

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of Finance Committee

Meeting
Form 6101

GRAPHIC VILLAGE - CINCINNATI, OH

Held September 11, 2023



FINANCE COMMITTEE
Village of West Jefferson Council
MINUTES
September 11th, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Mike Conway called the Finance Committee Meeting to Order at 5:15 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Council Members: Mike Conway, Samantha Cahill, Linda Hall

Quorum Declare: 3 present, 0 absent.

Also attending were: Mayor, Ray Martin; Communications & Mayors Assistant, Jill Sorenson; Council Member, Jennifer Warner; Director of Public Service, John Mitchell; Director of Development, Tom Hale; Planning & Zoning Enforcement Officer, Kristie West; Clerk of Council, Tisha Edwards.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:

Motion to Adopt the Agenda moved by Linda Hall and seconded by Samantha Cahill.

All in Favor

Motion to Approve the Minutes of the September 5th, 2023 moved by Samantha Cahill and seconded by Linda Hall.

All in Favor

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

A. RESOLUTION 23-075, AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT AND PURCHASE WITH OPENGOV INC. FOR CLOUD-BASED SOFTWARE, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ 59,194.67.

Director of Development, Tom Hale had a brief discussion with the Finance Committee at the September 5th meeting to explain their need for new software for the department. This evening, Director Hale gave the Committee more information regarding the name of the vendor, the expected cost and explained the reasoning for the new software. Two years ago, the Department implemented new software. Initially when the software was purchased there

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were supposed to be 3 municipalities using the software. The software went live in July of 2022, but Madison County decided they wanted nothing to do with the software, which caused a problem. In September of 2022, The Village of West Jefferson and the City of London went live. West Jefferson runs the London Building Department from start to finish, zoning and building. Madison County is run by their own staff. A good analogy was made that you had two trains running along the same track and then sometimes there is a derailment. The software company had made a commitment to the municipalities that all three would run together cohesively. They have worked for over a year to find that the software does *not* work cohesively as stated.

Because it was not working, Director Hale approached the County and said that they could either buy their own software and hire them to do work for them or they could give West Jefferson their building department to run like they do London's. There was a meeting held and Josh Beasley our Legal Counsel, developed a new contract that stated we were raising our fees and their contract rate would go up. The County made the decision not to buy new software. They currently have our contract and it is being evaluated. The goal is that by October 1st, we will have the Madison County Building Department. This means that the Development Departments Revenue will go up substantially. Previously, they were paying us per inspection, now we will collect the fees completely unless they come back with a counter offer and they want part of their fees which is what they do with the City of London currently on the Commercial side. In the process of this transition, they have decided to go with one software. Mark has been working with them all along during the current software issues. With this new software, many of the other communities around us for example, Union County, Upper Arlington, Hilliard, Grandview Heights, have went with this different software because it performs better and we feel now that we need to go in that direction because we are not efficient. We have 3 full time and 2 part time staff that are doing every permit for London, Plain City, Mount Sterling, and West Jefferson commercial and residential, which is a lot of territory to cover. If our resources are not there then it makes it hard to get the work done and collect the revenue. Currently if someone wanted to get their permit then they would have to go online and get the permit but they cannot pay for it online so they have to call in to pay or come in. We want to be where the customer can get the permit, pay online and it is done. In this agreement with the County and the City of London, our London contract is enforced and in place, but we also run that department. Director Hale and Kristie met with the two entities recently at the London courthouse and the agreement that they will begin working on in January 2024 will state that there is one Building Department that does all of the permits. The rest of the agreement is still being created. So, when we purchase new software then we will be that one Building Department. Once everything is finalized, we will have to evaluate, do we have enough staff, what do we need, how do we do everything. In 2025 the agreement should be finalized. Councilman, Mike Conway asked if there would be the need for another person like Tom to break up the work load. Director Hale stated that they will look at that after everything with the agreement is finalized, but the software will make things much more efficient. As an example, he stated that Lenny, the other inspector in the Village was off for the day. Director Hale chose not to call in another inspector for assistance that day because he was not sure how the flow of the day was going to go. He ended up having to do 36 inspections by himself that day. He left the office at 7:45 a.m. and got home at 6:30 p.m. that evening. Currently he believes that back up inspections done by a contractor are cheaper.

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Having good employees is valuable, but can you find them right now? There are not very many certified inspectors out there right now and that will take a lot of planning to decide how to go in the future. The cost of this software should pay us back and much quicker than they endured before. Director of Information Technology, Mark Crosten stated that there was extensive research into the vendor and what package to choose. He thinks it is the right direction to move forward with. Director Hale mentioned that if they were to pull the old information from the old software's cloud, it would have been almost another \$40,000, but they chose not to do that at this time. He, Kristie and Mark will figure out how to move that information at a lesser cost. Any permits or information that they have done in the last year will transfer over to the new system.

Recommendation to Council: The Committee decided to recommend this to Council at the Special Meeting that will follow this evening.

B. ORDINANCE 23-076, AUTHORIZING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION FOR THE MAYOR AND PUBLIC SERVICE DIRECTOR TO USE TO REPLACE THE ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING'S LIFT CHAIR AND CONTRACT WITH 101 MOBILITY.

Grant Writer, Pam Wurster, spoke to the Committee about a new grant that she will be applying for. She spoke about the last grant that was applied for with the Christopher Reeves Foundation and the announcement was made at the end of August that we did not receive the grant. The previous grant that we applied for was through the T-Mobile Main Street Foundation. It was a long shot, but they thought they would try and all they could do was say no, which they did. It did not cost the Village any money, it was just the time and research for Pam. There is no charge to Council until we get funded.

The new grant that we will be applying for is a grant that specializes on any kind of equipment that allows accessibility. They will fund up to \$25,000. She may try to go for the grant that funds up to \$40,000 but they would have to deem us as rural area and she is not sure that we would fall under that category. They will not pay for taxes but Director of Public Service, John Mitchell let her know that we do not pay taxes in the Village. Everything has to be in by October 11th for the grant. She is going on vacation so she wants to have everything submitted to them by September 25th. The announcements will not be made until December. We would need to make sure that the quotes are still the same amounts for the lift so that she can include that. John stated that he called to get that information and will let her know. This grant is very specific that you cannot start any kind of work on the lift before the grant is awarded. If this is started prior, it looks as if you have the money so we cannot do any kind of work or start any contracts with the vendor until we hear if we won the grant.

John said it was now up to Council to decide if they would like to wait for the grant or would they like to proceed with having the equipment ordered, constructed, and installed. He mentioned that there would be a delay anyways because it will take about 3 months for the lift to come in. We could also approve the funding tonight and then sit on any actions until the grant is announced. That would allow Council to carry over the PO until next year. The mayor stated that free money is good. We could apply for this and then if it does not get approved then we move ahead with purchasing it on our own. John mentioned that if Council decided not to wait for the grant and purchase

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it on our own, we could have it ordered and probably installed by January 2024. Multiple Council members agreed that if they only have to wait 3 months to find out if we could get \$25,000-\$40,000 to fund the lift that the constituents would probably agree if was worth the wait. We have a place to meet at the Community Center and there is no reason that we cannot wait until December. Mike Conway will speak with Finance Director, Becky Arnott-Shiple and decide if it is best to do it this year or next year with the budget. Council member Samantha Cahill also asked if Mike could find out from Becky how much they are over in appropriations at this time for this year's budget.

Recommendation to Council: The Committee agreed not to take the Ordinance to Council at this time

All in Favor

C. President Linda Hall discussed the need for a new aerial lift for the Christmas in the Park Committee.

President, Linda Hall, has recently spoke with Carol Beachy who is part of the Christmas in the Park Committee. Carol stated that the Christmas in Park lights have been on for the last 26 years. They are still in need of an aerial lift to put the lights up at Garrett Park this year. The rental of an aerial lift has been quoted at \$4,000. The lift has to be at least a 60 ft tall in order to get the lights to the tops of the trees. Councilman, Jeff Patterson mentioned that he has a friend that works for a company that rents lifts and that he may be able to get a discount and he will check with him. Councilman, Richard King asked if they had contacted companies such as Sunbelt and see if they would be willing to hang a banner for advertisement for a reduced rate in rental. President, Linda Hall stated that they have contacted multiple vendors such as Sunbelt and the cost is still in the \$4,000 range due to needing it for a long period of time to hang the lights. President Hall asked if the cost that they saved on replacing the lights with LED helped with the budget, but Carol stated their electric costs are still almost \$700 a month. Public Service Director, John Mitchell, was asked how tall our Village bucket truck is and he verified with Brian Farley that it is only 50 feet. Mayor Martin spoke up and stated that he just got off the phone with Dave Spegal, owner of Madison Garden Center and he is willing to allow the Village to use his 90 ft aerial lift if 2 people are willing to get trained on the lift before they use it for safety purposes. Linda and the Mayor will follow up with Dave and give the information to Carol and see if that will work. If not, they will bring the discussion back to Council for further review.

ADJOURN

Motion to Adjourn by Chairperson Mike Conway at 5:47pm. Motion moved by Samantha Cahill and seconded by Linda Hall.

All in favor.

 11.16.23

Tisha Edward Date
Clerk of Council

 11/16/23

Mike Conway Date
Chairperson