

**CITY OF INDEPENDENCE
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
NOVEMBER 23, 2020 3:30 P.M.
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM**

Present: Chairman Vice Mayor Dave Grendel
Councilperson Kenn Synek
Councilperson Dale Veverka

Also Present: Mayor Gregory P. Kurtz
Councilperson Kathleen Kapusta
Councilperson Tom Narduzzi
Councilperson Jim Trakas
Councilperson Chris Walchanowicz
Finance Director Vern Blaze
Economic Development Director Jessica Hyser
Service Director Leon Karas
Community Services Coordinator Amber Veverka

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said, welcome everyone, and if you recall, we finished last week's meeting. I think we have gone through the first 10 pages. However, at that time the Service pages 6, 7 and 8 were not complete.

Finance Director Blaze said it starts on Page 5, the bottom of Page 5 is Rubbish.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said we will pick up with Service. I see Leon you are here with us. So, we will start on the bottom of Page 5 with Rubbish, and Vern I will let you take over.

Finance Director Blaze said thank you Vice Mayor. Thank you Council. Good to pick up here where we left off last week. I know sometimes going through line item budgets isn't the most exciting, but trust me it's important. If you have been to any Public Administration classes and listened to the professors. There is a big saying that the most important policy document a legislative body passes in a year is their annual appropriations, their budget, because everything is driven off of the budget. So, it's an important topic we have to go through. Leon touched base with Finance since our last meeting and with the Mayor, and he was able to propose his 2021 budget. There's not a tremendous amount of changes in the Rubbish budget on a line item basis. It looks like the biggest increase that we are anticipating is budgeting \$100,000 for recycling charges. So, Leon is it just safe to say that because of the recycling market and such, we are just figuring our costs are going up on that because there's not a lot of value in a lot of recyclables.

I am understanding cardboard now is all of a sudden, and pricing for cardboard has gone up recently.

Service Director Karas said we bid this out along with the consortium. So, the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District has a consortium, and we are a participant within that. The money, the recycling portion, there's a fee moving forward. I am not sure what they are going to do when the markets go up or down; I think it's pretty much locked into where we are at so I think that's where we are going to be for the time being. We just based our budget based on the number of tons of recycling that we have picked up over the last few years, and we averaged about 800 tons of recycling a year. So, that increases there. That's what we added it in for.

Finance Director Blaze said excellent. Any questions or observations on that Rubbish section there on the bottom of Page 5?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said Vern I had a question, that amount that we are budgeting for wages. How many employees does that include?

Service Director Karas said so typically that just includes the 3 full-time employees that we have. In the summer time, we run 3; so between March and December we run 3 because we run the yard waste truck every day. Then it drops off, but we put that third one in there, and it just accounts for doing the toter, the senior rubbish and some of the special pickups.

Mayor Kurtz said we have 4 packers that we use. We use 3 of them, and we rotate the fourth one.

Service Director Karas said we put it into service. No truck sits for an extended period of time.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked and the age of those packers Leon?

Service Director Karas said the first 2 are from 2016, and the second 2 are from 2017. We are in good shape for a while.

Councilperson Synek asked in 2017 were we using the side load trucks at that point and time?

Service Director Karas said we were just getting on to that. The side loaders, I think the City started using the side loaders back in 2009 or 2010.

Mayor Kurtz said in 2010 we started doing the containers.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said so for about a decade we have had the containers.

Councilperson Synek said in 2016 it was zero, but I didn't know if that corresponded with the side load change. I was just trying to get my head around it. The 2016 wage amount is zero; so obviously that was put somewhere in 2016. I didn't know if that had anything to do with the side loader. I had in my head that the side loader takes less labor, and I would expect to see a declining trend in wages because of the side loader; but I didn't know when that started.

Mayor Kurtz said that was in 2010 that we did that.

Councilperson Veverka said Leon we had the side loaders through 2016, which is kind of a short period of time. What do we anticipate that the front loaders will last? What are you figuring, 10 years?

Service Director Karas said we kind of anticipate 12 years, that's what we are banking on right now. That's what our thought process was when we went to the front loaders is 12 years.

Mayor Kurtz said Leon the Councilperson said 10 years, you should have gone with his 10 years.

Service Director Karas said sorry. I am thinking that in the next capital budget, not this year's Five-Year Plan, but next year we will start putting aside money for front loaders.

Finance Director Blaze asked Leon is it safe to say that to address Councilperson Synek's question why no wages were budgeted for Rubbish in 2016 because that's when you kind of switched over to the system of identifying certain people who were just kind of specializing in that whereas prior to that it was kind of on a rotational basis. We didn't have any specific Service Department employees who were specifically assigned to the Rubbish, so we couldn't expense them out of that line because any number of people were performing that function.

Service Director Karas said so back in 2016 we had the side loaders. There was a rubbish truck operator, a recycling truck operator. We had 3 guys on a rear loader for yard waste, usually it was a driver and part-timers. We had the toter man picking up all the specials outside the cans. There were 6 guys in the summer time that would go out on a daily basis; and then on Fridays when we would do the special pickups, at that time we would allot for an another additional 5 more guys. So, on a Friday you would have 11 guys picking up trash; and we have kind of reduced that down. So, now our yard waste is 1 man. Our recycling is all 1 man operation. Our toter man, our senior rubbish guy, he goes out and just pulls the carts out. He's not picking up extra trash that's outside the can like he used to in the past. So, we utilize him a little bit during the day, in the morning and the afternoon; and then in the middle of the day we have him do other jobs for us, tasks. Then on Fridays we usually task typically 1 part-timer to do the special pickups because we are trying to pick up as much as we can on the actual garbage day as opposed to pushing things to Fridays like we used to in the past.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked any other questions?

Finance Director Blaze said off the subject of rubbish, but I am assuming you are able to get caught up this week on the leaves since they kind of all came down in one big swoosh a couple of weeks ago, and now you are just kind of cleaning up as people get that to the street.

Service Director Karas said yes, leave collection is all picked up.

Mayor Kurtz said actually to update everybody on the program. Your wisdom in purchasing those leaf vacs, and we had limited use of an outside contractor; and you can see the streets for

the most part, and I usually identify our success with how many complaints I get. Knock on wood, we are doing very, very well this year.

Councilperson Kapusta said I have gotten comments from residents too how impressed they are with the leaf pickup and how grateful they are; so thank you Leon to your staff and yourself.

Service Director Karas said you are welcome.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked now Leon do we have 2 new ones that we are using, or just 1 at this point?

Service Director Karas said so we did get our second one. It came in last week at the beginning of the week; but as the week went on, we did use 2 but limited on the second one.

Mayor Kurtz said you know the other thing is that we are starting a new practice of using 2 trucks, leaving the leaf vac working; when a truck is loaded we disconnect the attachment. We put a new truck in place, the other 1 goes to the dump and we move that truck to wherever he is needed, wherever a truck is being filled. He will go to the other operation, and we will detach and hook up, it takes 3 minutes to detach a truck; and we will pull into the old Service garage, so we are keeping a leaf vac going at all times. It's efficient. Next year we will have new trucks with capacity containers. So, we are going to be in really good shape in the future.

Councilperson Veverka said 1 operator that I spoke with was very pleased with that piece of equipment. I had a conversation with him, and it sure seems like when you watch that, it's a lot less labor intensive as far as the guys trying to swing around that big suction tube and rake and everything else. The new setup seems like it does just about everything and located from the back of the leaf vac. It's very nice.

Mayor Kurtz said when Leon sends out the video, it shows how efficient it is when it compacts the ground leaves. Next year it should even be better in terms of our efficiency since we came out of the gate a little late; but it was a great year for picking up leaves. Again, I think as the Finance Director said, it was also, the bad weather probably knocked them down all at one time. Good program so far this year.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said it worked out well that this equipment was available this year. I think Leon, correct me if I'm wrong, you switched the grinder with the leaf vac because these were available.

Service Director Karas said we switched out the chipper from the Capital Plan.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said it was a great move on our part and Finance. Any other questions regarding Rubbish of either Leon, Vern or the Mayor?

We will move on to Page 6 everyone, and that's Buildings and Lands.

Finance Director Blaze said and on that labor line, that's probably everybody who is not categorized in that first category, the Rubbish, Motor Pool down below is generally the mechanic staff, and then Water and Sewer are a couple of guys that are specialized or sent out most frequently on the sewer jet truck and that team. So, this is kind of the catch-all for everybody else; so it's probably the largest labor, the Water and Sewer is.

Mayor Kurtz said there's 9 people in this wage group here, 3 people in the Motor Pool as the Finance Director said.

Finance Director Blaze said let's see, actually what's being asked for in this category, the 5300, is actually slightly less than what's been approved to date in the 2020 budget, that last line. That fourth last line there, I apologize again, last week we had a little mislabel in here too. This one says 2020 Approved Final Budget, the fourth column from the right; and that's really the 2019 Final Approved Budget column. So, just to be clear there that you know what you are looking at. Last year actual expenses in Buildings and Land were \$1,062,000. For 2021 they were asking for just a little bit more than that, \$1,100,000.

Finance Director Blaze asked any questions, any comments?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said looking it over, it looks like everything is pretty much in line. I know there's \$75,000 down there, the Resident Tree Trimming. I was going to ask what that represented.

Service Director Karas said we took that out of our proposed budget for 2021.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I see.

Mayor Kurtz said what we are doing is we are going to review the ordinances from the neighboring communities and see if there's an opportunity to do something that the residents can participate in, but they are going to have to pay to play so to speak. We will have more information on that, hopefully before the end of the year.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked Mayor are you looking at something similar to what we were talking about with utilities.

Mayor Kurtz said something similar, if we are going to do something for a safety issue or sometime you get these neighboring issues; we are going to have to collect more money. I think Valley View has a more realistic ordinance which I will put that together if I haven't passed that out already.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good, thank you. Any questions from the committee or from Council?

Councilperson Synek said the wages line, \$286,000 in 2016; now we are looking at \$490,000 in 2021. What has changed in this grouping of people that drive that sort of increase over 5 years?

Finance Director Blaze said I think you would see that a number of those in that 2016 went to that Rubbish line, and then I am not sure if we have added personnel since 2016 Leon.

Service Director Karas said no, overall we haven't added personnel, it's the same headcount in the department.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said the big jump came in 2017, it looks like almost \$90,000; and then another big jump from 2018 to 2019, it went up another \$80,000 there.

Service Director Karas said I think if you look back at 2016, our SCM&R was very high. It was over \$700,000 in 2016. Then in 2017 it dropped down to \$296,000, and then it has just been around \$338,000 or \$339,000. I think a lot of our back in 2016, I think the majority of our personnel were categorized within that SCM&R line. So, that's why. I remember thinking back, I'm going back a few years, I just remembered having this conversation with the former Finance Director and Maggie at the time. I think we kind of readjusted those numbers to make them a little bit more accurate as to what people's functions were and how many people they were using for specific jobs.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said and Leon you were correct. I look on Page 14 where we have SCM&R, and that wage figure was \$706,000 in 2016, and it went down to \$296,000 the following year in 2017. So, it was a re-category of some of these employees. The SCM&R has stayed pretty much plateaued in the mid \$300,000 range I see.

Finance Director Blaze said since then, correct.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked any questions regarding Motor Pool? That figure is 3 employees, and we have 3 mechanics.

Mayor Kurtz said right.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked are they seasoned employees? Have they been there for a number of years?

Service Director Karas said 2 of them have been here for a while, and I think our youngest one has been here 3 years now.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I see. The workload is satisfactory, do we keep those 3 real busy?

Service Director Karas said yes. I think with the newer equipment it lessens the workload a little bit; but we used to have 4, and we have gone down to 3.

Finance Director Blaze said but your mechanics also work on Police vehicles, Fire vehicles, Recreation vehicles too, so it's not like they are working on their department vehicles only.

Councilperson Kapusta asked they probably miss working on the big City bus though don't they Leon?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said that was full-time employment right there.

Service Director Karas said just that one bus.

Finance Director Blaze said at least an electrician.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked any other questions on Page 6? If not, we will move on to Page 7, that's the Water and Sewer.

Finance Director Blaze said that's the one I think the Mayor and Leon will talk the most about right now is the proposal for 2021 in this subcategory department; and it ties into our discussion last Tuesday regarding the Engineering and this Sewer Division.

Mayor Kurtz said to continue where we left off with Engineering, we propose creating a new enhanced program. We have older infrastructure, as many of you know; and what we are trying to do is be more proactive and use less outside contractors. We have a number of contracts in place. They do a good job. The problem is their response time isn't as efficient as in-house, but the plan is to quit talking about sewers and creek maintenance and sanitary sewers, but actually have a division which would be responsible to both Engineering and Service that we could respond more quickly, have people being trained and cross-trained so that we would be in a position to more efficiently serve our customers. We are talking about recording our daily activities. We would be able to with GIS to monitor our sewer system, both sanitary and storm; and instead of reacting, we would be more proactive in our approach.

In order to accomplish that, we need to change how we go to business, and Leon can talk more specifically about how we propose this new enhanced program.

Service Director Karas said so currently we have 3 employees within the department. Those employees are basically union employees. We would like to increase that number up to a total of 7 in addition to a foreman that would just focus in on all of the sewer issues. The goal is to try to find somebody who has good working knowledge of the City and to really push the program forward. We rely a lot on subcontractors to do a lot of work; and as the Mayor said, subcontractors do a good job for us. Also, we are dependent on their schedules. I think if we see issues arise, we would be able to get on them a little more quickly. So, we would like to try to increase from 3 employees to a total of 7 employees with an additional foreman. That is kind of what we laid out here in the operating budget. I think in essence it's our largest issue we have are the issues with the storm lines and the sanitary lines that we are dealing with on a daily basis with the residents. We have the sewer jet. We have the catch basin cleaner. We have our street sweeper that helps with that. We have a camera truck, and I propose in our Five-Year Capital Plan trading in or getting rid of our old camera truck and upgrading to a new camera truck that would be a little bit more up to the 21st century. Our cameras will work with a new truck, but we have been having some issues with the old one; and we are just trying to get more efficient, get better in doing some of this work. That's what I proposed here in our operating budget to be able

to do these things a little bit more in-house and little bit more efficiently without having to rely so much on outside contractors.

Councilperson Walchanowicz asked, Mayor the foreman that he would look to hire, would that be somebody you would be hiring in-house?

Mayor Kurtz said we would like to look at Joe Potoma, but I don't want to put any pressure on anybody; but someone like Leon said, a good working knowledge of both the sanitary and the storm and has experience working alongside our Service Department personnel along with our Engineering. So, ideally he would be the kind of person we would want.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said perfect. Thank you.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said so this would increase our budget for that by about 3 times I see compared to last year.

Service Director Karas replied yes.

Mayor Kurtz said we have one dedicated crew now, and the goal would be, we are realizing that in order to be sustainable and using technology; you will see in the Capital, we are talking about a new enhanced camera truck and sewer truck. We are putting money aside for, and this has become much more technical in nature and much more sophisticated. To that end, we want to start cross-training people so that we always have several crews available rather than one crew and then outside crews. So, the goal is to put ourselves in a position to cross-train everybody and get people certified to be able to deal with this little bit more sophisticated equipment and be able to respond to our customers on a timely basis.

Councilperson Kapusta said I am not referencing the enhancement of services which I understand; but if we are to look at these expenses as Dave said roughly 3 times, how does that compare to what our contracted expenses would have been for the services that we had as they existed? I realize we are going into a new world, but do we have a sense for that Vern and the comparison between what that was versus this?

Finance Director Blaze said there's probably a lot to that response because of the multiple contracts we have with the creek, sanitary, storm. We would have to go back and get dollar amounts that we paid out under each of those contracts for the last couple of years which I know is in the hundreds of thousands of dollars each year and then break it out between the different categories there.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked is the hope that we reduce then what we pay like to some of these outside sources? I know Geotech is one, and I forget the others. Ultimately that will at least stay steady, or are we going to increase our output in what we can accomplish?

Mayor Kurtz said well the goal would be to reduce our outside vendor costs. Again, that depends a lot of it as someone mentioned about the magnitude of need at the time. I think what we are trying to do is, we are trying to have our own people have in-house training and be able to

document the repairs, document the different needs so that we have a more fluid program going forward; and we can document so that we have some type of insurance policy to show people what we have done so that we are not always at the short end so to speak. We identify a problem, and it's a residential problem, a house problem, identify it for the people and then we are on record. We also have it in our history log. So, the goal would be to transition away from the dependency on the outside vendors. We need training for our people, and then the right equipment to be able to offset that for a long term strategy.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I see. To be educated, I know like other communities, Broadview Heights, Seven Hills, they charge the residents a sewer charge. I believe it's on their real estate taxes. In those communities, does that money go towards these kind of services that we are providing? I just wanted to get a reference because I see a number of real estate tax bills that have sewer charges and everything, and I guess we probably should ask those communities what they use that money for, if that would be used towards these type of services or not.

Mayor Kurtz said technically I don't know if it's part. Each of us pays our sanitary sewer fee to the Regional Sewer; but we really don't get a lot of maintenance. We do our own maintenance for our sanitary sewer because we install the sanitary sewer. I think in some of those communities it's more of, that's their mechanism to offset some of their costs because they will either use the County or someone else to manage their sewer system.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I see. Thank you.

Mayor Kurtz said the ideal part of this is we have 3 levels of components. We have storm, sanitary, we have creek. All of them contribute, they are not silos; they all overlap each other. We are able to manage those 3 in unison with our current practice. We are just trying to plan for a long term future in making sure we are efficient and responsive.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said thank you. I know Kenn you had a question.

Councilperson Synek said along the lines of your question, there's this Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, and I am looking at their website. You can kind of tell that they are to a certain degree, each community in Cuyahoga County can choose to be a member of NEORS or not; and Independence has clearly opted not to be part of it as far as sewer maintenance. I guess we get our water through that somehow; but as far as sewer maintenance, Independence is not part of NEORS I think. Can you elect in? Can you elect out? Have we looked at should we become a member of NEORS?

Mayor Kurtz said that's a good question. The difference is response time, and all of a sudden they are looking at 10, 15, 20 communities responding to the same storm; and Independence is used to responding one community at one time.

Councilperson Synek said the homeowners would pay a fee to NEORS every month or quarter that they don't have to pay now because the City has taken on the responsibility.

Mayor Kurtz said that is correct.

Councilperson Synek said clearly this growth in this area, I think we have to remind the public that the City of Independence is responsible for all this maintenance of all this infrastructure that's there; and it's getting older, and if you don't maintain it, that's when people's basements get flooded and bad things happen. So, there's a cost there, but it's certainly a necessary one I think. If I hear you right Mayor, you are looking to beef up, it's probably been underserved in the past, given the incredible responsibility that goes along with making sure those pipes move the water out of the community. Am I summarizing the situation?

Mayor Kurtz said it's a fair assessment. Remember we have Seven Hills which drops its water. Remember it's creeks, and we take it to the river. So, we are caught between a rock and a hard place. I remember back when Mayor Chandick was the Mayor of Seven Hills, and their sewer system was really not well maintained, and there was a lot of inflow. We changed the diameter of the pipe from Seven Hills to Independence; I told him you are killing us. At Hillside we changed it from 9 inch to 6 inch, and from Cheryl Ann because we were just getting killed with the flooding. This was sanitary, it wasn't storm because they couldn't monitor their sanitary system like we did. Again, it's just a historical tidbit, but suffice to say, we couldn't do that today legally; we would probably be in big trouble, but back then we did. They started charging their residents to do all of this dye testing.

Our system is not perfect, it is aging. I think you said it appropriately Councilperson Synek, it's aging. Remember we had a moratorium back in the 1960's because we didn't have a sanitary sewer system; they wouldn't let us build. So, we have a system that's more elaborate, the technology is changing, the equipment is changing so that you are able to maintain it better. It costs a lot of money no matter what. The goal is to just be more responsive.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked Dale?

Councilperson Veverka said and I might comment that when we put the new sanitary sewers in and the storm sewers in, we had all sorts of difficulties trying to make connections in various areas. I mean when houses were built in the 1950's, hey down the hill, we will run the pipe toward the creek; so they didn't have pipe to pick up the basement drain necessarily to take it to the sanitary. So, there's an issue with some cross connections that are out there that have existed forever; and the other difficulty is just our ability to know exactly what's out there. There are definitely some gaps in the records. It would be interesting to get this program coordinated.

Mayor Kurtz said that and the fact that with Economic Development, we are talking about GIS. As we identify a problem, we can identify the connection, the locations; and it will just help us create a more effective system of categorizing everything so that it's transparent in terms of who is working, what the problem is. When we get a call for a house, we should be able to take the GIS information. We should be able to take the history, and we should be able to go pinpoint where a sewer connection, where it's out by the street, where the problem is; and we are pretty liberal in terms of our repair. We could help people out, and we do get cases where it is the person's private property responsibility. We discovered that with the Bramley project. Any time we redo a street, we usually identify some of these.

We just keep getting better and better. I think what Leon and what Don Ramm and myself, what we are all trying to do is come up with a program that we are less dependent on outside contractors and redundancy in-house. That we are able to respond on a timely basis; and as you all know, if you get the call when I get the calls, if you are not responsive, then no one wins.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked any other questions? So, this Mayor, we look to implement this for 2021 then and get started on the new program?

Mayor Kurtz said new enhanced program. That is the goal with your support.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good, and then that will be hopefully in our monthly newsletter to let the public know that we are placing a lot of money, a lot of investment and new employees in this program.

Mayor Kurtz said got it.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked any other questions? Dale, and then Jim you will be next.

Councilperson Veverka said well that reminded me with what you said. When we are going with this new rubbish collection company starting January 1st; do we have new decals lined up with what's being collected, and do we have information that is going to be going in the next newsletter so that we don't have a contamination thing related to the rubbish?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked Leon?

Service Director Karas said Councilperson Veverka, you broke up during your question.

Councilperson Veverka said oh, sorry. It's that new camera. My question is the decals that are on the recycling container no longer will be correct with the new company. In other words, what is appropriate to recycle? Are we in the process of getting new decals so that January or February we won't have people putting the wrong stuff in the containers?

Service Director Karas said the decals are pretty close. We are going to look to update all those decals, and I know we are coming up with a new recycling brochure that we will be sending out to all of the residents. Kimble is the same company. We have the same company, they didn't change. They are just getting a little bit more strict on what they are going to accept.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said Jim, you had a question.

Councilperson Trakas said thanks Mr. Vice Mayor. One quick question for Leon, one of the reasons we usually use outside vendors is because of equipment costs. What type of equipment costs are going to be needed to bring this, and obviously we are going to have a joint meeting of the Streets & Sidewalks and the Utilities to go into greater detail; but what type of equipment costs are going to be needed for this new proposed program?

Service Director Karas said a lot of our equipment we already have. So, we have a catch basin cleaner. We have a street sweeper. We have a combination sewer truck. We also have a mini excavator. So, what we want to add is an additional mini excavator; and we already have it in the Five-Year Capital Plan. I think we started last year putting aside money for a new combination vac truck. So, that's 2 pieces of equipment that we want to add.

We already have a camera. We have a lateral launch camera. We have a main line camera. We have been having issues with our lateral launch camera since we have had it. The company that sold it to us is willing to give us a pretty decent credit on that camera; and we can move a lot of our equipment into a new vehicle that is designed specifically for this. We will be able to have a greater capacity, the ability to record and to document all the information that we collect when we are out in the field. So, that being said, an updated camera which is in the Five-Year Capital Plan, a sewer (inaudible) in the Five-Year Capital Plan and then the mini excavator which is in the Five-Year Capital Plan.

Councilperson Trakas said thank you.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said Vern, now that we have looked, we are increasing our appropriations, our budget by \$550,000, is there any areas that we should offset that, other areas of the budget that we can reduce because it looks like our income tax revenue has plateaued and everything, and I know the discipline is not to increase our budget too much or if we do to offset with some reductions. I just want to see what your recommendation would be.

Councilperson Kapusta said that's what generated my question too about the contracts. That's what I was trying to ask.

Finance Director Blaze said it would be in the use of those maintenance contracts; so if we have already approved them for 2021, I don't recall on all of them if they all run out at the end of this year, and Don needs to re-up them for 2021, or if they were multi-year contracts where part of this year, part of next year. Then it's going to just take the internal discipline to lower the reliance on the availability of the outside vendor contractor and pull the work in-house. So, gradually over time we should just see a natural reduction in the use of the maintenance contracts as this department starts to get staffed and equipped and up and running. So, one bucket would go down while the other one is going up; and hopefully, it's a fairly close one-to-one ratio of a drop in the maintenance contracts corresponding with the increase in this Water and Sewer budget.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said it's probably going to take a little bit of a transition period because it's going to take a transition and have new people brought in and that. The hope is that we will be able to offset the increased costs with reduced contracts.

Mayor Kurtz said Vice Mayor you are correct. It's going to take several years to transition from the past practice to a future opportunity. So, yes.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good, but hopefully the ultimate goal and Mayor when you look ahead like that ultimately 10 years from now there will be a tremendous savings in having our own program like we did with the Engineering Department.

Mayor Kurtz said absolutely.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked any other questions regarding the Water and Sewer before we move on to the Administrative part.

Mayor Kurtz said one more if I may Vice Mayor. You touched upon it, it's hard to gauge the success of the Engineering group when how much more work has been applied to that group. So, with this Sewer, it's the same thing. We can be efficient. We can wean ourselves away from some of these contractors, these specialists, but we also might be taking on more work.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said it will take a number of years. You couldn't really judge the Engineering Department after the first couple of years; you had to wait at least 5 or 6 years. Now after 10 or 12 years and everything, we have seen that it was a very good move at that point. So, there will be some growing pains, and we will have to understand that there might be some mistakes made along the way. Hopefully, the bottom line is that for the future this will make a lot of sense. We will provide better services for our residents.

Any other comments Leon from your perspective?

Service Director Karas said like I said, we have a good group of guys who understand the sewers now, and I think we will be able to grow it and provide a better service to the residents is what we are going to be able to do. We are all going to own the outcome as well because I think we do a good job, and I want to continue to enhance that service.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. Like Kenn mentioned, our system is getting older all the time just like we are; plus the weather is, we can recall from back when we were growing up as kids in the 1970's and 1980's, things have shifted. I guess you can call it global warming or that, but we had snowstorms and rough winters back then. Now it seems like it has shifted to a warmer climate, but still it's rough on our infrastructure.

Any other comments or questions before we move on to Administrative service?

Let's move on to the last category on Page 7. Vern, any comments?

Finance Director Blaze said well you keep dreaming about the last category, we still have cemetery, we still have SCM&R.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said that's right. I was just looking at my page. Well, the Cemetery we will definitely get to. That's something that we need to take a look at, and that's in Chris's area of interest there. Any questions with Administrative or any comments from anybody?

Finance Director Blaze said Leon, Mayor, it doesn't look like any major overhauls or changing in that sub-category for 2021?

Service Director Karas said the only change that I would like to do. We have Marie who is our full-time Office Coordinator, and we have a part-time Admin. Clerk. I would like to move our part-time Admin. Clerk to become full-time.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said the wages have increased by about \$50,000, is that incorporated in that move?

Service Director Karas said that's why we added an extra I think \$25,000 or \$30,000 in there to transition Anissa from part-time to full-time.

Mayor Kurtz said and the goal would be to have some overlap, but also have some extended hours communication contact with people.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. Any other questions either Vern, the Mayor or Leon in this category?

Then we will move on to Page 8 which is the Cemetery.

Finance Director Blaze said and you see Cemetery there in the 110 starting this year, and there's still technically the Cemetery Fund; and that's a fund 835. It's technically still in existence, but to try to get the total Service Department cost reflected in the Operating Budget instead of a separate fund, we moved the Cemetery expenditures out of the Cemetery Fund into this 110, the General Fund here. That's why you don't see previous years' data in this 110 category. It's essentially the one employee, and that employee's payroll costs and just some nominal supplies and materials. Anything else major is really is kind of budgeted out of other lines; but they are still asking for \$6,000 for the things they need to do down there on an annual basis.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I see the health insurance was removed for the proposed budget.

Finance Director Blaze said right now the person who is most often performing the cemetery sexton function, the medical insurance is being taken out of 5300, the Buildings and Lands category; but if this individual or somebody else is actually named the cemetery sexton, we could just as easily move that expense category back into this Cemetery sub-category.

Councilperson Kapusta asked are there areas where we have wages in one category and like health insurance in another Vern?

Finance Director Blaze said it gets a little difficult when you have multiple employees doing multiple functions. This one I think has been Tim Topolski mostly, but it's our understanding it's not exclusively. When his hours come over and they are approved, the vast majority of them seem to be allocated to the cemetery, but maybe not all of them. That could be the reason why we still have his medical insurance expensed out of the 5300 category. It's still out of the

Service Department budget. It's not like he works for Service, and his medical is being expensed out of Engineering. It is still out of the Service Department budget, it's just one of the different sub-categories here.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked Mayor you were about to say something?

Mayor Kurtz said my comment actually pertains to tomorrow's agenda. Our goal is to have something to be able to discuss tomorrow about the cemetery at the Public Buildings & Lands Committee agenda. I am not sure we will make it, but that's our goal, about the cemetery expansion and the different burial opportunities.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said we have been talking about that for a number of years, and then hopefully it will become a reality because I know we will have to make a decision sooner rather than later in that area. How many lots are still available for burial?

Mayor Kurtz said I think there's like 50 left, 60, 70.

Service Director Karas said available for sale, somewhere in that number.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. Any other questions of Vern or Leon or the Mayor regarding the cemetery?

Finance Director Blaze said if you want to flip to the last page, that would be the SCM&R.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said we will get that taken care of while Leon is here and everything. If we can move to Page 14, the very last category on our spreadsheet there, SCM&R. Vern, I will let you take over.

Finance Director Blaze said that's Street Construction, Maintenance and Repairs; so obviously a very important category for our community given the job we pride ourselves on doing as far as maintaining roadways. One of the bigger operating costs in this department is that Salt Supplies line. It's always a crapshoot. You can see that it has been as low as \$153,000 back in 2017, and it's been as high on an actual basis as almost \$400,000 the year after that in 2018. So, all we could do is budget based on some long term averages and see where each particular year comes in above or below that long term average trend.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I noticed that we have only used \$134,000 this year; so it looks like we will be well below. I take it we have a supply of the road salt Leon.

Service Director Karas said yes Vice Mayor, our salt shed is loaded and our salt dome is loaded as well. Right now we have a full complement of salt.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said and we are required to purchase a minimum under the consortium.

Service Director Karas said yes. So, typically, it's funny because when I first started working here, 6,000 to 7,000 tons a year was kind of what we would shoot for; but we are down to 5,000 tons. We are required to buy 80% of that, so 80% of the 5,000 is what we are required to purchase.

Finance Director Blaze asked Leon is that because of the makeup of the winters the last couple of years or is it because through the technology with our equipment we have been able to apply the salt in a little more technologically advanced manner where we can accomplish the same thing as far as road clearing and safety but not have to use as much salt?

Service Director Karas said we kind of gauge our winters by how many times we call all the senior snow plow drivers, and the first couple of years I worked here, we called them up a dozen times plus. The last few years it has been a lot less. So, there's been a lot less snow.

Mayor Kurtz said by the way, I don't want to take away your thunder Leon, but the new trucks should be in later this month and next month; and Leon if I remember correctly, they have a much more sophisticated dialing system to monitor the salt usage.

Service Director Karas replied yes. We will be able to monitor the salt usage. All of these trucks will be equipped with pre-wetting brine. So, we will be able to hopefully reduce the amount of salt we use by using more brine and being a little bit more conscious of how we are applying our salt. We will really selectively dump salt when it needs to be laid down. I think the new equipment will help us to do that.

Mayor Kurtz said with the tracking and the GPS we should be in better shape.

Service Director Karas said yes.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I noticed our bill for the electric for our streetlights has come down markedly from 4 or 5 years ago. Does that LED lighting have anything to do with that?

Mayor Kurtz said I think it's a lot of different things. We still communicate with our supplier right now. I think they got a little shaken up because of a potential outside vendor coming in. So, they have been much more responsive to outages, much more responsive to bad lights; and so as we transition to this new, and I think the PUCO changed the rules so that they are able to give us a better rate under the new regulations. Is that your interpretation, or is there something I missed?

Councilperson Trakas said I think that's correct Mayor. I think First Energy got their new rate approved by the PUCO last December, and I believe they have been applying that to the City of Independence. That was a pretty substantially lower rate than they were charging the year before. We had talked about that in the Utilities Committee at some time. There had been some ideas about trying to do something rather innovative, creative; but it involved a legal challenge and probably some years down the road. So, First Energy was being a little bit proactive realizing there was competition, and they have extended that rate through this year.

Mayor Kurtz said yes, so there's three levels of involvement with that, replacing all your bulbs; or the other extreme would be as they go out, they will replace them. We are trying to figure out what the best strategy is long term.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I don't know how other Council members feel, but I know some of our neighborhoods it would be nice to add a few lights for safety and for security. Some of our streets are awfully dark and not well lit; and I think, not that there's a crime wave or anything, but I think safety is equated to a little better lighting at night too. We talked about some of the parking lots on Rockside, but even in our neighborhoods I think they could use that. I don't know who would decide on that, but there are a number of streets. I hear people saying that our streets are not well lit. They like to take evening walks with their pets and that too.

Mayor Kurtz said the more sidewalks we add, the more you are going to find this to be true. The challenge is where to put them because inevitably you pick a spot, and you better have 4 people involved agreeing to that spot. If not, I'll get the call, and it won't be much fun.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said yes.

Councilperson Kapusta said to speak to what you said Mayor; so when we do our enhancements and put in the sidewalks in areas where perhaps they were not previously, do we then at that time do an evaluation for the lighting in the area because as you said, we need more if we have more sidewalks.

Mayor Kurtz said I can't speak historically, but I can say this, when we do our landscape walk through at the end, that would be the time to look at new streetlights because the mechanisms are there. It's just a matter of where to put them, and so we can identify that; and as we are talking about trees, talking about landscaping, that would be the time. Any time someone calls, if they can identify and show us a location of a pole, a pole number, and everybody is in sync, it's easy to put a light on it.

Councilperson Kapusta said I'm thinking incorporating that as a routine component of that last process as you indicated would be very helpful in the future.

Mayor Kurtz said I will talk to Leon and talk to Don Ramm to find out for sure what the mechanism is that triggers, other than when they call.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said this year you will have 2 new sidewalks in 2021 on Hillside; so it will be a good pilot program just to see with the additional sidewalks if we need some lighting there to make sure for safety reasons.

Mayor Kurtz said good point.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked any other questions regarding SCM&R? This way we can let Leon take a break then. Any other questions, or for Vern or the Mayor on this area?

Finance Director Blaze said well when you add the SCM&R total to the total service number on the bottom of Page 8, it comes out that with the proposed additions for next year, Service is a \$5,400,000 budget annually; and when you look at the Police Department being about the same, \$5,500,000, and the Fire Department at about a \$4,000,000 department, you have \$14,000,000 in the Operating Budget right there with 3 departments, almost \$15,000,000. There are 3 big departments there between Police, Fire and Service. Not to diminish by one iota the importance of the other departments, but just on a dollar volume basis, that's your big 3 there.

Mayor Kurtz said right.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. I think Vern if that takes care of that, we can go back to Page 11. Leon, thank you very much for your input and assistance in going through this with Council.

Service Director Karas said no problem, it was a pleasure.

Finance Director Blaze said at the top of Page 11, we left off with Economic Development, correct?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said that is correct.

Finance Director Blaze said and I think it's good that the Mayor is on, and I don't know if the Economic Development Director had to step out.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said no, Jessica's here.

Mayor Kurtz said Jessica would not miss this one. She has a lot of selling to do; so she wouldn't miss it.

Finance Director Blaze said well when your 2019 plan budgets \$231,000, and you are asking for \$764,000 you have some skin in the game for this one. We talked about this, so it's no big surprise. You have the 2 pieces of legislation on the agenda for the wayfinding and the branding and such. That's the big one there on that promotion line and some wages too that her and the Mayor will talk about as far as division for the department from a personnel staffing standpoint and then that promotion line as far as tying that into the legislation that's currently on Second Reading on the legislative agenda.

Economic Development Director Hyser said I think maybe it would be best to, do you just want to go through things in the order in which they are presented?

Finance Director Blaze said you could start at the top there with the wages.

Economic Development Director Hyser said so what you have in front of you is adding potentially 2 staff members. The first is the Economic Development Specialist position, which I believe you guys all know is currently posted. That's kind of bringing up an old position that was previously in the department that has been not filled for some time, but given the volume of work

that we are trying accomplish in Economic Development, it's kind of important to have a right hand person.

The second position you will see is a GIS Specialist, and just to give you some background, GIS is Geographical Information Systems. A person in that field probably wouldn't necessarily have to live here in the Economic Development Department, but we would put them here kind of as a placeholder. It's something that could work well here in Economic Development or with our Building Department, Engineering or even IT. So, to give you a little bit more background on GIS, the concept is here is that we look at geocoded data that would be able to track assets and workload to look at things in a more spatial manner. We previously talked about some stormwater inventory which could be very helpful if we had that information geocoded so that we knew where assets were and what those assets, more specific data on those assets. Every fire hydrant in the City, light posts, all of that information could be geocoded, and it makes it a little bit easier for us to track when stuff has been serviced and again more details about that. That's kind of what would be housed, the responsibilities of that person in the GIS Specialist role. Basically, it's a little bit more technical. You are building up data in specific systems. The most commonly used would be ARC GIS.

Mayor Kurtz said if I may Jess just interrupt for one second. We mentioned earlier about storm sewers and sanitary sewers. Through this system we would be able to pinpoint the locations of connections, and people do landscaping and cover things up. We would be able to identify based on this information, this data, we would be able to go and find that precisely.

Economic Development Director Hyser said you would be able to know if that was an 8 inch main or if it was a 6 inch pipe. It would give you a lot more details about what is actually in the ground that we can't see.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said so this would be an overlap of what the Engineering Department would normally handle.

Mayor Kurtz said an enhancement because right now we don't have a pure GIS system, or we don't utilize it effectively.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I see. Jim, you had a question.

Councilperson Trakas said so Jessica relate this to Economic Development. So, I understand GIS, and I am trying to think how does this help you to recruit people and retain them here in Independence?

Economic Development Director Hyser said it's helpful to know what utilities are where. It's also helpful to know the capacity. When I am responding to leads, not only am I asked if there's a certain site, but how that site could be developed and what the capacities are at that site. So, a lot of the information that I have to provide is really specific data about utility capacity, excess capacity; and that information could be maintained in the GIS system. As well as looking at a site, plotting a building at a certain size to see how that fits and works spatially on that site.

Councilperson Trakas asked how do we do that now without this function?

Economic Development Director Hyser said right now we are lacking some of that data. We are able to use some skills from the Engineering Department, but for this other information, as I kind of said in the beginning, isn't necessarily information that has to be housed here in Economic Development. It could work in either IT, the Building Department or Engineering; but building out our GIS information is kind of critical. We are a little bit behind the 8 ball on that.

Mayor Kurtz said compared to other communities.

Economic Development Director Hyser said yes.

Councilperson Kapusta asked any way this would help with fiber optics? We talked about that in the past about building that. Is it related?

Economic Development Director Hyser said it can be helpful, but there is proprietary information; and there are also national security concerns. So, finding out fiber optic information is a bit challenging. If we do know that information, we can't make it public.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said so then Jessica say somebody wants to come to the City, and they have an area where they would like to develop; you would be able then with this new position, this new person would be able to advise what are the capabilities of that piece of property would satisfy what their requirements would be and everything.

Economic Development Director Hyser said they would be able to help in that area, and they would also be able to help in other areas of the City.

Mayor Kurtz said it goes back to the car wash approach we talked about to put our customers; when they come into the City, this would be another tool to be able to, whether it's economic development, engineering, IT, just one of those overlapping tools that as you become more sophisticated, helps you to become on a more timely basis be able to respond.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said so we would know what areas in town, if they are interested in bringing a project here, we would be able to steer them towards different areas of town that would satisfy their needs.

Economic Development Director Hyser said correct. For example, I was working on a project that was looking at building on a piece of land on Pleasant Valley; but they also needed to know what the excess sewer capacity was at that site. So, that requires knowing about the utility size of that infrastructure.

Councilperson Kapusta asked so prior to this, did we just not have an answer for them or did we have to use some other resources to be able to provide that to our potential customers?

Economic Development Director Hyser said I can't answer that question.

Mayor Kurtz said I can answer that. What we would do is we would go back to the original sanitary sewer maps, and then we would be able to manually go and derive this information.

Councilperson Trakas said I am not a big contracting out person, but it seems to me that the function could have value, but is it a full-time job? There's not much developable land that we have in Independence; and we already have developers working on parts of that. Is this something that we could do on a part-time basis or contract it to somebody who could help us do this on a need basis?

Mayor Kurtz said with all fairness to economic development, blame me because I could have stuck this in Engineering as easily. It would probably be more easily understood if it was in Engineering because Service would use it. Engineering would use it. Economic Development would use it and IT. Everyone would use it. It would just make it more efficient for us, and more sophisticated communities have a GIS system or team or somebody to manage that information on a daily basis.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said so basically Mayor even though we have under Economic Development, it really spreads out over 3 or 4 different departments.

Mayor Kurtz said it's almost like IT. You could put it under IT. Other communities put it under IT because it's an extension, an overlap of use. It's not just germane to one area. So, in all fairness, I probably put it in the wrong spot, but I watched some other communities, what they are doing; and it just overlaps into Economic Development, IT, Engineering. It's just one of those IT type components.

Councilperson Narduzzi asked so it's not broken down, but what's the cost of this unit or is there a specific cost?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I think it's an employee cost Tom.

Mayor Kurtz said there's an employee cost, but then there's a technology component of that which we are putting together. We are doing our due diligence right now as we speak, aren't we Jess on that?

Economic Development Director Hyser said yes.

Mayor Kurtz said so there's 2 components or aspects. There's the labor side of it, and then there's the technology side of it which we are going to share with you when we finalize our more robust IT initiative.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said my concern is that between the new department, the Water and Sewer that we have, and then proposing this, it's over a million dollars in additional operating. So that concerns me somewhat; although I know it's going to be offset by not having as much in contracted services and everything too. That's where my big concern is, hopefully fit that in because of the increase and because of Covid and everything else. I don't know how the rest of Council feels.

Mayor Kurtz said your point is well taken. We are taking these initiatives to be very proactive based on what we see coming down the pike in terms of the climate, the business climate; and we don't want to be reactive, we would rather be proactive in some of these to try and convince some of these more sophisticated users that we are still the best location and here's the reasons why.

Councilperson Veverka asked is Brecksville one of the communities that uses this?

Mayor Kurtz said their Engineering group, I can't verify that.

Councilperson Veverka said I guess my question would be Brecksville for example has a great deal of open land and open property for development. It sounds like if GIS would be needed, that they would have that program. If they don't, what other communities have this particular program and could they demonstrate the need and how valuable it is for them?

Economic Development Director Hyser said I know Westlake uses this, and they have a GIS person on staff. I am very familiar obviously with the City of Green. They have a dedicated GIS person on staff; and again, it's about more than just developable land. It's about understanding your assets and what is available in the ground.

Mayor Kurtz said you know, I think Hudson has a very robust GIS program, and they created something. What we will do is we will put together a program that we can share. We will go over it with Council. I think that will be more convincing.

Councilperson Narduzzi said and I think what you said before Mayor, we could take this out of Economic Development. When you look at these numbers here, it kind of skews because it's really not all for Economic Development; it helps the City in many different functions, but it makes Economic Development go from \$230,000 to \$764,000. It's not that whole number, but it makes you look at it 2 or 3 times. It's really not supposed to be there.

Mayor Kurtz said that's fair. I think we will get with the Finance Director, and we will reallocate in final form because you are right. Blame me for that one, I stuck it in, but we could have easily put it, it's more appropriate to put it in Engineering or put it in IT.

Councilperson Kapusta said and I would appreciate Mayor some additional information.

Mayor Kurtz said absolutely. I heard that, and we will do that. We will do both of those items. So, yes absolutely.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked any other questions or concerns?

Finance Director Blaze asked on that wage line or do you want to talk about that promotion line now too?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said promotion is the other big elephant in the room, besides me.

Several people began speaking at once.

Mayor Kurtz said Jess they are being very nice to you right now. That's a nice way of saying you had better have a good explanation for this.

Economic Development Director Hyser said I got it.

Councilperson Trakas said welcome to Independence by the way Jessica.

Economic Development Director Hyser said I live here, I grew up here. I am not an outsider.

Mayor Kurtz said take a piece of the pie rather than the whole thing.

Economic Development Director Hyser said so the first item you will see in here is the City of Independence magazine and hospitality guide. It's a partnership with Great Lakes Publishing. The City has worked with Great Lakes Publishing in the past to do this magazine. As you will remember, last October an edition came out. It featured Topgolf. We would like to do this magazine on an annual basis. It's a great economic development tool because it tells more information about our community. It's a great resource to leave at hotels as well as our employers can use it as a recruiting tool. The investment from Great Lakes to help us to do the publication is about \$9,000. The magazine would also be poly bagged with some editions of the Cleveland Magazine which would also help us market outside of Independence.

The next 3 items are things that are on the Council agenda for next week in some fashion. So, we have \$77,000 set aside for branding should Council consider that as well as potential for Phase 2 marketing program that we have a placeholder for about \$50,000.

The third thing is the Guide Studio wayfinding placemaking contract which is the \$32,100. Again, those are things that we will be discussing in more detail at the Economic Development Committee meeting next week.

If we should choose to move forward, we are trying to look at some new tools and how do we reach businesses that we haven't reached before? This is again trying to market Independence outside of the community that knows us so well and outside of northeast Ohio. We have budgeted about \$50,000; and the reason why that number is so high, one of the things that we would like to do is create a video. We have seen what some other communities have done. We believe this to be very helpful with our downtown project. These videos don't come cheaply. This would include kind of some aerial footage, some drone footage as well as some overlay graphics of the potential for that development. Knowing what another neighboring community paid for a similar video, those are about \$25,000.

Councilperson Kapusta asked if I might interrupt Jess, and the audience that the video is used with?

Economic Development Director Hyser said it would be used as an attraction tool. So, for people who are not familiar with our area as well as potential developers and investors who would want to locate into our downtown area.

Councilperson Kapusta said thank you.

Economic Development Director Hyser said the next item is banners. We have had those banners on Rockside Road. We have had a little bit of a discussion about them and how people feel that they are generic. Again, if we update our branding, that's going to update our messaging; and those banners are an item we would like to update as well. It's a significant investment. There are 49 poles on Rockside that currently have those banners. We are not saying that we would put banners back up in that same amount of frequency, but if we did, that would cost us about \$20,000.

Again, some additional promotion to do some really targeted marketing. I mentioned before that we would like to do some geofencing and some more paid LinkedIn advertising again for some attraction purposes. We have updated that number to be about \$30,000.

The second from the last thing is updating of our Zoning Code. You might wonder why we are thinking about that as a project. Our Zoning Code, most of it was written in the 1960's. It has a lot of gaps in it. We would want to bring that up so that it was in today's standards, kind of address some best practices, fix the outdated components of our code, help us evaluate portions of the code and upgrade them. For example, one thing that we don't have that many communities do is a masonry requirement. So, new commercial structures that go up would need to meet certain percentage of masonry so you don't see metal sided buildings. It would also allow our Zoning Code to be a little bit easier to use; so when new construction does happen, it's a little easier for the end user to navigate that code. Again, since it was written in the 1960's, most of it, it is a bit cumbersome. We do have a quote from one of the area firms to kind of give us a ballpark idea of how much that might cost. While it is significant, it's about a \$105,000 investment for us.

Then we left about \$50,000 in the budget for additional planning services. As we do the downtown plan and the northwest quadrant, there might be some additional need for us to engage some professional services as well as some other undeveloped land. We look at the Cloverleaf area as an area where there could be some potential redevelopment, but what does that visioning look like; and it's helpful to bring in a fresh set of eyes to help us navigate that and plan for its future.

So, I know it's really aggressive, but we are trying to navigate in a world that none of us have every navigated before. So, this post-pandemic where we are trying to show that Independence has a bright future; we are trying to use different methods to reach that audience and keep us at the forefront of the world; so when people are looking to do development, they think Independence first.

Councilperson Veverka said a couple of questions. First of all, let's rewind for a second. You mentioned the October Topgolf magazine. Now was that a cost to the City?

Economic Development Director Hyser said well I can't speak to that. It was done in October of 2019, but based on the contract and my previous experience with Great Lakes, it was probably a similar investment by the City.

Councilperson Veverka asked and when we do the videos, I mean are those the short bits, were those samples or what?

Economic Development Director Hyser said no. What we were trying to do with those videos that you saw, there are series of 4 of them, is to really specifically focus on our restaurants. We would try to do something a little bit different when it comes to our downtown area and the visioning of that site. So, it wouldn't be of that same look and feel.

Councilperson Veverka said because obviously I support the idea of getting information out related to our restaurants, but I would say, I don't know if this is the time to mention it; but I found the videos not easy to follow. So, I don't know. They were very quick, the flashes back and forth with the different restaurants. They were very quick. If that was an example, I was very tuned into that.

Economic Development Director Hyser said that wouldn't be what we would be looking for this larger downtown video. The video of the restaurants was intended to be quick because they are designed for social media, and people don't have, they don't spend a large amount of time watching social media videos.

Mayor Kurtz said the videos we are talking about are, some of our more sophisticated communities are doing them as a business attraction feature. We have seen a couple of them, you can see where they make them different. They use a lot of drone footage; so they are comprehensive. When somebody is looking for a new site, remember people are looking for sites aren't the same type of people who were looking for sites 20 or 30 years ago.

Economic Development Director Hyser said they are also doing a lot of animation to show you the potential of what an area might look like, once road improvements have been made, once some structures have been constructed. It gives you a different look and feel for an area that you see in today's light.

Councilperson Trakas said I think this is part of a broader discussion. Do you think maybe we should talk about these in some detail at the Economic Development meeting to give a little bit more of a structure to it and talk about the theory and what you are trying accomplish with all of these things.

Economic Development Director Hyser said we could talk about it.

Mayor Kurtz said as long as you approve the budget, that's okay. Your point is well taken, I will leave that up to the Chairman and to Jessica to help us figure out how to navigate this appropriately.

Councilperson Trakas said it's a departure, it doesn't mean it's good or bad; it's a rather substantial departure, and I think the more details that we need know before approving a budget of this magnitude.

Mayor Kurtz said we will meet with the Finance Director. We will rework the budget, take out the GIS and streamline this, and at the Economic Development Committee meeting we can go in more detail if that helps Council.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said my main concern is just to hear from other communities to see how successful these programs are. I know that the social media is a lot different than when I was on Council before, but I remember with Mayor Ramos, we did a video, a number of videos because I was Chairman of the Community Services Committee; and they never saw the light of day. I pull them out now to get a good laugh what happened back then. They never got utilized. I don't know how much the City spent, but I thought they would use them. So, I would like to see something that it will pay dividends to us and not just an expenditure; and we have nothing to show for it. At least I can speak for myself, we would like to be sold on the advantage of this with the investment we are putting into this as opposed to some other expenditure. Again, we are talking about over \$1,000,000 of new expenditures between 2 proposals, and we want to make sure that they are well invested for the community.

Economic Development Director Hyser said absolutely.

Councilperson Kapusta said and I think to add to that too, Jess made the point about it that it's going to be a new world after this pandemic; and I respect that. It's potentially going to be a new world for us from a financial standpoint, so I think we have to balance those 2 things a little bit.

Councilperson Narduzzi said Jessica if you could rate the importance in your mind each one of these so Council; if we do not pick them all, and I know you don't want to hear that. If we do not pick them all, at least Council will have a recommendation from you of what you think is the most important one down to the least important one.

Economic Development Director Hyser said and that's fine, and there are some things. I put together a pretty aggressive list of items. If we have to kick some down for another year, that's acceptable as well.

Councilperson Narduzzi said in my mind, I am looking at it like a Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan, but maybe going to 3 years, and maybe over a 3 year period try to do all of this. I don't know. That's just me talking; I am just trying to justify spending that much money.

Mayor Kurtz said that's a fair approach. We will get with Finance and reallocate, and then we will prioritize; and then if the Economic Development Chairman wants to call a meeting, we can be more efficient in making sure we get our points made.

Economic Development Director Hyser said it seems like we have a pretty full agenda for our meeting coming up.

Councilperson Synek said I would just add that so many of these things, if you do them all at once how do you really measure what if anything is effective. It's one thing to spend money, but it has to be a tangible, measurable outcome to these things that we are aiming for. I'm not sure that's well defined at this moment, but what is the tangible, measurable outcome has to be defined. Also, I think in context of Covid, and in the next year what's the likelihood of major real estate development happening anywhere. It's one thing to track builders and developers, but in this environment is that just foolish? You have to lay these things out over time and have plans ready to go, but you also have to balance it against the economic realities of people aren't building buildings to bring people to work in one space right now.

Mayor Kurtz said actually you make a good point Councilperson Synek. We are getting play from existing users. We are getting play from users from other parts of this area who want to come to Independence, but they want to come in a different way, form or fashion that's being defined as we speak.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good points, and like I say, I am more apt when I look at that, I know the reorganization of the Water and Sewer, that's almost all or nothing. We need to have the employees. That's a big investment that would be difficult to chop up, where here Jessica if you can give us maybe bits and pieces like Tom mentioned a 3 or 4 year program, we can slowly bring that in and also monitor the conditions with Covid and everything else. I think that would be a win-win situation to gradually put these programs into place.

Economic Development Director Hyser said I think we are going to have to spend money though to make us stand out from our competition.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said definitely.

Councilperson Veverka said but I would add to that how much money makes sense in the economic times, and what Kenn mentioned about how do we evaluate if we are doing a scatter gun approach, which one of those b b's are the ones that actually were positive. I like Tom's idea, we are going to do a number of these things, at the very least we should have enough time in between to be able to do some quantitative evaluation and then decide if that continues or that is something we drop when we move to something else.

Mayor Kurtz said fair enough.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked any other comments or questions from Council?

Mayor Kurtz said I appreciate the discussion. We will get with Finance, and we will prioritize.

Economic Development Director Hyser said thank you everyone.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said thank you Jessica for your input.

Finance Director Blaze said Vice Mayor it's 5:50 p.m. I am still good to go, but I don't know if other members on line kind of budget a 5:00 p.m. either hard or soft stop. I will let you guys decide.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said we hit the 2 areas Vern that you thought would have the most length as far as discussion goes and everything. Council, do you feel like going for another half hour to 5:30 p.m.?

Councilperson Synek said that's fine with me.

Several other Councilpersons agreed.

Mayor Kurtz said we can knock a few of these out then I think.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said that's what I am thinking, we have done the toughest parts. Let's move right on to Boards and Commissions. I don't think there's much to discuss there.

Finance Director Blaze said no, pretty stable as far as the cost; it's just to pay all the people who get paid on Architectural Board, Zoning Board, Planning Commission, etc. The OPERS cost, and not a big cost driver there.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. Well if there's no questions regarding this, let's move on to General Government and Mayor's office. I notice Mayor there's an increase of about \$70,000 in the wage category.

Mayor Kurtz said yes, you know what, the bottom line is not just Covid but there's a lot of different, you're pulled in so many different directions. You can only respond so quickly. I think to have more support in the office. It's really to make us more efficient from an organization standpoint, a position that can support the various departments on a more timely basis and answers back to people. It's all about communication.

Finance Director Blaze asked is it just on my end or Mayor you are breaking up for me.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said you are breaking up a little bit Greg.

Mayor Kurtz asked is it in any better now?

Councilperson Trakas said better, yes.

Councilperson Veverka said I think you got ahold of Jim Trakas' old microphone.

Mayor Kurtz said okay, let me just suggest again that what you are going to see, we are trying to look down the road in terms of the level of communication and the amount of work we are doing out of this office and trying to be able to efficiently get information back. The demands that come to this office, whether it be a constituent, whether it be a business, whether it be another elected official. The amount of information that's flowing through this office is becoming more

expedient rather than linear. So, we are just trying to plan and be able to provide the best practices really.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked that current figure of \$250,000, that represents how many employees under your office?

Mayor Kurtz said I don't know. Vern, maybe you can answer, it's Dar.

Finance Director Blaze said Dar, Letitia and yourself.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I see.

Mayor Kurtz said HR, it's not identified, but HR is under the Mayor's office.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I see, and you are looking to increase by one employee or two employees.

Mayor Kurtz said one employee.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said and this would be someone who would help Dar with her work?

Mayor Kurtz said exactly. You know, I think all of you know that Dar does a great job, but it's hard to do all she does plus to try to facilitate, disseminating information. Remember, I would like to think, people like to think this is an 8:00 to 4:00 p.m. job, but most of the heavy lifting she does gets done after the phones close at 5:00 p.m. So, it's not fair to have one person try to keep up with me for sure.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked is there a new Communication Director? Does she have any responsibilities as far as getting information out from your office?

Mayor Kurtz said the public information yes.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I see.

Mayor Kurtz said there's a great deal of information dealing with day-to-day individual requests. People need answers quickly on a timely basis, and you know what, I don't know if it's more; I think what I have experienced this year, more people call to talk, more people call to complain, more people need to communicate with somebody and guess who they communicate with? The Mayor's office.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said yes.

Mayor Kurtz said I could have 2 phones on my face all the time; but by no means is this a distraction from the fact that Dar does a great job. I need two Dar's to be efficient.

Finance Director Blaze said yes, plus she's at that point where she would like to use some of her vacation, accrued vacation time, and she's finding it difficult to even schedule that because she can't afford to leave the Mayor's office unstaffed for the number of times that she has available to take.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said it kind of sounds like the situation Council is in with Debi.

Councilperson Veverka said yes.

Mayor Kurtz said yeah pretty much. That's the reality of this job, it's just becoming more demanding and people want more timely responses. They want someone to talk to or they want an answer or they want to vent. I get a lot of all of them, and Dar again does a great job, but she can't be here every day for the amount of hours that the job demands. So, we just bring it to your attention, a reality.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said sure.

Mayor Kurtz said that's the answer to that question.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. That's fully understandable, but it's better to hear it from you too explaining. You take for granted, and the people we have too, we need to bring in some younger people because the time is coming that a few years down the road they aren't going to be here; so we need to bring younger people to give the experience to and have them be our future leaders in that particular area.

Mayor Kurtz said well you have heard me say over this year, building the bench. You heard me repeat that comment about building the bench, and you just identified one of our challenges. We have some multi-talented people; but they are on one end of the spectrum, and if we don't start backfilling and building the bench, then we are going to lose that continuity, lose that experience or that transition of information.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said right.

Councilperson Trakas asked Mayor what do you think about if this position is approved, what do you think about working with Council to have this person be a backup for Debi and perhaps be trained for Debi so that we don't have to have the same situation that we just talked about. She can't take any days off, nor can Dar; and maybe you have someone who does some roving back and forth and could be a backup and do some of the meetings.

Mayor Kurtz said obviously we need a backup for Debi, there's no question about it. I guess somebody said earlier, but it's similar to what Dar and Debi go through in terms of their tenure, their time; and we don't have a backup for either one of them really. We could look at something that is accommodating. That would be maybe something we should look at.

Councilperson Veverka asked does Gayle, does her coverage sometime overlap into your department?

Mayor Kurtz said Gayle is kind of like, she is all over. Gayle can't really do Debi's job, and she can't really do Dar's job because she is kind of like you are spread too thin; and you can fill temporarily, but you can't do the job because it's not your job. Does that make any sense?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said right. She kind of fills in those areas that it's hard to categorize, but she has come up with some good ideas; for example, the banners, the Veterans and that. Different programs and specialized programs, but I think with Debi, we need to eventually a fill in for Debi and then for Dar. There are two different skill sets I think. Of course Debi is with her expertise at taking Minutes and being really knowledgeable for Council matters and everything, where Dar is more or less in the Executive branch. So, it's two different Legislative and Executive are two different skill sets. So, it's hard to train somebody for both. So, you almost need one for each area.

Mayor Kurtz said we will keep looking. We want to throw it in there so it's not surprise, and you understand that the amount; this has been a pretty interesting year I can tell you in all my years of public service, this one takes the cake in terms of demand. I think a lot of it has to do with people, they just need someone to talk to, so they call the Mayor's office.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said that's why it's so important to look at the totality of the appropriations. We have expanded needs that your office has. We have a new proposal for the Water and Sewer, and then we have an expanded request from Economic Development. So, it would be nice to say well we have an extra million and a half that we can put towards these; but we really have to categorize and prioritize what's the most important and maybe not do it all at one time, but especially our Economic Development. We do need like you said to fill the bench. We do need that. Personnel is so important, and people's future help is so unpredictable that you wouldn't want to take anything for granted, you want to be prepared.

Mayor Kurtz said and that's our goal.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good Mayor. Any other questions regarding the Mayor's office from Council?

Councilperson Synek said I'm just kind of wondering in terms of having this new position. Is there because of Covid and the shutdown, there's a Receptionist position there at the front desk of City Hall. Well no one is coming to City Hall, do we still need the Receptionist there? Can that position be reimaged into this somehow? We explored all those possibilities for redeploying the Administrative manpower and womanpower that already exists in City Hall to this purpose.

Mayor Kurtz said absolutely. We do that on a daily basis, trying to find out if someone can fill this need, fill that need and not jeopardize or compromise their current responsibilities; and then you take, I think someone identified it earlier. People have time off, and just when you think you have the system working, I'm going on vacation. So, when you take the amount of time that people have accumulated during their tenures of public service, and you start to realize that it doesn't leave a lot for overlap. We do that constantly, and you will hear next, I think doing that now from all the various Community Services and Recreation, both departments, we are trying to

find out. We are taking a three prong approach to the long term strategy of our economic viability. One is robust, one is status quo and one is if we need to get the lifeboat out. I think most communities, most of the Mayors I have talked to were, everyone is trying to take that three prong approach. Most of them are focusing on get the lifeboat out. So, I am not going to be naïve to the situation. We are set to be nimble enough to be able to adjust accordingly pretty quickly.

Finance Director Blaze said Councilperson Synek to your question. Sure, I think any consolidation has to be looked at to see if there's some efficiencies to be gained or some new ways to go about it. I will say even though the front door is locked, and people have to call from the front lobby, it's seems like the public at large is using the phone more because our department has become the backup to when the front desk is not staffed; and so we have the technology. Ryan set it up where the 4131 line rings down in our office, and we grab it. I know there have been a couple occasions here where I have all of my staff in here; and they have all picked up one of the 4131 calls. The next one rolls over to me, myself, and there's 5 of us here; so I am not saying it's that busy 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. You have those episodes where you are scratching your head. You are like we are getting a lot of calls here.

Councilperson Synek said it's a recurring theme Vern. I hear a lot from clients. You know, the accounting office, the operations have to continue, pandemic or no, you folks are there every day. Other people can work remotely, but you guys have to be there; so you are getting all those calls. I have heard that many, many times over the last months.

Mayor Kurtz said make sure we are paying the bills that's all.

Finance Director Blaze said we are glad to help out. We are glad to pitch in and make sure the building keeps running the way it's intended to.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. Anything further on the Mayor's office? I guess we will try and get through Page 12 here Vern if we can. We have Finance Department, that's your department.

Councilperson Trakas said and a chance to cut.

Finance Director Blaze said we are already asking for less money than was approved year-to-date; so we are not looking for any changes. We are hoping to, our big initiative for 2021 is going to be instituting ACH payments; and so that's our department's 2021 overriding goal is to greatly diminish the use of paper checks and go to ACH finally and get into the 21st century here. That will make us a little more productive, and I don't know of anybody's talked about any retirements and so forth; but going forward, if anybody is looking at cutting their hours back because of their life situation, maybe this ACH system will allow us to maintain the existing level of service without having to do a one-for-one replacement at that time. So, it's the way of saying we are hoping to gain some efficiencies here by implementing the ACH payments.

You will see the \$518,500 where we are requesting for 2021, it's about \$20,000 less than it's approved for the department for this year.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. Any other questions for Vern?

Councilperson Narduzzi said Vern you should take the Mayor out to breakfast and tell him how you are doing.

Finance Director Blaze said exactly what he wants to hear, right?

Mayor Kurtz said pile it on you guys, go ahead.

Councilperson Synek asked who or how many people get included on the wages line?

Finance Director Blaze said 3 of us full-time and 2 part-time; and the one part-time is a little more than half time, and the one part-time is probably like three-quarters times plus. There is Dennis too, over in Purchasing.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said oh so Dennis is in there. So, it's 4 full-time.

Finance Director Blaze said correct.

Mayor Kurtz said I have HR, and you have Purchasing.

Finance Director Blaze said and Economic Development gets their own.

Councilperson Narduzzi said take her to breakfast too.

Mayor Kurtz asked who's buying?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said so we can move on to Council office.

Finance Director Blaze said your department looking kind of the same, where based on 2021 budget it looks like you could get by with a little bit less than what was approved for 2020.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said the only thing in here that could possibly change is if we do get a part-timer or somebody; but that's something we can look at. I think we are talking about somebody who works for a couple various departments too to bring in slowly because right now it's perfect as the way it is set up now, but we are talking about bringing on somebody to hopefully give Debi some relief as we move forward.

Councilperson Kapusta asked so is that line where it says part-time wages Council, does that reflect Gayle then?

Finance Director Blaze said that's mostly the 7 members of Council. Gayle is probably in General Government. Gayle and Alla and Monica, when we flip to the next page, but I don't think we will be getting there today.

Mayor Kurtz asked why not?

Finance Director Blaze said well, it's coming on 5:30 p.m., we can keep going. I do have Cross Country Awards night though on line at another venue so I have to get ready for that and then make sure I can get logged on to Google Meets; and I have some prep for that. I do have to kind of make that deadline this evening.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said well we will finish up probably with just the Law Department. I think there's not much more than we can have. The \$385,000 you have is quite a bit more than what we have had, but is that taking into consideration other special circumstances into account?

Finance Director Blaze said that's reflecting the fact that you can see through the end of October, through 10 months we were already at \$304,000 in using Councilperson Synek's way of doing it which I like too. You take the \$304,000 divide it by 10 months; we have been spending \$30,000 a month. You annualize that at 12, and you are at \$365,000. So, we just know that some of the last couple Law Department bills attributable to this line, they are a little bit higher; but some of his legal services get billed out to other lines and specifically in the Self Insurance Account. They have been averaging a little bit closer to \$40,000 to \$45,000 a month; so we just want to make sure if that's a long term trend that we have enough money appropriated for that.

Councilperson Trakas said well we have a lawsuit coming up that's not going away. We are paying a second lawyer, and that could be a 2 to 3 to 4 year expense.

Finance Director Blaze said that for the most part does not get expensed out of this line. This is more of the day-to-day legal services that the Law Director provides to all of you, to the Mayor, to the Department Directors. The expenses you are referencing to Councilperson Trakas, we mostly have been expensing out of the Self Insurance Fund. So, those are in addition to this line.

Councilperson Trakas said wow.

Finance Director Blaze said should have been an attorney right.

Councilperson Trakas said I tried.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I think we are probably going to stop at this point, we have to look at, we still have to cover Pages 13 and then not all of 14 but half of 14, the Mayor's Court. Then we have to get to the Five-Year Plan too. So, as far as committee members, Debi is there going to be a Planning Commission meeting next week?

The Clerk said yes, we have one item on the agenda.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I see. So, I was hoping if there wasn't, we could go right after Economic Development; although I think Kenn you have a class later on that day.

Councilperson Synek said I have a 3:00 p.m. class.

Finance Director Blaze said it's less than 24 hour notice, but you have a 4:30 p.m. Public Lands meeting tomorrow, if you wanted to go at 3:30 p.m. and just knock out that Page 13.

The Clerk said you can't do that.

Finance Director Blaze said okay.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said that gives next Monday, how is next Monday?

Councilperson Kapusta asked could we do it after then if we say 24 hours or no that's cutting it too close?

The Clerk said I don't know how long the Public Lands meeting is going to go tomorrow.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said I can reschedule my meeting for you guys, but I think Dennis has already made arrangements.

Councilperson Kapusta said that wouldn't help us.

Several people began speaking at once.

Finance Director Blaze said how about if they budget 90 minutes for Public Lands, and we met from 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and knocked it out in a half hour. I hate to have umpteen meetings, but we are getting to that point, and I think we would like to knock this out and then if we are not going to vote on it on December 8th, vote it up or down on December 15th so we don't really have to get together that last week or two of the year.

Mayor Kurtz said if you want to do it tomorrow, if we can do it if it's after Public Lands & Buildings. I don't know if the rest of it is that complicated.

Councilperson Narduzzi said I don't think it's going to take that long.

Several people began speaking at once again.

Councilperson Trakas said just from a public perspective, you really want to give more notice. I think 24 hours is our minimum, I don't think it would be fair to the public to do that.

Mayor Kurtz said really Vice Mayor, I'm just looking at Pages 13 and 14, General Government, is there anything that's, I don't see anything.

Councilperson Veverka said Dave somebody has been on from Community Services since the beginning of the meeting, did we skip them?

Councilperson Trakas said yeah we never tackled that.

Mayor Kurtz said we do have Community Services yet, that's pretty quick.

Finance Director Blaze said we did that because you guys had the question about the transportation for the adult bus drivers and the 55+ lunches get expensed prior to them being separate line items.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said we had the Civic Center, Page 5 I believe.

Finance Director Blaze said I thought we got through that, and we stopped at Rubbish there since there wasn't anything.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said we talked about the 55+ lunches and different things.

Mayor Kurtz said well Amber it looks like I handled it for you.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said sorry about that Amber. We discussed that matter last week. Vern, do you think if we schedule a meeting for next Monday, would you be able then, we could transition right into the Five-Year Plan?

Finance Director Blaze said that would be the Capital Plan, that would be Monday, November 30th.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said yes.

Finance Director Blaze asked what time is good for the committee?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I am free all day there, so whatever the committee says, it's fine with me.

Finance Director Blaze asked do I hear 3:30 p.m.?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked Dale is 3:30 p.m. okay with you?

Councilperson Veverka asked which day?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said next Monday.

Councilperson Veverka said I have to go check my other calendar.

Finance Director Blaze said the retired guy has the busiest schedule.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said because with the holiday this week, the rest of this week is kind of out. Since we have Planning Commission, and of course Kenn wouldn't have been available Tuesday. Thursday I have my big tax seminar next week.

The Clerk asked what about December 2nd, do you want to do it with the Utilities and Streets meeting that you wanted?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked do we want to tackle that?

The Clerk said Councilperson Trakas is not on anymore. I don't know what happened to Jim.

Finance Director Blaze said I agree that finishing up Pages 13 and 14 of the Operating Budget won't take a long time, but if we do use this meeting to transition into the Five-Year CIP, that's easily a meeting in and of itself. I don't know if we should dovetail that with another meeting. We will be on for many, many hours if we do a Finance meeting and another committee meeting the same day.

Mayor Kurtz asked what did we say, Monday at 3:30 p.m.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I can go a long time next Monday, if Council is ready to dig into that Five-Year Plan.

Mayor Kurtz said let's tentatively set it, and if Dale can make it fine; if not we can change it.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked Vern you will be ready to discuss the Five-Year Plan next Monday?

Finance Director Blaze said sure.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked and Kenn you said 3:30 p.m. sounds good to you?

Councilperson Synek replied yes.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said Dale if you could let us know as quickly as possible. We will tentatively schedule the next Finance meeting for 3:30 p.m. on November 30th.

Councilperson Veverka said I'm good.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said then it's set for 3:30 p.m. next Monday, and if we could go to 6:00 p.m., we could hopefully knock out a lot of the Five-Year Plan too.

Finance Director Blaze said thank you.

Mayor Kurtz said Vice Mayor if I may follow up to your question about the situation on Rockside at the hotel. The male was charged with felonious assault. We have identified some of the witnesses, and the detectives are bringing them in to identify accomplices. Also, we talked to the GM at Embassy, and we are talking about different operational issues that could help prevent this in the future.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked what time did that happen Mayor approximately?

Mayor Kurtz said I thought it was Saturday night at about 2:00 a.m.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said I see.

Councilperson Kapusta asked how many patrolmen do we have or Police officers do we have again? I was asked that question.

Mayor Kurtz said I think there's 34 in the department. They are not all, remember we dispatch some to some special groups. There are a lot of them who are detectives and have different responsibilities. They are not all patrolmen.

Councilperson Kapusta said okay, thank you.

Councilperson Veverka asked and we had 4 officers on that shift or is it less because of vacations?

Mayor Kurtz said well it's 3, but then sometimes it can go as high as 5 or 6.

Councilperson Veverka said right, but typically it's 3.

Mayor Kurtz said I believe it's 3 plus those who are working up there off duty which is like an extra Policeman. They have 2 of those at Topgolf. So, I consider them, that's why we have had such good response time with some of these recent situations.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said so I imagine Mayor they were probably there pretty quickly in this situation too.

Mayor Kurtz said this is another one of those bizarre situations, but the goal is to meet with the GM at Embassy Suites because we haven't had a situation like this; but we are going to go over some of the operational issues that could prevent this type of situation in the future.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. Thank you for keeping us informed.

Councilperson Veverka asked how many officers responded to the incident?

Mayor Kurtz said you know I don't know Dale.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked any other questions before I get a motion to adjourn? So, we are all set. We will continue discussion, we will finish up the appropriations and move on to the Five-Year Plan next Monday, November 30th at 3:30 p.m. Do we have a motion to adjourn?

Moved by Veverka, seconded by Synek, to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting of November 23, 2020. Voice Vote: 3 yes/0 no; motion carried.

The Finance Committee meeting of November 23, 2020 was then adjourned at 5:36 p.m.

Debra J. Beal, Clerk of Council
Minutes Unapproved at Time of Release 11/25/20
