

CITY OF MERRILL
PERSONNEL & FINANCE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, July 26, 2022 - MINUTES
Regular Meeting City Hall Council Chambers 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Chairperson Michael Caylor, Alderperson LaDonna Fermanich, Chairperson Paul Russell was remote

Others Present: Alderpersons Mark Weix, Dick Lupton and Rick Blake, Mayor Hass, City Administrator Dave Johnson, Finance Director Kathy Unertl, City Clerk Anderson-Malm, City Attorney Tom Hayden, City Engineer Rod Akey, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator-Darin Pagel, Fire Chief Josh Klug, Library Director Jessica Zellers and Merrill Productions video operator

I. Call to Order – Chairperson Caylor called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

II. Vouchers – June

Alderperson Russell made a motion to approve the June vouchers. Alderperson Fermanich seconded and the motion carried.

III. Minutes from previous meeting:

A motion was made by Alderperson Fermanich to approve the June 28, 2022 minutes. Alderperson Russell seconded and the motion carried.

IV. Agenda Items for Consideration:

1. Re-define spending limit for non-capital purchases

Chair Caylor requested this be included on the agenda. Chair Caylor explained his understanding regarding this issue. Finance Director Unertl gave an explanation regarding budgeted items. Maintenance items would not be included in this issue. After further discussion, between all parties present, no action was taken.

2. Status review of 2021 Tax Settlement overview

Finance Director Unertl gave a report regarding the status of 2021 tax settlements. She reported this is the lowest in delinquent taxes she has seen in 20 years. Overall, it was a good report.

3. Consider writing off 2021 (and 2022) personal property tax bills

Finance Director Unertl asked to write off \$56.27 for personal property tax for Park City Pedorthics. This business has been out-of-business for about a year.

Aldersperson Fermanich made a motion to write off the 2021 and 2022 personal property tax bill of \$56.27. Aldersperson Russell seconded and the motion carried.

4. Review of Budget 2023 – Meeting Concept

Discussion occurred regarding budget meetings. The first budget meeting will be August 29th at 6:00 PM. Finance Director Unertl will send an email to all involved parties regarding the remaining dates.

5. Review and discuss preliminary 2023 budget development provisions:

- a. Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS)**
- b. Health Insurance**
- c. Compensation**

Finance Director reported on the Wisconsin Retirement System as well as a possible health insurance increase. Those numbers will be available the first part of September.

The main portion of discussion involved compensation for Limited Term Employees (LTE). Finance Director Unertl will bring back a revised compensation grid to the next meeting. Flexible work days/hours was discussed to attract and retain employees. City Administrator Johnson stated employees want PTO, holiday pay and sick time. The city's benefit package has been adjusted regarding vacation and sick time.

6. Consider 2023 budget requests to Lincoln County for:

- a. Ambulance – EMS**
- b. T.B. Scott Free Public Library**

Finance Director Unertl presented the budget request for the Ambulance – EMS. Fire Chief Klug was available to answer questions.

Library Director Zellers presented the budget request for the library. She explained the library pay scale is different than the city compensation grid. The library has lost 14 employees in 15 months due to retirement and wage disparity. The library is getting creative in hiring and keeping employees and trying to improve morale.

After further discussion, Finance Director Unertl mentioned the increases for the library exceeds the tax levy however, will check to see if ARPA funds could be used.

Chair Caylor made a motion to forward the budget requests for the Ambulance – EMS and the TB Scott Library to the County. Aldersperson Russell seconded and the motion carried.

7. Consider 2023-2024 contract with Bowmar Appraisal, Inc. for Maintenance & Market Revaluation

Finance Director Unertl presented the amount for the market revaluation would be \$122,000 in 2024. After further discussion, Aldersperson Russell made a motion to

approve the 2023-2024 contract with Bowmar Appraisal, Inc. for Maintenance and market revaluation. Alderperson Fermanich seconded and the motion carried.

8. Discuss interim administrator position and view the current city administrator contract drafted by City Attorney Hayden

Mayor Hass stated an internal email was sent to city employees with applications to be sent to him by August 1. A Common Council meeting will be on August 3 to review any applicants and proceed from there.

City Attorney Hayden wanted to clarify; he did not draft the employment agreement. He worked with Public Administration Associates and other outside counsel helped with the agreement.

After further discussion, Alderperson Fermanich made a motion to forward information regarding city ordinances pertaining to the city administrator position to the ad-hoc committee. Alderperson Russell seconded and the motion carried.

9. Discussion on Succession Planning

City Administrator Johnson prepared a statement regarding succession planning. This was requested by Alderperson Fermanich. This document was in the agenda packet.

City Administrator Johnson stated there is a lack of depth for succession in some departments.

Alderperson Russell asked if any clerk/treasurer staff is interested in doing the Finance Director position. Finance Director Unertl stated none of the employees in the clerk/treasurer office are interested in filling her position. Discussion occurred regarding cross training employees and the need to have some type of plan to cover aspects of positions.

City Administrator Johnson stated it makes sense to have more than one person to handle the city administrator duties in the interim. Alderperson Caylor stated there needs to be more checks and balances for the top three positions (City Attorney, City Administrator and Finance Director).

After further discussion, no formal action was taken.

V. Monthly Reports:

1. Monthly Report – Finance Director Unertl

No questions for the Finance Director.

2. Monthly Report – City Administrator Johnson

Aldersperson Russell had a question regarding the housing project with the County and Aldersperson Caylor had a question regarding a ribbon cutting at Tractor Supply. City Administrator Johnson answered all questions.

3. Monthly Report – City Attorney Hayden

No questions for the City Attorney.

4. Monthly Report – City Clerk Anderson-Malm

No questions for the City Clerk.

5. Monthly Report – Municipal Court

No questions for the Municipal Court.

6. Fire Department Callback Report

No questions.

7. Consider placing monthly reports on file.

Aldersperson Russell made a motion to place the monthly reports on file. Aldersperson Fermanich seconded and the motion carried.

IV. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

VII. Establish date, time and location of next regular meeting

The next regular meeting would be Tuesday, August 23 at 6:00 PM

V. Adjournment

A motion was made at 7:29 PM to adjourn by Aldersperson Fermanich. Aldersperson Russell seconded and the motion carried.

Minutes prepared by: Lori Anderson-Malm – City Clerk