

**Special Common Council
of the City of Onalaska**
Monday, November 7, 2016
1

1 The Special Meeting of the Common Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. on Monday,
2 November 7, 2016. It was noted that the meeting had been announced and a notice posted at
3 City Hall.

4
5 Roll call was taken, with the following members present: Mayor Joe Chilsen, Ald. Jim Binash,
6 Ald. Jim Bialecki, Ald. Jim Olson, Ald. Harvey Bertrand, Ald. Bob Muth. Ald. Barry Blomquist
7 participated via telephone.

8
9 Also Present: City Clerk Cari Burmaster, Financial Services Director/Treasurer Fred Buehler,
10 Human Resources Director Hope Burchell, City Engineer Jarrod Holter

11
12 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from the previous meeting**

13
14 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, 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 – Swearing in of new City of Onalaska Police Officers Tyler Thilges and Trevor**
20 **Carlson**

21
22 Cari asked Trevor to raise his right hand and repeat the following: *“I, Trevor Carlson, having*
23 *been appointed as an Officer of the Onalaska Police Department, swear that I will support the*
24 *Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Wisconsin, and will*
25 *faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of said office to the best of my ability, so help me*
26 *God.”*

27
28 Cari asked Tyler to raise his right hand and repeat the following: *“I, Tyler Thilges, having been*
29 *appointed as an Officer of the Onalaska Police Department, swear that I will support the*
30 *Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Wisconsin, and will*
31 *faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of said office to the best of my ability, so help me*
32 *God.”*

33
34 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

35
36 **FINANCE**

37
38 **Item 1 – Public Hearing: Approximately 6:00 P.M. (public input limited to 3 minutes per**
39 **individual) – On the proposed 2017 Executive Budget, including the budgets for General**
40 **Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Debt Service Funds, Enterprise Funds, Capital Project**
41 **Funds, and Community Development Authority Funds**

42
Reviewed 11/8/16 by Cari Burmaster

43 Mayor Chilsen opened the public hearing, called three times for anyone wishing to speak on the
44 proposed 2017 Executive Budget, and closed that portion of the meeting.

45
46 Mayor Chilsen called for any Council members wishing to speak on the proposed 2017
47 Executive Budget.

48
49 Ald. Bertrand addressed Tourism revenues, noting that \$723,175 is being budgeted for 2017.
50 Ald. Bertrand also noted that revenue as of October 31 was \$516,367 and said this amount
51 reflects revenues that take into account a room tax rate of 8 percent for the full year. Ald.
52 Bertrand said revenue would total \$619,640 if the \$516,367 is projected throughout the entire
53 year. Ald. Bertrand said he had contacted Hampton Inn representative Brent Johnston and
54 Stoney Creek Inn representative Judy Leis, both of whom told him they are expecting a “flat”
55 year in 2017 compared to 2016. Ald. Bertrand said, “I see no reason to project anything but an
56 annualized figure for the 2016 activity, which I get to be \$619,640. If we did the \$723,175 that
57 would be an increase of 17 percent. I simply do not see any reason how that could happen.”

58
59 Motion by Ald. Bertrand to reduce Tourism room tax revenue in the 2017 Executive Budget to
60 \$619,640.

61
62 Mayor Chilsen said it is his understanding that Ald. Bertrand is asking to decrease the amount
63 budgeted for room tax revenue.

64
65 Ald. Bertrand said, “Significantly.”

66
67 Mayor Chilsen asked, “By how much?”

68
69 Ald. Bertrand said he would like the amount revised to \$620,000.

70
71 Ald. Blomquist said the reduction would be \$103,000.

72
73 Fred said, “If we go from \$667,000 to \$620,000 ...”

74
75 Mayor Chilsen said this would be a \$47,000 reduction.

76
77 Fred said the reduction would be \$47,284 or \$47,285.

78
79 Ald. Bertrand reiterated he does not see any justification for budgeting \$723,175.

80
81 Ald. Olson asked Fred for his opinion.

82
83 Fred noted that a second to the motion had not been made.

84
Reviewed 11/8/16 by Cari Burmaster

85 Motion by Ald. Bertrand, second by Ald. Olson, to reduce Tourism room tax revenue in the 2017
86 Executive Budget to \$620,000.

87
88 Fred said, “Back when the [Room Tax Commission] met, there were only two quarters that have
89 elapsed. Two quarters have elapsed from the time the [Room Tax Commission] met. Since the
90 budget notices were given to the Common Council, after that date the people had until the end of
91 October to pay for the third quarter. Third quarter finished in the area of, in reference to sales ...
92 I’m going to deal with sales because it’s a matter of taking that times 8 percent. [There were]
93 sales of \$8,341,000. Those are factual numbers through third quarter, unlike we did not have
94 that information for third quarter when the [Room Tax Commission] last met [on August 24]. If
95 you were to take the slowest quarter, which is the first quarter of any year, which is January,
96 February and March, and add that sales to the \$8.3 [million] – and the lowest one was
97 \$2,334,000 in the first quarter of 2016 – you will get \$10,675,000. This budget is put together at
98 \$10,550,000. With that said, I feel very comfortable with even a little bit of a latitude there that
99 the figures presented in this budget are proper.”

100
101 Ald. Bertrand asked for the meaning of the \$516,367.

102
103 Fred said, “If you were to take \$10,550,000, as indicated in the budget, [and multiply it by] 8
104 percent, that is the allocation of the room tax to the City of Onalaska.”

105
106 Ald. Bertrand asked if \$516,367 was the city’s revenue as of October 31.

107
108 Fred said no, noting that the budget books were sent out before the quarter information was
109 received. Fred said, “The third quarter was not complete. Actually, you were missing two
110 months’ worth when the books went out because there’s such a lapse of time from the time the
111 motels have to pay – two months, to be exact.”

112
113 Ald. Bertrand asked how many months the \$516,367 represents.

114
115 Fred said, “What I’m telling you is they had until the end of October to make the third quarter
116 payments. Third quarter sales total \$8.3 million. Eight-point-three million dollars plus \$2.3
117 million comes to \$10.6 million. Ten-point-six is higher than the \$10.5 million that’s in the
118 budget.”

119
120 For clarification, Ald. Bertrand asked Fred if the hoteliers had until the end of October to make
121 third-quarter payments.

122
123 Fred said yes, noting that the payments that are postmarked typically do not arrive at City Hall
124 until three to five days into the following month.

125
126 Ald. Bertrand referred to the August 24 Room Tax Commission meeting minutes and noted that
Reviewed 11/8/16 by Cari Burmaster

127 revenues through the end of July totaled \$317,252. Ald. Bertrand noted that this equates to
128 approximately \$45,000 a month.

129
130 Fred told Ald. Bertrand that four hotels make quarterly payments and said four motels were not
131 included in the figures because the quarter had not ended. Fred said there are three months
132 where the statistics will not show quarterly sales from the four motels. Fred referred to Council
133 members' budget books and noted it includes a sheet clearly identifying \$10,550,000 in sales
134 along with the methodology used to show the amount of income that would be collected. Fred
135 said, "That is what this budget tonight shows."

136
137 Ald. Bialecki said he believes what Fred has presented is accurate.

138
139 Mayor Chilsen noted that the budget is about expenditures and not revenue. Mayor Chilsen said,
140 "We're voting on how much money we can spend."

141
142 Ald. Bertrand asked, "Our budget is not based on revenues?"

143
144 Mayor Chilsen reiterated it is based on expenditures.

145
146 Ald. Bertrand asked, "Don't we have to cover expenditures with revenues?"

147
148 Mayor Chilsen said there is an expenditure cap and noted the funds coming in from Tourism may
149 not be utilized by the city – just a small portion.

150
151 Ald. Binash, who sits on the Room Tax Commission, told Ald. Bertrand he understands his point
152 of view. However, Ald. Binash added, "I feel very comfortable with the figures that we have in
153 the budget for where we're going with next year. You have to realize this is the first year for the
154 La Crosse Convention and Visitors Bureau and the first year we're doing the 8 percent [room
155 tax]. There was a bit of a slow period in the beginning, but as I was informed by some of the
156 hoteliers that usually in the fall – especially with the weather that we're having now – things
157 would pick up. Obviously, they have gotten to their budgetary concerns. I do see where you're
158 coming from, but I'm comfortable with the budget the way it is."

159
160 On voice vote, motion failed, 5-1.

161
162 Mayor Chilsen called three times for any Council members who wish to modify the 2017
163 Executive Budget and closed that portion of the meeting.

164
165 Fred said the Common Council would have to accept Exhibits "A," "B," "C" and "D" that were
166 proposed and changed at the October 19 Finance and Personnel II meeting as well as the
167 revisions, which have been included in Council members' packets.

168
Reviewed 11/8/16 by Cari Burmaster

169 **Item 2 – Recommendation and possible action in regards to the 2017 City Budget changes**

170

171 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Binash, to approve the changes identified in Exhibits
172 “A,” “B,” “C” and “D” for the 2017 Executive Budget.

173

174 On voice vote, motion carried.

175

176 **Item 3 – Public input on the new changes to the 2017 City Budget**

177

178 Mayor Chilsen called three times for anyone wishing to comment on accepting Exhibits “A,”
179 “B,” “C” and “D” and closed the public hearing.

180

181 **Item 4 – Recommendation and possible action in regards to the 2017 City Budget**

182

183 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the 2017 City Budget as proposed.

184

185 On voice vote, motion carried, 5-1 (Ald. Bertrand).

186

187 **Item 5 – City of Onalaska – Ordinance No. 1576-2016 – to adopt the appropriation budget**
188 **for 2017 (Suspend rules to give ordinance its First, Second, Third and Final Readings)**

189

190 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Binash, to suspend the rules and give Ordinance No.
191 1576-2016 its First, Second, Third and Final Readings.

192

193 On roll call vote: Ald. Harvey Bertrand – aye, Ald. Barry Blomquist – aye, Ald. Bob Muth –
194 aye, Ald. Jim Olson – aye, Ald. Jim Binash – aye, Ald. Jim Bialecki – aye. Motion carried, 6-0.

195

196 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Binash, to approve Ordinance No. 1576-2016 – to
197 adopt the appropriation budget for 2017 (First, Second, Third and Final Reading).

198

199 On roll call vote: Ald. Bob Muth – aye, Ald. Jim Bialecki – aye, Ald. Barry Blomquist – aye,
200 Ald. Jim Binash – aye, Ald. Harvey Bertrand – aye, Ald. Jim Olson – aye. Motion carried, 6-0.

201

202 **Adjournment**

203

204 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Ald. Olson, to adjourn at 6:23 p.m.

205

206 On voice vote, motion carried.

207

208

209 Recorded by:

210

211 Kirk Bey