piece of concrete that is damaged on a concrete road then we should be able to go replace that so it protects the rest of the street. Crack sealing has always been a good thing on residential roads, not on Route 57.

Mr. Armstrong asked if crack sealing is done on a regular basis?

Engineer Schneider said yes, it's done almost every year. We used to have a crack sealing machine and it was scrapped out some time ago. We have done some in house and contracting some out which utilize the muni motor vehicle tax. Concrete roads will last a long time if they're properly crack sealed.

Dir Pyanowski said the City of Elyria Street Dept. has 13 employees. It that was something the City would consider down the road they would have to invest in equipment and employees that have that experience. It would be a significant investment if we were to go in that direction. That could certainly be explore that possibility and it would be a long-term plan and a budgetary thing to look at.

Chair Mitchell didn't realize we only had 13 employees in that department. But, they do a good job and if we let them know about a pothole, they are right on it.

Mr. Stewart said since he's new on this committee, he understands the streets are chosen for each ward as well as alternate streets.

He asked if there could be a way Ward 7 can be assured to have one or two of those alternate streets so that there can be an effort for Ward 7 to catch up.

Mr. Cerra said last year when he requested an extra million dollars of ARPA funds and they did get it which brought the funds up to 3 million. At one point it was at \$160,000 and there was a comment to give to Ward 7 and then there were 2 nays right away. There was no discussion about it and there should've been a discussion.

Mr. Armstrong asked if we own a skit steer and a mill head? And if so, are we capable/the street department capable to operate those?

Engineer Schneider said yes. They go out on the streets when there are bumps to be milled them down.

Chair Mitchell thanked Engineer Schneider and said to bring this conversation back, the suggestion was made by Mr. Stewart to perhaps give Ward 7 one or two alternates at this time so that Mr. Cerra can start to catch up in his ward.

Mr. Stewart said that was just a suggestion whether we do that this year or wait until next year's budget.

Mrs. Davis said she sees no problem in giving Ward 7 our alternates to help Mr. Cerra's ward, we need to all work together. Each of the other 6 wards could give up one of their alternate streets for Ward 7.

Mr. Armstrong said he is fine with it, but when we vote on it are we going to have some members vote no.

Chair Mitchell said we're just having this discussion tonight and we can continue it when other Ward members are here.

Mr. Cerra does appreciate this and he thanked everyone.

Chair Mitchell said as ward council members, what we do with streets is the most important thing that we do. Residents want the streets done.

Chair Mitchell said we'll continue this discussion at the next meeting.

Chair Mitchell asked for a motion to adjourn.

**Mr. Armstrong moved to adjourn the Utilities, Safety & Environment Committee Meeting and that motion was seconded by Mrs. Davis at 6:45 P.M.
MOTION CARRIES**

The next Utilities Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 20th, 2024 at 6:00

*Respectfully Submitted by,
Colleen Rosado, Secretary/Administrative Assistant*