

A meeting of all committees of the City of Gray, Georgia was held on Monday, December 19, 2022, in the conference room at City Hall located at 109 James Street

**Present:** Mayor Ed Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem James Collins, Council Members Terrell Fulford and Terry Favors, City Attorney John Newberry, Gray Fire Chief Keith Eisele, City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan, Public Works Manager Chris Neal, Main Street Director Ashley Roberson, City Clerk Cindy Yancey, and Assistant City Clerk Heather Brown.

**Guests:** Gray Volunteer Fire Dept, Robert Davidson, Debbie Lurie-Smith, *The Jones County News*,

Mayor Barbee called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

**Finance/Tax Committee:**

- Financial Update –  
76.16% of the 2022 property tax has been collected, leaving an unpaid balance of \$239,771.41

**Water/Sewer Committee:**

**Plan Committee:**

**Personnel Committee:**

- Executive session
  - Held until end of meeting

**Streets/Sanitation Committee:**

**City Property:**

**Public Safety Police/Fire:**

- Fire Chief Keith Eisele stated that he is looking to apply for two different grants, the AFG Grant and the SAFER grant for recruitment and retention. The AFG grant is the Assistance Firefighters Grant and is for equipment or apparatus. Fire Chief Eisele stated he is looking into apparatus replacement for the 1991 Pierce Aerial which is only 50ft and doesn't meet a lot of the needs we have here in the city. The cost of the aerial he is looking at is 1.1 to 1.2 million which is a 75ft aerial which will suffice for the needs they have and anything additional in the comprehensive plan. The matching cost they are looking at is 5% and the cost of the grant writer would be 3%.
- Councilman favors confirmed it would be a total of 8% for the city.
- Fire Chief Eisele confirmed that it would be a total of 8% out of the 1.1 to 1.2 million dollars. He stated that after research that is the cheapest, he can purchase an aerial.
- Mayor Barbee asked that with it being a bigger ladder will it fit in the current fire station. Mr. Eisele confirmed that they will build it to the specs you need so there will be no need for modifications to the current structure.
- Councilman Fulford asked what the value of the older truck is. Chief Eisele stated he would have to get it appraised and estimated it to be worth 30 - 40 thousand.
- Mayor Pro Tem Collins mentioned that it took a while to sell the last one. Chief Eisele confirmed it was older with a lot more issues but took almost 7 months to sell.
- Councilman Fulford asked if the equipment and everything needed would be included in the 1.1 million. Chief Eisele stated the cost of the apparatus would be \$1.1 million and the equipment would be an additional \$55-60 thousand dollars and be incorporated in with the grant.

- Mayor Pro Tem Collins stated that he knows the departments need for an Aerial but with the grant and the current cost abilities would it be feasible to get by with purchasing an engine. Fire Chief Eisele stated that the higher cost is going to be the aerial but stated it is older than the current engine and cost wise over a 5–10-year plan it would be better to replace the aerial. Mr. Collins stated that based on the figures shown now the cost would be roughly \$300,000.
- Chief Eisele stated that it is very hard to get these grants and the reason he recommends using a grant writer, Robert Davidson. Mr. Eisele introduced him to speak with council.
- Mr. Davidson stated that the truck that Chief Eisele is discussing also qualifies as a pumper. Mr. Davidson stated he started writing grants when he realized departments in Georgia were having trouble receiving grants. Mr. Davidson stated he normally charges 5% unless it exceeds 1 million, then he only charges 3%. Mr. Davidson spoke briefly about his history of writing grants and his success grant of being awarded. He offered to provide references.
- Councilman Fulford asked what the time is on the grant. Chief Eisele stated that the grant open in January, so they needed an answer tonight to be able to begin process online and have approval to apply for the grant. Mayor Pro Tem Collins stated if everyone is on the same page council will call a special council meeting for voting.
- Councilman Favors asked if the grant writer receives anything to write the grant. Mr. Davidson stated that he doesn't charge anything to write and submit the grant application. If the city was to receive the award, he would bill for the 3%.
- It was consensus of council to look over financials and then have a called meeting for voting if necessary.
- Chief Eisele stated that the second grant is the SAFER grant, this a 100 % funded grant in the past. This grant will offer around a \$25 training incentive for each training event a firefighter attends. Also, it would pay the instructors to teach the firefighter 1 class each year. The entire grant would be \$333,990 and the 3% grant write fee would be \$10,019. It is a four-year grant.
- Mayor Pro Tem Collins asked if he had that in his budget to cover that.
- It was consensus of council to add the SAFER Grant to the January council meeting for voting.

Mayor Pro Tem Collins made a motion, seconded by Councilman Favors, and unanimously voted to close the All Committees Meeting and go into Executive Session regarding personnel issues.

The All-Committees Meeting resumed.

**Miscellaneous:**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

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Assistant City Clerk