

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Monday, October 3, 2022

6:00 PM

Common Council Chambers

I. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Mayor Steve Hass with the following attending:

Paul Russell – District 1

Michael “Gus” Caylor – District 2

Rick Blake – District 3

LaDonna Fermanich – District 4

Dick Lupton – District 5

Mike Rick – District 6 – left meeting at approximately 7:00 pm

Mark Weix – District 7

Steve Sabatke – District 8

Other’s present: Mayor Steve Hass, Finance Director Unertl, City Attorney Hayden, City Administrator Johnson, Fire Chief Klug, Park & Recreation Director Wendorf, Police Chief Bennett, Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey, Facilities Maintenance Manager Wszalek, Utility Operations Manager Steinagel, Transit Director Brummond, Street Superintendent Bonack, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel, Interim Library Director Ollhoff, Enrichment Center Director Tammie Mrachek, Kyle Gulke, Bill Bialecki and Merrill Productions

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. Public Comment

Kyle Gulke, 1804 Jackson Street, Merrill, spoke as a member of the Park & Recreation Commission. He expressed the importance of the Ott’s Park and Riverside Park dock replacements. He provided information regarding boating and fishing and the connection to the docks at the parks. He feels it is vitally important to fund these projects.

IV. Follow-up from 8/29 Committee of the Whole:

1. Sewer Rates – potential 2023 adjustment

Financial Director Unertl spoke about this topic and said there will be no water increase in 2023. Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey also spoke about this topic and stated small increments would be preferable rather than a large increase in sewer rates.

Questions were asked by Alderperson's and Utility Operations Manager Steinagel answered all questions and concerns.

Alderperson Russell made a motion to increase the sewer rates by 2.5% for 2023. Alderperson Sabatke seconded. The motion carried on a 6-3 roll call vote. Voting no – Alderperson's Caylor, Fermanich and Rick.

2. Proposed alternative to 2022 Infrastructure Petition – N. State St. (E 8th St to E 10th St)

Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey provided information regarding the updated proposed infrastructure petition and answered questions from the Alderperson's.

Alderperson Fermanich made a motion to approve the alternate 2022 infrastructure petition on N. State Street (W 8th St to W 10th St). Alderperson Blake seconded the motion. The motion carried on an 8-1 roll call vote. Voting no – Alderperson Sabatke.

3. Tax Increment Districts (TID's)

Finance Director Unertl highlighted the TID information that was provided to the Alderperson's and answered questions.

V. Consider 2023 Operational Budget Requests:

1. Economic Development – Bill Bialecki was granted permission to speak and answered questions.

2. Transit – Transit Director Brummond discussed the transit budget and answered questions from the Alderperson's.

3. Streets & Weed Commissioner – Financial Director Unertl discussed the Streets & Weed budget.

4. Public Works Director – Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey discussed the public works budget.

5. Streets – Related – Street Superintendent Bonack discussed the streets budget. He highlighted some items regarding increased budget requests. He answered questions from Alderperson's.

6. Parks & Recreation – Park & Recreation Director Wendorf answered questions from the Mayor and Alderperson's. He discussed the budget and highlighted areas in the budget.

7. Building Inspection/Zoning – Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel answered questions from the Mayor and Alderperson's.

8. Community Development (Fund 25) – Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel answered questions.

- VI.** The next Budget Meeting will be Monday, October 17th at 6:00 PM
- VII. Adjournment** – Alderperson Caylor made a motion to adjourn. Alderperson Lupton seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 PM.

Minutes prepared by: Lori Anderson-Malm – City Clerk from Merrill Productions Video
*the audio was very difficult to hear; the minutes were prepared to the best of my ability considering the condition of the audio