

CITY OF MERRILL
PERSONNEL & FINANCE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, February 28, 2023 - MINUTES
Regular Meeting City Hall Council Chambers 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Chairperson Russell, Alderperson Fermanich, Alderperson Caylor

Others Present: Mayor Hass, City Attorney Hayden, City Clerk Anderson-Malm, Finance Director Unertl, Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey, Police Chief Bennett, Fire Chief Klug, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel, Facilities Maintenance Manager Wszalek, Park & Recreation Director Wendorf, Street Superintendent Bonack, Utility Operations Manager Steinagel, Stephanie Pagel, Brenda Grefe, Renea Frederick, Alderperson Lupton, Alderperson Weix, Alderperson Sabatke and Merrill Productions video operator

- I. **Call to Order** – Chairperson Russell called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.
- II. **Vouchers – January**
Alderperson Caylor motioned to approve the January vouchers. Alderperson Fermanich seconded the motion for discussion.

Alderperson Fermanich questioned a \$12,000 charge for mattresses for the Fire Department. Fire Chief Klug explained the expense. Alderperson Caylor questioned a charge for tree removal. Street Superintendent Bonack explained the expense. Alderperson Caylor also questioned an amount from a local store. Finance Director Unertl explained the expense and noted it was for the Airport. After discussion the motion carried.

- III. **Minutes from previous meeting(s):**
A motion was made by Alderperson Fermanich to approve the January 24th meeting minutes. Alderperson Caylor seconded and the motion carried.

- IV. **Agenda Items for Consideration:**
1. Consider writing off 2021 & 2022 personal property taxes – Kozy Korner LLC
This item was not discussed because it was resolved.

2. Consider writing off 2022 personal property tax bill for Wit's End Day Spa (out of business)

Alderperson Caylor motioned to approve writing off the 2022 personal property tax bill for Wit's End Day Spa. Alderperson Fermanich seconded and the motion carried.

3. Discuss and consider the sale of one pool car to be placed on the Wisconsin Surplus Auction

Mayor Hass discussed the sale of the pool car. Questions were asked regarding the use of the vehicle and all questions were answered.

After discussion Alderperson Caylor motioned to sell the 2015 Ford Fusion pool car on the Wisconsin Surplus Auction. Alderperson Fermanich seconded and the motion carried.

4. Discussion on remote/call in's for Closed Sessions

Mayor Hass spoke about Lincoln County's policy for no remote calls for Closed Session. Alderperson Caylor said this was a good policy to not offer remote call-ins for closed sessions; especially for the Redevelopment Authority since financing is discussed. Alderperson Fermanich agreed to no call-ins for closed sessions.

After discussion Alderperson Caylor made a motion for City Attorney Hayden work with the Mayor and Interim City Administrators to create a closed session policy to exclude remote access. Alderperson Fermanich seconded and the motion carried.

This will be on the March Common Council agenda.

5. Discussion on December 2022 Revenue & Expense Reports – Revised

Finance Director Unertl reported on the revised Revenue & Expense report from 2022 that was included in the packet. She reviewed the items and the department deficits.

Alderperson Fermanich had a number of questions regarding a number of items. She was concerned with the numbers and would like to be more informed with numbers. She stated nothing pulls anything together and no comparisons are given.

Alderperson Caylor had additional questions and concerns regarding the reports. He spoke about the City of Waupun's budget overview that was presented last spring/summer. This report showed the budget information and all the numbers so tax payers saw the ins and outs of the city's budget. He asked why this type of report has not been presented. He also stated some of this information should have been red flagged when the concern arose.

Finance Director Unertl answered questions and concerns. After further discussion, no action was taken.

6. Consider Finance Director proposal to balance 2022 budget and update on Fund Transfers – revised

Finance Director Unertl explained the reasoning for the proposal.

Alderperson Fermanich had questions regarding the transfer for the TID's and offsetting the shortfalls of the TID's. Finance Director Unertl answered the questions.

Alderperson Caylor asked what other cuts have been proposed. He also stated he is not comfortable using ARPA funds to cover short falls.

Alderperson Fermanich expressed other concerns regarding the big picture. She stated they need better reporting for easier tracking and requested this be brought back for

further discussion. Alderperson Caylor agreed to bringing this back for further discussion.

It was also requested this be discussed at the Department Head meeting and have employees suggest cost savings and possible cuts.

No action was taken.

7. Discussion on succession planning

Discussion regarding this topic and item #8 were discussed together. Police Chief Bennett asked if the committee was talking about continuity planning instead of succession planning.

Alderperson Fermanich stated it was difficult to discuss succession planning when the city is dealing with other issues. Succession planning is difficult to plan but needs to be done.

Mayor Hass and the Interim City Administrator's will continue to look at this issue.

8. Overview of Accounts Payable

Alderperson Fermanich explained she requested this item because she was not aware of the flow of transactions. This allows for better transparency.

V. Monthly Reports:

1. Monthly Report – Mayor/Interim Administrator's

The report was in the packet; there were no questions.

2. Monthly Report – Finance Director Unertl

The Finance Director's report was in the packet.

3. Monthly Report – City Attorney Hayden

The report was in the agenda packet.

4. Monthly Report – City Clerk Anderson-Malm

The report was in the agenda packet.

5. Monthly Report – Municipal Court

The report was in the agenda packet.

VI. Public Comment

Nathan Meyer – 208 E 4th St – stated he is alright with increasing taxes because of inflation to keep the services we are accustomed to in the City.

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

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, March 28 at 6:00 PM

VIII. Adjournment

Aldersperson Caylor made a motion to adjourn. Aldersperson Fermanich seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 PM.

Minutes prepared by: Lori Anderson-Malm – City Clerk