

Minutes of City of Dunkirk Finance Committee held on January 12th, 2015

Present: Councilman Mike Michalski, Chairperson
Councilman Andy Gonzalez, Member
Councilman-at-Large Willie Rosas, Member
Rich Halas, FAO
Mark Woods, City Treasurer
Al Zurawski, Building Inspector
Guests: Gib Snyder- Observer, Sue Chiappone – Buffalo News

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

Meeting Content:

Building inspector fees – Zurawski recommended if there are any changes in the fees, they are changed in the fee section of the charter. Michalski noted majority of fees have not been changed in 25 years. Zurawski noted some fees needed to be raised to cover cost in a reasonable manner, but not to discourage residents. Zoning Board appeals is only \$5, which does not cover cost in paying board members (\$15 per mtg. per member), newspaper publications and secretary pay.

Zurawski felt fines & telecommunication fees were adequate, however zoning fee (\$5), housing commission fee (\$5) and most of the permit fees, especially industrial/commercial building need to be increased. General remodeling / alterations need to be considered for increases as well. Zurawski will examine the fee structure of other local municipalities to see where we can increase fees and still remain competitive with other municipalities. This information will be reported at the next finance meeting.

Gonzalez questioned where these various fees are being accounted for (credited) within the city's budget lines. Halas & Woods will report on fees at the next meeting.

Police Fees – most fees are set by the court, NYS and/or judge's discretion. Parking, meter violations, and handicap parking fees are set by council. When the last increases went into effect was brought into question. A request will be made to Chief Ortolano by Michalski as to when the last increase was implemented.

Clerk Fees – Michalski stated he was approached by CAC members looking for projects. It was decided to have the CAC examine event fees within the city. Halas thought it would be a good idea to have the CAC examine enforcement (possible fines) of when trash can be placed out on the curb the day prior to collection. Loose / blown trash is a problem to the city's image & a hazard to city crews.

Parking Meters - Rosas inquired as to the city's written procedures of parking meter collection. When and how collected money is handled and accounted for. Woods stated Bruce Tarnowski is the person in charge of this task and the meters have not been maintained & calibrated. There are no written at this time, the money is turned into the clerk's office & then rolled by the treasure's department.

CHIPS Account – Halas addressed the CHIPS & Improved Streets accounts:

The city's CHIP's expenditures over the past 2 years exceeded our CHIP's revenues by \$143,853. Improved Streets account – we were assured that the city will be receiving FEMA / NY State funds of approximately \$70,000. This will help offset the deficit balance of \$86,203. Woods stated the FEMA reimbursement was for flooding in May and not for street pavement. Michalski reiterated with Halas these two accounts are currently in a -\$250,000 combined deficit balance.

Meeting adjourned 6:40pm.