

NOVEMBER 26, 2018, FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

4:30 p.m. Council Chamber. Members present: M. Hraban, M. Platteter, B. Stoneberg. Others present: A. Christianson 1 and 2, K. Ellwanger, K. Gorsegner, R. Grey, T. Verdegan.

Call to Order:

Committee Chair Platteter called the meeting to order and presided.

Lighthouse:

Mr. Platteter reported that, although Rusk County isn't able to use tax levy monies to assist Lighthouse homeless shelter, it was able to shift \$4,000 of State aid to this use to buy 195 bed nights for 2019. Mr. Platteter asked if the City might do likewise, noting the City has home rule powers such that it might have more power in this regard than the County.

Mr. Hraban commented on how that County arrangement was made.

Mrs. Stoneberg asked where the money would come from. No source has been identified.

Mr. Platteter noted that, if the City was able to find money in a few days to pay someone to jump out a plane with a flag for mere seconds, it ought to be able to find money to address something as serious as homelessness.

Adm. Christianson stated that he doesn't believe the City should enter into a whole new realm of public service meaning social services, which it has no staff expertise in, or history with, although M. Hraban has that background. He noted that, owing to levy limits that have been in place for years, some other costs would need to be cut to reallocate funds. Mr. Platteter countered that the City could apply monies from its operating reserve.

Adm. Christianson also noted that it is unfair for the City to be "double dipped" meaning that it is already contributing as part of the County. He went on to note that no other municipality (village or town) in the County has been asked to put in extra funds. It was then stated that 72% of the facility users are reported to be from the City. The Administrator replied that most ambulance responses are in the City as well, but that is because many rural dwellers move into the city when they are no longer to maintain or stay in their previous rural homes. They need to be in the City to gain better access to medical or other services, and may be living in nursing homes or other assisted living arrangements such as Care Partners, Lake Manor or Country Terrace. Because other locales lack these facilities, Ladysmith ends up with a concentration of folks with greater needs. The Administrator concluded by stating he will not place this item on a Council agenda for consideration without a directive from the Mayor or Council to do so.

When asked Mayor Christianson stated that he has mixed feelings on the subject.

Comptroller Verdegan expressed concern about revising the 2019 budget so soon after it was enacted, adding that this isn't the first time that has happened.

Monthly Invoices:

Motion was made by M. Hraban, seconded by Stoneberg and carried by voice vote to recommend Council approval of the monthly invoices.

Adjourn:

Upon motion by Stoneberg, which was seconded by Platteter and carried by voice vote the meeting was adjourned shortly after 5 p.m.