

**Finance & Personnel Committee
of the City of Onalaska**

Wednesday, August 5, 2015

1

1 The Meeting of the Finance & Personnel Committee of the City of Onalaska was called to order
2 at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 5, 2015. It was noted that the meeting had been announced
3 and a notice posted at City Hall.

4
5 Roll call was taken, with the following members present: Ald. Jim Olson, Ald. Jim Bialecki,
6 Ald. Bob Muth

7
8 Also Present: Financial Services Director/Treasurer Fred Buehler, Human Resource Specialist
9 Hope Burchell, Ald. Harvey Bertrand, City Engineer Jarrod Holter, Land Use and Development
10 Director Brea Grace, Parks and Recreation Director Dan Wick, Fire Chief Don Dominick,
11 Municipal Court Supervisor Amber Jolly

12
13 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from the previous meeting**

14
15 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Bialecki, to approve the minutes from the previous
16 meeting as printed and on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

17
18 On voice vote, motion carried.

19
20 **Item 3 – Public Input (limited to 3 minutes/individual)**

21
22 Ald. Muth called for anyone wishing to provide public input.

23
24 **Dan Ferries**
25 **402 9th Avenue North**
26 **Onalaska**

27
28 “What brings me here today is Item No. 6 under Personnel, [which is hiring] a full-time [City]
29 Administrator. I know we looked at that four years ago when I was on Council [as a Second
30 District Alderperson], and at that time I was for it. I’m not speaking for or against it, but I
31 definitely think it’s an issue that we need to look at and go down that road. My question is,
32 would we need a Mayor, part-time Mayor, [or] Finance Director if we got an Administrator? It’s
33 just those kinds of questions [that need to be answered]. I encourage you to see if we can have a
34 referendum, possibly in November, and get the input of the community. Thank you for your
35 service, gentlemen, and thanks for the time.”

36
37 **Harriet Schuppel**
38 **515 3rd Avenue North**
39 **Onalaska**

40
41 “In regard to this review and consideration of hiring a full-time City Administrator, we had one
42 once before, and I think that if that’s what you’re going to consider doing I think it should go to a
Reviewed 8/10/15 by Hope Burchell & Fred Buehler

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43 public vote as to what the citizens of Onalaska feel about it. I also think that you need to review
44 what his duties are, what his pay is, and divulge this to the citizens of Onalaska. If you're going
45 to go with a part-time Mayor, there again, I think his duties and what his pay and everything are
46 going to be. I think that all needs to be divulged to the citizens of Onalaska, and I would like to
47 see a referendum on this."

48
49 Ald. Bialecki asked that Item No. 6 under Personnel be addressed first.

50

51 **PERSONNEL**

52

53 **Item 6 – Review and consideration of hiring a full-time City Administrator**

54

55 Ald. Bialecki said, "On that particular subject, as long as everyone is here, I'm going to read a
56 memo from [Mayor] Joe Chilsen. He and I have had numerous conversations recently
57 [regarding] where the city is at, and where we really think it should be going. Long story short,
58 the memo is to Finance and Personnel Committee members from the Mayor, who is not here
59 tonight, referencing City Administrator. [The memo states:] *'After having a number of*
60 *discussions with Council President Bialecki, I am asking the City Council to discuss the merits of*
61 *having a full-time City Administrator and reducing the Mayor to a part-time position. It is with*
62 *a bit of angst that I seek to have my full-time position vacated, but it is time to revisit a City*
63 *Administrator position. I believe that an administrator brings with them the public*
64 *administration educational background and experiential preparedness needed for Onalaska. A*
65 *city administrator removes a great deal of politics from the internal workings of city government.*
66 *Additionally, city administrators bring consistency to the position. Instead of changing CEOs*
67 *every four to eight years, a city administrator would have a set number of contracted years voted*
68 *on by the City Council. Please give every consideration to this option. Thank you for all you do*
69 *for Onalaska. Joe Chilsen, Mayor, City of Onalaska.'*

70

71 I think what we're looking at here tonight is maybe to consider going forward with that. In order
72 to do that, we have to have the authority to do that by the Council next week. A couple of
73 questions came up. We had two positions previously, [but] went away from that. When you
74 look at the overall operation of the city, perhaps it is time that you have a person, again, that has
75 the academic background as well as five or more years experience in this size a city or greater
76 that understands all facets of the city. Another question that came up out here too is, what about
77 the Mayor's position? If you have a full-time Administrator we don't need a full-time Mayor.
78 It's been suggested to consider a November referendum. You could, but I'm not sure that would
79 give us the necessary time to put that into place. Are you going to keep a full-time Mayor or are
80 you not? That's for the Council to decide. Either way, I would like to see us proceed with that
81 with the understanding that you don't need a full-time Mayor anymore."

82

83 Ald. Olson said, "There are some merits to that, Jim. I probably would need, for the public, a
84 little bit more explanation on the City Administrator's duties."

Reviewed 8/10/15 by Hope Burchell & Fred Buehler

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85

86 Ald. Bialecki said he is asking for assistance from both Ald. Olson and Ald. Muth if they favor
87 having a full-time City Administrator. Ald. Bialecki stressed that time is needed to obtain
88 authority to gather information and present it to the community.

89

90 Fred said, "When you use the words 'City Administrator' you're kind of tied to that topic. ...
91 Maybe you don't want to limit yourself to a City Administrator. It could be a manager."

92

93 Ald. Bialecki said he is simply introducing the topic and said he welcomes input. Ald. Bialecki
94 said the city could choose to create a City Manager position, but doing so would change the
95 city's charter and the Mayor's position would be eliminated. Ald. Bialecki said this could be a
96 viable option and cited the examples of the City of Fond du Lac and the City of Eau Claire. Ald.
97 Bialecki said, "I would like to take a look at this in-depth because I just think that you can have a
98 full-time Mayor. You may get a new one next year; I don't know. If you do, it might take you a
99 good year to break that person in. ... You might get a social worker; you might get a doctor.
100 There's still a lot more to the administration and knowledge of all these different departments
101 you need a clear understanding with. That's where I think [it's important] to have that type of
102 individual who does this and has, as I said before, the necessary academic background and
103 experience to function appropriately for the city."

104

105 Ald. Bertrand inquired about the process for considering having a full-time City Administrator.

106

107 Ald. Bialecki asked Ald. Bertrand, "What would you like to see in terms of the process?"

108

109 Ald. Bertrand said the thought of holding a public meeting does not appeal to him.

110

111 Ald. Bialecki suggested that, if the Finance and Personnel Committee decides to look into having
112 a full-time City Administrator, it should move this item to the Common Council for further
113 discussion at its August 11 meeting. Ald. Bialecki said, "If in fact there is interest, then delegate
114 that back to the Finance and Personnel Committee to work with the Human Resources Director
115 to develop some preliminary job descriptions for that type of position. That means looking at
116 other comparable cities."

117

118 Ald. Bertrand asked if this matter would come back before the Common Council.

119

120 Ald. Bialecki said it has to. Ald. Bialecki said, "The other thing that goes hand-in-hand is unlike
121 in previous years, whomever this new person is going to be will get an employment contract of
122 what our expectations are of them, everything listed in terms of salary, benefits, et cetera. And if
123 written appropriately, there is also a clause that if they're not happy with us or we're not happy
124 with them we can give a piece of paper for 90 days, shake hands, and you walk away."

125

126 Ald. Bertrand said, "We're all going to learn in terms of how we'll proceed. It's not in stone as
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127 to how we proceed because we haven't done this before, I suppose. So the way it sounds we
128 have to learn in the process. There are a lot of prototypes out there, so it seems as though we
129 could learn through those prototypes.”

130

131 Ald. Muth stressed that the process is only beginning and said he agrees with Harriet that this
132 will be a community decision. Ald. Muth said, “We work for the community, so we want to find
133 out, will this work? Is it better? It's a process, and it's not just something that's just decided by
134 us. It's decided by the community. ... I assure you it's not going to be anything in closed session
135 or anything like that. It's going to be something we all do together.”

136

137 Ald. Olson said, “I think the level of expertise that somebody has to have to hold this position is
138 something that, as complicated as government is today, they bring a particular expertise in
139 finance and expertise in resource management. It's getting to be a very intensive job. ... The
140 expertise is there to manage human resources and manage the day-to-day operation and really
141 understand what it's like to run an organization. This happens to be government, and there are
142 days when it's frustrating. I think it's worth looking into and finding out all the ramifications of
143 how the particular function of government works in that manner. It's a learning process, but it's
144 also a process of getting that information to the public.”

145

146 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to refer to the Common Council for
147 consideration at its August 11 meeting review and consideration of hiring a full-time City
148 Administrator.

149

150 On voice vote, motion carried.

151

Consideration and possible action on the following items:

152

FINANCE

153

Item 4 – Omni Center financials for 2015

154

155 Dan reported that the Omni Center had shown a profit of \$6,989.53 through June 30. Dan noted
156 that as of June 30, 2014 the facility had a deficit of more than \$52,000. Dan said activity at the
157 Omni Center has been increasing since May.

158

159 Ald. Bialecki inquired about the status of the facility's capital projects.

160

161 Dan said the previous chiller has been removed and the new system is scheduled to be installed
162 the first week of September. Dan also said the boards are en route and that the projects are “on
163 line.”

164

165 Motion by Ald. Muth, second by Ald. Bialecki, to accept the Omni Center financials for 2015.
166 Reviewed 8/10/15 by Hope Burchell & Fred Buehler

167

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169

170 On voice vote, motion carried.

171

172 **Item 5 – City General Fund Financials for 2015**

173

174 a. General Fund

175

176 Fred noted that committee members' packets include the financials (revenues and expenditure)
177 through June. Fred reported that Jarrod told him the price of salt has increased per ton compared
178 to the 2015 budget.

179

180 Ald. Muth asked if the city had purchased extra salt.

181

182 Fred said the salt had been purchased to finish 2015.

183

184 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to accept the General Fund report.

185

186 On voice vote, motion carried.

187

188 b. Water-Sewer-Storm Water

189

190 Fred referred to the July water billing cycle and noted there has been a significant decrease in
191 revenue due to the significant amount of rain that has fallen in the area.

192

193 Ald. Bialecki asked if there will be an impact on the projections for the rate increase.

194

195 Fred said there will be a slight impact, but also reminded committee members that the water rate
196 application went into effect on June 11. Fred predicted that the city probably will be "right on
197 target" by the October billing cycle due to the current dry weather in the area. Fred referred to
198 the Sewer Utility and noted the most significant item is the City of La Crosse, which is nearly
199 half of the Sewer budget. Fred noted "La Crosse Charges" increased 10 percent compared to
200 2014's figures.

201

202 Ald. Bialecki asked if overtime pay is staying in line with the budget.

203

204 Fred noted that Water has approximately seven different overtime accounts and referred to an
205 account where \$4,754 had been budgeted, but only \$907.65 was spent. Fred said he believes
206 Water overtime is "in check." Fred referred to the "Wages – regular" column under the Sewer
207 Utility (\$34,879) and said this is subject to overtime. Fred noted that \$1,000 was budgeted for
208 overtime and \$779.18 was spent. Fred said he has not seen anything troubling regarding
209 overtime in Water, Sewer or Storm Water.

210

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211 Ald. Muth asked if there had been extra costs associated with the failure of two water pumps
212 failed on May 31 at the lift station located at 6th Avenue and Quincy Street. Ald. Muth noted that
213 pump trucks had assisted with the situation.

214

215 Jarrod said approximately \$4,000 was spent on pump trucks alone that day. Jarrod also noted
216 that five individuals had worked overtime that day. Three of the individuals worked 7½ hours of
217 overtime.

218

219 Ald. Muth said he wondered if this would have a negative impact on the budget.

220

221 Jarrod said there is sufficient funding in the accounts, noting that there are always “ebbs and
222 flows.”

223

224 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to accept the Water-Sewer-Storm Water
225 budgets.

226

227 On voice vote, motion carried.

228

229 **Item 6 – Approval of a contract for professional consultant services with Heritage**
230 **Research, Ltd. in an amount not to exceed \$5,802.84 to complete reconnaissance survey of**
231 **historic properties with the City of Onalaska**

232

233 Brea said the city had received a grant from the Wisconsin Historical Society for \$6,600. The
234 grant will cover 100 percent of the contract, and it also will bring in dollars to the General Fund
235 to cover time and expense for both Brea and Planner/Zoning Inspector Katie Meyer. Brea said
236 staff believes the proposal from Heritage Research, Ltd. best suits the City of Onalaska and
237 noted the Historical Preservation Committee had approved this contract at its June 18 meeting
238 and recommended approval from the Common Council. Brea said this will be completed in a
239 year’s time and noted homes that are more than 40 years old are being surveyed. Brea said the
240 intent is to provide education to the public and added this is a way to not only showcase the
241 city’s historic properties, but also to give homeowners an opportunity to take advantage of tax
242 credits. Brea said this is a way to encourage reinvestment in the older section of the community.

243

244 Ald. Muth noted that 943 buildings had been listed and asked if all of them will be looked at.

245

246 Brea said yes.

247

248 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to approve a contract for professional consultant
249 services with Heritage Research, Ltd. in an amount not to exceed \$5,802.84 to complete
250 reconnaissance survey of historic properties with the City of Onalaska.

251

252 On voice vote, motion carried.

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7

253

254 Item 8 was addressed next.

255

256 **Item 8 – Options regarding the Cemetery fence project with donations, foundation funds,**
257 **and Aikin funds currently at \$137,137**

258

259 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to approve allocating \$15,000 from the
260 Unrestricted Cemetery Fund toward the Cemetery fence project.

261

262 Ald. Bialecki said, “The report we received roughly three months ago suggested \$150,000.
263 Obviously they’ve been fundraising, and this is where they’re at. I think the group’s intent was
264 to go ahead and proceed this year, but we’ve been very fortunate that Jarrod has been sitting on
265 there with them. He’s strongly advised that they may not want to do that because you’re going
266 to bid that project right in prime time of construction season. You’ll get it done, but the bids
267 you’ll get might be [substantial]. I think they’re going to consider maybe bidding in February
268 with the completion date more toward Memorial Day.”

269

270 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to amend the previous motion and authorize
271 City Engineer Jarrod Holter to continue to work with the Cemetery Committee and advise its
272 members regarding the bid process.

273

274 Fred noted that another \$2,100 had been received since the meeting agenda was released. This
275 brings the total to \$139,237.

276

277 Vote on the amendment:

278

279 On voice vote, motion carried.

280

281 Original motion restated:

282

283 To approve allocating \$15,000 from the Unrestricted Cemetery Fund toward the Cemetery fence
284 project. City Engineer Jarrod Holter will serve as an advisor to the Cemetery Committee.

285

286 On voice vote, motion carried.

287

288 **Item 7 – Gundersen Health Systems Parking Ramp 2nd Quarter 2015**

289

290 Fred noted the committee members’ packets include the first and second quarter operating costs.

291

292 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Muth, to accept the Gundersen Health Systems Parking
293 Ramp 2nd Quarter 2015 financials.

294

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8

295 On voice vote, motion carried.

296

297 **Item 9 – Update regarding credit card usage/cost and e-box usage through 2nd quarter 2015**

298

299 Fred referred to the yellow sheet in committee members' packets that shows credit card usage
300 compared to the 2-percent convenience fee charged to citizens. Fred said that while the city is
301 showing a loss, he also pointed out it never was the city's intent to profit from this. Fred referred
302 to the document containing e-box usage statistics and noted that the totals from each quarter
303 continue to increase, particularly during the months when water bills are due (January, April,
304 July, October). For example, there were 883 transactions in April 2014 for a total of
305 \$110,467.89. By comparison, there were 898 transactions in April 2015 for a total of
306 \$107,966.61. Fred said there are significant cost savings to the city in terms of manhours as only
307 one city employee performs transfers via computer.

308

309 **PERSONNEL**

310

311 **Item 1 – Review and consideration of authorization to post, advertise, and replace a Police**
312 **Officer position**

313

314 Hope noted one of the city's officers had recently submitted their resignation and plans to teach
315 at Western Technical College. Hope said that based on the retirements that have occurred in
316 2015, the city has expended all its eligibility lists. Hope said she is seeking authorization to post,
317 advertise and replace the Police Officer position. This means the city will have to recruit,
318 advertise and test potential candidates so another eligibility list may be established.

319

320 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to approve authorization to post, advertise, and
321 replace a Police Officer position.

322

323 Ald. Bialecki asked if this covers obtaining an eligibility list.

324

325 Hope said yes.

326

327 Ald. Muth inquired about the timeframe for hiring a new officer.

328

329 Hope said the goal is to establish an eligibility list by the end of November and hire a new officer
330 by January. Hope also said she hopes the officer hired to replace the recently retired Dave Haack
331 is on the job by September.

332

333 Ald. Muth inquired about the impact on the Police Department's budget, stating he assumes that
334 overtime will be necessary.

335

336 Hope said she does not believe the Police Department has exceeded its overtime budget. Hope
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9

337 noted that the department receives grant funding, which should be of assistance.

338

339 On voice vote, motion carried.

340

341 **Item 2 – Joint Municipal Court Quarterly Report on Accounts Receivable – FIO**

342

343 Amber referred to the 2015 2nd Quarter Report included in committee members' packets and
344 highlighted the following:

345

346 • **2009 percentage of fines collected to date:** 83 percent

347 • **2010:** 80 percent

348 • **2011:** 79 percent

349 • **2012:** 79 percent

350 • **2013:** 78 percent

351 • **2014:** 70 percent

352 • **Average:** 78 percent

353

354 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Bialecki, to accept the Joint Municipal Court Quarterly
355 Report on Accounts Receivable.

356

357 On voice vote, motion carried.

358

359 **Item 3 – Review and consideration for out-of-state travel request of the Fire Chief to attend**
360 **the Executive Fire Officer Program Symposium in Emmitsburg, Maryland on September**
361 **9-12, 2015**

362

363 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to approve out-of-state travel request of the Fire
364 Chief to attend the Executive Fire Officer Program Symposium in Emmitsburg, Maryland on
365 September 9-12, 2015.

366

367 On voice vote, motion carried.

368

369 **Item 4 – Review and consideration of changes to Policy 3.02 Fair Labor Standards Policy**
370 **(FLSA)**

371

372 Hope said this policy is coming forward because there has not been a change to the on call pay
373 for utility operators for at least five years. Hope said she is asking that the changes to the policy
374 take effect January 1, 2016 because this is a budgetary issue. Utility employees will receive one
375 hour of pay for each day that they are on call. Employees may not switch partial days of on call
376 duty. All on call trades must be approved by the supervisor prior to any trade of on call days.

377 There would be a minimum of one hour calculated at the rate of time and one-half is guaranteed

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378 an employee who is requested to and actively returns to work at a time when he/she would not
379 otherwise have to be on duty. Hope said she has spoken to supervisors, who have given their
380 approval. City Attorney Sean O’Flaherty also has reviewed and approved the changes.

381
382 Motion by Ald. Muth, second by Ald. Bialecki, to approve changes to Policy 3.02 Fair Labor
383 Standards Policy (FLSA).

384
385 On voice vote, motion carried.

386
387 **Item 5 – Review and consideration of changes to job descriptions:**

- 388
- 389 a. Park & Recreation Director
 - 390 b. City Engineer
 - 391 c. Human Resource Specialist
 - 392 d. Financial Services Director
 - 393 e. Municipal Court Supervisor
 - 394 f. Tourism Director
 - 395 g. Fire Chief
 - 396 h. Police Chief

397
398 Hope said she has updated what the individuals who hold these positions are currently doing and
399 separated essential job functions. Hope noted there had been a change to educational
400 requirements for the Tourism Director position. This would increase the pay grade, but it also
401 would not adversely affect the budget.

402
403 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Muth, to approve changes to job descriptions ‘a’, ‘b’,
404 ‘c’, ‘d’, ‘e’, ‘f’, ‘g’, and ‘h’.

405
406 On voice vote, motion carried.

407
408 **Closed Session**

409
410 To consider a motion to convene in Closed Session under Section 19.85(1)(g) of the Wisconsin
411 Statutes for the purpose of conferring with legal counsel for the governmental body who is
412 rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with respect to
413 litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved:

- 414
- 415 • Water damage at 9534 East Highway 16 Frontage Road

416
417 If any action is required in Open Session, as the result of the Closed Session, the Committee will
418 reconvene in Open Session to take the necessary action and/or continue on with the printed
419 agenda.

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420

421 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Bialecki, to convene in Closed Session.

422

423 On roll call vote: Ald. Jim Olson – aye, Ald. Jim Bialecki – aye, Ald. Bob Muth – aye. In
424 Closed Session.

425

426

427 Recorded by:

428

429 Kirk Bey