

New Philadelphia City Council

Finance Committee

Meeting Notes

November 28, 2016 – 6:30 p.m.

Present for all or portions of the meeting were the following: committee chairman Darrin Lautenschleger and committee members Rob Maurer and John Zucal; committee alternate Dean Holland; Councilmembers Cheryl Ramos and Kelly Ricklic; Council President Sam Hitchcock; Clerk of Council Julie Courtright; Service Director Ron McAbier; Auditor Beth Gundy; City Law Director Marvin Fete; Safety Director Greg Popham; City Treasurer Tom Gerber; City Fire Chief Jim Parrish; Shyanne Carroll of WJER Radio; Alex Knisely of The Times-Reporter and Julie Levenson Stephon of the New Philadelphia Business & Community Association.

ITEMS: Proposed Resolution 49-2016 and the 2017 proposed city budget.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION 49-2016: Chairman Lautenschleger said this piece of legislation is to “clean up” and include three non-bargaining positions (Director of Human Resources, Health Department Nurse and Health Department Sanitarian) for pay increases identical to those approved in Amended Resolution 34-2016. Due to the amendment offered by Mr. Maurer on the floor of Council prior to its passage, these three positions inadvertently were omitted from the approved legislation.

In follow-up discussion, several Council members expressed their concerns about procedure, the proper method of amending legislation on the floor during a regular meeting of Council and related issues. Mr. Fete reminded Council members that a motion to table legislation also is afforded to Council members who may be concerned about amendments offered during session.

ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Zucal, seconded by Mr. Maurer, the Committee voted 3-0 to recommend to City Council that Proposed Resolution 49-2016 be added to the agenda for first reading at tonight’s regular session of City Council, that the rules be suspended on this legislation, and that the legislation be approved on first reading.

PROPOSED 2017 CITY BUDGET: Chairman Lautenschleger reminded committee members that Mayor Day had suggested and Auditor Gundy has prepared the first draft of the 2017 budget with a goal of adoption prior to Dec. 31, 2016.

Ms. Gundy reported that a few minor updates will be prepared and distributed in the draft budget and that she plans to update the multi-year projections for the budget prior to the end of this year.

In response to a request for details about major projects, Mayor Day said that the Rt. 416 paving project and the headworks improvement project at the city wastewater management plant rank as the two primary projects. The remainder of the budget is a “maintenance budget” to maintain current services at normal levels. No major staffing changes – additional positions or elimination of positions – are planned, the mayor added.

Mr. Zucal suggested that a master plan for infrastructure maintenance, improvements and long-range planning should be considered for development and implementation by the city.

In response to questions from Mrs. Ramos about the projections showing potentially negative balances in 2018 and beyond, Ms. Gundy said that the projections she has prepared are what can be considered “worst-case” scenarios. Ms. Gundy said she has prepared the projections based on lower-than-anticipated revenues and higher-than-anticipated expenditures in order for the administration and managers to determine priorities and plan for changes that would need to be made if these scenarios do develop. “We normally spend about 80 percent of what is appropriated,” Ms. Gundy said.

The committee scheduled its next budget review meeting on Monday, Dec. 12, from 6 to 7 p.m. to begin the line-by-line review of the draft budget.

With no further business to be discussed by the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Darrin Lautenschleger
Chairman