

BRATENAHL VILLAGE
411 BRATENAHL ROAD
BRATENAHL, OHIO 44108
(216) 383-0468

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM

JUNE 16, 2021
5:30 p.m.

MAYOR JOHN LICASTRO
JAMES PUFFENBERGER, CHAIR
JOYCE BURKE-JONES
TOM McDONALD

DAVID J. MATTY, ESQ.
NANCY L. MOLNAR, RPR, CLR

3

1 Finance meeting, given that we had a special
2 meeting last week that lasted, what was that, two
3 and a half hours, or whatever it was, and covered
4 a lot of material. Some of that we'll discuss
17:34:57 5 again this evening.
6 But our first resolution is the
7 alternative tax budget for fiscal year 2022.
8 This is essentially boilerplate. We do this
9 every year. It's something we have to do in lieu
17:35:13 10 of adopting a tax budget per the county
11 requirements. All of the information relative to
12 this tax budget is included in your sheets. And
13 if there are any questions on this, we should
14 entertain them now. I'll rotate this so it's
17:35:34 15 readable.
16 Are there any questions relative to any
17 of this information?
18 MS. BURKE-JONES: I don't believe so.
19 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Okay. We've had an
17:35:46 20 opportunity to review this. The committee has.
21 And I will entertain a motion to recommend
22 Resolution Number 1230 to Council for passage
23 this evening on an emergency basis.
24 MS. BURKE-JONES: I so move.
17:35:59 25 MR. McDONALD: So move.

2

1 MR. PUFFENBERGER: We have a complete
2 committee here, so I will call this regular
3 Finance Committee meeting to order. And we have
4 Josh here who will be calling the roll for us,
17:34:12 5 please.
6 MR. FRIEDMAN: Ms. Burke-Jones?
7 MS. BURKE-JONES: Here.
8 MR. FRIEDMAN: Mr. McDonald?
9 MR. McDONALD: Here.
17:34:12 10 MR. FRIEDMAN: Mr. Puffenberger?
11 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Here. We are all
12 here. First order of business is to approve our
13 May 19th regular Finance meeting minutes. Are
14 there any additions, addendums, et cetera?
17:34:33 15 MS. BURKE-JONES: No.
16 MR. PUFFENBERGER: I'll entertain a
17 motion to approve the minutes from the May 19th
18 Finance meeting.
19 MR. McDONALD: Move approval.
17:34:43 20 MR. BENJAMIN: Second.
21 MR. PUFFENBERGER: All in favor?
22 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
23 MR. McDONALD: Aye.
24 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Okay. So we have a
17:34:45 25 relatively short agenda here, at least for the

4

1 MS. BURKE-JONES: Second.
2 MR. McDONALD: Second.
3 MR. PUFFENBERGER: All in favor?
4 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
17:36:08 5 MR. McDONALD: Aye.
6 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Okay. That's easy.
7 The next one is one of the primary reasons we had
8 a special meeting last week, of course. This is
9 an ordinance authorizing an increased COLA. And
17:36:14 10 this is retroactive to January 1st of 2020 for
11 all current employees. This includes all
12 employees. The impact to the Village was worked
13 out by Diana. I worked through some of that
14 information just a short time ago on a phone call
17:36:33 15 with her. As we all know, she is out of town.
16 And the total impact for all of us to
17 consider is somewhere in the neighborhood of
18 \$111,000 for not only the retroactive pay, but
19 what it will cost us for the six months that
17:36:51 20 concludes 2021. As we discussed at the special
21 meeting, there were no COLAs for the year 2020.
22 And for the year 2021, it was recommended that we
23 not have COLAs at the beginning of the year as
24 well.
17:37:13 25 I'll just open this up for discussion

1 for the committee and any comments anyone may
2 have. First the committee, then I'll open it up
3 to the administrative personnel and the remainder
4 of Council.

17:37:27 5 MS. BURKE-JONES: I have a question, Mr.
6 Chairman.

7 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Sure.

8 MS. BURKE-JONES: I just wanted to
9 verify exactly where we were going to be taking
10 these dollars from, because we had talked about a
11 number of sources at our last meeting. And we
12 just really never verified exactly where these
13 dollars are going to be coming from. I would
14 like to confirm that.

17:37:52 15 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Okay. We don't have
16 Diana here to answer that question. She's the
17 most important person to do that or the most
18 pertinent, I should say, person to do that. I
19 know that it should not be taken from the capital

17:38:04 20 projects fund. That would be, of course, your
21 preference, of course. It should not be taken
22 from there, because we have capital projects that
23 still need to be done. It comes out of the
24 general fund. And some of this, I assume, we can
17:38:20 25 take from the restricted police fund as well.

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1 Mayor, can you comment on this?

2 MAYOR LICASTRO: That's correct. I
3 think this is for Council to determine where the
4 funds should be generated from. I think that
17:38:32 5 since most of this is police, we can take it from
6 the restricted funds and the rest we can take it
7 from here and there, but I think Council needs to
8 give our Fiscal Officer direction as to where to
9 take the funds from.

17:38:45 10 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Yeah, I would agree.
11 I made one comment based on Joyce's question that
12 we cannot, I don't think, afford to take anything
13 out of the capital projects funds or any of those
14 funds that were transferred from the capital
17:38:56 15 projects fund at this juncture. We can transfer
16 more, but I don't think that's a good idea.

17 We will be receiving some funds in
18 December from the Federal Government from what I
19 understand. I think that is a primary source, if
17:39:13 20 allowable, for these funds and is the primary
21 reason, I think, that the majority of us
22 discussed this on a rather positive basis last
23 Wednesday, because we will be getting Fed funds.

17:39:30 24 We'll be getting a tranche this year and a
25 tranche next year totaling somewhere -- oh, I've

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1 heard different numbers. And I know that, Mayor,
2 you sent out a sheet on this somewhere in the
3 \$230,000 range.

4 MAYOR LICASTRO: That's correct. That's
17:39:42 5 over a two-year period and two equal increments.

6 There's still some discussion for the General
7 Assembly perhaps diluting that fund by including
8 townships, which is kind of crazy, because what's
9 driving this discussion of the General Assembly,
10 one of the reasons they want to offer residents
11 refunds on where they file income tax is they
12 feel what local communities would lose they would
13 gain with Federal dollars.

14 Well, the Federal dollars might not be
17:40:13 15 as much as we anticipate, but I would think
16 they'll be more than enough to cover this
17 \$114,000 approximate. If there's not, as you
18 mentioned, we can take the remainder out of the
19 restricted fund.

17:40:29 20 MR. McDONALD: Can I ask a question
21 borne of ignorance because I have not been
22 involved very long. Is there a separate fund for
23 salaries for paying our employees?

24 MR. PUFFENBERGER: No. The employees
17:40:42 25 are paid out of the general fund with the

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1 exception of some items for the police, which
2 were put in a restricted fund based on a tax levy
3 from, what was that, two years ago, I believe.

4 MR. McDONALD: But that's not for
17:40:56 5 salaries?

6 MAYOR LICASTRO: It can be used, yes,
7 sir. So that can be used for expenses for police
8 and service, including salaries, equipment, et
9 cetera, et cetera. So that would be a primary
10 source along with the Federal funds as well.

11 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Yeah, and, of course,
12 those funds have to be used strictly for the
13 police increases. The increases for other
14 employees would have to come from other funds.

17:41:26 15 MR. McDONALD: Understood. But what I
16 was getting at is that a COLA, the Cost of Living
17 Adjustment, and that's kind of -- I was really
18 surprised to hear that you skipped a year, that
19 you didn't give a COLA for one year.

17:41:42 20 Was the Village in that really bad shape
21 that you couldn't do that, because what that says
22 is we pay you \$100 because we think that job is
23 worth \$100. And now cost of living goes up two
24 and a half percent, we're going to keep paying
17:41:58 25 you the \$100 and you're just going to go

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1 backwards on what you have to live on. The Cost
2 of Living Adjustment is really just trying to
3 keep people even. Am I missing something?

17:42:16 4 MAYOR LICASTRO: No. Look, Tom, there
5 was so much uncertainty last year with COVID, we
6 weren't certain what our funds would be. We saw
7 a diminishment. It was really a knee-jerk
8 reaction. And I think Council's willingness to
9 do this retroactively makes up and addresses the
10 concern you just had in your question.

17:42:31 11 MR. McDONALD: Okay. And what you're
12 telling me is it was an extraordinary event,
13 COVID, it was an extraordinary event and you
14 passed on it then, that's perfectly
17:42:45 15 understandable. Thank you.

16 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Yeah. And actually,
17 it was pretty extraordinary pre-COVID. There was
18 a lot of uncertainty before COVID in 2020, before
19 we ever heard of COVID. So we can't use that as
17:42:58 20 the reasoning for 2020, certainly. Certainly
21 2021 we can, but 2020, there was still a great
22 deal of uncertainty. We did put some
23 restrictions as I defined I think at the last
24 meeting on when we can give COLAs, if we can
17:43:18 25 afford it or we couldn't afford it and we didn't

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1 meet those tests because of the fiscal situation
2 of the Village at the time. Things are a little
3 bit more certain now and that's why we're opening
4 the discussion again.

17:43:32 5 MR. McDONALD: Very good.

6 MR. PUFFENBERGER: All right. So are
7 there any -- I mean, we need really need to
8 consider that there is still a little bit of
9 uncertainty, I think, but we feel a little bit
17:43:51 10 better about where we are in discussions both
11 public and private with our Fiscal Officer. We
12 are, in my view, in better shape than I thought
13 we would be, than I ever imagined we could
14 possibly be at this juncture this year.

17:44:08 15 Some of that is due to Federal funding
16 that we'll be receiving, and that is a primary
17 reason why we can go with this. It's kind of
18 interesting that the total outlay amounts to
19 about 111,000. And if, in fact, we get the total
17:44:26 20 230,000 in two tranches, our first tranche will
21 cover that with \$3,000 leftover. It's very, very
22 tight. So it's kind of interesting that it's
23 very close, coincidental perhaps, but that is,
24 you know, a primary driving force for this.

17:44:45 25 There was the possibility of a bonus

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1 earlier based on this and some other things
2 earlier in the year, but as I think I defined, at
3 least it's my opinion, COLA is a much, much
4 better thing for our employees than a bonus, a
17:45:01 5 one-time bonus, which only affects you once and
6 doesn't affect your career, what you make in your
7 career earnings. So this is a much better way
8 than any kind of a bonus program. And that's one
9 of the reasons why we did not entertain the bonus
10 program when it was offered a couple of months
11 ago. This is a much better way to go.

17:45:15 12 MAYOR LICASTRO: Jim, let me interject.
13 You mentioned how our revenue is healthier than
14 we anticipated. They've seen that at the state
17:45:29 15 level, as well. State revenue is much higher
16 than they predicted. It's reflected in the new
17 budget, which they're discussing in conference
18 committee the next few days, but I think all of
19 us, we couldn't anticipate the effects of COLA.

17:45:43 20 We were fearing the worst and hopefully so far
21 the worst has not happened. It's been better
22 than we hoped, but not only the local level, but
23 the state level as well.

17:45:55 24 MS. BURKE-JONES: That's good. Thank
25 you, John.

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1 MAYOR LICASTRO: It also affects the
2 local government distribution, which, as you
3 know, is not what it used to be. It's 35 or
4 \$40,000 a year, but that's affected by state
17:46:03 5 revenue. Right now I think we'll be increased
6 perhaps two percent, which is nothing, but it
7 could have been decreased as well.

8 MS. BURKE-JONES: Good.

9 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Not to complicate
17:46:15 10 this, but as we were having the discussion last
11 time, there was a discussion of -- and I think
12 this is pertinent to our discussion, but before
13 we vote and before we have any additional
14 comments, Mr. Matty brought up the idea of
17:46:31 15 assistants and the lack of assistants within our
16 Village.

17 And I'd like to pursue that simply
18 because it can have an impact long-term on us and
19 it can have an impact on our overall outlay if,
17:46:44 20 in fact, that is necessary. I've never had
21 anybody come to me and say they needed an
22 assistant. So I want to pursue that to see if,
23 in fact, any employees on the line would like to
24 comment on that if, in fact, that is a necessity
17:46:55 25 to be more efficient here. I open it up to any

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1 employees that are on the line.
 2 MAYOR LICASTRO: Would you like me to
 3 respond?
 4 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Yeah, failing any
 5 employees chiming in, yes.
 6 MAYOR LICASTRO: Any employee, please go
 7 first.
 8 Well, then let me chime in.
 9 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Okay. Go ahead.
 10 MAYOR LICASTRO: Look, we have a
 11 Building Department of one, we have a Finance
 12 Department of one. I don't have an assistant.
 13 We can all use assistants, but two things are a
 14 concern. First of all, is space. You know,
 15 we're cramped for space at Village Hall, which is
 16 why I came up with an epiphany last week about
 17 building new. So as much as there's a pressing
 18 need, thank goodness for Josh Friedman. Not all
 19 of you have met him. He's the one taking our
 20 roll call today. He's our legal aide, legal
 21 intern.
 22 His help on public records has been
 23 invaluable. Given the volume of public records
 24 we have, which at times is overwhelming, thank
 25 goodness he's on board, but he really took the
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1 last available spot. You know, we're practically
 2 sitting in each other's lap with proximity. Mr.
 3 Puffenberger, I think we need to discuss this
 4 going forward. We're not going to resolve it
 5 tonight, but with our present configuration space
 6 is a concern.
 7 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Yeah, and I get that.
 8 I get that. But it needs to be brought out,
 9 because it could have an impact on future outlays
 10 and also the efficiency with which we run our
 11 Village government.
 12 MAYOR LICASTRO: Gina Huffman, just sent
 13 a text or chat, whatever that is.
 14 MS. HUFFMAN: I've been relentless.
 15 MAYOR LICASTRO: She's recommended
 16 additional help using the intern program, which
 17 has worked out great with Josh. But, again, we
 18 need a place to put them and that right now is a
 19 limiting factor.
 20 MS. HUFFMAN: Can I chime in for a
 21 minute when you finish, Mayor?
 22 MAYOR LICASTRO: I was going to have
 23 Josh introduce himself. Josh, can you come on
 24 the screen and let everyone see your smiling
 25 face?

1 MR. FRIEDMAN: Yeah, can you guys see me
 2 all right?
 3 MR. PUFFENBERGER: We can. Hi, Josh.
 4 MR. FRIEDMAN: Hi. Great to be here.
 5 MAYOR LICASTRO: Josh, introduce
 6 yourself and give us a little bit of your
 7 background.
 8 MR. FRIEDMAN: So as the Mayor covered,
 9 my name is Josh Friedman. I'm going to be a 3 ^
 10 L at the Cleveland Marshall College of Law this
 11 upcoming fall. I'm the legal intern right now.
 12 I do a lot of helping with the public records and
 13 pretty much whatever else people need help with.
 14 MR. PUFFENBERGER: How many hours a week
 15 are you currently working, Josh, for us?
 16 MR. FRIEDMAN: It varies. Usually
 17 between 15 and 25 hours.
 18 MR. TAYLOR: Wow. How much is on public
 19 records request?
 20 MR. FRIEDMAN: Probably 80 percent of
 21 that. You know, a lot of it is redacting
 22 different files, finding the files, stuff like
 23 that. And then one other thing I'm working at is
 24 making a database of all our ordinances so in the
 25 future public records requests for ordinances and
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1 resolutions, all you have to do is type it in and
 2 everything will come up and kind of make it a
 3 little easier for whoever takes my place in the
 4 future.
 5 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you.
 6 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Okay. Well, thank
 7 you for being here, Josh.
 8 MR. FRIEDMAN: Glad to be here.
 9 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Did I hear Diana's
 10 voice?
 11 MS. KREINER: It was me, Julie.
 12 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Oh, Julie. You
 13 sounded like Diana for some reason.
 14 MS. KREINER: I was probably trying to
 15 get the dog out of the room. I just wanted to
 16 touch base a little bit, too, when you were
 17 asking input about assistants, that we don't have
 18 assistants. You know, we are -- I'll just take
 19 the court, for example. Angela has her own job
 20 duties and she does assist. She doesn't assist
 21 me with the court. She has her own, as an
 22 Assistant Deputy Clerk, she does other things
 23 other than helping me with court. She has her
 24 own specific job duties.
 25 And then on top of that, you know, for

1 the 20 some years that I've been there, we all
 2 take on multiple tasks. You know, we're a small
 3 administrative staff. And sometimes, though,
 4 it's not always better to have another assistant,
 5 someone who you have to then take the time to
 6 show what task you need done. And then like in
 7 our case, all our stuff, people have to have
 8 certain certifications. You know, certain things
 9 are not for -- like Josh can't help me with my
 10 court public record requests, because he's not
 11 privy to see. He can't see people's social
 12 security numbers or, you know, criminal history
 13 records. Things that someone like Angela, who is
 14 certified, or myself as a practitioner are
 15 allowed to see.

16 So in certain aspects of certain
 17 departments, another assistant isn't always, you
 18 know, beneficial. I can't necessarily -- I can
 19 tell you what I know that I've experienced over
 20 the last couple years. I think even Lt. LoBello
 21 can speak to that. I think the amount of time
 22 that an officer, you know, has to like do public
 23 record requests, and it's usually, you know,
 24 video or criminal stats, even though the term
 25 readily available seems to be something that

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1 people like to use when they want to ask for a
 2 request, the amount of time it takes for readily
 3 available and to redact and to be available is
 4 actually quite overwhelming sometimes.

5 So we have police officers that have to
 6 stay in the building and not out on the road to
 7 do that. So maybe that is a niche where you
 8 could look at providing assistants to the police
 9 department, you know, to allow the police
 10 officers to be out on the road, but yet get
 11 someone who may have that -- I don't know,
 12 Lieutenant, maybe you can help me out what I'm
 13 trying to say.

14 I can see a need being there for someone
 15 who necessarily wouldn't be taking officers off
 16 the road to do that type of clerical redacting
 17 work that is specialized. I guess that's kind of
 18 a synopsis of what I was thinking when you asked
 19 for input.

20 MAYOR LICASTRO: Let me jump in here.
 21 We want to keep Josh gainfully employed. He's
 22 become a key member of our staff. The young man
 23 is not going to be doing this forever. He's in
 24 law school. I would think the most pressing need
 25 we have is a full-time Public Records Officer

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1 given the burden Julie mentioned in her court
 2 with police and admin. We've got eight or nine
 3 or 10 working public record requests demands,
 4 call them what you will. I think that's probably
 5 the first thing we need, because that would help
 6 all departments. Again, the question, there's a
 7 question of space, but I think there's a pressing
 8 need for that once we lose Josh.

9 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Well it's worth
 10 having a discussion. That's why I brought it up
 11 as part of what we're talking about here, because
 12 if that's a pressing need, then it's something we
 13 need to look at. And I think it's pertinent that
 14 we have an HR professional on certainly later,
 15 because that's something we can probably discuss
 16 in how that can be structured.

17 I've talked before about governance
 18 models and structures and that kind of thing and
 19 perhaps that's something that would fit in very
 20 nicely. What Julie was talking about there seems
 21 like the most pressing need, as she said from her
 22 explanation. That seems very, very important.
 23 We don't want to take officers off the road.
 24 That's incredibly important. We just don't want
 25 to do that. So perhaps that's something we can

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1 talk about in more detail. We're not going to --
 2 as the Mayor said, we're not going to settle on
 3 that this evening, but I want to put it out there
 4 so we can begin thinking about what we really
 5 need to make everything more efficient.

6 I'm thinking, though, that some of this,
 7 and I know space is at a premium at the current
 8 place and that's why we're talking about
 9 alternatives, but I should think that much of
 10 this, and correct me if I'm wrong, I'm certainly
 11 not in Village Hall every day to see what
 12 happens, but could be done remotely, could be
 13 done from home or from a separate office. Julie
 14 is shaking her head no.

15 MAYOR LICASTRO: Josh, since you're
 16 hands on with this, why don't you address the
 17 feasibility of doing this remotely as opposed to
 18 in person.

19 MR. FRIEDMAN: There are some things
 20 that could be done remotely, at least
 21 specifically for me, I deal with a lot of
 22 physical records that need to be scanned in to be
 23 redacted and filed, so that would be tough, as
 24 would pulling certain ordinances from the big
 25 safe in the back, but then there are days where I

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1 could work from home maybe once or twice a week
2 would be possible when I've already kind of
3 scanned everything in to myself and work off the
4 documents I have on the computer.

17:56:34 5 MS. KREINER: Jim, I'm going to
6 piggyback on this. That's fine for certain
7 records, but records like court records, police
8 records, you know, those type things, you know,
9 we have -- you've all heard us talk about ^
17:56:52 10 LEADS, those type items never can leave a
11 building. And you actually have to be careful
12 where you're forwarding those on to. You only
13 have so many -- we can get sanctioned and lose
14 our LEADS certification if we, you know, on
17:57:06 15 certain records. Mostly police and a lot of
16 times with the court there are certain records
17 that just aren't physically allowed to leave the
18 building or they have to be redacted in a certain
19 way without personal identifier.

17:57:25 20 So I think administration-wise, I mean,
21 in other departments maybe, Building, Rec,
22 whatever, that's something that could be done
23 remotely, but as far as, like I say, I'm going to
24 speak for the court and only for the police
17:57:35 25 department, because I've worked with them and
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1 have helped them do a lot of public record
2 requests, you know, and I know the limitations
3 there, too.

17:57:47 4 MAYOR LICASTRO: Building, you're
5 talking about plans, you're talking about
6 permits. Certainly downloading all that stuff
7 electronically is a solution, we should also
8 think about. Maybe that's enough for today, Jim,
9 we have other stuff. Thank you for broaching it.

17:58:03 10 But certainly a public records officer. Again,
11 if it were not for Josh, we'd run out of there
12 screaming. He's been a major help to all of us.

17:58:14 13 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Diana, in my
14 conversation with her no more than a half hour
15 ago, was very complimentary of Josh as well. So
16 thank you, Josh, for doing that and making
17 everyone more efficient. I think a more
18 permanent solution down the road is worthy of
19 discussion.

17:58:27 20 MAYOR LICASTRO: I see his thumbs up on
21 his screen. I never saw that before. That's
22 cute, Josh.

17:58:40 23 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Unless, Josh, you
24 want to pass up your law career and come work for
25 us full-time. That will be a thumbs down.

1 MAYOR LICASTRO: Mr. Matty beware, in a
2 couple years -- I'm just joking.

17:59:00 3 MR. MATTY: Mayor, Josh has come a long
4 way. And actually, if Gina and we could figure
5 out space for a person with Gina's assistance, it
6 would be great to get someone in on the tail end
7 of Josh leaving so we could have Josh train
8 whoever comes in, because he has come a long way
9 and we have given him more responsibility. And
17:59:22 10 we will keep giving him more responsibility,
11 because he is doing an excellent job for the --
12 not only for the Village, but the law department.
13 So Gina, if you've got another person there in
14 the mill, send them our way and we'll see what we
17:59:42 15 can do.

16 I do have one question, Mayor, for
17 Julie. When she mentions certifications, Julie,
18 what type of certifications are needed to handle
19 your files?

17:59:54 20 MS. KREINER: Well, Mr. Matty,
21 particularly the court files, if they have LEADS,
22 printouts in them, what we have to do is we're
23 certified as practitioners to be allowed to view
24 these protected files. It's people's driving
18:00:18 25 record, but it has a lot of information on it.

1 And, you know, police officers have to get
2 certified in LEADS, so you're either a user -- I
3 can't remember the three types, but there's
4 users, something else and practitioners. I'm a
18:00:36 5 practitioner. I have certifications to look at
6 those files.

7 They're kind of -- because the court
8 falls under that they have to view those files,
9 prosecutors have to view them, I think LEADS has
18:00:53 10 a kind of tight control. Angela was actually TAC
11 officer for a while, so she can answer that.

12 MS. FERNANDES: In order to be LEADS
13 certified, you have to be in the law enforcement
14 capacity, which in terms is police, or you have
18:01:10 15 to be in the court capacity. You have to have
16 you're a practitioner or an officer or a
17 dispatcher. Leads will not allow anybody else to
18 have access. You have to take a test. They have
19 to come out and check your area. They have to
18:01:25 20 check your -- it's an audit. It's a lot more
21 involved than just signing up for a webinar, so
22 to speak.

23 It's a very involved process in order to
24 be LEADS certified. There's a lot of parameters
18:01:40 25 that you have to meet, so it's not an easy

1 process for just a civilian to get in and be
2 certified.

18:01:54 3 MR. MATTY: Angela, the reason I asked
4 that is if we have a prospective employee in the
5 future that Council and the Mayor would want to
6 assign to the Mayor's court, is this the kind of
7 certification that somebody could come work for
8 us part-time and go through that process, as an
9 example, as an employee clerk of an assistant
18:02:11 10 clerk of the court?

11 MS. FERNANDES: Yes, they would have to
12 be a sworn court official. Like I said, police
13 are all deputy clerks. And the police have to
14 have that access, too. So yes, in essence, if
18:02:28 15 they are sworn into the court in a court
16 capacity, they can be a part-time court personnel
17 and they can then in turn be certified as a
18 practitioner.

19 MAYOR LICASTRO: So, Dave, we would make
18:02:42 20 this Public Records Officer a deputy clerk.

21 MR. MATTY: Thank you.

22 MS. KREINER: But I want to put a caveat
23 in there. I think that's how it used to be. And
24 I just, you know, Angela and I have talked about
18:02:57 25 this, too. We've not ever added another Deputy
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1 Clerk. We do officers, but not in our court.
2 And we would have to get permission from LEADS to
3 allow us to bring someone else, you know, they
4 would have to give us the okay to move forward
18:03:16 5 with that.

6 So I just want to say we speak to it
7 thinking we could do it, but we would have to get
8 a confirmation that that would be allowed.

9 LT. LOBELLO: I'm sorry, Jim, real
18:03:29 10 quick, I think the path of the least resistance
11 of this would be if we were to bring somebody on,
12 they have to be brought on and sworn in under the
13 umbrella of the police department as a civilian
14 records clerk within the police department
18:03:40 15 subject to the police department's policies
16 regarding protected information through LEADS.

17 I'm not saying they would only work for
18 the police department, but they would be titled
19 as a civilian police department records clerk.
18:03:53 20 And like I said, that way our policies would be
21 in place over them, which would assist us in
22 getting LEADS permission.

23 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Okay. Thank you for
24 that. I think we've discussed enough for this
18:04:10 25 evening. I did want to open that discussion. I
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1 think we all learned a little something here.
2 And it's worth continuing this discussion as we
3 go forward so that we can work as efficiently as
4 possible in Village Hall, wherever that will be
18:04:21 5 in the future. Thank you all for your input. I
6 appreciate that.

7 I'd like to see if anybody else on
8 Council, I'll open this up to all of Council to
9 make any comments or ask any questions concerning
18:04:34 10 this Ordinance Number 4107 that's in front of you
11 now.

12 MR. TAYLOR: Jim, this is Rod, I have
13 two questions open to anybody. But number one,
14 how has this going to be received by employees
18:04:45 15 of Bratenahl; and number two, what was the actual
16 inflation figures for the Midwest territory
17 during those two years?

18 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Okay. I can only
19 answer the second. I've not heard from anyone,
18:04:59 20 but I can make certain assumptions. And I don't
21 think I probably have to address that first
22 question. But I'll open it up to employees who
23 want to say anything they want to say.

24 In October of 2020, which is the cutoff
18:05:14 25 we put in the original framework for how we
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1 determine COLAs, it was 1.6 percent. Through
2 this year, it's a little bit higher than that.
3 We only have data through the month of May, and
4 it's somewhere in the 2.3 percent range.

18:05:33 5 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. Lt. LoBello,
6 how about you, any comments from your officers?

7 LT. LOBELLO: I've not spoken to every
8 officer since the meeting last week, but every
9 officer with whom I've spoken has been thrilled
18:05:51 10 and grateful.

11 MR. TAYLOR: Good. Good.

12 MAYOR LICASTRO: Speaking for the other
13 employees, those are the two operative words,
14 thrilled and grateful. We had an increase in
18:06:02 15 healthcare, so this helps bring them even. Cost
16 of living is just that. And I think the 2.5 for
17 each of the years retroactively is fair.

18 MR. PUFFENBERGER: I do need to make a
19 comment about the numbers. Rod just asked what
18:06:15 20 the numbers were. And obviously 2.5 is higher
21 than any of those cost of living increases
22 regionally in the Midwest, because that's where I
23 get my numbers. They divide it up, the
24 Department of Labor Statistic divides things up
18:06:33 25 by regions. It's very, very different in
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1 different parts of the country, as you know. 1.8
2 and 2.3 doesn't add up to five. However, we do
3 anticipate an inflationary period. That's not a
4 good thing in some areas. So from an employment
5 standpoint, from a salary standpoint, that is not
6 a good thing. We already have experienced
7 increase in building costs and an increase in gas
8 prices. Oh my gosh. That's a big one.

9 So, and that's one of the reasons why
10 this is being considered at a higher level. And
11 I think that the residents on the line who are
12 actually paying for this, those who have to pony
13 up to pay for this, are the ones that need to
14 hear that, so there is an explanation. Are there
15 any other comments?

16 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you.

17 MR. BENJAMIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 I do want to say that I support the two and a
19 half percent for both years as a cost of living
20 increase. I hope that our employees understand
21 that we're able to do this this year because of
22 our unique situation, especially getting Federal
23 dollars last year and getting stimulus dollars
24 for each of the next two years, we hope, will

25 offset any losses that we may have in terms of
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1 revenue from property taxes or income taxes, so I
2 hope we don't. I hope it continues to go up.

3 As many of you know, I do work for
4 another city. And the city I work for, we've
5 been getting two percent across the board for
6 several years. And this year we anticipate it's
7 going to be two percent and two percent for the
8 next two or three years. Many of the communities
9 around us are between one and a half and two.

10 Some are at two and a half. Mayfield Heights got
11 two and a half. So Bratenahl is at the higher
12 end of that. And I just want to make sure that
13 employees and that members of the public are
14 educated on where we're at in Northeast Ohio.

15 Having said that, I'm in support of all
16 of this. I am concerned about our finances.
17 When we met last week, we talked about our notes
18 and our bond issuance. And the fact that in a
19 couple years we're going to have to pay -- I
20 believe it was around \$125,000 a year to begin
21 paying off the garage, the new garage, which was
22 needed, absolutely, but we're going to have to
23 figure out a way to pay that.

24 And without additional revenue coming in
25 that we used to get from the big dig, I'm

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1 concerned about how we're going to continue to
2 pay for increases, continue to improve services
3 to residents. At the end of the day, they're the
4 ones who are paying the taxes that enable us to
5 provide these services. And as we all know,
6 we've got big decisions to make on facilities and
7 what we're going to be doing there and that
8 certainly will cost us.

9 So sorry for being longwinded. I know
10 we're short on time already, but again, I will
11 support this tonight. Thank you.

12 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Anyone else?

13 MS. HUFFMAN: I just wanted to comment.

14 I plan to support it as well, but I share the
15 sentiments of Councilman Benjamin in light of
16 what we're looking at in our future. And so as
17 we all know, it's going to be some sacrifice.
18 We're surely probably not going to be able to
19 revisit this kind of consideration for salary
20 increases in a long time. We have a lot coming.

21 And I just want us to be in a place
22 right now, if this is going to be satisfactory
23 for now, just knowing that in two or three or
24 maybe even four years when all that's coming at
25 us, we may not be able to do anything other than

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1 what we're doing now.

2 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Thank you. I
3 appreciate that. Anyone else on Council? Okay.
4 I think we should. I mean, we want to take care
5 of our employees and that's why we're discussing
6 this. And we have to consider this isn't because
7 of COVID. When you look at healthcare workers,
8 for example, I had this discussion with a couple
9 of you here recently. Every physician, frontline
10 healthcare workers, physicians at University
11 Hospitals got a 10 percent cut in their salary
12 last year. 10 percent cut. My wife, a physician
13 assistant at the Cleveland Clinic got no increase
14 at all last year. Not everybody is getting
15 increases. So I think we should consider this
16 pretty extraordinary.

17 We don't know, as both Councilman
18 Huffman and Benjamin said, that we'll be able to
19 do this or match this in years to come, but given
20 that we want to take care of our employees now
21 and we expect an inflationary period to come here
22 in the last six months of this year, at least I
23 do from all indications, this is the right thing
24 to do in my view.

25 Any other comments, questions, issues?

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1 Okay. I'll accept a motion from a Finance
2 Committee member.

3 MS. BURKE-JONES: I so move.

4 MR. PUFFENBERGER: I didn't define the
5 motion. I just wanted whoever is out there to
6 make the motion.

7 MS. BURKE-JONES: Yes. Go ahead, Tom.

8 MR. McDONALD: I'm confused. We voted
9 on this Wednesday. We're going to vote on it in
10 the Council meeting. Do we vote on this in this
11 committee meeting again?

12 MR. MATTY: Yes.

13 MR. PUFFENBERGER: No, we only made a
14 motion last week to create legislation. Now what
15 we're doing, and I know it's kind of a long
16 process, but it's what we have to do. Now what
17 we're doing is making a motion to recommend that
18 Council pass it. That's what the committee's
19 responsibility is, to review a piece of

20 legislation and make a recommendation, thumbs up
21 or thumbs down to Council on whether they should
22 pass it.

23 Last week we didn't have the legislation
24 yet. Now the legislation is created and we need

25 to make a motion on whether we're going to
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1 funds would be July 9th. Given where we are with
2 that, I should say that all of the funds for the
3 police should come from that restricted fund and
4 all of the remaining funds should come from the
5 general fund, if that defines it well enough,
6 that makes sense.

7 MR. MATTY: That's excellent, Mr.

8 Chairman. That's excellent.

9 MS. BURKE-JONES: And so I so move that
10 recommendation.

11 MR. McDONALD: Second.

12 MR. PUFFENBERGER: All in favor?

13 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.

14 MR. McDONALD: Aye.

15 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Good enough. We are
16 recommending Ordinance Number 4107, with some
17 additional language, of course, as amended, that
18 Council pass that this evening on an emergency
19 basis. The original pay date for backpay will be
20 the 9th of July as I understand it. Okay. There
21 we are.

22 Last item on our agenda here is our pay
23 claims. I had conversation with the Mayor
24 earlier about pay claims. I also had a

25 conversation with Diana prior to this meeting
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1 recommend it to Council to pass.

2 MR. McDONALD: Recommendation to
3 approve.

4 MR. MATTY: Mr. Chairman?

5 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Matty.

6 MR. MATTY: If you would, whatever the
7 committee thinks the fund should be where the
8 money should come from, please include that in
9 the motion so our Fiscal Officer doesn't have an
10 issue of where to take the money from.

11 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Okay. Well, showing
12 specific amounts and given the fact that this is
13 coming from more than one account, that's a
14 little bit difficult to do at this juncture.

15 What I would recommend is that we say that it
16 does not come from, as we talked about earlier,
17 from any capital projects fund.

18 The majority come from the general fund,
19 which is where the monies that we're going to get
20 from the Federal Government are going to be
21 deposited as I understand. And any remainder
22 certainly should come from the restricted police
23 fund. I think probably we should say given
24 sufficient funds at the time that this happens
25 and the pay date for this for the retroactive

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1 about pay claims. This is a rather benign one.

2 Another fairly, fairly small one. They've been
3 getting very small. A couple of the things I'd
4 like to cover to anticipate some of the

5 questions. Under Public Safety, there's an
6 amount for housing of \$3,267.12. That covers us
7 for 18 months. That's year-to-date and all of
8 last year, because we just got billing for that
9 for the last year, if there's any question about
10 that.

11 I also asked about the \$5,500 that we
12 have already paid as a deposit for our fireworks.
13 Given we're not going to have 4th of July
14 fireworks, it is a refundable amount, but the
15 Recreation Committee has recommended a Bratenahl
16 Day, I believe is what they're recommending it be
17 called, and to have fireworks on that day. So
18 we're not going to be asking for that \$5,500 back
19 in the event that we use it at that time. And I
20 believe, Mr. Mayor, you said that because we're
21 having it that day and not on the 4th of July
22 weekend, we'll be getting some level of discount
23 as well.

24 MAYOR LICASTRO: Yeah, so the amount
25 will be reduced to 7,000. It will be a pared

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1 down display. Everyone will get a postcard.
 2 It's going to be like a pie baking contest and
 3 kind of like old school, but yeah, we'll have
 4 fireworks on the 21st of August with the 22nd as
 18:17:09 5 the rain date. Details to follow.
 6 MS. BURKE-JONES: Wonderful.
 7 MR. PUFFENBERGER: I think that will be
 8 nice for the Village. And we should all feel
 9 comfortable with being out by then hopefully.
 18:17:21 10 Under the Recreation, the tennis courts were
 11 resurfaced in an amount of \$18,075. I mentioned
 12 this in an e-mail to Sue, and I don't know who I
 13 copied on this. I don't remember who I copied,
 14 who is on that distribution, but I mentioned
 18:17:35 15 being a tennis player, I'm very appreciative of
 16 this. They look fantastic. They really look
 17 good. And they sorely needed to be done and it's
 18 a good thing for our community. So I think that
 19 was a good dollar or two spent.
 18:17:50 20 Are there any other questions or issues
 21 concerning pay claims? Okay. That being the
 22 case, I'll entertain a motion to recommend
 23 Ordinance Number 4108 be passed by Council this
 24 evening on an emergency basis.
 18:18:08 25 MR. McDONALD: So move.
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1 MS. BURKE-JONES: Second.
 2 MR. PUFFENBERGER: All in favor?
 3 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 4 MR. McDONALD: Aye.
 18:18:13 5 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Okay. All right.
 6 Now, that does conclude the agenda. I just want
 7 to make mention of this. I had a discussion
 8 about this also today. We did anticipate that we
 9 would have legislation relative to the transfer
 18:18:28 10 of funds from the recreation fund to the general
 11 fund for very specific purposes that I don't
 12 think I need to detail again, because we talked
 13 about those ad nauseam in several meetings over
 14 the past year. That legislation has not been
 18:18:41 15 prepared yet. And Diana is in the process of
 16 preparing that, so we simply won't be reviewing
 17 that this evening if anybody has any questions
 18 about that.
 19 Okay. I'll open that up for any issues
 18:18:53 20 or questions from anybody first on Council.
 21 None there. I'll open it up for a few
 22 questions from the public. We're running behind,
 23 so if you would please do us the courtesy of
 24 limiting your questions, I would appreciate that.
 18:19:11 25 MS. MEADE: Hi, Jim, it's Pay. I have a
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1 question.
 2 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Sure.
 3 MS. MEADE: On the professional service
 4 invoices in the past, and I think for this month,
 18:19:20 5 for example, when it comes to lawsuit expenses,
 6 certain people's names get highlighted with the
 7 lawsuit, but I noticed the cost for the police
 8 sexual harassment lawsuit does not get line item.
 9 So could we find out what the cost is to
 18:19:39 10 date on the police sexual harassment lawsuit?
 11 MR. PUFFENBERGER: I don't have that
 12 information in front of me as I sit here.
 13 MS. MEADE: Mr. Matty's on the call or
 14 the Mayor, could someone give a rough ballpark?
 18:19:52 15 MAYOR LICASTRO: We're not going to do
 16 that off the cuff, Ms. Meade.
 17 MS. MEADE: Is it over 100 grand?
 18 MAYOR LICASTRO: We're not going to do
 19 it off the cuff. We need to come up with
 18:20:02 20 specifics for your question and we can't do that
 21 in a casual manner.
 22 MS. MEADE: When could I expect a
 23 specific answer then?
 24 MAYOR LICASTRO: I don't know. We'll
 18:20:11 25 have to get back to you.
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1 MS. MEADE: That was it, Jim. Thank
 2 you.
 3 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Thank you, Pat.
 4 Anyone else?
 18:20:20 5 LT. LOBELLO: Jim, may I?
 6 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Yes.
 7 LT. LOBELLO: Briefly I want to thank
 8 you, the members of Finance, the members of
 9 Council for your hard work in getting that
 18:20:31 10 resolution passed on behalf of all the employees,
 11 so thank you.
 12 MAYOR LICASTRO: Well, Chuck, they
 13 haven't passed it yet.
 14 LT. LOBELLO: Pledging to.
 18:20:39 15 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Just recommending it.
 16 MAYOR LICASTRO: Let's hope.
 17 MR. PUFFENBERGER: I think based on the
 18 Finance Committee's recommendation, there's three
 19 votes. We need five to do it tonight and four to
 18:20:50 20 pass it, so I think we're pretty close.
 21 LT. LOBELLO: Thank you in advance.
 22 MR. PUFFENBERGER: All right. Anyone
 23 else? That being the case, I'll entertain a
 24 motion to adjourn the Finance meeting this
 18:21:05 25 evening.
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1 MS. BURKE-JONES: So move.
 2 MR. McDONALD: Second.
 3 MR. PUFFENBERGER: All in favor?
 4 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 5 MR. McDONALD: Aye.
 6 MR. PUFFENBERGER: We are adjourned.
 7 (Meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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 3
 4 I, Nancy L. Molnar, do hereby certify that
 5 as such Reporter I took down in Stenotypy all of
 6 the proceedings had in the foregoing transcript;
 7 that I have transcribed my said Stenotype notes
 8 into typewritten form as appears in the foregoing
 9 transcript; that said transcript is the complete
 10 form of the proceedings had in said cause and
 11 constitutes a true and correct transcript therein.

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Nancy L. Molnar
 Nancy L. Molnar, Notary Public
 within and for the State of Ohio

My commission expires July 15, 2023.

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