

CITY OF BURTON
FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 15, 2009, 5:45 P.M., COUNCIL CHAMBERS
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The Finance Meeting was called to order by Chairman Steve Heffner at 5:55 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: S. Heffner, L. Tinnin, and P. Zelenko.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: D. Heidenberger, Assessor and G. Webster, City Clerk.

**PURPOSE OF THE MEETING: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS
CONCERNING THE FOLLOWING:**

**1. Resolution Establishing Fees for Registration of Abandoned
Structures RE: Ordinance 2009-5-91**

PRESENTATION:

Mrs. Heidenberger explained that Mike Butzke spoke with the City of Kalamazoo regarding the implementation of an abandoned building ordinance. She tried to contact Flint Township regarding this issue, however she had no response. Their abandoned building ordinance has been in place since September 2008. She stated that Flint Township was currently charging \$100.00 for violations. In addition, they do charge a registration fee, but is not sure how much. She has not polled other communities to see if they are registering abandoned homes.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

John Stapish, P.O. Box 190134, was opposed to charging a fee for registering abandoned homes.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Tinnin stated that the City employees are paid to do their job everyday. There should be a nominal fee that would cover the gas to go back and forth. She felt initially a \$50.00 fee was reasonable to start the program. Later, the fees could be re-evaluated if necessary.

Mrs. Zelenko said they had previously discussed that the fees should be \$75.00 for a half of year. However, she did not have a problem with an initial \$50.00 fee. She explained the importance of factoring and including wages in the fees.

Mrs. Tinnin suggested setting the fees at \$100.00 for a full year and \$50.00 for the remainder of this year.

Mr. Heffner pointed out that the \$100.00 rate would cause a shortfall.

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So far, Mrs. Heidenberger has only looked at current foreclosures, not rental properties. These homes have been vacant for an average of nine months before they were sold to a subsequent buyer. During the summer months there is more concerns with unmowed lawns, vagrants and children abusing these vacant properties. She suggested someone needed to check on these properties twice a month. They would check to make sure the lawns are mowed, the structures are boarded up or windows are not broken and that they are locked and secured. She is looking at vacant homes and foreclosures to distinguish between the properties that are owned by HUD, mortgage companies and individuals selling their homes.

Mrs. Zelenko suggested that they initially set the fee at \$50.00 and raise it to \$100.00 in January, and possibly more if it is needed.

Mrs. Heidenberger explained that this was going to be a trial and error situation since we haven't done it before. She emphasized the importance of not incurring any additional costs to the City and having the program pay for itself.

Attorney Austin stated that he could revise the ordinance. He clarified the distinction between residential, commercial and industrial property and between an initial and annual registration fee.

Mrs. Heidenberger stated that a commercial building should not cost any additional money.

Attorney Austin stated that since the commercial and industrial buildings are larger they might incur a greater cost.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Tinnin moved and Zelenko seconded the following motion:

1. The Finance Committee recommendation to Council to approve and authorize setting the registration fee and annual renewal fee for abandoned residential, commercial and industrial structures at \$50.00, with these established fees to be re-evaluated by the Finance Committee after January 1, 2010. This is to be referred to the Council at the Regular Council Meeting held on July 6, 2009.

Motion carried 3-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

ljj