

CITY OF BURTON
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 22, 2013, 6:00 P.M., COUNCIL CHAMBERS
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The Special Council Meeting was called to order by President Tom Martinbianco at 6:03 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Martinbianco, , Smith, Wells, and O'Keefe

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ellenburg, Heffner and Haskins.

OTHERS PRESENT: G. Burke-Miller, Controller, S. Warren, Human Resource /
Labor Relations Director, Chief Halstead, D. Bingaman and J. Adams,
City Clerk.

**PURPOSE OF THE MEETING: Public Hearing for the Proposed 2013-2014 City of
Burton Budget.**

PRESENTATION: None.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: None.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

Mr. Martinbianco said it is fair to say we have already addressed some issues, especially when it comes to road improvements. He would like to see Center Rd. taken care of, as it is a great economic hub. It is a thoroughfare between Grand Blanc and the City of Flint and represents one of our life bloods. We have been fortunate that some of our businesses have been willing to locate there, mostly financial institutions in the most recent years. That alone should indicate there is value to that property.

Mr. O'Keefe said he respects Mr. Martinbianco's commentary on how many years they have been holding these and the lack of attendance by the community. You would think people would want to hear about their city. He had hoped there would be people present to add input on where they would like their money spent. It is pretty easy to say the City has a revenue problem, not an expense problem. The City has done an excellent job of cutting the corners that it needs too. Five years ago there were 105 employees and now there are 80 people. When you cut a workforce down like that you have people that are working harder than they ever have before. He hears about the roads all the time. Mr. Smith has taken a proactive stance as the Chairman of the Finance Committee. He was very happy about the water report and that there is a plan. He hopes the same will work out for the sewer system. Both systems are aging and deteriorating. The biggest concerns of the citizens are that they don't want cuts to Police and Fire. One of the biggest problems is the MERS pension program. When you have a shortfall of 22 million and it is going to jump to 25 million pretty soon, it is almost inconceivable. The Council and Administration need to put this issue on the front burner. He has had a handful of people come to him and say they cannot afford to do this. He said the people are valued City employees and hopes they don't seek employment elsewhere. They need to do it as a defensive measure to keep the good people that the City currently has. If they have something in writing from MERS he would like a copy.

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Mrs. Burke-Miller said she and others attended a meeting and were told that as of January 2013 they had dropped the percentage down to 50% funded level.

Mr. Martinbianco said there was a request by Mr. Smith to put that in writing, which has not been forthcoming.

Mrs. Burke-Miller said they can change the program for new hires to the defined contribution plan. The employees that are currently employed stay in the defined benefit plan.

Mr. O'Keefe said it is going to be interesting to find out what the ramifications of that will be.

Mrs. Burke-Miller said it is a long-term solution, as opposed to a short-term solution.

Mr. Martinbianco said this problem is facing other communities as well. MERS has been less than cooperative with much of the information that they should have already provided for us to make an informed decision going forward in future budget years.

Mr. Smith said he has asked for some timelines and does not believe the City has received anything. He has made this request to Plante & Moran, through Tadd Harburn. He doesn't know where to go next with this. He is hoping to hear more about it this evening. He would like to see Plante & Moran help the City with this. He is being told MERS is looking for the stock market to bail us out.

Mr. O'Keefe said he agrees with Councilman Smith. We have not seen any suggestions of solutions. He said they need to come up with a plan.

Mr. Martinbianco said the more employees that retire makes the problem exponentially greater. The City was almost at a balance of active employees versus retirees and it won't take too much more and that situation is upside down. Then you are asking 80 people to take care of 90 people. The solution has to come from the existing retirees. There needs to be something put into place to either reduce or control the pension levels.

Mr. Wells said it is sad there is no representation by the residents. He had a couple calls asking about it, including Mr. Shustock, who comes to all the meetings. He went to the website and there were lots of question marks. They are going to have to address the website, as it is not what they wanted or needed it to be at this point in time. All they can do is try their best and upgrade. He thinks they all have the same goal and heart for the City. No one wants to see it fail.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

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