

Finance Committee Meeting February 25, 2014

The **Finance Committee** met Tuesday, February 25, 2014, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Present were Committee members Sue Galbraith, Dwayne Andrews, John Hollowell and Sheena Martin. Also present were Councilperson Ken Gardner, Mayor C.A. Grenz, Fire Chief Dale Berg, Public Utilities Director Al Kelm, City Attorney Dan Rice, and Recorder/City Clerk Lorrie Pearce.

Also present were Attorney Shawn Quinlan, and Resident Nancy Reynolds.

Request of Citizens

None

Resolution No. 3669: A Resolution Authorizing the City of Miles City to Enter into An Agreement With Lucas & Tonn, P.C. A Montana Corporation, for Providing Legal Services Of Assistant City Attorney

Attorney Rice explained that Deputy City Attorney Noble has given his resignation. The reason for the resignation is the work load has been too overwhelming. Noble reports that he works 3-4 days to keep up with the caseload, which means he takes a lot of cases home and works on them during the weekend. Attorney Rice explained that there are jury trials scheduled every Monday and Friday until May. He is concerned that the City will be losing convictions because of the lack of a speedy trial. Attorney Rice proposed hiring Shawn Quinlan as an Assistant City Attorney. Quinlan would work with Attorney Noble helping with the backlog until December 15, 2014, when Attorney Noble resigns. The hiring of Quinlan would be by contract and would increase the attorney budget about \$2600 per month, calculated at \$30 an hour. This would not count his sick or vacation time.

Attorney Rice added the contract includes increasing the Administrative Legal Secretary's hours from 15 hours per week to 20 hours per week. This would amount to an additional \$280 a month increase in wages.

Chairperson Galbraith explained the total addition to the City's budget would be \$11,536 for fiscal year 13-14.

Attorney Rice explained that Attorney Noble is scheduled to work 2 days a week, but with the additional jury trials, he is hoping that 3 days budgeted will be enough. He said he will have a better handle on the hours by budget time.

Mayor Grenz said there are around 200 cases open and he is in agreement with the resolution.

- ** Committee Member Hollowell moved to recommend that City Council approve Resolution No. 3669. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Andrews; the motion passed with a vote of, 3-0, with Committee Member Martin abstaining.*

Request for Water Bill Adjustment

Nancy Reynolds explained their renter had moved out December 1st, so there was no heat in the house. This caused the meter in the basement to freeze. She explained the water was clean and it did not go down the sewer line. She asked the Committee to reduce her water bill by whatever they thought was fair.

Director Kelm explained the averaging process, and said he would talk to the Utility Billing Clerk to readjust the bill to 3000 gallons usage. He also added that the adjustment would have to be approved by Council.

- ** Committee Member Andrews moved to recommend that the adjustment would reflect the sewer rates to 3000 gallons a month. The motion was seconded by Chairperson Galbraith; the motion carried unanimously, 4-0.*

Approval of Ambulance Bills to be sent to Collection

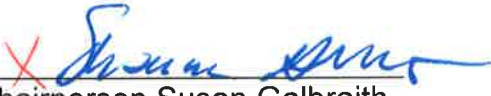
Committee Member Hollowell was concerned that there are some real old claims on the collection list. Fire Chief Berg explained that it's still part of the cleanup, and Solestone is following the City Collection Policy of 180 days. There was also a concern that the City is sending the claims to the collection agency while clients are still paying on them. Chief Berg said he would call Solestone and get clarification on the credits that were paid.

- ** Committee Member Andrews moved to recommend that City Council approves sending the ambulance bills to collection. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Hollowell; the motion carried unanimously, 4-0.*

Adjournment

- ** There being no further business, Committee Member Martin moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Committee Member Hollowell. The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted:



Chairperson Susan Galbraith



City Clerk Lorrie Pearce