

Minutes of City of Dunkirk Finance Committee held on February 23rd, 2015

Present: Councilman Mike Michalski, Chairperson
Councilman Andy Gonzalez, Member
Councilman-at-Large Willie Rosas, Member
Councilwoman Stacy Szukala
Councilman William Rivera
Rich Halas, FAO
Mark Woods, City Treasurer
Al Zurawski - Building Inspector, Keith Ahlstrom - Fire Chief, Ron Szot – City Attorney
Guests: Gib Snyder- Observer, Sue Chiappone – Buffalo News

Opening: Chairman Michalski opened the meeting at 5:30pm.

Meeting Content:

Live Burn Simulator Proposal – Ahlstrom explained the county cannot apply for grants such as this in its name & thus requested the help of the city. Grant is for \$360,000. County will provide \$40,000 plus the cost of a 5 yr maintenance agreement at \$49,500. Unit will be insured by the city. This unit will provide training opportunities for city firemen as well as those firemen in the surrounding communities. It will be stored at the city training grounds with eventual installation of a concrete pad and barn for storage. Maintenance may be accomplished in-house after 5 year agreement expires.

Building Inspector Fees – Zurawski reviewed spreadsheet which compared those fees charged by his department as compared to other surrounding communities, plus proposed increases. Fees discussed included Zoning Board Appeals (\$5 compared to \$150), residential re-roofing, Building permit application fee and new construction fees. Given the amount of information presented while comparing proposed rates and those of other communities, it was decided to revisit fee increases at the next finance meeting.

Michalski updated group on review of other department fees. Examination of city “event fees” will be presented to the CAC for their input at their March meeting. Parking fees were recently updated and it was decided no changes would be made at this time.

Proposed Budget Transfer – replacement of 3 refrigerated air dryers (beyond repair) at WWTP. Transfer of \$11,500 from contracted services to equipment line.

Snow Removal Costs – Halas reviewed snow removal expenses incurred by the city during both the last quarter of 2014 and 01/01/2015 to 02/14/2015.

Percentage of Annual Budget:

	<u>4th quarter of 2014</u>	<u>01/01/15 through 02/14/2015</u>
Personnel	10.9%	58.5%
O/T	37.6	89.9
Salt	79.4	101.4
Repair to Equip.	174.0	48.1

Johnson & Mackowiak Audit / NYS Comptroller Risk Assessment – Woods reported the J&M Audit is proceeding as scheduled. The NYS Risk Assessment has not yet begun.

Bond Renewal – Woods reviewed two upcoming bond auctions. One is an annual renewable and callable bond at \$13,150,000 (for the Lake Front Blvd. Seawall Project). The other bond is a \$3,180,000 (balance owed for water meter replacement project and a portion of Phase 1 water filtration project) for 20 years. Interest rates are yet to be determined.

Szukala questioned why city is going short term on the Seawall Project (\$13M). Woods explained it is due to the final project costs still being undetermined at this point as well as NYS Finance Law and the advice of Municipal Solutions.

Halas questioned how future financing (BAN's) of the Water Filtration Project will work given city can only go short term (annually) for a maximum of 5 years, yet the project is still uncompleted and final costs are unknown? Woods responded city would have to end that portion of the project and begin long term financing.

Woods explained the city's financial advisory service is Municipal Solutions which the city has worked with for past 40 yrs and are very familiar with the city. Currently, they are looking for a written contract with the city going forward. Woods questioned if committee wanted him to look for other possible providers for this service (RFQ)? Szukala stated it would be helpful to do so for comparison purposes and due diligence, even though by law, city is not obligated to do so. Committee agreed to review paperwork and decide on future contracts at next meeting.

A motion was made by Gonzalez to approve prior meeting minutes with a second by Rosas. All members voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned 6:40pm.