

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

Wednesday, November 2, 2016

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, November 2, 2016. It was noted that the meeting had been
3 announced and a notice posted at City Hall.

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

7
8 Also Present: Ald. Bob Muth, Financial Services Director/Treasurer Fred Buehler, Human
9 Resources Director Hope Burchell, Fire Chief Don Dominick, Police Chief Jeff Trotnic, City
10 Engineer Jarrod Holter

11

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

13

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

16

17 On voice vote, motion carried.

18

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

20

21 Ald. Bialecki called three times for anyone wishing to provide public input and closed that
22 portion of the meeting.

23

24 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

25

26 **PERSONNEL**

27

28 **Item 4 – Review and consideration of MSDS online contract renewal for 1/31/2017 through**
29 **1/31/2020**

30

31 Hope said this item is due to expire in 2017, noting the city was able to obtain this program at a
32 discount in 2013 through Cities and Villages Mutual Insurance Company (CVMIC). Hope said
33 that while the rate has increased by \$300 a year, she believes it is “minor” considering the
34 services the city receives. Hope described the program as “very successful and user-friendly”
35 and said she hopes the committee will vote to renew it.

36

37 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Bertrand, to approve MSDS online contract renewal for
38 1/31/2017 through 1/31/2020.

39

40 On voice vote, motion carried.

41

42

Reviewed 11/3/16 by Hope Burchell & Fred Buehler

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43 **Item 5 – Review and consideration of new position job description**

44

45 a. HR/IT Assistant

46

47 Hope said this position is somewhat similar to the temporary position approved through the
48 reorganization. This position would be part-time, and the employee also would assist IT Support
49 Specialist Mike DeLine. Hope said this employee also could assist other clerical staff in the
50 suite if there are opportunities to do so.

51

52 Ald. Bialecki asked Hope if she believes the person who is hired will have the technological
53 knowledge to serve as Mike’s backup.

54

55 Hope said the employee would provide support for Mike and be knowledgeable in Excel and
56 Word.

57

58 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Bertrand, to approve the new position job description
59 for HR/IT Assistant.

60

61 On voice vote, motion carried.

62

63 b. Administrative Secretary-Police Department

64

65 Hope said Police Department staff had given her the changes it had requested for the position.
66 The grade was marked as a Grade “10,” but it was incorrect and actually a Grade “7.” The
67 employee’s duties will include parking and open records, and the hourly wage was decreased to
68 \$12.25.

69

70 Ald. Bialecki asked if the position is a Grade “7.”

71

72 Hope said it now is a Grade “6.”

73

74 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the new position job description for
75 Administrative Secretary-Police Department.

76

77 On voice vote, motion carried.

78

79 **Item 6 – Review and consideration of Police Department Towing Policy**

80

81 Ald. Muth said he has questions regarding the Police Department Towing Policy, adding that
82 perhaps changes also need to be made. Ald. Muth gave each committee member a packet and
83 referred to the top sheet of paper, which lists the Police Department’s “Wrecker of the Week”
84 schedule. There currently are six towing services serving the city. Two are located in the City of
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85 La Crosse; two are located in the Village of Holmen; one is located in the City of Onalaska; and
86 one is located in the City of Sparta. Ald. Muth referred to the second page of the handout, which
87 is the first page of the “Wrecker of the Week” agreement between the City of Onalaska and a
88 contractor, and said he is not seeking action from the committee tonight, but rather is simply
89 supplying this information so it may be examined.

90
91 Ald. Muth referred to page 2, Section 3.1 (“Business Location”) of the contract, which notes that
92 a towing service must be located within a geographical area that allows for a 20-minute response
93 time to be met. Ald. Muth said he is certain that a tow truck is not able to travel from the City of
94 Sparta to the City of Onalaska in 20 minutes. Ald. Muth said it is his understanding that a
95 towing service stations itself at the La Crosse Airport when it is the “Wrecker of the Week” so it
96 may arrive at a location within 20 minutes. Ald. Muth referred to page 3, Section 3.7 (“Storage
97 Service and Facility”), which states that each towing service must have a secured storage area if
98 vehicles are taken into their possession and towed. Ald. Muth noted that according to the
99 agreement wrecker services must be listed in the local telephone book. However, Rush Hour
100 Towing, the service located in the City of Sparta, is not listed in the local telephone book. Ald.
101 Muth also said he is unsure if Rush Hour Towing has been examined to determine if it has a
102 secure storage facility in which to store vehicles, which is a requirement of Section 3.7. Ald.
103 Muth referred to page 5, Section 6.2 (“Subcontracting”), which states a towing company serving
104 as “Wrecker of the Week” may not subcontract these duties.

105
106 Ald. Muth referred to the City of Onalaska Police Department Policy regarding “Towing
107 Abandoned, Disabled, or Other Vehicles” and said he is aware that the “Wrecker of the Week”
108 comes up for renewal January 1 of each year if new towing companies are being added to the
109 list. Ald. Muth said, “My concern is, number one and most importantly, any business that has a
110 towing company, if they want to be on this towing ‘Wrecker of the Week’ service, we could
111 have tow trucks from Galesville, Stoddard, Denver, Colorado ... I don’t care where you have
112 them as long as they comply with it. I guess as a [Common] Council member, I really truly
113 believe that we should support businesses within our area. I’m not saying strictly Onalaska, but I
114 would think La Crosse County. We should support those businesses around us and we don’t
115 open the door to let everybody and anybody that complies with these rules come into Onalaska
116 and be the ‘Wrecker of the Week.’ I just don’t agree with it. I’ve supplied you with some of the
117 notations and information, and I guess all I’m asking is for you to have a look at it and see if
118 there are some changes [to be made]. But I do believe that we should have local wrecker
119 companies that have been [here]. The 40 years I’ve been here, mostly the same wrecker
120 companies have been supplying service to our community, and they’re all within La Crosse
121 County. I think that’s something we should look at. We should support our businesses that are
122 around us.”

123
124 Ald. Bialecki cited the example of purchasing a new automobile from a dealership located in the
125 City of Sparta, noting that the vehicle has warranty provisions. Ald. Bialecki cited the example
126 of that automobile needing repairs six months after being purchased and the dealership offers to

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127 tow the vehicle to the City of Sparta to repair it. Ald. Bialecki asked Ald. Muth if this means a
128 towing service located in the City of Sparta could not come to the City of Onalaska to tow the
129 vehicle.

130

131 Ald. Muth said the vehicle's owner may choose which towing service to utilize because it is
132 stipulated in the policy. Ald. Muth said, "It's the ones that don't have a preference, or there is an
133 arrest made and the officers [must] make the arrangements to have the vehicle towed. That's
134 where that comes into play. I'm concerned about if we have a wrecker service out of Sparta and
135 we have a local person who has an accident or their car breaks down and they have them come
136 and tow the vehicle. When that person is able to pick up their vehicle, they have to go to Sparta.
137 They live in Onalaska. This is where the car broke down, but they have to go to Sparta to pick
138 up their vehicle. If that was me I'd be wondering, 'Why am I going all the way to Sparta to get
139 my vehicle?' I just want to support businesses in the La Crosse County area. I think if you look
140 at other jurisdictions [such as] Holmen, La Crosse and other ones, I don't think you're going to
141 find that they have other towing companies that are way out of the area."

142

143 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to refer for 30 days review and consideration of
144 Police Department Towing Policy.

145

146 Fred said City Clerk Cari Burmaster has asked that motions not state that items are being referred
147 for 30 days but rather until the next meeting because there might not be a 30-day separation
148 between meetings.

149

150 Motion restated:

151

152 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Bertrand, to refer to the December 7, 2016 Finance and
153 Personnel Committee meeting review and consideration of Police Department Towing Policy.

154

155 On voice vote, motion carried.

156

157 **FINANCE**

158

159 **Item 1 – Omni Center financials for 2016**

160

161 Fred reported that the Omni Center's deficit as of September 30 was \$21,687.02.

162

163 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Bertrand, to accept the Omni Center financials.

164

165 On voice vote, motion carried.

166

167 **Item 2 – City General Fund Financials for 2016**

168

Reviewed 11/3/16 by Hope Burchell & Fred Buehler

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169 Fred noted that legal fees will be approximately \$26,000 over budget.

170

171 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Bertrand, to approve the City General Fund Financials.

172

173 Ald. Bialecki said he believes the legal fees bear “some scrutiny,” stating, “In my opinion, that’s
174 been going up substantially over the years. Sometimes I feel like we should have enough gray
175 matter inside to work through our own problems without having to have an attorney do it for us.”

176

177 On voice vote, motion carried.

178

179 **Item 3 – Consideration and possible actions regarding existing and future improvements in**
180 **the Onalaska Cemetery**

181

182 Ald. Bialecki noted that this item has been discussed at the November 1 Board of Public Works
183 meeting and said the Cemetery Committee that has been fundraising likely will have most of the
184 funds necessary to finish the fencing and archway. Ald. Bialecki also noted that Jarrod has
185 applied for a grant and said the next goal is to install an irrigation system. The Cemetery
186 Committee will fundraise for this system, and Ald. Bialecki said the estimated cost of the system
187 is \$10,000.

188

189 Ald. Bertrand inquired about irrigation in the cemetery.

190

191 Jarrod said the irrigation system would only serve the visible sites.

192

193 **Item 4 – Review and consideration of purchasing and funding software in 2016 for the Fire**
194 **Department**

195

196 Fire Chief Dominick noted the department’s trucks have mapping, and also that OSHA requires
197 that the department must have preplans of buildings. Fire Chief Dominick said the Fire
198 Department has received no support for the software it has been utilizing. Both IT Support
199 Specialist Mike DeLine and GIS Manager Joe Barstow attempted to contact the company, but
200 telephone calls were not being returned, and its website began to “go gray.” Fire Chief
201 Dominick told the committee firefighters had responded to an early-morning emergency call and
202 discovered that the vendor had deactivated the software. Fire Chief Dominick said the Fire
203 Department considered utilizing software currently being used by the Water Department that is
204 similar to a satellite image. However, the software was cost-prohibitive at more than \$20,000.
205 Fire Chief Dominick said the department looked into the “I Am Responding” software, which
206 utilizes Google Earth maps.

207

208 Fire Chief Dominick noted he, Mike and Joe had met with the firefighters and also spoken to the
209 vendor via conference calls, and he said, “It was determined we need to go somewhere because
210 eventually if we’re not getting support and the company no longer offers services, we’re going to

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211 have to change. What we're taking a look at is the monies we didn't spend on the support so far
212 this year because we weren't getting the support, we're going to take a look at utilizing either
213 that or what we have in ... We have money in the budget to get us through to the end of the year,
214 and with Mike's advice, which we obviously agree with, we would temporarily use both systems
215 so we're not without one, and we would make sure we get the bugs worked out and it would suit
216 us. We have the money in the budget."

217

218 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the purchase of the "I Am
219 Responding" software for the Fire Department.

220

221 Ald. Olson inquired about the total cost.

222

223 Fire Chief Dominick said Verizon cards will need to be installed in the trucks so that firefighters
224 may utilize the internet. The cost to do so is \$480, and the cost of setting up the program is
225 \$860. Fire Chief Dominick said the service would run through November 2017, and the total
226 cost would be \$1,340.

227

228 On voice vote, motion carried.

229

230 **Item 5 – Review and consideration of costs related to public records requests**

231

232 Ald. Bialecki said he does not believe all the city's departments are charging for hard copies or
233 digital copies of records and stated he believes there should be a cost to obtain records.

234

235 Both Ald. Olson and Ald. Bertrand said they agree.

236

237 Ald. Bialecki asked Fred to send an email to city employees asking that this policy be utilized.

238

239 Police Chief Trotnic referred to the State of Wisconsin's Open Records Law and when fees can
240 and cannot be charged, noting that there can be a 25-cent per page charge for an open records
241 request. This cost covers the use of the copier and the paper. Police Chief Trotnic said he is
242 uncertain the same would be allowed for a digital copy.

243

244 Hope said the city typically has charged 25 cents per page regardless.

245

246 Police Chief Trotnic said, "My understanding of it is that's not the case. That's why we don't
247 charge for digital."

248

249 Hope said she will defer to Cari.

250

251 Police Chief Trotnic said he will contact the State of Wisconsin, noting the Police Department
252 charges what the state allows it to for the disk. Police Chief Trotnic said there is a \$5 charge for

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253 the disk, noting the Police Department is allowed to charge 25 cents per page. Police Chief
254 Trotnic also said he simply wants to determine if the Police Department is within its purview to
255 charge for digital copies.

256

257 Ald. Bialecki asked Fred to ensure that all departments are charging for copies “as long as we’re
258 staying within the spirit of the law.”

259

260 **Item 6 – Reconsideration of the 2017 budget modifications to establish budget neutral:**

261

262 a. Authorization of a 1½% cost of living adjustment to non-union personnel

263

264 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to approve authorization of a 1½-percent cost of
265 living adjustment to non-union personnel.

266

267 On voice vote, motion carried.

268

269 b. Establish an Administrative Secretary hourly rate and hours for 2017

270

271 Hope said this will be a 600-hour position. However, the hours will be decreased by 33 hours to
272 ensure that it is budget neutral. This will bring the total hours to 566 for 2017, and the hours will
273 increase to 600 in 2018.

274

275 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Bertrand, to approve establishing an Administrative
276 Secretary hourly rate and hours for 2017.

277

278 On voice vote, motion carried.

279

280 c. Establish Human Resources and IT Assistant hourly rate and hours for 2017

281

282 Hope said this is a 1,200-hour position that will be reduced by 59 hours. This will bring the total
283 hours to 1,141 for 2017, and the hours will increase to 1,200 for 2018.

284

285 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Bertrand, to approve establishing Human Resources
286 and IT Assistant hourly rate and hours for 2017.

287

288 On voice vote, motion carried.

289

290 **Closed Session**

291

292 To consider a motion to convene in Closed Session under Section 19.85(1)(g) of the Wisconsin
293 Statutes for the purpose of conferring with legal counsel for the governmental body who is

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294 rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with respect to
295 litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved:

296

- 297 • Claim regarding overhead wires at 437 Pearl Street, Onalaska, WI

298

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

302

303 Ald. Bialecki said there will be no Closed Session because legal counsel has not had an
304 opportunity to review this matter.

305

306 **Adjournment**

307

308 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Bertrand, to adjourn at 7:55 p.m.

309

310 On voice vote, motion carried.

311

312

313 Recorded by:

314

315 Kirk Bey