

The FINANCE COMMITTEE held a MEETING on Tuesday, May 27th, 2025 beginning at 6:10 P.M.

FINANCE PRESENT: Chair Tollett, Cerra, Schneider,
COM DEV PRESENT: Chair Schneider, Mitchell, Oswald
OTHERS: Stewart, Armstrong
EXCUSED ABSENCE: Callahan, Davis, Siwierka, *Medical Excuse*-Lipian

OTHERS PRESENT: Law Dir Deery, Safety Svc Dir Pyanowski, Mayor Brubaker, Finance Dir Pileski, Fin Dir Farrell, Building Official Farkas, HR Dir Yousefi

1. The matter of approval of meeting minutes from the Finance Committee Meeting, on May 12th, 2025 as circulated.

Motion made by Mr. Cerra and seconded by Mr. Schneider to approve the 'said' meeting minutes as circulated.

MOTION CARRIES

2. The matter of a new Capital Project Fund entitled the State Issue II Capital Projects Fund.

Referred By: Finance Dir Pileski

Finance Dir Pileski said over the years we've had a number of State Issue 1 and State Issue 2 projects. Each time we had a project, we created a separate fund. With the State Issue 2 being renewed at the State level for 10 more years he is recommending that we create one new Capital Project Fund and title it 'State Issue 2 Capital Projects Fund'. Then from now on, each time we get awarded for a project, we can create a department underneath that fund so we won't have to come back and create new separate funds. So, it will be one fund and each project will be a separate department under the fund.

Chair Tollett asked for some examples of what would go into those funds.

Dir Pileski said they have 5 this evening; OPWC resurfacing projects, E River, Gulf Rd, Leona St., Murray Ridge, West River. These projects are partly funded by OPWC which are administered by State Issue 2 monies and there is a 20 – 25% local share which will come out of the muni motor vehicle tax fund. Those funds have already been appropriated. The OPW share will be appropriated tonight.

There were no questions and Chair Tollett read the committee report and asked for a motion.

Motion made by Mr. Cerra, second by Mr. Schneider to authorize an ordinance to authorize the 'said' new capital Project Fund.

MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

3. The matter of Waiving Elyria Building Permit Fees for the Construction of the new Central Maintenance Public Works Complex.

Referred By: Asst. Director Strohsack

Dir Pyanowski said this request is simply to waive the fees we charge ourselves and that the contractors would charge back to us. In the long run, by not paying these fees, it would free up money that we're not bonding out so we're not committing to those costs. The fee money would just float back to us anyway.

Mr. Oswald asked if they knew what the permit fees would total?

Building Official Farkas said that total fee amount based on the estimated cost of construction would be \$195,000.

Motion made by Mr. Cerra, second by Mr. Schneider to authorize an ordinance to authorize the waiver of the 'said' permit fees.

MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

4. The matter of the Purchase Real Estate of property located on Woodford Ave.

Referred By: Director Pyanowski

Director Pyanowski said these are back lots of houses along Woodford, in between the City property and the houses along there. The City had already purchased a parcel which currently houses the salt shed and now they want to purchase these 2 additional parcels. With the purchase of these last two parcels, it will give us six contiguous parcels along the back area and up to what will be the secondary driveway for in and out of the complex. The property we want to purchase will be used for a water retention, catch basin for parking lot runoff, which will save space within the complex. There will be a fence on the outside of these properties, between the houses that remain on Woodford and our property, which will also increase the buffer space. We have a couple of other feelers out for the remaining parcels along the back part of the property. The amount of this purchase will not exceed \$10,000. The owner accepted \$4,000 per lot and then the additional \$2,000 would be closing costs and other fees.

Motion made by Mr. Cerra, second by Mr. Schneider to authorize an ordinance to authorize the purchase of the 'said' two parcels on Woodford Ave., not to exceed \$10,000.

MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

5. The matter of a wage increase for Employees of Chapter 165.

Referred By: Mayor Brubaker

Chair Tollett said so that these employees work at the pleasure of the Mayor, Finance Dir and other elected officials and some are Civil Service. Some are supervisors and they make things happen in the City. When Council needs things to happen, these employees get it done for them and for the tax payers.

Mayor Brubaker said that he has had conversations with everyone sitting up here and everyone gave input and ideas in regards to this increase. The Mayor said he put this referral in for this 3 percent increase with retro back to the beginning of the year. At the end of 2023, the EPD's pay was increased due to the fact that we were losing officers to other departments. He is happy to announce since we have increased the salary for police officers, we have not lost officers since December 2023. Though, we have lost some to retirement.

As we came into 2024, we knew we would have contract negotiations with the Unions. We gave a significant increase to the Fire Dept. and a significant increase to AFSCME, both rightfully so. And early last year we awarded Dispatch an increase, outside of their negotiations, because they were one of the least compensated dispatching units in the county. And, as we talked about Muni Court, he said he waited to see how that would play out and they received their pay increase from Council. He then waited until that happened before discussing this increase for Chapter 165.

Primarily because we are in a salary study for that group of employees. That salary study will take several months and likely won't come back with any significant information until September or October. So, by asking Chapter 165 to wait until October for a potential raise, and it's been stated that if it comes back significantly higher, we don't have to adopt it and those employees will get nothing.

The Mayor's idea is, instead of waiting until the salary study comes back, is to give a 3 percent increase to Chapter 165 employees. The salary study did need to be done because it's been 8 years since it was last done. This is not for the Mayor, Law Director or Finance Director, though, but for the employees of these offices.

To ask these employees to wait, is not fair, and the possibility that the raises or increases might be too high and maybe we don't give retro pay, there were all these factors that were shared. He feels 3 percent is a middle ground, because when the salary study comes back and depending where it's at, if we have to adjust, 3 percent is easier to swallow and add to, than a big jump at one time, especially later in the year when the budget gets tight and when we start to talk about the next year's budget.

He did reach out the Finance Director's office and got numbers to the General Fund, retro to the beginning of the year, which is about \$209,000. To the Enterprise Fund, it's about \$77,000, the total is in the neighborhood of about \$287,000, and whatever happens with the salary study happens. So, this is his recommendation. He has had individual conversations with some of the council members and he thinks everyone is in alignment. When you look at the numbers, they are not significant for any one employee and 3 percent is fair considering what we might be looking at as we get into later in the year when the salary study comes back.

He is asking the committee to support this.

He realizes that some employees have gotten a step increase this year, some got one at the end of last year, some won't get theirs until later in the year, but 3 percent across the board won't break the bank, but it shows good faith to these employees.

Chair Tollett asked if there are any questions.

Mr. Schneider asked for clarification on the retro pay, is it \$285,000?

Dir Pileski said the \$285,000 is total for one full year and the retro would be part of that.

Mr. Stewart said he did speak to the Mayor and the question which was brought up by councilwoman Siwierka in regards to the salary study, if someone is between steps 0 to 6 as opposed to steps 7 to 12, how much will that disrupt the salary study moving forward? Some employees already got bumps this year already, so they would get that bump, plus the 3 percent and that would be considered again after the salary study is completed?

Dir Pyanowski said, no, that would not disrupt the salary study. Numbers will have to be submitted, should it pass, and it will go from there. The study largely looks at the market and tells us what the market would pay and where we're at. Gallagher has not given us any indication that our salaries are high or low or if the 3 percent would complicate our ability to complete the salary study, it should not have an impact.

Mayor Brubaker said that some employees have rec'd their step increase, but we also have employees that are in Step 7 thru 12 that won't get an increase this year because, they're in an off year.

Mr. Stewart asked how many employees are in steps 0 thru 6 and how many are in steps 7 thru 12... there was no answer to this question.

Mrs. Mitchell supports this and all the employees who help her do what she does and she appreciates that and it's only fair that they receive a raise to show them that they are appreciated.

Mr. Oswald asked when they finish the study, what will be the time frame when they will implement that?

Dir Pyanowski said nothing will be implemented without coming back to council to have further conversation and approval and also to change the salary ordinance.

Mr. Armstrong said he understands that 165 employees don't have a bargaining unit or representation and he sees many of those employees here this evening and he appreciates everyone on them. He asked if any of those employees wanted to speak to the committee this evening?

Dave Rothgery, Supt of the Water Distribution Dept. came up to the podium. He said he appreciates that he and the other Ch 165 employees have gotten to where they are now because, they don't have a bargaining unit. They work hard and their voice is a little different because it's not a part of any formal negotiations. He appreciative that it is moving forward and everyone is being thoughtful to the fact that we want what's fair and we appreciate that.

Chair Tollett said he discovered that Chapter 165 was established in 1969. It was established because as mayor's change, and at the time solicitors change, and they created this as a parody system for those employees.

Mr. Schneider thanked Ch 165 members for all they do.

Chair Tollett read the Committee report and asked for a motion.

Motion made by Mr. Cerra, second by Mr. Schneider to authorize an ordinance authorizing the 'said' wage increase and to be effective Jan. 1st, 2025.

MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

6. The matter of Amending the Salary Ordinance for Chapter 165 Employees.

Referred By: Mayor Brubaker/Finance Dir Pileski

Chair Tollett said this is the companion to what was just voted on. It is to amend the salary ordinance for these employees.

Dir Pileski said when they award an increase, they also have to amend the salary ordinance. In order to proceed with the new rates and to start retro, they need to amend the salary ordinance to reflect the 3 percent increase. They have the exhibit prepared.

There were no questions.

Motion made by Mr. Cerra, second by Mr. Schneider to authorize an ordinance to amend the salary ordinance to reflect a 3 percent increase to Chapter 165 employee salaries, non-elected and non-bargaining.

MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

7. The matter of Amendments to the 2025 Permanent Appropriations Ordinance.

Referred By: Finance Directors Pileski and Farrell *[Standing Referral]*.

Finance Dir Pileski said there are 6 amendments this evening. 1.) General Fund, Prisoner Support, Operating & Maintenance, bumping up by \$20,000, the \$10,000 has already been used. 2.) State Issue II Capital Projects; E. River, Capital Outlay \$137,640, 3.) State Issue II Capital Projects; Gulf Rd, Capital Outlay \$180,042, 4.) State Issue II Capital Projects; Leona St, Capital Outlay \$88,282, 5.) State Issue II Capital Projects; Murray Ridge, Capital Outlay \$132,756, 6.) State Issue II Capital Projects; W. River, Capital Outlay \$190,476. These are for the various 2025 State Issue II street projects. The City share of these projects is appropriated out of the Muni Motor Vehicle Fund.

Motion made by Mr. Schneider, second by Mr. Cerra to authorize an ordinance to amend the 'said' permanent appropriations.

MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTE

Chair Tollett asked for a motion to adjourn the Finance Meeting:

Motion made by Mr. Cerra and second by Mr. Schneider to adjourn this evening's Finance committee meeting at 6:45 P.M.

MOTION CARRIES

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