

Finance Committee Meeting Tuesday 03.14.2023

The meeting commenced at 1901 hrs.

Committee members in attendance: Chairman David W. Voss and Brian Smyth. John Hardig, and Lindsey Jones were excused due to other commitments.

Other council members in attendance: Kathleen Zech, Amy Richter, Stefanie Hawk and President of Council Kerry Smyth.

City officials: Mayor Sam Keller, SSD Tom Braun, Clerk of Council Jenny Eilermann, Fire Chief Robert Klein, Police Chief Jeff Patton and Auditor's Assistant Patty Henry.

Others: None

Meeting Objectives: The chair advised that tonight's meeting is for reviewing the 2023 Appropriations. The chair advised everyone that the 2023 appropriations need to be passed by March 31st. Documents for review: 2023 Appropriations, 2022 Expense Report, and 2022 Expenditure Comparisons versus 2023 Appropriations spreadsheet.

Discussion: Police Chief Jeff Patton provided information relative the number of officers. He advised a full complement of full-time is 15 officers. Currently, there are only twelve officers, and three additional hires are in process. Cheviot also employes three part-time officers. Chief Patton eventually wishes to assign an officer to RENU full-time.

Chief Patton wishes to continue having a K-9 unit. The current dog is set to retire in May. Concerns were raised as to the cost of continuing to appropriate funds for a K-9 unit. The Chief stated that the department should be able to have the cost of acquiring a new dog through a donation and the labor costs for the K-9 officer to maintain the dog are covered through scheduling. The Chief feels it is important that Cheviot is able to assist other departments as well as Cheviot's needs.

Fire Chief Robert Klein advised that the full-time fire complement is eleven personnel. Part-time firemen number is twenty.

When questioned about the amount of money generated by squad runs in 2022, the Chief provided they brought in \$352,837.08.

The issue of any large expenses foreseen in the near future came up. The Chief mentioned a replacement of a fire truck will be needed in the next two years. A new firetruck is estimated to cost \$600,000.00. Fire trucks are replaced on a 25 year schedule.

SCMR line items were discussed and appeared okay as presented.

The escalating cost of health insurance was discussed. The escalating costs of providing health insurance for two elected officials and to clerical personnel without any contribution on their part was cited as a financial concern. Union members do contribute a portion of the cost of their health insurance. Clerical personnel demand the same raises as union personnel but contribute nothing to health care. The administration refuses to confront the uncomfortable fact that the business as usual approach is

financially unsustainable. For the record, employee health insurance costs for 2023 is projected to be \$615,000.00. This is a 25% increase (\$121,644.66) more than the 2022 expenditure of \$493,355.34.

The swimming pool appropriation of \$60,712.23 was questioned by the chair. Why not raise the cost of pool admission? Garbage fees are being increased and there is a call to increase property taxes.

In closing, there was some challenging conversation throughout the meeting. Cheviot has a \$360,000 budget deficit for 2023. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) monies will offset this deficit in 2023. 2024 and beyond is a concern and the City needs to rethink its future spending priorities. Council has the basic authority to control the checkbook (spending) by not appropriating money if they don't want it spent.

The meeting concluded at 2102 hrs.

Respectfully submitted,

David W. Voss, Finance Chairman

Brian Smyth