

**Administrative & Judiciary Committee
of the City of Onalaska**

Wednesday, August 7, 2019

1

1 The meeting of the Administrative & Judiciary Committee of the City of Onalaska was called to
2 order at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 7, 2019. It was noted that the meeting had been
3 announced and posted at City Hall.

4
5 Roll call was taken with the following members present: Ald. Diane Wulf, Ald. Tom Smith,
6 Ald. Boondi Iyer

7
8 Also Present: Deputy City Clerk JoAnn Marcon, City Attorney Amanda Jackson, Planning
9 Manager Katie Aspenson, Ald. Dan Stevens, Ald. Kim Smith, Ald. Jim Olson

10
11 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from the previous meeting**

12
13 Motion by Ald. Iyer, second by Ald. T. Smith, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting
14 as printed and on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

15
16 On voice vote, motion carried.

17
18 **Item 3 – Public Input (limited to 3 minutes/individual)**

19
20 Ald. Wulf called for anyone wishing to provide public input.

21
22 **Mary Ann Stellick**
23 **903 Keith Place**
24 **Onalaska**

25
26 Mary Ann told committee members the rear of her home adjoins the back of a neighbor’s yard,
27 and she said, “We’ve had problems for quite a while. The home has not been kept up. They
28 have six dogs. When I go out to my flower area, the dogs start barking and charging the fence.
29 They do not clean up from the dogs. There is no grass anymore. It’s just nothing but dirt and
30 feces, and it’s in really bad shape. This person has a tendency to clean up a little bit. It’s good
31 for a couple of weeks, and then it goes back again to the same condition. I’m not the only
32 neighbor who is concerned. There are two other properties that have the same problem. In fact,
33 one person can’t even open up their bedroom windows because of the odor from the backyard.
34 When they try to use their deck, the dogs just bark, bark, bark. In fact, when they have a party
35 people can’t believe that that’s continuing to go on. Another neighbor has children, and this
36 neighbor has yelled at them, screamed at them. Actually, when they were driving by, he threw
37 something at the car the kids were in, and they were just driving down the street. They weren’t
38 doing anything that was unusual. We’re frustrated. We want a change in the ordinance. We
39 want the number of dogs to be actually utilized in that ... He has six dogs, but he says he’s
40 taking care of his friend’s dog. They’re not. They’ve been living there for years. They have
41 German Shepherds. They have a Rottweiler. They have two Saint Bernards and another little
42 dog. It’s a zoo. When my dog is in her own fenced-in yard and goes outside, the dogs start

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43 barking and he yells at my dog. We're concerned as property owners that the ordinance isn't
44 being used correctly. We need it to become effective. It's not. Everybody seems to be afraid of
45 this neighbor."

46
47 JoAnn informed Mary Ann she had reached her three-minute speaking limit.

48
49 Mary Ann concluded, "I know he has problems. But we have property, and we should be able to
50 use it."

51
52 Ald. Wulf told Mary Ann that the committee may not respond to what she has said as it is the
53 public input portion of the meeting. However, Ald. Wulf also told Mary Ann she can follow up
54 with her privately regarding the dogs on the property.

55
56 Ald. Wulf called three times for anyone else wishing to provide public input and closed that
57 portion of the meeting.

58
59 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

60
61 **Administrative**

62
63 **Item 4 – Approval of Operator’s Licenses as listed on report dated August 7, 2019**

64
65 JoAnn noted the new report committee members received this evening has one additional
66 applicant. The Police Department has approved all the applicants, who also have undergone
67 background checks.

68
69 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Iyer, to approve the Operator’s Licenses as listed on
70 report dated August 7, 2019.

71
72 On voice vote, motion carried.

73
74 **Item 5 – Approval of Special Events permits for:**

- 75
76 a. St. Pat’s Family Fun Run, October 5, 2019 from approximately 9-11:30 a.m. starting at
77 St. Pat’s Playground, 11th Avenue North, Onalaska

78
79 JoAnn noted this is a repeat event and said staff has received the Certificate of Insurance on file.
80 All city departments also have signed off on the event.

81
82 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Iyer, to approve a Special Event Permit for St. Pat’s
83 Family Fun Run, October 5, 2019 from approximately 9-11:30 a.m. starting at St. Pat’s
84 Playground, 11th Avenue North, Onalaska.

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85

86 On voice vote, motion carried.

87

88 b. Mini Donut Half Marathon, September 14, 2019 from approximately 7-7:30 a.m.
89 crossing Highway 35 at Riders Club Road, Onalaska

90

91 JoAnn noted this is a repeat event and said event organizers have worked with the Police
92 Department to establish a route and ensure barricades will be placed where they are needed. The
93 Certificate of Insurance is on file, and all city departments have signed off on the event.

94

95 Motion by Ald. Iyer, second by Ald. T. Smith, to approve a Special Event Permit for the Mini
96 Donut Half Marathon, September 14, 2019 from approximately 7-7:30 a.m. crossing Highway 35
97 at Riders Club Road, Onalaska.

98

99 On voice vote, motion carried.

100

101 **Item 6 – Approval of Fireworks Display Permit for Spielbauer Fireworks Co. for wedding**
102 **event at La Crosse Country Club, October 12, 2019 at approx. 8 p.m. (alternate start time 9**
103 **p.m.) on the 9th tee box**

104

105 JoAnn noted the application included in committee members' packets does not show signatures
106 for the Police and Fire Departments signing off on this request. However, both departments have
107 signed off on it, and the Certificate of Insurance is on file. JoAnn told committee members such
108 requests are made perhaps once a year or once every other year.

109

110 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Iyer, to approve a Fireworks Display Permit for
111 Spielbauer Fireworks Co. for wedding event at La Crosse Country Club, October 12, 2019 at
112 approximately 8 p.m. (alternate start time 9 p.m.) on the 9th tee box.

113

114 On voice vote, motion carried.

115

116 **Item 7 – Approval of First Amendment to the Joint Municipal Court Agreement**

117

118 Amanda said she had been asked by Municipal Court Supervisor Hildie McIntyre to update the
119 Joint Municipal Court ordinances. After examining the ordinances, Amanda said she had
120 discovered a few areas that needed editing. Amanda noted there had been changes in the law
121 with respect to the bonding of the judge, and she told committee members the city may now do
122 insurance in lieu of bonding. Amanda said she also had discovered the original agreement had
123 never been amended, noting different municipalities have joined, left, and/or rejoined the JMC.
124 Amanda said she believed it would be prudent to have a short amendment to clarify the
125 membership of the JMC, and also to update the provisions regarding the bonding and the
126 insurance. Amanda said, "There really are only two changes to the original agreement."

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127

128 Ald. T. Smith asked if the City of Onalaska had previously had insurance.

129

130 Amanda said no.

131

132 Motion by Ald. Iyer, second by Ald. T. Smith, to approve the First Amendment to the Joint
133 Municipal Court Agreement.

134

135 On voice vote, motion carried.

136

137 **Item 8 – Discussion regarding regulations for a new Property Maintenance Ordinance**

138

139 Ald. Wulf said property maintenance – including weeds, grass, boats, and abandoned vehicles –
140 is the one topic about which citizens have contacted her the most during her time in public
141 service to the City of Onalaska. Ald. Wulf stated there are citizens who believe they are being
142 harassed in terms of property maintenance, and she told Katie she believes she is the one
143 alderperson who has had the most exposure to her department working with property
144 maintenance on behalf of constituents.

145

146 Ald. Wulf told Katie she has always found her department to be very professional and
147 responsive, and she said, “It’s not an easy job ... but it [dealing with property maintenance] is an
148 unfortunate task that has to be done by someone at City Hall. I know that we can’t make
149 everyone happy. I am, though, seeking relief on people like Mary. I have a number of Second
150 District constituents who have had a lot of issues, and I know every community is going to have
151 those chronic offenders. I am going to continue to stay on Council and still speak on behalf of
152 those people who feel they are being put upon by those offenders. In the talks I’ve had with
153 Katie, I’ve always been very appreciative that the City of Onalaska takes more of an educational
154 point of view. I hear the City of La Crosse [tends to levy more fines] and you don’t get notices.
155 We have more of an educational component. I would much prefer that way, and once people
156 know they’re doing something wrong and they’re not willing to comply, then we fine them. ...
157 The goal is for compliance; that’s what we’re after.” Ald. Wulf told committee members
158 residents along 8th Avenue have had to deal with property maintenance issues for 15 years, and
159 she said both she and Ald. Stevens, who also represents the Second District, want to deliver a
160 resolution that addresses the chronic offenders and also find a niche that does not cause issues for
161 law-abiding citizens.

162

163 Katie told committee members this is a project both she and Amanda have been working on for
164 some time. Katie noted the city has been doing property maintenance for decades and said
165 deficiencies and inconsistencies have been discovered in how property maintenance is addressed
166 in the city. Katie said city staff begins with education and utilizes a three-step process for most
167 of the Property Maintenance Ordinance:

168

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- 169 • Staff sends a first letter informing a citizen he/she has a property maintenance violation.
170 Staff cites the code section, and the property owner must be given time – typically
171 between seven to 10 days – to accommodate it. Property owners also are informed they
172 are welcome to contact the city and speak to staff if there are extenuating circumstances.
173 In most cases, Katie said the additional time they seek is less than what she would offer.
- 174 ○ Katie said that while seven to 10 days seems like a sufficient amount of time to
175 address the violation, on average it takes four days for a letter to reach a
176 homeowner. In reality, homeowners then have three days to accomplish a task.
177 By comparison, the city typically gives a homeowner 10 days to address outdoor
178 storage, boats, or vehicles, which might need to be stored or removed from a
179 property. Katie said those citizens only have six days to complete the action if a
180 letter takes four days to reach them. Katie told committee members many of the
181 property maintenance pieces come from people who, for example, reside in
182 California or Florida. As a result, letters citing violations could take up to a week
183 to reach their destination.
 - 184 ○ Katie said city staff members do not perform surprise inspections, nor do they go
185 to a property before the day property owners are notified they will be inspected as
186 it undermines the city and the level of trust it has with its residents.
- 187 • If property owners do not address the violation in the set timeframe, the city’s second
188 step is to inform. Staff then sends a certified letter to the property owner, which Katie
189 said can upset the property owner as he/she must sign for it. Katie said whenever staff
190 sends a second letter, it also is sent regular mail as a property owner could refuse to sign
191 for a certified letter. A property owner again is given seven to 10 days to address the
192 violation, but in this instance staff pulls out the section of the code and states how the
193 property owner can come into compliance. A new deadline is established, and dates are
194 bolded and highlighted. Staff includes photographs of the violation, sometimes with the
195 violations circled.
- 196 • The city enters the citation process if a property owner still does not comply or contact
197 the city. Staff works with the Police Department, which issues citations on behalf of the
198 Planning Department. Violators receive a letter and a copy of the citation from the city.
199 Katie said the citation is approximately \$280, and she told committee members the goal
200 still is compliance. Katie said if a property owner cleans up the property after receiving
201 the citation and city staff recognizes he/she has complied, he/she works with city legal
202 counsel and enters deferred prosecution. This means the city agrees to waive the citation
203 if the property owner agrees to keep his/her property clean for the next six months. The
204 property owner does not get to waive the citations if the city receives new complaints.

205
206 Katie acknowledged there are “bad” properties in the City of Onalaska, and she said staff sets up
207 meetings with property owners every two weeks and informs them they are coming. Katie said
208 she also personally reminds property owners a day or two in advance she is coming to their
209 property. Staff performs a full inspection of the property every time, and Katie said the only way
210 violators earn additional time to address violations is by working and making continued progress

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211 and effort. Katie told committee members she brings photographs from the previous meeting so
212 that she can justify her willingness to grant additional time and extensions based on the level of
213 work that occurred over a two-week period.

214

215 Ald. Iyer asked if a resident has to register a complaint regarding a property maintenance
216 violation before staff investigates it.

217

218 Katie told Ald. Iyer the city is historically a complaint-based property maintenance program,
219 noting the reason for this is due to a lack of staff. However, Katie also noted the city began
220 systematic code enforcement this summer. This means that in addition to complaints, city staff
221 will go to every single residence in the City of Onalaska and check them against the ordinances.
222 Katie said residences either pass or fail, and property owners receive a letter if their property
223 fails. Katie said going neighborhood to neighborhood is a slower process because if staff cites
224 15 properties and sends 15 letters, not all of them have the same timeframe. Katie said that in
225 addition to the complaint-based violations, staff also must return to all the previous locations and
226 inspect them, and they might discover other properties with violations in the process. Katie said
227 as a result, the city creates the continual process of property maintenance.

228

229 Katie said, “The purpose of the systematic code enforcement is to ensure that everyone gets a
230 fair look, and that we’re not targeting people and individuals. Even if we do get a complaint on
231 Rolling Oaks Drive, we’ll cruise the neighborhood. ... What we typically find is that two houses
232 down it’s the exact same issue, but those neighbors get along. The city never takes a side when
233 it comes to property maintenance. We are equal enforcers.”

234

235 Ald. Stevens asked if the city has a mechanism in place to have enhanced compliance for
236 property owners who, for example, remove a television from the boulevard after receiving notice
237 from the city, but commit another similar violation, say, a year later.

238

239 Katie said the city utilizes an annual basis and told Ald. Stevens if staff sends a first letter for a
240 violation committed in April and the same violation is committed in August, it then sends a
241 second letter (both certified and regular).

242

243 Ald. Wulf said she feels like the situation to which Mary Ann Stellick had referred in public
244 input starts over all the time.

245

246 Mary Ann said, “They move it from the side of the garage to the back, and then from the back
247 they put it in the garage. Then they can’t close the door on the garage, then they bring it back
248 out again.”

249

250 Ald. Wulf noted the homeowners to which Mary Ann had referred “have been making marked
251 improvement” based on the photographs she has seen and said they must earn their way to
252 another two-week reprieve.

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253

254 Katie told committee members properties similar to the one Mary Ann has described tend to
255 come into minimum compliance, and she said some items (ATVs, boats, recreational vehicles,
256 patio furniture, wood piles) may be stored outside. Katie said that while those items are not
257 always visually appealing, they are meant to be stored outside. Katie also said citizens are
258 allowed to accumulate items.

259

260 Ald. Wulf referred to a letter to the editor she had read in the La Crosse Tribune regarding a City
261 of La Crosse citizen who was upset he/she was cited by the City of La Crosse because he/she had
262 utilized a non-conventional item for a flower pot. Ald. Wulf said, "That's the fine line we have
263 to balance on."

264

265 Katie said the Property Maintenance Ordinance encompasses 12 to 15 different city ordinances,
266 and she told committee members the city's Property Maintenance Ordinance is its Code of
267 Ordinances, which each ordinance having different implications. Katie said, "The purpose of
268 what we have before you this evening is every single piece of the Property Maintenance
269 Ordinance that we tend to deal with on a routine basis will now be located at one location so that
270 when somebody calls us we can point them to one particular area because a lot of times people
271 want to know, what are the rules? ... The problem when it's scattered is that if someone makes
272 an ordinance amendment and it changes the section on us and we didn't catch it or it became an
273 'f' instead of an 'e', now you're referring to the wrong ordinance and you're detracting the
274 authenticity and accuracy of your own letters. That was one of the big reasons why we decided
275 to pull this all together and put it into one particular location." Katie told committee members
276 this will be one ordinance. Katie referred to licensing of animals, which Mary Ann Stellick had
277 mentioned during public input, and noted licensing and the number of animals one may own are
278 not included in the Property Maintenance Ordinance. However, Katie noted animal feces will be
279 part of the ordinance.

280

281 Katie noted the Property Maintenance Ordinance includes the following:

282

- 283 • Citizens who wish to register a complaint against a property owner may remain
284 anonymous, per the ordinance.
- 285 • City staff may not enter one's private property unless the property owner has granted
286 his/her permission, or a property owner grants staff permission to enter his/her property
287 so that city staff may examine something on a neighbor's property.
- 288 • Special inspection warrant language, which allows city staff legal access to one's
289 property (exterior and/or interior).
- 290 • Penalties range from \$50 up to \$1,000 per offense.
- 291 • Razing structures that are dilapidated.
- 292 • Section 16-1-2 is "Clean, Safe, Sanitary, and Attractive Maintenance of Exterior
293 Property." This section covers vegetation and landscaping.

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294
295 Katie noted the shaded portions of the code in committee members' packets either mean it is
296 brand new language; language on which the city has been operating, but has not been formalized;
297 and also items for which staff is seeking feedback. Katie referred to a shaded section that reads
298 "*where the parcel of land is located within a subdivision where more than 70 percent of the*
299 *parcels are unbuilt/vacant,*" and she noted there once were large subdivisions in the city, but
300 parcels were built one by one. As a result, the grass on the other properties would grow long,
301 and Katie said it would be difficult to request that the property owner mow the grass because
302 construction has begun on one or two houses, but not others. Katie said the general rule of
303 thumb in the City of Onalaska always has been if 70 percent of the parcel is built, all the parcel
304 owners must mow the lawn.

305
306 Ald. Wulf said it also ties into sidewalks.

307
308 Katie told Ald. Wulf "this is more lawn" and said sidewalks either are shoveled or not shoveled.

309
310 Ald. Wulf said she was referring to installing sidewalks and told Katie she believes it would be
311 logical to have them possibly tie in.

312
313 Katie next addressed natural landscaping, noting it has become more popular to have native
314 grasses, butterfly gardens, rain gardens, and natural pollenating flowers.

315
316 Ald. Wulf asked Katie to return to Section 16-1-2(2)(a) ("Vegetation and Landscaping"), which
317 reads: "*Exposed soils, except exposed soil that is associated with a garden or cultivated*
318 *farmland, shall be vegetated, landscaped, or paved consistent with this Ordinance to prevent soil*
319 *erosion.*" Ald. Wulf said that while she understands the whole purpose of it, she noted there are
320 citizens who are purposely killing right-of-way grass, leaving behind barren soil. However, no
321 soil erosion occurred, even during significant rainfall. Ald. Wulf said City Engineer Jarrod
322 Holter has asked her how this can be enforced, and she stated it is illogical to her that citizens are
323 allowed to kill the right-of-way grass and have barren soil. Ald. Wulf asked if something as
324 extreme as citizens along 2nd Avenue removing the right-of-way and the pathway to the Great
325 River Landing before the ordinance is changed. Ald. Wulf also asked if citizens can be told they
326 cannot purposely kill their grass.

327
328 Amanda referred to Section 16-1-2(2)(a) and said the three options are to vegetate, landscape or
329 pave exposed soils to prevent soil erosion.

330
331 Ald. Wulf said she was told the city cannot enforce the ordinance if there is no soil erosion.

332
333 Katie returned to natural landscapes and noted there used to be extensive ordinance language
334 addressing how citizens had to maintain natural landscapes. Katie said the regulations were
335 unnecessary, telling committee members citizens may, for example, vegetate their entire

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336 backyard and have a butterfly garden. Katie noted natural landscapes are becoming more
337 popular on Commercial properties because it is used as stormwater retention. Katie said the
338 following language has been added to the ordinance: *“Where a natural landscape abuts a*
339 *property or right-of-way that does not have a natural landscape, the property owner with the*
340 *natural landscape shall provide an adequate grass lawn buffer or other acceptable buffer*
341 *between the natural landscape and the adjacent property or right-of-way so as to prevent the*
342 *natural landscape from being a nuisance or hazard or encroachment.”* Katie said the buffer is
343 not specified, noting it is three feet in some cases, five feet in others, and 10 feet in others. Katie
344 told committee members this is meant to be a discussion topic and said the discussion may
345 continue in September.

346

347 Ald. Wulf asked Katie if the end of 2019 is her timeline to complete the ordinance and have it in
348 effect.

349

350 Katie said yes, stating the goal is to have it in full effect come spring 2020.

351

352 Ald. T. Smith asked if this ordinance will replace the existing ordinances.

353

354 Katie said, “We’ll essentially be removing it from all the different sections, so that is another
355 thing [the Administrative and Judiciary Committee] will see. Every single time we’re cutting
356 from an ordinance as we create the new, it will be delete, delete, delete, delete – new ordinance.”

357

358 Katie next addressed brush, noting it currently is treated as a nuisance. Brush is addressed in the
359 ordinance as follows: *“Piles of brush (tree branches, yard waste, etc.) shall not be allowed to*
360 *accumulate and/or be stored on parcels of residentially zoned land as said brush becomes*
361 *habitat for vermin and other associated animals and can become a public nuisance.”* Katie next
362 addressed natural lawns, which are addressed as follows in the ordinance: *“Natural lawns shall*
363 *not be removed through the process of burning unless approval is received from the Fire Chief*
364 *or their designee and a written permit to burn issued by the Fire Chief or their designee. The*
365 *Fire Chief shall establish a written list of requirements for considering each request to burn*
366 *natural lawns, thereby ensuring the public safety. In addition, the property owner requesting*
367 *permission to burn the natural lawn shall produce evidence of property damage and liability*
368 *insurance identifying the city as a party insured. A minimum amount of acceptable insurance*
369 *shall be \$300,000.”*

370

371 Katie told committee members Section 16-1-2 (3) (“Noxious Weeds, Nuisance Weeds and
372 Invasive Species”) has been reduced to three paragraphs, noting the ordinance refers to State of
373 Wisconsin Statutes, natural resource guidelines, and administrative code as to what is a nuisance
374 and what is noxious. Katie said this will allow the city to enforce the most up-to-date code.
375 Katie told committee members she is seeking feedback on Section 16-1-2 (4) (“Composting”),
376 noting people have become more intrigued by composting. Some of the rules for composting
377 staff has put into ordinance form include, but are not limited to, the following:

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378

379 • Composting shall be conducted within an enclosed container or containers not to exceed
380 a sum total of 150 cubic feet per parcel. A compost container shall be made of durable
381 material such as wood, block, plastic, or sturdy metal fencing, and shall have been
382 constructed exclusively for composting.

383 • Compost containers shall not present an aesthetic, health, or odiferous nuisance to
384 neighboring properties.

385 • Compost containers are prohibited in any front or side yard, nor can they be located in
386 drainage swales. Compost containers must be located a minimum of three feet from
387 parcel lines, five feet from an alley right-of-way, 10 feet from a principal structure, and
388 three feet from another neighboring accessory structure.

389

390 Katie next addressed Section 16-1-2 (8) (“Storage of detached truck toppers”), asking committee
391 members if the city should regulate this. Section 16-1-2 (8) reads in part “*No person may leave
392 or store a detached truck topper in any front yard. All detached toppers shall be stored inside an
393 enclosed structure, or they shall be stored in a rear or side yard in a manner that does not create
394 a hazard or an aesthetic nuisance.*”

395

396 Ald. Wulf asked to address Subsection ‘c’ of Section 16-1-2 (6) (“Animals, animal enclosures,
397 and feces”), which reads “*Domestic animal feces shall be removed and properly disposed of
398 within 24 hours.*”

399

400 Katie told Ald. Wulf that rule has been in the books for several years and said she is not
401 proposing any changes to it. Katie said, “You have to look at it from a matter of enforcement,”
402 and she asked those in attendance how many of them a dog who has defecated outside during a
403 snowstorm that has lasted three days, and also how many of them had picked up the feces within
404 24 hours. Katie noted the feces do not emit an odor during the winter months and are covered
405 when it snows, and she pointed out there are several City of Onalaska residents who do not
406 follow this rule. However, Katie asked if the rule should be changed, and she also asked how the
407 rule should be enforced.

408

409 Ald. Wulf told Katie her constituents who live on 8th Avenue have told her dog waste on
410 neighboring properties prevents them from enjoying time outdoors, and she asked how the city
411 could approach this problem.

412

413 Katie said staff can continue to look into this and propose potential options at the September 4
414 Administrative and Judiciary Committee meeting.

415

416 Ald. Wulf stated she believes something different needs to be done, but the solution needs to be
417 logical for city staff and also enforceable. Ald. Wulf also said any violations have to be reported.

418

419 Katie noted city staff cannot be everywhere and said some violations will be more complaint-

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420 based.

421

422 Ald. T. Smith asked if city staff keeps citizens who register complaints apprised of the situation,
423 telling Katie he has been told by citizens who registered complaints the city has not taken any
424 action even though he knows that is not true.

425

426 Katie told Ald. T. Smith city staff does not always return citizens' telephone calls and said the
427 burden typically falls on the property owner to contact the city. Katie said the reason for this is
428 city staff attempts to do property maintenance for the entire city, and she reiterated a resident
429 may contact staff at any time and inquire where the city is at in the process.

430

431 Katie next addressed Section 16-1-2 (11) ("Graffiti") and noted it is existing language that would
432 be moved into this particular section. Regarding Section 16-1-12 (12) ("Firewood Storage"),
433 Katie noted firewood storage originally could be no higher than six feet from grade. However,
434 some citizens burn more wood during the winter, and Katie said she is proposing increasing the
435 height to eight feet. Katie addressed Subsection 'e', which reads "*Not more than 20 percent of*
436 *the side and rear yard may be used for storage of firewood at any one time. When a rear yard is*
437 *used for firewood storage, such storage area shall be counted in computing the rear lot coverage*
438 *requirements in Section 13-6-7 (c) (2) (3),"* and asked how this could be tied to the 25-percent
439 amount of the rear yard lot coverage. Katie said she does not necessarily believe this is fair and
440 told committee members this can be a discussion topic. Regarding Section 16-1-2 (13) ("Fuel
441 tanks"), Katie said they would not be allowed in the front or side yard. Katie addressed
442 Subsection 'b' ("Litter from Conduct of Commercial Enterprise") in Section 16-1-2 (14)
443 ("Dumping and littering") and said staff has seen littering due to overflowing refuse cans. Katie
444 addressed Section 16-1-2 (17) ("Vehicles") and said this addresses the parking and storage of
445 vehicles in all Residential zoning districts. This section includes the following rules:

446

- 447 • Vehicles shall be kept fully operational, licensed and used on a regular basis. Oil and
448 other vehicle fluids shall not be permitted to spill onto the ground, which may create an
449 aesthetic nuisance and/or migrate into the city's right-of-way or utility systems.
- 450 • Vehicles and trailers that are less than 25 feet in length not required by the State of
451 Wisconsin to be licensed or registered shall not be parked on front yards (excluding
452 corner properties) unless parked on a driveway or parking area described pursuant to the
453 provisions of this Ordinance and set back a minimum of 15 feet from the curb. Such
454 vehicles may be parked in the rear yard and/or in the side yard if the side yard has a
455 minimum 25-foot setback.
- 456 • Except as permitted on State of Wisconsin property, no person shall park any
457 unregistered, unlicensed, or inoperable vehicle upon any public street, alley, highway, or
458 public property.
- 459 • Regarding the responsibility for parking violations on premises, the registered owner of a
460 vehicle shall be responsible for any violations of the parking provisions of this
461 Ordinance. Katie noted individuals who rent a home to someone who does not obey the

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12

462 parking rules are responsible for property maintenance.

463

464 Katie noted the city currently allows RVs, boats, snowmobiles, and ATVs in a homeowner's rear
465 yard. Citizens who own corner lots typically have front yards that are set back 25 feet from the
466 boulevard to the house, and they are allowed to keep vehicles on the side yard as they do not
467 have a rear yard. However, Katie noted several residents own boats that are tucked in on their
468 side yard and said she would like to discuss this. Katie also noted some citizens keep multiple
469 vehicles in their driveway – and they are allowed to do so – and she said some create more
470 impervious surface for storage so their vehicles sit on an approved hard surface. Katie said there
471 also are citizens who wish to fence in their side yard and backyard and create a new space. Katie
472 said she knows the intent of the 25-foot setback is to protect corner properties and told
473 committee members she sees nothing wrong with it. However, Katie also said she wishes to
474 discuss addressing side yards for citizens who do not own corner properties. Katie noted some
475 citizens have fenced-in side yards and cannot fit an RV through a gate that might only be five
476 feet. Thus, they must install a gate at a significant cost.

477

478 Amanda noted the Police Department had requested that Subsection 'f' ("Parking or storage of
479 unregistered, unlicensed, or inoperable vehicles on public property"), Subsection 'g'
480 ("Abandoned vehicles"), Subsection 'h' ("Storage of machinery, implements and equipment"),
481 and Subsection 'i' ("Responsibility for parking violations on premises") be included. Amanda
482 noted Assistant Police Chief Troy Miller had requested the inclusion of Subsection 'f' due to
483 complaints the Police Department has received.

484

485 Katie told committee members the city's department heads had examined the draft copy of the
486 ordinance before the committee this evening. Katie also noted concerns have been raised
487 regarding vacant homes and said it is staff's intent to include language in the ordinance that will
488 address this.

489

490 **Item 9 – Miscellaneous licensing reporting**

491

492 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Iyer, to place on file the miscellaneous licensing
493 reporting.

494

495 JoAnn noted there are four additional applicants from the listing included in committee
496 members' packets.

497

498 On voice vote, motion carried.

499

500 **Judiciary**

501

502 **Item 10 – Ordinance 1651-2019 – to amend Article E of Chapter 3 of Title 2 of the Code of**
503 **Ordinances of the City of Onalaska relating to Joint Municipal Court (First and Second**

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504 **Reading)**

505

506 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Iyer, to approve Ordinance 1651-2019 – to amend Article
507 E of Chapter 3 of Title 2 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Onalaska relating to Joint
508 Municipal Court (First and Second Reading).

509

510 Amanda said that pursuant to the Joint Municipal Court agreement, the JMC Ordinance must be
511 approved by all the governing bodies that are members of the JMC. Amanda also noted the
512 member communities, including the Village of Holmen and the Town of Campbell, are
513 examining the same ordinance.

514

515 On voice vote, motion carried.

516

517 **Adjournment**

518

519 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Iyer, to adjourn at 7:12 p.m.

520

521 Ald. T. Smith noted the meeting was adjourned.

522

523

524 Recorded by:

525

526 Kirk Bey