

City of Lewisburg
Finance Committee Meeting
Paul R. Cooley Council Chamber
942 Washington Street, West
Lewisburg, West Virginia 24901
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
March 15, 2023

PRESENT: Mayor Beverly White; Councilmembers: Sarah Elkins, Franklin Johnson, John Little, Valerie Pritt and Arron Seams; City Manager Misty Hill, Treasurer Susan Honaker, City Clerk Shannon Beatty, Police Chief Chris Teubert, Fire Chief Joey Thomas and Public Works Director Tony Legg.

CALL TO ORDER:

Finance Chairman Arron Seams called the Finance Committee meeting of the City of Lewisburg to order at 9:00 a.m.

Department Capital Requests for Fiscal Year 2024

Community Development:

Magic of Christmas, Carriage Rides - \$5,000
First Fridays, entertainment - \$ 4,000
Halloween, downtown décor - \$1,000
Music throughout town - \$25,000
Wi-Fi downtown – no estimate
LDBA brochure - \$7,200

Magic of Christmas Carriage Rides

City Manager Hill stated the Lewisburg Downtown Business Association had requested additional funds beyond the \$5,000 the City had paid last year to ensure carriage rides were available for the public during the Magic of Christmas. These funds would make the carriage rides free to the public. In 2022 the City paid Carola and Sons Carriage Service \$5,000 to make the carriage rides available to the public. However, it cost the public \$5 for children and \$10 for adults for the carriage rides. The LDBA had asked if the City could make the carriage rides free to the public. After consulting Carola and Sons Carriage Service it was discovered it would cost the City \$21,600 to make the carriage rides free. City Manager Hill felt that was too expensive and she created a place holder for the \$5,000 to make the carriage rides available again. Council held a discussion about this and agreed with Hill.

First Fridays

City Manager Hill noted the Lewisburg Downtown Business Association has only been able to budget \$1,000 for live music using individuals instead of bands for music during First Friday events. She stated the LDBA has asked if the City could support First Fridays by granting \$4,000 to the association. This would help them be able to hire bands instead of just one or two individuals to play music. First Fridays occur in downtown Lewisburg from April through December.

Halloween Décor and Festival

City Manager Misty Hill stated that no decorations or festivals have been held to celebrate Halloween. She noted the City typically goes from summer hanging baskets to Christmas decorations in the downtown area. City Manager Hill stated she would like to have \$1,000 to spend on décor to decorate in the Greenspace.

Music throughout the downtown area

City Manager Hill stated the Lewisburg Downtown Merchants Association has requested the possibility of having the capability to have music provided through a wireless system on the light poles downtown. Misty and Shannon are working with Alpha Music and have a rough estimate of \$25,000 at this time. More information needs to be gathered. Hill stated her concerns would be about what time music would be played, what kind of music and how loud. It would be on light poles from the intersection of Courtney Drive and Washington to the intersection of Lafayette and Washington Street.

Free Wi-Fi in the downtown area

City Manager Hill stated she does not have an estimate or bid for how much providing free Wi-Fi in the downtown area would cost. She said her concerns with providing this would be that it could cause issues in the downtown area. She stated she would only be comfortable providing this during festivals. She noted the LDBA members had stated they could better offer an online “scanning” pamphlet option if there was Wi-Fi available. Hill noted that in order to make this happen the City would have to get permission from building owners to place Wi-Fi equipment on their buildings.

Lewisburg Downtown Business Association (LDBA) Brochure

The LDBA has requested \$7,200 to print their brochure. City Manager Hill stated it would relieve funding they could use for social media expenses. Councilmember Elkins stated she felt that businesses that were not members of the member only LDBA would have to be able to “opt in” to be listed in the brochure for her to feel comfortable about supporting it. Councilmember Pritt stated she felt like the brochure was “advertising” for the members of the LDBA and did not represent a comprehensive listing of all businesses in Lewisburg. Pritt noted the LDBA brochure only listed “members” and not other businesses located in Lewisburg or the downtown area. Councilmember Little stated he could only support this request if the brochure promotes visiting downtown Lewisburg and does not list specific businesses that are part of the LDBA members only organization. He stated he does not see how it would be ethical for the city to print this. Councilmember Seams stated it felt like an interest for profit group request to him. City Manager Hill stated the City needed to find some common ground here to help the LDBA which is a group working for the downtown. She stated it would make her job easier to be able to help them. Councilmember Little stated that he could support promoting events that bring people to Lewisburg but not a brochure for a member only group. Councilmember Elkins stated she supports giving more money to events like the Magic of Christmas. Councilmember Pritt said she could

see increasing the budget for music at First Fridays. Councilmember Elkins stated she would rather support events like the Magic of Christmas, First Fridays and Halloween.

City Hall:

- Door pass/lock system - \$10,000
- Server - \$10,000
- Capability to work away from office (Cloud) - \$32,000
- WatchGuard (replaces SonicWALL) - \$3,500
- Scanning of documents – no estimate at this time

Door pass/lock system

City Manager Hill stated the system has been failing. She noted they no longer make parts for this system.

Server

City Manager Hill stated the server is a 2013 model. It has been kicking everyone off the server for the past week. The server is necessary for any work to get done at City Hall.

Capability to work away from office

This would be necessary for employees to work in AccuFund if working away from the office. City Manager Hill stated this would allow the City Manager, the City Treasurer and several other employees to work in AccuFund every day. The only other way to work in AccuFund would require a VPN

WatchGuard

This would replace the SonicWall which is our aging firewall and needs replaced.

Scanning of Documents

City Manager Hill stated she would like the City to be able to scan all documents. This would enable employees to do searches for documents and store documents. This company would come in and scan all documents.

Fire Chief Thomas stated keeping documents only electronically makes him nervous after he lost all information in his system.

Heating and Air units

City Manager Hill stated the heating and air units need to be replaced. She said that one unit is not working now. She noted the heating and air system would have to be engineered because of the layout

and age of the building. She stated that when the security doors were added in 2011 it blocked the flow of air. She noted the system has not worked well for a long time.

Police Department:

- Door pass/lock system - \$10,000
- 6 office laptops - \$9,534
- Camera system for spare cruiser/with body cam - \$8,735

Door pass/lock system

This is the same system that is used at City Hall and it is also failing. Chief Tuebert feels like it is safety issue for the clerks working in the Police Department. He noted he can no longer get parts to repair the door pass/lock system.

6 office laptops

Six office laptops are needed for employees in the Police Department.

Camera System for Spare Cruiser/with Body Cam

This gives three views of what is happening with an officer on a traffic call whereas, just a body cam only gives one view. It is a matter of safety for the officer.

Chief Teubert stated that all three items are a must have for the police department at this time.

Fire Department:

- Fire Truck (from fire service fee income) - \$950,000

Fire Truck (from fire service fee income)

Chief Thomas stated that trucks need to be replaced every 20 years. This would replace a 2003 engine pumper truck. After the truck is replaced it would be placed on a five year reserve status. Thomas noted it takes three years to build a truck. The City would not receive this truck until 2026 if it is ordered now. He stated the last truck that was ordered the City had to pay for the chassis at the time the order was placed. The remainder of the balance due was paid when the truck was completed. He stated there is \$700,000 in the fire service fee rainy day fund for a truck at this time. Councilmember Seams stated the City would not be paying for the entire purchase price in this budget year. Treasurer Susan Honaker stated the only way that Council can purchase a truck at this amount of money would be with a lease purchase agreement since the payment terms would extend past the limit of their terms of office. Councilmember Little clarified that this Council would approve the down payment with a lease.

Street Department:

Mill grinder (used) - \$9,000

Mill grinder (used)

Director of Public Works Tony Legg stated he could buy a used mill grinder from a local business Greenbrier Excavating and Paving for \$9,000. He noted a new mill grinder cost \$22,000. He stated using a mill grinder helped pothole patching jobs and paving jobs last longer.

Parks Department:

Fly Ball Net (Hollowell Senior League Field) - \$45,000
Dorie Miller new fence for softball field - \$8,000

Fly Ball Net (Hollowell Senior League Field)

This is for the poles only. A new fly ball net is needed to protect other users of the park from being hit by softballs. Director of Public Works Legg stated it is possible that crews could build an in house version for less money.

Dorie Miller new fence for softball field

Legg indicated that Parks Crews had repaired the fence by placing a tie wire along the bottom of the fence.

Total of all capital requests from Department Heads is \$1,139,470

General Fund Budget Preparation Fiscal Year 2024

The following discussions were held:

City Council members reviewed the Revenue line items page by page with City Manager Hill.

City Manager Hill stated that changes to the budget need to be made now because they cant be made after the City Council meeting because Treasurer Susan Honaker has to submit the budget to the state on Wednesday, March 22, 2023.

Treasurer Susan Honaker noted that \$400,000 has been carried over the budget for five years for a new HVAC system for City Hall.

City Manager Hill noted that the total reimbursement for Route 219 North and South sidewalk project is \$246,000.86.

City Manager Hill stated that with the ARPA funds, the State of WV has only allowed the City to “commit” funds we have to the water plant upgrade leaving the City with \$900,000.

Regarding the one percent sales tax that will go into effect July 1, 2023. The State of WV will send information to City Treasurer Susan Honaker as to what the City will receive. She noted the State’s collects taxes quarterly so it will not be until approximately January until we know how the tax will do.

Council member Little asked to clarify that vehicle leases were \$14,000 more than last year. Public Works Director Legg answered yes and that the Public Works Dept. had two more vehicles ordered this year.

Council held a discussion about salaries and increasing the pay scale for employees.

Councilmember Little asked Treasurer Honaker how she would handle the Capital requests in the budget if she were a councilmember. She stated she would put \$180,000 in contingencies and then all the requests could go into the budget. She stated she would not go into a fiscal year without having money in the contingencies fund. She stated that by the time some of the purchases would be made the City would have a better idea of how the one percent sales tax was doing.

Concerning the Community Development requests, City Manager Hill stated the City would oversee all the funds. That the Lewisburg Downtown Merchants Association would be required to submit invoices for the City to pay directly after approval by the City Manager.

Community Development Capital Requests

Councilmember Little made a motion to recommended increasing the Community Development Capital Requests to \$25,000 using the funds to bring visitors to Lewisburg for events and festival such as the Magic of Christmas, First Fridays, Halloween Décor and other activities. No money shall be used for social media, or specific business advertising. Councilmember Johnson seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

City Hall Capital Requests

Councilmember Little made a motion to recommend approval of \$23,500 for the City Hall Capital Requests for Door pass/lock system, upgrade to the server and WatchGuard replacement of the SonicWALL. Councilmember Elkins seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

Police Department Capital Requests

Councilmember Johnson made a motion to recommend approval of all Police Department Capital requests as presented in the amount of \$29,770. Mayor White seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

Fire Department Capital Requests

Mayor White made a motion to recommend approval to place \$400,000 in the budget for a possible down payment for the Fire Department Capital request (new fire truck), with \$400,000. Councilmember Pritt seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

Street Department Capital Request

Mayor White made a motion to recommend approval of the Street Department Capital Request as presented in the amount of \$9,000 for a used mill grinder. Councilmember Pritt seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

Parks Department Capital Requests

Councilmember Johnson made a motion to recommend approval of \$12,000 of the capital request by the Parks Department for a fly ball net (Hollowell Senior League Field). Councilmember Elkins seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

Greenbrier County Convention and Visitor's Bureau report

City Manager Hill stated that Treasurer Susan Honaker had attended training this year and had learned the Greenbrier County Convention and Visitor's Bureau needs to submit financial statements to the City. This is a change made by the legislature this year.

Recycling

Councilmember Johnson asked what the City was paying for recycling services. City Manager Hill answered the City is paying \$64,464 a year. Hill stated that she and Mayor White had asked the director of Greenworks Recycling to submit a financial report to the City several months ago including regarding what if any extra charges they charge to city residents. She stated they have not received any financial reports. Treasurer Susan Honaker stated the contract with Greenworks expires in 2024. City Manager Hill stated that once the City tears down and removes the old Public Works buildings at Dorie Miller Park the ability of Greenworks to keep their sorting equipment there will be compromised. She noted it was quite an eye sore. Without a report, the City does not know how many citizens use the service.

City Manager Hill stated that City Council might want to investigate if it would be more cost effective for the City to hire two additional employees at the price of the contract and have them do recycling.

Councilmember Elkins made a motion to recommend approval of \$59,092 including \$5,372 in salaries to cover the cost of the Recycling Contract with Greenworks through the end of the contract or come up with a different solution. Mayor White seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

Treasurer Honaker stated the City could write a grant applications to get the equipment necessary for recycling.

General Fund Budget Preparation discussion for Fiscal Year 2024

Councilmember Little asked City Council members if they would feel okay approving a budget in which the expenses were more than the revenues in the current form. Councilmember Pritt stated she would feel okay approving the budget knowing the City has several failsafe measures in place. City Manager Hill stated that Department Heads would still have to follow the procurement process before purchases were made. City Manager Hill stated the City had to justify in the application with the Home Rule Board what the City planned to spend the revenue from the one percent sales tax on. She stated that some of things listed were the expansion of the Police Department, the construction of the new fire station, and the pay scale upgrade. She stated they had conservatively represented in the budget the amount from the one percent sales tax.

Councilmember Pritt made a motion to recommend approval of the \$9,128,415 General Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2024 with a 3.6 million loss, with the approved Capital Requests and \$506,270 in contingencies. Mayor White seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

Councilmember Little advised City Manager Hill the City should be very quick to respond to the new revenue from the One Percent Sales Tax as the City sees how it comes in.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilmember Elkins made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:18 p.m. Councilmember Little seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.