Minutes
Finance & Policy Committee
October 5, 2020
2nd committee meeting

Committee Members: Michael Reynolds (Chair), Carol King, Diane Kuzniar
Others Present: Finance Director Holly Abercrombie, HR Director Mark Putnam, and City Administrator Brandon Madden

1. **Call to Order** — The Honorable Michael Reynolds

2. **Public Comment** — The Honorable Michael Reynolds

3. **Reading and Approval of Minutes** — The Honorable Michael Reynolds
   a. Finance Committee Meeting: September 14, 2020

   Action: Councilwoman Kuzniar made a motion to approve the minutes with Councilwoman King seconding.

   Vote: The vote was unanimous (3-0).

4. **Reports or Communications from City Officers** — The Honorable Michael Reynolds
   a. City Administrator Brandon Madden
      i. Budget Review

   b. Finance Director Holly Abercrombie
      i. Budget Review
      ii. Unclaimed Property Update
      iii. Annual Audit Update
      iv. Capital Improvement Program Update
      v. Bond Escrow Funds Update

   Ms. Abercrombie said the budget looks good.

   The City of Mauldin has a little over $5,000 in unclaimed money that can be claimed from the State. We have sent the State a letter to claim that money.

   The auditors have been on site since last Monday and will be here through this coming Friday. A draft audit review will be upcoming.

   The Capital Committee that was formed last year has completed reviews of what the departments have submitted and will send the information back so the departments can justify what they are asking for.

There are bond escrow funds dating back to 2012 that need to be transferred out of the bond escrow account into the general fund. The transfer amount will be a little over $80,000.

Councilman King said the reports provided a lot of good information. Councilwoman King said the CIP program is great because before Mr. Madden came, the City struggled to come up with even a 5- year plan.

c. Human Resources Director Mark Putnam
   i. Budget Review

Mr. Putnam said all the City evaluations are done and the employees have been paid. This was all done in about two months. Department Heads did a great job with the evaluation process.

Mr. Putnam said insurance renewals are starting and we could see a decrease in insurance premiums.

5. <u>Unfinished Business</u> The Honorable Michael Reynolds

There is no unfinished business.

6. <u>New Business</u>

a. Amendment to the Purchasing Policy

The City of Mauldin purchasing policy was adopted in December 2007 and has had subsequent revisions in 2016, 2017 and 2019. Currently, the policy mandates that purchases greater than $25,000 follow a formal Bid procedure. As part of that procedure, advertisement is required. The policy states that, "All purchases…shall be publicly advertised at least once in a newspaper of general circulation in the city at least five (5) calendar days prior to the date established for receipt…" Additionally, the policy eliminates this requirement for professional services.

Additionally, City Ordinance Sec. 2-304. - Award to lowest bidder; advertising; when required., states that, "Newspaper notices, when required by the procedures manual, shall include a general description of the articles or services to be purchased, and shall state where specifications may be secured and the time and place for opening the bid."

Newspapers have been a critical part of the American news landscape, but they have been hit hard as more and more Americans consume news digitally. Since the year 2000, newspaper readership has declined 51% (2019 - *Pew Research Center*).

However effective this publication requirement was, it is now less than half as effective. The advent of the information age has allowed for goods and services to be searched nationwide and prices to be obtained instantly. The ultimate goal of obtaining exactly what is budgeted for, at the lowest price, can be accomplished instantly on a computer.

Action: Councilwoman King made a motion to send this item to full Council to eliminate the requirement to advertise in local newspapers. Councilwoman Kuzniar seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (3-0).

b. Amendment to Vehicle Use Policy

This amendment would add a gas card section to the vehicle policy. The current City gas card program is administered by way of custom and practice. The current custom and practices for the program have been updated and formalized into a policy that is incorporated into the City's current vehicle use policy.

This will allow for a formal document that can be shared with and reviewed by all gas card users to make sure they are using the cards properly. Also, this will allow for the implementation of measures to improve the current internal controls and prevent misuse of the gas cards.

Councilwoman King asked how the purchase of gas was working before. Ms. Abercrombie answered that the gas card is issued to a vehicle. When a new employee is hired, they are issued an Individual gas card pin number so they can use the card to purchase gas for a City vehicle.

Ms. Cox has worked hard on this program with Mansfield Oil to do an audit and get new cards. When an employee is terminated, their pin will be terminated.

Action: Councilwoman King made a motion to send this item to full Council requesting approval of this amendment to the vehicle policy.
Councilwoman Kuzniar seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (3-0).

c. 206 Libby Lane Demolition

During the historic flooding event in 2015, multiple structures along Libby Lane that were located in the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Authority) flood zone sustained significant flood damage. Following the event, the City engaged hazard mitigation consultant Jeff Ward & Associates (JSWA) to manage the purchase and demolition of those properties through a FEMA hazard mitigation grant program.

During the original scope of work in 2017, 206 Libby Lane was not able to be purchased and demolished. Subsequently and prior to the closing of the grant program, FEMA announced additional funds that would allow the city to purchase and demolish the site. Since 2018, staff has been working to settle this project. After negotiations with FEMA, the site has been approved for purchase and demolition.

JSWA has already begun the process of managing the purchase and demolition of the site. Council approved the purchase of the site but did not approve the matching funds. Council is being requested to approve the use of the funds for this project.

No new funding is being requested. The matching funds needed total $20,000. $29,237 is available in the FY2021 budget for this available for this project.

Action: Councilwoman Kuzniar made a motion to forward this to Council. Councilwoman King seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (3-0).

d. City Council Method of Representation

Chairman Reynolds said he asked for this for informational purposes so the City would know what the options are if we wanted to change the way our Council representation works. He asked Mr. Madden to reach out to find out the process to change our Council representation to wards if we are interested in that, and how many Cities are represented at-large.

Councilwoman Kuzniar said she did some research with the National League of Cities. The research states council members in an at-large system can be more impartial and rise above the limited perspective of a single district and concern themselves with the problems of the whole community; vote trading between Councilmembers may be minimized; and the number of candidates available for election tends to be larger.

Councils elected by district elections may experience more infighting and be less likely to prioritize the good of the city over the good of their district. Larger municipalities tend to use district elections.

Councilwoman Kuzniar said when she was campaigning she got questions about whether she would represent a certain ward, and she could say she would represent the City.

Chairman Reynolds said the Mayor would still be elected at large and there could be a couple of at-large seats. He is concerned that there is a large part of the City that is under-represented. Councilwoman Kuzniar said getting candidates to run has been a problem, and you may not have anyone who wants to run in a particular area.

No action was taken on this item. This is information only.

e. City Council Compensation

Chairman Reynolds said this was also for information. Councilwoman King said being on Council is not about the money for her She did not know what Council compensation was before the first check was deposited into her account. She will not support a raise for Council and if this brings

more people to run for Council, that is not a good reason to want to serve.

Chairman Reynolds said there may be some people who are interested in running and may have the time but could not afford to run. Mauldin's Council compensation is right in line with some of our neighboring cities.

This was information only.

f. Motion to enter into Executive Session to Consider a Personnel Matter as allowed by State Statute Section 30-4-70 (a) (1)

Action: Councilwoman King made a motion to go into executive session with Councilwoman Kuzniar seconding.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (3-0).

Chairman Reynolds reconvened the meeting.

Councilwoman King reported out that no decisions were made and no action taken in executive session.

g. Possible action on items discussed in executive session- None

7. **Public Comment-** None — The Honorable Michael Reynolds

8. **Committee Concerns-** None — The Honorable Michael Reynolds

9. **Adjournment-** Chairman Reynolds adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Miller
Municipal Clerk