

Protection and License Committee

Chairman Infurna, Boisselle,
McAteer-Margolis, Brodeur, Forbes
Attending: Medeiros, Mortimer,
Seaboyer, Tramontozzi, Wright,
Conn
In attendance: City Auditor/CFO
Patrick Dello Russo, Fire Chief John
O'Brien, Health Director Ruth Clay;
Building Commissioner Paul
Johnson

Protection and License called to order by Chairman Infurna at 7:30 p.m. Alderman McAteer-Margolis motions to open Public Participation, 2nd by Alderman Boisselle. All in favor. No one comes forward. Alderman McAteer-Margolis motions to close Public Participation, 2nd by Alderman Boisselle. All in favor.

Order No. 09-076, TRANSFER Amount: \$53,750.00 From: A/C #019111-511010 – Pension, Contributory Retirement To: various accounts: Fire, Overtime; Health, Professional Services; as set forth herein.

Chairman Infurna says the Health Director is unable to attend tonight's meeting. Mr. Dello Russo says there is correspondence from Ms. Clay included in the order. Chairman Infurna reads Ms. Clay's memo into the record.

Alderman Brodeur moves to recommend, 2nd by Boisselle.

Alderman McAteer-Margolis asks if the motion to recommend is for the Health Department amount or the whole amount; Chairman Infurna says it is for the whole amount. Alderman McAteer-Margolis says she would like to hear from Chief O'Brien.

Chief O'Brien says he is requesting \$50,000 in overtime. Historically he runs out of overtime funds this time of year. This amount will get the department through to late February. Melrose's overtime costs compared to other departments the same size are miniscule; it's just the cost of doing business.

Alderman Seaboyer asks if taking funds from the Pension Contributory Retirement account is wise, and why this account is being used. Mr. Dello Russo says the Board of Aldermen voted to appropriate \$5.1 million for this account for FY09. The Retirement Board has since voted to amend the funding schedule giving the City more time to buy down the obligation and making more funds available for other uses. The amended appropriation amount is \$4.6 million. It is prudent to use this fund because the money is not crossing fiscal years and it is being used to fund a current expense. The bulk of the remaining dollars in the Pension account will be transferred to the snow and ice deficit so those dollars won't have to be raised in FY10.

Alderman Medeiros says that extending the payback schedule gives the City more cash this year but asks where it leaves the City in the future. Mr. Dello Russo says the Retirement Board voted to extend it two additional years, to 2024. The State authorizes the City to go to 2028, which leaves Melrose room to extend it further if necessary. If returns on investments aren't coming in, the responsibility to fund the obligation falls on

the taxpayers. The market is expected to correct itself and the money isn't there to fund the obligation without cutting services left and right. He says everyone has to be cognizant and not put the City in harm's way if they don't have to; there remains room to extend the schedule to 2028. Alderman Medeiros asks Mr. Dello Russo if he doesn't see a bottleneck in 5, 10, 15, or 20 years where the City doesn't have the funds to pay retirees. Mr. Dello Russo says no; the first bill to be paid is the retiree obligation. Alderman Medeiros says the City is ahead of the 2028 deadline issued by the state.

President Conn asks Chief O'Brien how much he expects to need for overtime for the rest of the fiscal year. Chief O'Brien says funds are usually appropriated in blocks of \$50,000. He'll ask for another appropriation in late February or early March which will get the department almost to the end of the fiscal year. President Conn says there are two numbers that are inaccurate in the budget: Snow & Ice and Fire Overtime; he'd like to see real numbers in the budget. He asks Mr. Dello Russo the amount remaining in Free Cash; Mr. Dello Russo says that after tonight's orders the balance is \$928,672.81. President Conn asks if he will try to hang onto it to the extent that he can in the event it is needed later this year. Mr. Dello Russo says yes; it would be good to put \$350,000 into the Capital Stabilization Fund but funding may be needed for more urgent matters.

Alderman Boisselle asks if Ms. Clay could come forward seeing that she has arrived. He asks her about the contract the City has with the National Wildlife Service. Ms. Clay says it is a three-part program that will hopefully reduce the number of geese. The eggs are oiled to prevent them from hatching, the use of pyrotechnics to disrupt them, and a limited roundup of them.

Alderman Brodeur says the funding schedule was created because cities and towns were ignoring the obligation. The State forced cities and towns to do so. The funding depends so much on market performance; the schedule will have to be reworked if the market tanks.

Alderman Mortimer asks about hiring a trained dog to control the geese. Ms. Clay says it is very expensive.

Alderman Wright asks if a different flock of geese will replace those geese that are captured and those that don't hatch. Ms. Clay says there's a combination of issues but there's no static population; it keeps growing and growing.

On the motion to recommend, All in favor.

Order No. 09-077, TRANSFER Amount: \$1,875.00 From: various Inspectional Services/Wire Accts To: A/C #012412-529020 - Insp. Svcs, Inspections \$1,200.00 and A/C #012451-513000 - Wire, Overtime \$675.00 as set forth herein.

Alderman Brodeur moves to recommend, 2nd by Alderman McAteer-Margolis.

Alderman McAteer-Margolis asks Mr. Johnson if the funds being transferred from seminars and schooling are not needed or if he has decided not to participate. Mr. Johnson says it's a combination of the two. Alderman McAteer-Margolis asks if more inspections are being performed than were expected. Mr. Johnson says the funds are for replacement inspectors to cover employees when they're out.

Alderman Brodeur asks if there's been a slow down on permits. Mr. Johnson says no; his department has issued 100 per month since July. Alderman Brodeur asks if the same types of work are being done as in past years; Mr. Johnson says it's the same value range.

Alderman Forbes asks if the Wire overtime is for inspections at Oak Grove; Mr. Johnson says no. Alderman Forbes asks about the progress at Oak Grove. Mr. Johnson says the first building in Phase II will open in January 2009; it has 36 units. Alderman Forbes asks if a major project like that has drained the manpower in his department. Mr. Johnson says yes but scheduling inspections with them has worked out well.

President Conn asks who is being used as replacement inspectors. Mr. Johnson says Paul Marchand for wire, Kenny Rogers for plumbing, and Bob Aldenberg for the Building Commissioner.

Alderman Wright asks if the replacement inspectors have to be certified; Mr. Johnson says yes, and they are.

On the motion to recommend, All in favor.

Order No. 09-079, APPROPRIATION Amount: \$1,602.00 From: A/C #84042-590000 - Contract Stabilization Fund, Transfer out To: A/C #012411-511000 - Inspectional Services, Salaries as set forth herein.

Alderman Brodeur moves to recommend, 2nd by McAteer-Margolis.

Alderman McAteer-Margolis asks what this transfer is for. Mr. Johnson says it's to fulfill contract obligations.

Alderman Tramontozzi asks the difference between the two orders. Mr. Johnson says one is funding salaries and the other in funding overtime. Alderman Tramontozzi asks if the replacements are used when full-time employees are sick. Mr. Johnson says either when they're sick or on vacation. Alderman Tramontozzi asks if the work can wait until the inspector comes back if it isn't an emergency. Mr. Johnson says inspections are put off whenever possible but people can't wait a week if they're without a kitchen or a bathroom.

Alderman Seaboyer asks if a job may continue if the inspector can't get to the jobsite; Mr. Johnson says no, the job is stopped.

On the motion to recommend, All in favor.

Alderman Brodeur motions to adjourn, 2nd by Alderman McAteer-Margolis. All in favor.

Protection and License adjourns at 8:10 p.m.

There are no orders in Health, Education and Welfare or Public Works to be acted on.

Committee Meeting Minutes
Aldermanic Chambers, Melrose City Hall

Thursday, 18 December 2008
7:30 p.m.

Maribeth Harrington
Clerk of Committees