



CITY OF MERRILL
PERSONNEL AND FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES • TUESDAY MAY 21, 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: Mayor Derek Woellner, City Administrator Dave Johnson, Finance Director Kathy Unertl, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Alderman Rick Blake, Alderman Rob Norton (arr. 5:03), Alderman Steve Hass (arr. 5:04), LaDonna Fermanich, Lori Anderson Malm, Eric Dayton and City Clerk Bill Heideman. A representative from Merrill Productions was present to videotape the meeting.

II. Vouchers:

1. Vouchers

The vouchers were in the meeting packet. It was mentioned that the vouchers are reviewed by the members each month prior to the meeting.

Motion (Meehean/Osness) to place on file.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE
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III. Agenda items for consideration:

1. Report on who may be included/excluded from closed session attendance.

Correspondence related to this issue has been provided to the Committee members. Alderman Osness noted that he has contacted the League of Wisconsin Municipalities to obtain information on this issue.

Alderman Meehean suggested that, prior to convening in closed session, the Common Council and City sub-groups should specify who will be included in the closed session.

It was suggested that a resolution be drafted and considered to specify policy related to closed session attendees. Alderman Meehean stated his opinion that he does not think a resolution is necessary.

No action was taken at this time.

2. Request from Alderman Osness to reconsider policy on authority to amend job descriptions and create positions.

Alderman Osness stated that he is proposing that, after the City Administrator makes a hiring recommendation, it should be reviewed by the Personnel and Finance Committee and/or Common Council.

Alderman Meehean noted that the City Administrator does not have the authority to create new positions.

City Administrator Johnson stated that requiring Personnel and Finance Committee and/or Common Council approval would delay the hiring process.

Alderman Russell stated that he has mixed feelings on this topic.

No action was taken.

3. Request from Alderman Osness to consider conducting an employee survey.

A sample employee survey was in the meeting packet.

Alderman Osness stated that he is proposing conducting a survey of non-management employees. Alderman Russell and Alderman Meehean suggested that the survey include all employees.

Discussion was held on whether completed surveys would be subject to open records laws.

Motion (Meehean/Osness) to authorize City Administrator Johnson to prepare an employee survey document and submit it to a future Personnel and Finance Committee meeting for consideration.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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4. Discuss 2020 budget target/goals.

Alderman Meehean stated that he was under the impression that the Committee of the Whole has established a “best case scenario” of a 0% change in the City budget for next year, and that the “worst case scenario” would be a budget change equal to the change in the Consumer Price Index.

Mayor Woellner stated that would like to take actions to “correct” the last tax bills, and he acknowledged that this type of action would involve budget reductions.

Finance Director Unertl provided historic tax levy/tax rate information. She stated that the first steps in preparing the 2020 budget will be a focus on the tax levy and debt service.

Alderman Russell instructed Finance Director Unertl to prepare budget summaries based on various budget increases and decreases, as well as a 0% budget change.

Motion (Meehean/Russell) to propose a “best case scenario” of a 0% change in the City budget for next year, and that the “worst case scenario” would be a budget change equal to the change in the Consumer Price Index.

RESULT:**APPROVED & SENT TO COUNCIL****Next: 6/11/2019 7:00 PM****IV. Monthly Reports:****1. Municipal Court**

The monthly report was in the meeting packet.

2. Finance Director Unertl

The monthly report was in the meeting packet.

3. City Attorney Hayden

The monthly report was in the meeting packet.

City Attorney Hayden reported that a new Administrative Assistant in the City Attorney's office has been hired.

4. City Clerk Heideman

The monthly report was in the meeting packet.

City Clerk Heideman reported that, on either May 23rd or May 24th, he would be issuing certificates of sufficiency/insufficiency for the five aldermanic districts included in the recall.

5. City Administrator Johnson

The monthly report was in the meeting packet.

Two Development Agreements are pending.

The Committee stated that they thought the tax levy information recently shared with the public was beneficial.

A request was received to land a Blackhawk helicopter on the Festival Grounds, in conjunction with an event at the Armory.

6. Consider placing monthly reports on file

Motion (Meehean/Osness) to place on file.

RESULT:**PLACED ON FILE****V. Establish date, time and location of next meeting**

Tuesday, June 25th, 2019 at 5:00 P.M. in the City Hall Common Council Chambers.

VI. Public Comment Period

LaDonna Fermanich mentioned that it seems as if the Common Council has recently made an effort to increase transparency with the public. She stated that, if the City portion of the last tax increase had been 3%, the overall increase on the tax bills would have been less. She agrees with Alderman Osness that the Personnel and Finance Committee should have the final say on job descriptions and hiring.

Eric Dayton raised some questions related to Tax Increment Districts and Tax Increment Financing. Alderman Meehean suggested that Mr. Dayton contact Finance Director Unertl with his questions related to these topics.

Alderman Norton suggested posting the City Administrator's monthly report on social media and the City website.

VII. Adjournment

Motion (Meehean/Osness) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 6:00 P.M.