

**CITY OF MERRILL
PERSONNEL & FINANCE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, September 27, 2022 - MINUTES**

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

6:00 p.m.

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

Others Present: Mayor Hass, Alderperson, Blake and Lupton, City Administrator Dave Johnson, Finance Director Kathy Unertl, City Attorney Tom Hayden, City Engineer Rod Akey, Fire Chief Josh Klug, Police Chief Bennett, Enrichment Center Director Tammie Mrachek, Interim Library Director Lorie Ollhoff, Communications Specialist Chantel Kuczmarski (remote), Dawn Smith, Brenda Grefe, Lori Kroening and Merrill Productions video operator

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

II. Vouchers – August

Alderperson Fermanich made a motion to approve the August vouchers. Alderperson Russell seconded for discussion. Questions were asked regarding a few items in the vouchers and were answered by the appropriate persons. After discussion the motion carried.

III. Minutes from previous meeting(s):

A motion was made by Alderperson Russell to approve the August 23rd regular meeting and the September 7th special meeting minutes. Alderperson Fermanich seconded for discussion. Alderperson Fermanich requested clarification on the minutes from the August 23rd meeting. City Clerk Anderson-Malm explained she was absent from that meeting and after watching the video, the portion of the meeting that pertained to the motion in question was not on the video. After further discussion, the motion carried.

IV. Agenda Items for Consideration:

1. Consider writing off 2021 personal property tax bill for 809 E 1st St (former First Street Coffee) for \$140.65

Alderperson Fermanich made a motion to approve writing off the 2021 personal property tax bill for former First Street Coffee. Alderperson Russell seconded and the motion carried.

2. Discussion and consideration regarding continuing with Carlson Dettmann.

Chairperson Caylor asked Mayor Hass to provide his attempts to contact Carlson Dettmann. Mayor Hass distributed a log of his attempts to the committee members.

He stated he has received no response from Patrick as of September 14th. City Administrator Johnson responded and said he has received a response from Patrick. He, Alderperson Blake and City Attorney Hayden called Patrick and did not have an issue getting in contact with him. Mayor Hass will continue to try to contact Patrick and will continue to log his attempts.

Alderperson Fermanich made a motion to send a formal letter to Carlson Dettmann asking for a response by October 18th with the understanding business dealings with them would cease if no response is received. Chair Caylor seconded. The motion failed on a 1-2 voice vote.

After discussion, Alderperson Fermanich amended the motion to send a formal letter to Carlson Dettman asking for a response by October 11 with the understanding business dealings with them would cease if no response is received. Alderperson Russell seconded and the motion carried.

3. Discussion and consideration regarding the Communications Specialist agreement.

Mayor Hass explained why he asked this to be placed on the Marketing & Communications agenda with a referral to the Personnel & Finance Committee. Previous agreements regarding contracts have gone through Personnel & Finance and then to the Common Council for approval.

Alderperson Fermanich suggested implementing a uniform policy regarding agreements.

Mayor Hass stated the past practice in contracts going through the committees before being approved by the Common Council.

Chair Caylor explained the issue is not with the Communication Specialists ability or current employment. The issue is the contract was never approved or signed by the Mayor or City Clerk.

Chair Caylor made a motion to forward the contract of the Communication Specialist, without recommendations, to the October 11th Common Council. Alderperson Russell seconded and the motion carried.

4. Consider amendment to Group Health Insurance Incentive Plan – part-time employees (Section 14-5-2 Employee Handbook)

Finance Director Unertl explained the reasoning behind this request.

Alderperson Fermanich stated she doesn't understand why the city is paying employees for not taking insurance.

Chair Caylor stated that usually it is an employee takes the insurance or does not. There are usually no incentives not to take insurance.

Alderson Russell made a motion to approve an amendment to the Group Health Insurance Incentive Plan for part-time employees in the employee handbook. Chair Caylor seconded and the motion carried on a 2-1 voice vote.

5. Review and consideration of 2023 non-union wage proposal

Finance Director Unertl explained this request and the information that was included in the agenda packet for this proposal.

The initial cost would be \$127,000.

After further discussion, Alderson Russell made a motion to approve the Finance Directors information in planning and what has been discussed this evening and forward it to the October 17th Committee of the Whole for final approval or disapproval. Alderson Fermanich seconded and the motion carried.

6. Discussion and consideration regarding the revisions to the Employee Handbook.

It was noted the majority of the revisions were clearing up language.

Alderson Fermanich motioned to approve as an operational draft before adoption by the Common Council on October 11. Chair Caylor seconded and the motion carried.

7. Discussion regarding a traumatic incident employee wellness policy

Additional information was provided at the meeting for all committee members. Chair Caylor would like guidelines or procedures for both the Fire Department and Police Department. The departments could either have a shared procedure or separate procedures but both should have firm guidelines.

There was no motion but this item was referred to the Health & Safety Committee as a future agenda item.

8. Discuss and consider the development, approval and implementation of appropriate internal controls as recommended by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP.

Alderson Fermanich would like the issues addressed and recommendations brought back to the Personnel & Finance Committee.

Finance Director Unertl explained the findings from CliftonLarsonAllen that were included in the agenda packet. She will address this further at the October Personnel & Finance meeting.

V. Monthly Reports:

1. Monthly Report – Finance Director Unertl

The report was in the agenda packet. No questions for the Finance Director.

2. Monthly Report – City Administrator Johnson

The report was in the agenda packet. No questions for the City Administrator.

3. Monthly Report – City Attorney Hayden

The report was in the agenda packet. No questions for the City Attorney.

4. Monthly Report – City Clerk Anderson-Malm

The report was in the agenda packet. No questions for the City Clerk.

5. Monthly Report – Municipal Court

The report was in the agenda packet. No questions for the Municipal Court.

6. Fire Department Callback Report

The report was in the agenda packet. This report will be removed from future agendas per Chair Caylor.

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

Brenda Grefe she said spoke regarding the reclassifications and said regardless of reclassifications she hopes all receive equitable consideration.

Dawn Smith stated she was disappointed in the committee because no one on the committee has asked questions regarding the reclassifications.

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

The next regular meeting would be Tuesday, October 25 at 6:00 PM

V. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Aldersperson Fermanich. Aldersperson Russell seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 PM.

Minutes prepared by: Lori Anderson-Malm – City Clerk with the help of City Attorney Hayden