



**CITY OF MERRILL**  
**PERSONNEL AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES • TUESDAY JULY 23, 2019**

**Regular Meeting**

**City Hall Council Chambers**

**5:00 PM**

**I. Call to Order**

Alderman Russell called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

| Attendee Name | Title                          | Status  | Arrived |
|---------------|--------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Tim Meehean   | Aldersperson - Eighth District | Present |         |
| Paul Russell  | Aldersperson - First District  | Present |         |
| Steve Osness  | Aldersperson - Fourth District | Present |         |

Also in attendance: City Administrator Dave Johnson, Finance Director Kathy Unertl, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Library Director Stacy Stevens, Fire Chief Josh Klug, Alderman Steve Hass, Alderman Rick Blake, Alderman Rob Norton, Steve Sabatke, LaDonna Fermanich and City Clerk Bill Heideman. A representative from Merrill Productions was present to videotape the meeting.

**II. Vouchers:**

**1. Vouchers**

The vouchers have previously been published and were also in the meeting packet.

Alderman Russell asked questions and received answers on vouchers related to demolition and drug testing.

Motion (Meehean/Osness) to place on file.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>PLACED ON FILE</b> |
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**III. Agenda items for consideration:**

**1. Review estimated costs of July 16th recall election**

A report on estimated costs was in the meeting packet.

City Clerk Heideman reported that approximately \$300 should be added to the estimated costs. These costs are related to work done by Street Department and Parks & Recreation Department employees.

After discussion, Finance Director Unertl stated that no budgetary action on this item is necessary.

**2. Review 2019 costs for Outside Legal Counsel**

A report on 2019 Outside Legal Counsel costs was in the meeting packet.

After discussion, Finance Director Unertl stated that no budgetary action on this item is necessary.

**3. Continue consideration of employee survey (draft)**

A revised draft employee survey form was in the meeting packet. City Administrator Johnson reported on the revisions.

Alderman Osness stated that he is opposed to questions #4 and #5 under the "Management" section of the survey. He also does not like questions #6 and #7 in the same section, because they refer to a specific position.

Alderman Meehean suggested that questions #3 and #4 in the "Management" section could be combined. He disagrees with Alderman Osness on questions #6 and #7. In his opinion, those questions should be retained in the survey.

Alderman Russell suggested that the "Management" section be incorporated into the rest of the survey, rather than included as a separate section.

Alderman Osness commented that there has been previous discussion related to shortening the survey form.

Alderman Russell noted that City employees who live in the City have the option to communicate employee-related concerns to their alderperson. He then suggested deleting question #46 and the entire "Management" section from the survey, and distributing it to City employees.

Motion (Osness/Meehean) to direct City Administrator Johnson to make revisions to the form and submit it to the next meeting for consideration.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>APPROVED</b> |
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4. Consider 2020 budget requests to Lincoln County for:

T.B. Scott Free Library

The proposed budget was in the meeting packet.

Motion (Osness/Meehean) to approve the proposed 2020 Library budget as presented and forward it to Lincoln County for consideration.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>APPROVED &amp; SENT TO COUNTY</b> |
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Merrill Ambulance/EMS

The proposed Ambulance/EMS budget was in the meeting packet.

Motion (Osness/Russell) to refer this budget back to City staff in order to "rework" this budget.

Alderman Osness stated that he has concerns related to this budget being \$31,000 more than the 2019 budget.

It was noted that the ambulances are owned by Lincoln County, and that the majority of the \$31,000 increase is related to wages and benefits.

Alderman Osness requested that his motion be withdrawn. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Motion (Meehean/Russell) to approve the proposed 2020 Ambulance/EMS budget as presented and forward it to Lincoln County for consideration.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>APPROVED &amp; SENT TO COUNTY</b> |
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**5. Consider 2020 budget steps and timeframes**

A proposed schedule for 2020 budget development was in the meeting packet. Health Insurance rates are still a variable at this time.

No action was taken

**IV. Monthly Reports:**

**1. Municipal Court**

The report was in the meeting packet.

**2. Finance Director Unertl**

The report was in the meeting packet.

Finance Director Unertl provided a verbal status report on delinquent Personal Property taxes.

Dates for strategic planning sessions will be considered at the next Common Council meeting.

**3. City Attorney Hayden**

The report was in the meeting packet.

**4. City Clerk Heideman**

The report was in the meeting packet.

The Board of Canvassers met on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019. No vote totals were changed as a result of that meeting.

**5. City Administrator Johnson**

The report was in the meeting packet.

**6. Consider placing monthly reports on file**

Motion (Meehean/Osness) to place on file.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> <b>PLACED ON FILE</b> |
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V.      Establish date, time and location of next regular meeting

Tuesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 5:00 P.M. in the City Hall Common Council Chambers.

VI.      Public Comment Period

Library Director Stevens thanked Tim Meehean for 24 years of service on the Library Board.

Alderman Norton noted that it has been a privilege for him to serve with Tim Meehan. Alderman Norton then stated that he hopes someone will submit a check to the City for \$16,767.95. This amount represents the current estimated amount of the recall election (\$4,424.75) plus all 2019 Outside Legal Counsel costs incurred by the City to date (\$12,343.20).

LaDonna Fermanich replied that, at some point, the Merrill Recall Committee will be submitting a check to help pay for the July 16<sup>th</sup> recall election.

Fire Chief Klug stated that he hopes that a section on working relationships of City employees will be included in an employee survey.

Alderman Russell outlined several goals as he continues serving as First District Alderperson and Personnel and Finance Committee Chairperson. These goals include:

- Ensure that agendas and meeting packets are published sooner
- Hold “Town Hall” type meetings
- Listen more effectively
- Pursue accountability in leadership positions

VII.      Adjournment

Motion (Meehean/Osness) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 5:58 P.M.