

KIRTLAND CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

April 19, 2021 – Work Session

The work session meeting of Kirtland City Council commenced at 6:00 p.m. Due to the current state of emergency regarding COVID-19, the meeting was held virtually via Zoom. Council members present were: Scott Haymer, John Lesnick, Richard Lowery, Jeffrey Ruple, Matthew Schulz and Joseph Smolic. Kelly Wolfe was absent.

Mayor Kevin Potter, Law Director Matthew Lallo, Finance Director Mary Kovalchik, Service Director Joseph Fornaro and Fire Chief Anthony Hutton were also in attendance.

Mayor Potter noted that discussion will be held regarding Ohio Checkbook. Mrs. Kovalchik stated that one of her top priorities since coming to Kirtland is to provide a clearer understanding of the budget process and bring more transparency and accountability regarding use of the taxpayers' funds. She stated this has been accomplished with the implementation of the new software system and conversion, noting that files can now be exported to the State of Ohio to generate additional transparency to the general public. Mrs. Kovalchik introduced Alaina Bowers from the State Treasurer's Office, noting that she will address the new innovative system and show the best way to navigate that system.

Ms. Bowers stated that she has been working with Mrs. Kovalchik, reviewing the data multiple times. Mrs. Kovalchik noted that additional functionality has been added to Ohio Checkbook.

Using the screen share function of Zoom, Ms. Bowers reviewed the functions of the Ohio Checkbook home page, noting that the new state Checkbook and local government Checkbook has been launched. She stated that the four functions show salaries, expenses, budget and local government. With regard to a press release, Ms. Bowers stated they are aiming for May publication and would need to know this week or early next week if Kirtland would like to move forward with publishing. She stated their office can release a press release, noting that the City can share the link on its website and social media.

With regard to salaries, Ms. Bowers said that state employee salaries, teacher salaries and pension salaries are mandated by the state; the local government salaries are 100 percent voluntary. She noted that when she shows Kirtland's checkbook site, no names are available for public view; if it is decided later to provide the employee names for salaries, it would be a separate data file. She noted that as of 2020 only one entity has provided this information.

Ms. Bowers noted that resources are provided, including frequently asked questions and searches that can be performed.

Ms. Bowers stated that the local government and schools Checkbook portal shows the different entities that are currently published on the Checkbook; there are currently close to 850 entities on the Checkbook. She noted it is all voluntary, the data is all voluntary, and can be updated monthly, quarterly or yearly.

Ms. Bowers showed the City of Kirtland's Checkbook site, noting that she and Mrs. Kovalchik worked to have the Fiscal Year 2020 data available on the site, along with two months of the 2021 data. Mrs. Kovalchik stated it would be updated monthly, as part of the monthly reconciliation process. Ms. Bowers reviewed how transactions are shown on the site.

Councilman Lesnick inquired if this is strictly expenditures, without any revenue shown. Ms. Bowers stated it is expenditures only at this time and that including revenue is something that will be addressed in the future.

Answering Mr. Lesnick regarding expenditures made from borrowed funds, Mrs. Kovalchik noted that the City's analytics are much more detail oriented, which enables Finance to answer detailed questions for Council and the Administration.

Responding to Councilman Schulz, Mrs. Kovalchik advised there is no cost to the City for this service. Council President Lowery noted that the City's previous Finance software was a deterrent to moving forward a couple years ago.

Council President Lowery thanked Ms. Bowers for her assistance with this process and for providing the presentation. Ms. Bowers stated that she will be available this week for any questions that Council members may have in this regard.

Responding to Councilman Lesnick regarding making the site "live", Mrs. Kovalchik stated that the City will make an announcement or have an announcement made by the State Treasurer's Office. She noted that a shortcut will be posted to the City's website. Noting that it is an administrative matter, Mrs. Kovalchik stated she will follow-up with the Mayor.

Councilman Schulz inquired about records requests, once the site is live. Mr. Lallo advised that the City would still have to provide the record to the requester, but they can be pointed to the website so they can find the information in the future on their own.

Ms. Bowers introduced Rebecca Armstrong, Public Affairs Liaison for Kirtland's region, noting that they will work together on the press release if the City decides to move forward.

Mrs. Kovalchik thanked Ms. Bowers for her time and dedication in putting this together.

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Upon the Mayor's request, Mrs. Kovalchik addressed legislation on tonight's agenda relating to a contract with the City of Lyndhurst for purchase of sodium chloride (rock salt). Noting that she would like this to be passed tonight, Mrs. Kovalchik stated that the City of Lyndhurst does not have the salt capacity for storage that most cities have; they ordered 3300 tons through ODOT for shipment in their last season, and they are obligated to purchase 90 percent. It was a lighter season, and Mrs. Kovalchik noted they determined the surplus salt would be marketed to other governmental units that may have paid a higher price, making it beneficial to surrounding communities. Mrs. Kovalchik stated it must be done by Ordinance, and the emergency is necessary because they have to complete their contractual agreement.

Mr. Smolic inquired if the 750 tons would be offset on Kirtland's purchase from the State. Mrs. Kovalchik stated that Kirtland is still obligated for the 2200 tons approved in the contractual agreement with ODOT (plus or minus ten percent). Mrs. Kovalchik stated that Kirtland's savings in the purchase of the salt at \$42.00 per ton is \$4485.

Responding to Councilman Schulz, Mrs. Kovalchik stated the salt would be directly delivered to Kirtland or any other location where there is an agreement; the cost includes the shipment costs.

Councilman Lesnick inquired if the salt purchased from ODOT will be reduced by 10 percent. Mr. Fornaro stated it depends on the cost of the salt from ODOT.

Noting that Councilman Schulz had inquired about cyber-security, Mrs. Kovalchik advised that the City added cyber-insurance to the policy in 2021. Additionally, a third party network has been eliminated from the VPN procedures, and the Community Center has added a firewall so that individual VPN accounts and associated credentials no longer reside on the local personal computers. She stated all servers and associated data were moved into a secured data center. She stated that once the servers were moved locally, it provided the ability to eliminate more individual VPN connections at the Police Department, Fire Department and Public Works. Mrs. Kovalchik stated the City is in the process of upgrading all its active directories to Windows Server 2019. She stated that Fairsite IT is also working on the multi-factor authentications, which she prefers when logging into a VPN, which is another insulating factor relating to access to the systems.

Mrs. Kovalchik stated that she will be looking to renew the BAN, noting that the process with OMAP begins next week, and that will be coming before Council.

Mr. Schulz inquired about the issuance cost of the BAN and the legal fees. Mrs. Kovalchik stated she sent the paperwork from the sale, and she was waiting for the invoice from the bond counsel. Once she has all those facets, she will put the information on a spreadsheet for Council.

There was no further discussion, and Mr. Lesnick moved to adjourn, with the second by Mr. Smolic. The work session meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

President of Council

Clerk of Council