

Finance Committee

March 6, 2023

6:00pm - City Hall Council Chambers

Chairman Ptak Called the Meeting to order at 6:00pm

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Ptak, Aldermen Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon

Excused Absence: Alderman Thompson

Others Present: Finance Director John Duncan, Deputy Clerk Brent Bader, Director of Public Works Patrick Watson, Fire Chief Jerry Janick, Alderman Bacidore, Alderman Reynolds, Economic Development Director Curt Bedei, Alderman Crane, City Treasurer Virginia Kochanowski, City Attorney James McPhedran (arrived at 6:14pm), Police Chief Mike Smudzinski (Arrived at 6:10p.m.).

A quorum was present.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to approve and place on file the minutes of the Finance Committee for February 21, 2023.

Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

No questions with bills.

Finance Director Duncan began the discussion of the Ferguson Proposal. He mentioned that this proposal is not inclusive of everything that will have to be purchased. It is a proposal to get the project started.

This proposal would be for 200 units, even though the city does need 4000. He wants the committee to take into consideration that all pricing might be subject to change next year. The current brand calls these units MTUs but the current client refers to them as MIUs. Once the 200 get approved, ordered, and arrive, the city would start making appointments to install those. Duncan also asked in addition to this proposal, for the council to give authority to hire a water labor employee and a wastewater labor employee. Once approved, the city would start the hiring process so the city could get the right people in, trained and dedicated to this project. The other items on this proposal are a R900 collector equipment and the MRX 920 mobile data. One of them is \$9,600 and the other is \$6,900. Those devices will be able to equip the laborers that are responding and installing these units to program them and put them in on site. In addition, they'll be able to use the R900 collector equipment to drive around and collect readings on the 200 new units. There would be the bigger ticket items to be purchased later: the Gateway R900, Ethernet, and also the four antennas for the towers.

Alderman Reynolds asked about how long the city has had the current ones. Alderman Crane stated that there were Neptune meters with the Neptune head put in around '06. The city does have Badger meters with RTR heads. The transmitting devices for those were also put in around '06-08.

Duncan stated that most of the bad MTUs are 12 to 15 years old, with some being close to 20 years.

Duncan stated that the city will also start to send out a mailer to the resident that has a bad MTUs. This mailer will have a detachable sheet for the resident to take their own meter read on a specific day or around a specific day. The resident will be able to return their meter read in a postage paid envelope or the drop box.

Duncan mentioned the first couple steps for this project will be getting the 200 MIUs in. While they wait for the antennas to be installed, they will have a worker driving and collecting reads from the new MIUS. The drive by read will not be a daily read. The daily and every 15-minute read coming into City Hall via an antenna will not come in until the city gets those installed.

Duncan believes that will take the city through this current year to get staffed trained and the 200 MIUs installed.

Chairman Ptak is concerned if this company is going to have inventory of the MIUs that the city does need.

Duncan stated that they assured the city that they will.

Alderman Lavieri asked if the new water and sewer laborers would be the two that would be the installers of this or just move into the city crew.

Duncan said that the city was not committing new hires to do this one task. The city will discuss with the current labor force what their interest would be with this project. Duncan assumed that Supt. Watson may want to establish some sort of rotation so that all staff learns how to do it.

Alderman Herndon asked if the city workers would receive training on the product and the installation of them.

Duncan stated that Neptune is the brand of the meter and they would send someone to the city to help with training. Some city laborers also suggested to Duncan to send some of them to the City of Rochelle, because they have gone through a process like this. The Laborers thought it would be beneficial to hear from the City of Rochelle of any tips and tricks that they have learned through this transition.

Duncan stated that the company did mention that changing an MTU out for an MIU would be about a 15-minute process. This time estimate will help when scheduling out appointments. Duncan suggested spacing out appointments to every 25-30 minutes. The city does plan on discussing a couple different scheduling options.

Chairman Ptak asked about the \$4,200 that was quoted for software. Duncan explained it by stating that the city buys the hardware and their software system. There is an annual software system fee of \$18,648. The city currently pays approx. \$20,000 for their software plan. Duncan believes that the city will have a couple of years where they will be paying software fees to both because they will be phasing some out from Aclara and some into Neptune. The city will only be charged the software fee for the MIUs that are connected, which is \$4.44 per MIU. There is a minimum charge however, if they don't get enough setup right away.

Alderman Jeppson asked about the lifespan of the new battery. Duncan mentioned that it should be about the same life span of 12-15 years. Duncan suggested having the conversation in 10-12 years about starting to replace these before they start failing or does the city let them reach their point of failure.

Duncan mentioned that if the city goes into a home with an old Badger meter, they will be replacing the meter along with the MIU at that point. Alderman Crane questioned if it would be feasible to put a rebuild kit in the Neptune meters that are only 10-20 years old. Duncan mentioned how the life expectancy was about 25 years on the Neptune meters. Crane is suggesting the rebuild kits, because the city is already in the home replacing the MTUs for an MIU.

Alderman Bacidore asked Duncan if he mentioned waiting till fall to install. Duncan stated that they would get them going now. It would be Fall before the city can get to the towers to install the antennas to get the electronic readings. Bacidore is concerned because this will be a lot of work for one individual. Duncan's intent is for the guys to start with two-man crews until all have learned the installation process. They would then go to a two one-man crew to continue the work.

Alderman Crane feels that it's important to have two people in a resident's home for liability reasons. Duncan spoke with Rochelle on this and they mentioned that they had one person going into each home and it was extremely easy. This gave the city the confidence to deal with one.

Alderman Lavieri asked Director of PW Watson to get a price on the rebuild kits for the Neptune meters.

Moved by Alderman Jeppson and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept the proposal from Ferguson Waterworks regarding the City's water billing process and software for \$148,227.53.

ROLL CALL

AYE: Chairman Ptak, Alderman Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Thompson **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

Chief Smudzinski mentioned having a 2017 squad with about 150,000 miles on it. The new purchase will come out of the drug fund. He received a state bid for \$39,400 in total, with the ordering of vinyl seats for the back. He will also be getting \$3,500 for the trade in. He did mention having one more added to the fleet by the end of the year and the fleet should be pretty good.

Chief mentioned picking up the car later in the week and sending it in for a new design and it will be ready to go in about one month.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Herndon to accept the bid for \$39,227 to purchase a 2023 Dodge Durango for the Police Department following a trade-in for \$3,500 on their 2017 Ford Interceptor.

ROLL CALL

AYE: Chairman Ptak, Alderman Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Thompson **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

Chief Smudzinski spoke about the Flock cameras and how they would be a “sense of security” for the city. He said that surrounding towns already have them, Peru, Oglesby, and Ottawa. He has worked with Brent Bader and the representative to figure out points in the area for these and have been discussing how many would be necessary. This camera system allows the city to know who is coming into their town. This system would be very beneficial to investigations also. It is able to read a license plate and then send it to every police car. Every square will be programmed with this system. He said that they are quoted out at \$2,500/camera. He has it narrowed down to six cameras and locations. He is not going to disclose the locations currently but there will be a camera at every entrance in town. There is a \$750 installation fee for three of the cameras, which are on state roads and \$250 installation fee for the other three. There is no contract with this company. Chief Smudzinski does plan on trying it out for two years. Information is kept on the system for 30 days and after that it is automatically deleted. Once the department is trained with this system, they will be able to go in and flag anything that they may need for an investigation or for the future to flag it and then it will not be automatically deleted. Another advantage that Chief Smudzinski mentioned was that if one is part of the Flock system, one can access any information all over Illinois or the United States. Smudzinski states that in Illinois alone, there are 191 agencies and 34,000 cameras nationwide. This will come out of the drug fund. Smudzinski mentioned that the only thing that may take some time will be the permits needed for these. The local permits will not take any time at all but the state permits will take three or four months. He also mentioned that this system is hooked up with NCIC leads, Silver, Amber, and SOS alerts.

Moved by Alderman Herndon and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to approve Chief Smudzinski's recommendation for a two-year contract with Flock Cameras for a camera system covering the city's major entrances.

ROLL CALL

AYE: Chairman Ptak, Alderman Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Thompson **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

There were no more questions or comments from the public.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to adjourn the meeting.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Chairman Ptak adjourned the meeting at 6:30pm

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Quinn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Amy" on the first line and "Quinn" on the second line, slightly overlapping.

Amy Quinn, City Clerk