

**BOROUGH OF LANSDALE
ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES
MEETING OF FEBRUARY 1, 2023**

Members Present:

Denton Burnell	Borough Council President
Carrie Hawkins-Charlton	Committee Chairman
Rachael Bollens	Borough Council Member
John Ernst	Borough Manager
Glenn Dickerson	Finance Director
Andy Krauss	Electric Superintendent/ Fleet Manager

Ms. Hawkins-Charlton called the meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee to order at 6:35pm.

1. Action of Minutes Previous Meetings

Motion Mr. Burnell to approve the minutes from the Admin and Finance Committee meeting on January 4, 2023, second Ms. Bollens. Motion carriers 3-0.

2. Committee Business Items

A. Annual Recycling Contract for FX Browne

Mr. Dickerson- FX Browne compiles data and submits for Act 101 on our behalf. The amount for 2021 is \$35k. We need to approve the contract w/ FX Browne and for the renewal.

Mr. Ernst- There is a \$6,600 cost of the contract which is up \$300 from last years and we net around \$30k.

Motion Ms. Bollens to approve the contract with FX Browne and for its renewal, second Ms. Hawkins-Charlton. Motion carries 3-0.

B. Hedwig House- request for ARPA funding request

Michelle(Hedwig House)- I have been with Hedwig House now for 18 plus years and we are located at 157S Broad St. We have also been in business since 1975.

We help people to be independent and assist with home, jobs, friends, groceries, paying bills, dealing with retirement and socialization which is a big piece. We help individuals and groups. We have

volunteers and staff and work on life skills. We have food first and supply meals and deliver food and have volunteers who make.

The pandemic increased the needs for the people we serve who are low income. The pricing of food makes things a real problem. We are not clinical providers but we support them and work with them to support on strategies to help. We are not funded by insurance and we are a resource as others.

We are asking for \$88k to fund us and included difference for the \$41k we asked for food first and got \$20k. We deliver 100 meals a week and support 200 people. We use our own transportation. We used to be a larger organization and had a large fleet of vans but we only have 3. We service all of Montgomery County and have location in Abington.

We get various amounts of money like from HUD, grants from Department of Human Services and Federal money. We have also asked for ARPA from elsewhere like from Montgomery County. We are going to show a little video here and if you feel to reach out, please come and visit.

C. Update on progress of Financial System implementation

Mr. Dickerson- On January 1st, we started with the implementation of software for Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable and Code. For Sewer, we are paralleling with the old system to the penny. The only thing holding is Electric billing and is the meter file in. CSV and we are moving forward with Honeywell and all converted and in new system. In that system, we will be getting away from paper and routing to departments and come back to us.

Ms. Bollens- What is the time line?

Mr. Dickerson- March 31st at the latest to get everything done and we hope by March 1st.

Mr. Burnell- Why is this going to be better?

Mr. Dickerson- One thing, there will be the electronic routing of invoices. Invoices may get lost and my end goal is a supply portal and to submit online. We should get there in a year.

In Sewer, we had accounts by meter # and now we use and Premis ID which we get from NPWA. It is another improvement there with that.

Mr. Ernst- It is also flexible with generating of reports?

Mr. Dickerson- Yes. You get everything and it goes into Excel, not like in Incode.

Ms. Bollens- How much to convert?

Mr. Dickerson- It is \$199k for all of the licensing and \$60k less a year. So, in 2 years, we will be saving. We have been working on add on to budgeting.

Mr. Dickerson- We can.

Mr. Burnell- Did anything change?

Mr. Dickerson- Not, just the date has changed.

Motion Ms. Bollens to update Resolution 2021-07- Equal Rights and Opportunities Policy.
Second Mr. Burnell. Motion carries 3-0.

3. Old Business

A. Revisit idea of eliminating Residential Electric Deposits

Mr. Dickerson- We did a survey and Andy and I see very few have for residential. There is a \$200 deposit in a rental and \$300 if there is electric heat. We deposit and track and hold, interest accrues and when they move out then we refund deposit. Quakertown has got rid of the deposits and we are basically playing landlord.

Mr. Ernst- Any number of times that we do in a month?

Mr. Dickerson- We do a lot and on a biweekly basis we do 20 to 30 checks for refunds. It is resource dependent to do this to collect, track and return.

Ms. Bollens- Are we losing money?

Mr. Dickerson- We are not losing, but the time for staff could be more valuable.

Mr. Ernst- How would this impact the landlord?

Mr. Dickerson- It doesn't and the deposit goes back to pay the bill.

Question from resident- How many do have this in house for electric? If the tenant skips out, is it on the landlord and shouldn't it go against the tenants credit report?

Mr. Dickerson- Portnoff does collections and they can collect on landlord behalf.

Ms. Hawkins- Charlton- If we want to move forward, what is the next step?

Mr. Dickerson- I want to figure out from the system how many times a landlord has been responsible.

Ms. Hawkin-Charlton- A few years ago, a resident came into us and said to run my credit, but others are poor and can't afford or have credit. We hold money and staff has to then track it.

Mr. Ernst- We could been 18 to 24 months.

Mr. Burnell- What is the extra burden for a landlord to collect extra deposit?

Ms. Hawkins-Charlton- I like to see what we can move forward.

Mr. Dickerson- Deposits if we do this go back to tenants and can do this 1 of 2 ways. We can issue a check or credit their electric bill.

Mr. Ernst- We should talk about this change and how to communicate.

Mr. Dickerson- I will check with landlords and Quakertown to see how they communicate.

Ms. Hawkins-Charlton- Any specific time?

Mr. Dickerson- It can happen any time of the year.

Mr. Krauss- I like to look at the whole ordinance because we have something with charging stations.

4. New Business

A. Online payment vendor replacement- Paymentus replacement discussion

Mr. Dickerson- Paymentus is our online vendor and pay \$13k to \$15k for processing or electronic payments and different charges for cards. I have more than one vendor and can save us 50% because we get “utility rate” which we don’t get with Paymentus. A new vendor will give us an image of the bill, all notices and log in and can pay both sewer and electric unlike now and don’t get images now.

Mr. Ernst- Regardless of the change, the Borough still pays for convenience. In the industry, the fee the Borough pays gets less and the bulk goes to the customer. The fee could be like \$.75 to us and \$3 to customer. There is still an underlying that we pay, but the customers don’t.

We could absorb the fee and way to pass that on to the customer. The Borough still bear some of it and Paymentus to charge \$3.50, but not at all. We can charge customers \$7 more, but save us 50% now by switching. We can’t get that rate if we try and pass that on.

Ms. Hawkins- Charlton- So we are going to absorb the fee?

Mr. Dickerson- Yes, it would still be cheaper. If it costs us and thus \$7, then why not.

Mr. Ernst- We can charge them \$7 and cost us \$4 or charge them \$3.50 and pay \$.75.

Mr. Dickerson- On screen, in November \$13, 018.30 and processed 8,800 bills. If we don’t charge the customer it is like \$6,600 and if we pass along the cost is \$9,217.42. If we don’t charge, then more people will adopt and more people will log in and pay and get all info and no postage and paper bills.

Mr. Ernst- This is industry-wide. If you pass the fee onto the customer, we pay the fee also.

Mr. Dickerson- If they set up this transaction.

Mr. Hawkins-Charlton- If more people sign up, this cost could be \$9k.

Mr. Van Dame- If people are coming in to counter to pay, this could add value.

Ms. Hawkins-Charlton- We can navigate to ask people to sign up.

Mr. Dickerson- Yes, they can do a mass email.

Mr. Burnell- We are paying \$13k per month.

Mr. Dickerson- Yes.

Mr. Burnell- On top of the \$150k, what are the residents paying, \$3?

Mr. Dickerson- Yes, \$3. It depends on the credit card and merchant fees and all figured out at the end of the month to get this total we are charging.

Resident - Question- What about people who don't have a computer?

Mr. Dickerson- People will still get the bill mailed and only turn off printing for these that want.

Mr. Ernst- I think what we thought are getting are not.

Mr. Dickerson- I started to get into charges and see that we can save \$.

Mr. Burnell- Yes, especially since charging customers \$3 also.

Mr. Dickerson- Charge based on # of transactions. This is 1 month, but we have to look at average, but this still costs us this like in November.

Resident- Question- Do they take cards?

Mr. Dickerson- Yes, they do. Plus Apple Pay and so on. We are trying to come up with cheaper solutions for what we have.

Mr. Ernst- Can we forward to them all financial reports from now to meeting.

Mr. Dickerson- We are pretty much ready to close 2022 and process this week and before Business meeting. It is estimate and what we get back from the auditors is adjustments to enter.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30.