

**Common Council  
of the City of Onalaska**

Tuesday, July 14, 2020

1

1 The Meeting of the Common Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 14, 2020.  
2 It was noted that the meeting had been announced and a notice posted at City Hall.

3  
4 Roll call was taken, with the following members present: Mayor Kim Smith, Ald. Tom Smith,  
5 Ald. Jim Olson, Ald. Dan Stevens, Ald. Diane Wulf, Ald. Steven Nott

6  
7 Also Present: City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, City Clerk JoAnn Marcon, Police Chief  
8 Charles Ashbeck, Fire Chief Troy Gudie, City Attorney Amanda Jackson. Human Resource  
9 Director Hope Burchell, City Engineer Jarrod Holter, Parks and Recreation Director Dan Wick,  
10 Financial Services Director/Treasurer Fred Buehler and Planning Manager Katie Aspenson  
11 participated remotely.

12  
13 **Item 2 – Pledge of Allegiance**

14  
15 The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

16  
17 **Item 3 – Rules of the City of Onalaska Common Council and its Sub Committees –**  
18 **Harassment Free Forum**

19  
20 Mayor K. Smith read the following: *“The City Council and Sub-Committee meetings shall be*  
21 *conducted in a courteous manner. Citizens, Council, and Committee members shall be allowed*  
22 *to state their positions in an atmosphere free of slander, insults, obscene remarks, threats of*  
23 *violence, or for use of Council or Committee as a forum for politics. Sufficient warnings may be*  
24 *given by the Sergeant at Arms at any time during the remarks. In the event that any individual*  
25 *shall violate the rules of decorum heretofore set forth, such person may then be cut off from*  
26 *comment or debate.”*

27  
28 **Item 4 – PUBLIC INPUT: (limited to 3 minutes/individual)**

29  
30 Mayor K. Smith called three times for anyone wishing to provide public input and closed that  
31 portion of the meeting.

32  
33 **Item 5 – REPORT FROM THE MAYOR:**

34  
35 A. Community Update on COVID-19

36  
37 Mayor K. Smith said there have been discussions regarding adopting a mask policy requirement  
38 in the City of Onalaska and La Crosse County, and that regional leaders currently are discussing  
39 what such a policy would look like. Mayor K. Smith said the City of Onalaska would like to see  
40 a regional approach to reducing the spread of COVID-19, and any possible solutions would need  
41 to be evaluated for their legality and enforceability before moving on to measure a potential  
42 widespread community report. Mayor K. Smith said communication with the city’s regional

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43 neighbors is ongoing so that everyone may determine the best course of action. Mayor K. Smith  
44 said the city also is working with neighboring municipalities on having another test site Friday,  
45 July 24 at the Omni Center.

46  
47 City Administrator Rindfleisch said testing at the Omni Center will be from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on  
48 July 24. City Administrator Rindfleisch also reported that City Hall had reopened July 8 after  
49 the status of the Coulee COVID-19 Compass changed from Red to Orange. The building is open  
50 Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 p.m. to 5  
51 p.m. City Hall is closed to the public on Fridays. City Administrator Rindfleisch said City Hall  
52 is open for business electronically or remotely utilizing telephones, and the facility is open for  
53 appointments during the aforementioned hours. City Administrator Rindfleisch asked the public  
54 to call in advance if they need to meet with a city employee.

55  
56 B. Census Update

57  
58 Mayor K. Smith reported the current self-response rate is 77.5 percent, compared to 82.2 percent  
59 during the last census in 2010. La Crosse County's current self-response rate is 70.4 percent,  
60 compared to 79.5 percent in 2010. The State of Wisconsin's self-response rate is 68.7 percent,  
61 which is second in the nation. Residents may continue to respond until Saturday, October 31,  
62 but Mayor K. Smith said responding as soon as possible is important to avoid receiving a visit  
63 from a census worker. Census workers will begin visiting homes Tuesday, August 11, and  
64 Mayor K. Smith noted Census Bureau jobs still are available at a rate of \$17.50 per hour.

65  
66 Ald. Nott said he assumes there will be a way for census workers to identify themselves as being  
67 legitimate when they visit homes, and he asked if the city's residents may be informed of this on  
68 the city's website.

69  
70 JoAnn told Ald. Nott that information may be added to the city's website if it is not already  
71 there.

72  
73 C. Proclamation Acknowledging The Midwest Renewal Association's Group Buy Solar  
74 Program

75 o City of Onalaska Co-Host Solar Power Hour on July 29, 2020 from 11-12 p.m. (via  
76 Zoom)

77  
78 Mayor K. Smith noted a copy of the proclamation has been included in councilmembers'  
79 packets, and also that the City of Onalaska is co-hosting the Solar Power Hour. Mayor K. Smith  
80 noted Grow Solar La Crosse is a group purchasing program for residential and other small-scale  
81 solar individuals, and it is offered by the City of La Crosse, the City of Onalaska, La Crosse  
82 County, and the Midwest Renewable Energy Association. Mayor K. Smith said La Crosse  
83 County homeowners may participate in this program to pool the purchasing power and secure  
84 significant discounts that make installing solar more affordable for their home or property.

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85 Mayor K. Smith noted there is a link on the city's website, and she said it is offered at other  
86 times via Zoom. There is no obligation to attend the seminar, and the deadline to decide to  
87 purchase solar via the program is September 30. Mayor K. Smith said this is an initiative the  
88 City of Onalaska is doing with its regional partners at no cost to the city.

89

90 Ald. Wulf referred to No. 1 on the proclamation, which reads "*Allowing the use of the City of*  
91 *Onalaska name on promotional materials that state the City as a supporter of this project,*" and  
92 asked if it is in name only and not the city's logo.

93

94 Mayor K. Smith said it is just the name and told councilmembers the city is working on having a  
95 brand image that may be utilized in this type of situation. Mayor K. Smith said the logo was  
96 intentionally not used because of this.

97

98 D. Proclamations in recognition of city staff retirements

99

1. Cari Burmaster

100

2. Calvin King

101

3. Cindy Genz

102

103 Mayor K. Smith said she had written three proclamations of thanks for the three retiring city  
104 employees, and she read proclamations of thanks for Cari Burmaster, the retiring City Clerk (19  
105 years with the city); Calvin King, the retiring Building Inspector (31 years with the city); and  
106 Cindy Genz, who is retiring from the Inspection Department (32 years with the city).

107

108 Ald. Nott commended Cari, Calvin, and Cindy for their service to the city, noting that they have  
109 82 years of service to the city between them. Ald. Nott thanked the three and wished them well  
110 in their future endeavors.

111

112 Ald. Stevens thanked Cari, Calvin, and Cindy for their service to the city and said he hopes they  
113 enjoy the next aspect of their lives.

114

115 Ald. Olson thanked Cari, Calvin, and Cindy, and he said each of them has done a wonderful job  
116 for the city.

117

118 Ald. Wulf thanked Cari, Calvin, and Cindy for their many years of service to the city, and she  
119 also recognized Mac McGuire, who had recently retired from the Inspection Department.

120

121 Ald. T. Smith thanked Cari, Calvin, and Cindy, and he said they are excellent employees with  
122 whom he has enjoyed working.

123

124 E. Acknowledgement of swearing in of city employees:

125

1. Troy Gudie, Fire Chief

126

2. JoAnn Marcon, City Clerk

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127

128 Mayor K. Smith noted both Fire Chief Gudie and JoAnn had been sworn in to their new  
129 positions.

130

131 F. Guidelines for requests for Mayoral Proclamations

132

133 Mayor K. Smith said that while Mayoral Proclamations are the purview of the Mayor, she  
134 wanted to share the guidelines with the Council. Mayor K. Smith said she hopes the guidelines  
135 will be posted on the city's website, and also that they will be available to councilmembers, city  
136 staff, and the public if someone wishes to request a proclamation.

137

138 G. Appointment of Amber Pfaff, 609 Gilster Street, Onalaska, to Plan Commission

139

140 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. T. Smith, to appoint Amber Pfaff, 609 Gilster Street,  
141 Onalaska, to the Plan Commission.

142

143 On voice vote, motion carried.

144

145 H. Appointment of JoAnn Marcon to Onalaska City Clerk

146

147 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Wulf, to appoint JoAnn Marcon to Onalaska City Clerk.

148

149 On voice vote, motion carried.

150

151 **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION FROM THE**  
152 **FOLLOWING COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS/BOARDS:**

153

154 All items listed under the consent agenda are considered routine and will be enacted by one  
155 motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a council member requests  
156 removal, in which event the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered in the  
157 order of business in the non-consent agenda.

158

159 **Item 6 – Consent Agenda**

160

161 A. Approval of minutes from the previous meeting(s)

162

163 **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

164

165 B. Approve 2020 Omni Center Financials

166 C. Approve 2020 General Fund Financials

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- 167 D. Approval of a non-budgeted City department expenditure in the Equipment Replacement  
168 Fund to purchase 3 refurbished DS-200 voting machines not to exceed \$12,420 with  
169 potential reimbursement through the CARES grant for COVID related expense  
170 E. Approval of a non-budgeted City department expenditure in the Equipment Replacement  
171 Fund to purchase 18 single station voting booths not to exceed \$3,128.35 with potential  
172 reimbursement through the CARES grant for COVID related expenses  
173 F. Approval of contractual services for Information Technology computer support for the  
174 balance of 2020 from silver level support to gold level support  
175

176 **JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

- 177  
178 G. Approval of **Ordinance 1673-2020** – to rezone parcel located in Section 02, Township  
179 16, Range 7 in the City of Onalaska, La Crosse County Wisconsin from High Density  
180 Residential (R-4) to Low Density Residential (R-1)  
181

182 **ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE**

- 183  
184 H. Approval of Operator’s Licenses as listed on report dated July 13, 2020  
185 I. Approval of Change of Agent for Kwik Trip #350, 9421 State Road 16, Onalaska to  
186 Megan L. Giddings  
187 J. Approval of Special Events Permit for Market in the Park Event, July 18, August 8 and  
188 September 12, 2020 from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. at Van Riper Park Aquatic Center parking lot  
189

190 **BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS**

- 191  
192 K. Approval of Green Coulee Road Intersection Project Plat of Right of Way and Relocation  
193 Order  
194 L. Approval of Change Order #2 for 6th and Quincy Lift Station Project in the amount of  
195 \$14,598.30  
196 M. Approval of Change Order #2 for Crestwood Booster Station Project in the amount of  
197 \$34,479.59  
198 N. Approval of quote from Philips Outdoor Services for Great River Landing Fencing  
199 Project in the amount of \$18,656  
200 O. Approval of Change Order #4 for Public Works Facility addition project in the amount of  
201 \$13,343.79  
202 P. Approval of Development Agreement with Scannel Properties for traffic signal  
203 installation at State Trunk Highway 16 and Emerald Valley Drive East  
204

205 **PLAN COMMISSION**

- 206  
207 Q. Conditional Use Permit request filed by Lori Kopecky of Wireless Planning, LLC of  
208 2310 Mill Street, New London, WI 54961 on behalf of Atkinson Properties LLC, 1109

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209 Venture Place, Onalaska, WI 54650 and wireless carrier US Cellular, to replace six (6)  
210 existing antennas with six (6) new antennas and install nine (9) additional Remote Radio  
211 Units (RRU) and replacing / adding ancillary equipment to the existing  
212 telecommunications tower located at 1109 Venture Place, Onalaska, WI 54650. (Tax  
213 Parcel # 18-2401-0) (For Information Only)

214 R. Review and Consideration of a Final Implementation Plan to create the Eagle Business  
215 Condo Association Planned Unit Development (PUD) application filed by Adam  
216 Kirchner, Eagle Business Condo Association, 200 Mason Street #6, Onalaska, WI 54650  
217 on behalf of the Eagle Business Condo Association, 200 Mason Street, Onalaska, WI  
218 54650 for the parcel at 200 Mason Street, Onalaska:

219	200 Mason Street - Unit 1	200 Mason Street Unit 11
220	200 Mason Street - Unit 2	200 Mason Street Unit 12
221	200 Mason Street - Unit 3	200 Mason Street Unit 13
222	200 Mason Street - Unit 4	200 Mason Street Unit 14
223	200 Mason Street - Unit 5	200 Mason Street Unit 15
224	200 Mason Street - Unit 6	200 Mason Street Unit 16
225	200 Mason Street - Unit 7	200 Mason Street Unit 17
226	200 Mason Street - Unit 8	200 Mason Street Unit 18
227	200 Mason Street - Unit 9	200 Mason Street Unit 19
228	200 Mason Street - Unit 10	200 Mason Street Unit 20

229

230 **UTILITIES COMMITTEE**

231

232 S. Approval of Onalaska-Holmen-West Salem Shared Ride Program of Projects Budget for  
233 2020

234 T. Approval of Shared Ride Financials

235

236 **JOINT MUNICIPAL COURT COMMITTEE**

237

238 U. Accept 2020 Joint Municipal Court Financials

239 V. Accept Joint Municipal Court report regarding forfeitures/court costs

240 W. Accept Quarterly report containing cases not dismissed

241

242 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the Consent Agenda.

243

244 On voice vote, motion carried.

245

246 **Non-Consent Agenda**

247

248 **Item 7 – RECAP ITEMS PULLED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA**

249

250 As there were no items removed from the Consent Agenda, Item 8 was addressed next.

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251

252 **Item 8 – FINANCE COMMITTEE**

253

254 A. Vouchers

255

256 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the vouchers expended since the last  
257 Common Council meeting on June 10, 2020 in the amount of \$2,026,098.55.

258

259 On voice vote, motion carried.

260

261 B. **Resolution 30-2020** – Onalaska is Essential - Support of Fair, Direct Federal Emergency  
262 Support to Reopen and Rebuild Local American Economies

263

264 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Wulf, to approve Resolution 30-2020 – Onalaska is  
265 Essential – Support of Fair, Direct Federal Emergency Support to Reopen and Rebuild Local  
266 American Economies.

267

268 Ald. Nott stated that while he does not object to grants for programs at the federal level, “the way  
269 I’m interpreting this when it’s talking about this is going to continue long after this year, that this  
270 is more asking for handouts for budgetary shortfalls, which aren’t necessarily directly the fault of  
271 anybody here. We’ve had COVID-19 and all the constraints, and the impacts of those  
272 constraints are especially going to affect us next year in our budget. By going forward to  
273 Congress on this, in my personal view what we’re doing is we’re basically doing a shell game  
274 that’s going to result in spending federal dollars in order to administrate the movement of federal  
275 dollars. It’s likely going to impact rural communities the most because it’s the cities and the  
276 towns that are going to be the recipients of this. That money has to come from somewhere, and I  
277 think we’re going to be putting any type of funding we receive for budgetary shortfalls directly  
278 on the shoulders of a lot of the rural areas. Of course, the other option is we could be  
279 encouraging more federal debt. We’re already up to \$22 trillion. I don’t know what a bailout  
280 like this would be to all the communities, but it would be astronomical. I’m sure it would  
281 probably be in the \$2 to \$3 trillion range. That would be a guess just based on the things they’ve  
282 already done more recently.

283

284 I think communities are always going to encounter hardships, and we shouldn’t be tying our  
285 responsibilities to federal dollars, I guess is my view on this. I’m a big believer in the principle  
286 of subsidiarity, which is to solve problems at the lowest level if at all possible. That’s why I will  
287 not be supporting this.”

288

289 Ald. Stevens stated the passage of this resolution is necessary to receive a potential savings to  
290 taxpayers of up to \$308,000, and he noted that the funds will be spent at the federal level  
291 regardless of whether or not the city applies for it. Ald. Stevens said, “One way to look at this  
292 would be the opportunity cost of the things we need to do to keep our city operational and

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293 functional through the COVID pandemic. Essentially we're going to have to spend that money  
294 anyway. The question is, do you want to put Onalaska residents at an unfair advantage or at a  
295 \$308,000 deficit compared to neighboring communities? For that purpose, I would recommend  
296 supporting this resolution."

297  
298 Ald. Nott said the way he is interpreting the resolution is the city is asking Congress to ask for  
299 this funding, and he asked if the city is lobbying Congress to pass a bill, or if the city is  
300 attempting to leverage what is already passed.

301  
302 City Administrator Rindfleisch explained that the \$308,000 is an example of this, noting it had  
303 come through the CARES Grant and is very specific to expenses incurred in a limited time  
304 window in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. City Administrator Rindfleisch said this is a  
305 forward-facing resolution that asks the city's representatives to provide additional support for the  
306 City of Onalaska this way. City Administrator Rindfleisch explained that items such as loss of  
307 revenue, the closure of the Omni Center, compensation for employees for their time away from  
308 work, other expenses that do not qualify for the \$308,000 in new expenses, and revenue  
309 shortfalls are not covered in the \$308,000. City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Nott the city  
310 faces a substantial challenge with its budgets going forward, and he said, "The \$308,000 is  
311 available. We have between now and November to expend that on direct responses to the  
312 COVID-19 pandemic. It's expenses. It does not cover any revenue shortfalls which then impact  
313 the rest of our organization."

314  
315 Ald. Nott addressed the fact City Administrator Rindfleisch had mentioned reimbursing for  
316 expenses, and he asked if they already are being covered through the State of Wisconsin  
317 program, which will be addressed in the next agenda item.

318  
319 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "Yes, certain direct expenses. There are three periods  
320 between now and the end of the year basically for unbudgeted direct response. The challenge is  
321 that we have responses in expenses that may not fit the qualifications for that." City  
322 Administrator Rindfleisch cited rolling out time for employees or their family members who  
323 might need to be quarantined as an example of something that is not an expense that would be  
324 reimbursable. However, City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Nott there is a real cost to that  
325 time granted. City Administrator Rindfleisch referred to the next agenda item and told Ald. Nott  
326 he and Financial Services Director Fred Buehler had reviewed the list and decided not everything  
327 on it will be forwarded because there are items that do not qualify. City Administrator  
328 Rindfleisch told Ald. Nott there are a number of items that will not qualify for the \$308,000.

329  
330 Ald. Nott asked, "Isn't this all really coming down to the fact we have some fairly large budget  
331 shortfalls primarily due to the fact we have substantially decreased revenues? I'm trying to  
332 interpret the resolution in front of me, and I could be interpreting it wrong. With the  
333 'whereases,' they're talking about budget shortfalls and the effects of the pandemic emergency  
334 on local communities are going to continue long after this year, so this is a long-term request for

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335 federal dollars is the way I'm seeing this. In which case, that's where I have my concerns. I  
336 don't know that we want to go down the path of us being part of a movement of having all  
337 communities in the country relying on federal dollars to help offset budget shortfalls for  
338 whatever reason. I see that as a very dangerous path to take, and it could actually encourage  
339 poor stewardship of dollars because, well, we have another emergency [and] let's get someone  
340 else to pay for it. I don't know that that's a good path to go down. Am I not interpreting this  
341 correctly? It's very possible."

342

343 City Administrator Rindfleisch explained the resolution is a position statement by the City of  
344 Onalaska stating the city supports requesting from the elected officials in Washington, D.C. for  
345 additional support, and he said he believes the individual alderpersons' interpretation of what the  
346 city is requesting is appropriate.

347

348 Ald. Wulf asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if this was born from an email the city had  
349 received from the League of Municipalities, and she also asked if the City of Onalaska had  
350 crafted this resolution after the Village of West Salem's model.

351

352 City Administrator Rindfleisch and Amanda both told Ald. Wulf yes.

353

354 Ald. Wulf said she considers herself to be financially conservative and stated her accountability  
355 is to the City of Onalaska's taxpayers. Ald. Wulf said, "I think if there's ever a time that there is  
356 a possibility of money on the table, I'm going to fight for it for my Onalaska taxpayers. I do see  
357 the bigger picture, and I share that concern as you do, Alderperson Nott. But I think we need to  
358 be proactive and fight for Onalaska because if we don't, no one else will for us."

359

360 Ald. T. Smith said, "I think in this unique situation of where we are, I don't think we want to go  
361 to the federal government for money all the time. Historically, it is a local decision and we have  
362 to balance our budget. But this is a very unique world right now, and I think if there are some  
363 monies that can help our city get through this difficult time to hopefully minimize some of our  
364 budget expenses or even increase taxes and all those things we don't want to do, I think if the  
365 money's available we should at least try to get it. I agree with what you're saying, Steve, that we  
366 don't want to be a handout moving forward and assume the federal government is always going  
367 to be there. But this whole grant thing we've had with all the money being spent on everything  
368 is a very unique situation tied to COVID-19. I will support it."

369

370 Ald. Stevens said, "It was mentioned before a lot of this was due to decreased revenues. But I  
371 think we weren't focused enough on the unexpected expenses that were incurred by the  
372 municipality. I want to clarify my statement. When I say that we would put Onalaska's  
373 taxpayers at a competitive disadvantage, it would have to do with if we are spending money on  
374 the expenditures to keep the city operational." Ald. Stevens cited the example of installing  
375 Plexiglas in the City Clerk's Office and other locations, and he noted other communities will do  
376 the same. Ald. Stevens said if the City of La Crosse, the Village of Holmen, and the Village of

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377 West Salem all install Plexiglas and receive federal funding, but the City of Onalaska states it  
378 does not wish to receive federal funding, Onalaska taxpayers still have to pay for the Plexiglas.  
379 Ald. Stevens said, “Their taxes are going to go up comparatively higher than the peer group  
380 around them. Our first and foremost responsibility is to the people who live here in this  
381 community. I believe it would be foolish to leave that money on the table. We don’t have to  
382 raise taxes individually on our citizens compared to neighboring communities if we don’t have  
383 to.”

384  
385 Ald. Nott told Ald. Stevens that while he understands that, he also asked if the city was  
386 submitting the Plexiglas for reimbursement from the State of Wisconsin’s Routes to Recovery  
387 Grant.

388  
389 Mayor K. Smith said yes.

390  
391 Ald. Nott said, “This is my concern. When we’re talking expenses – and it’s on the very next  
392 item on the agenda, so I really don’t want to jump ahead to that – the Routes to Recovery Grant  
393 covers a great number of our expenses. I would argue what we’re asking for is either double  
394 dipping, or [it’s] asking the federal government to come to our assistance to help with a budget  
395 shortfall. That’s where my concerns are.”

396  
397 Ald. Stevens stated he stands by the analogy of comparing the City of Onalaska to other  
398 communities and the deficit in which it would put Onalaska taxpayers holds true on the expense  
399 side as well as the revenue side. Ald. Stevens said, “Again, I will always protect Onalaska  
400 taxpayers first.”

401  
402 On voice vote, motion carried, 3-2 (Ald. Nott, Ald. Olson).

403  
404 C. **Resolution 31-2020** – For the Authorization of Expense Reimbursement Submittal for  
405 Routes to Recovery Grant

406  
407 Ald. Stevens stated this is a resolution in which the City of Onalaska agrees to comply with the  
408 rules and regulations necessary to receive funding due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

409  
410 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Wulf, to approve Resolution 31-2020 – For the  
411 Authorization of Expense Reimbursement Submittal for Routes to Recovery Grant.

412  
413 Ald. Nott stated he will be supporting the resolution and said, “Just to clarify on where the  
414 difference lies, number one, this is a state program, which is a different animal entirely. Also,  
415 this program requires itemized, concrete accounting for short-term needs. Yes, I support this.”

416  
417 On voice vote, motion carried.

418  
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419 D. School/Police Liaison Officer Agreement between City of Onalaska and Onalaska School  
420 District for the 2020/2021 school year

421

422 Ald. Stevens noted this item was asked to be placed on the Non-Consent Agenda and said there  
423 appears to have been some confusion due to the fact some highlighting had bled over, making it  
424 appear that this was a new item. Ald. Stevens said it is his understanding there were no changes  
425 to the previous year's contract.

426

427 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Nott, to approve School/Police Liaison Officer  
428 Agreement between City of Onalaska and Onalaska School District for the 2020/2021 school  
429 year.

430

431 On voice vote, motion carried.

432

433 E. Review and consideration of partially non-budgeted telephone system replacement at  
434 City Hall, Omni Center and Public Works Facility with potential partial reimbursement  
435 through the CARES grant for COVID related expense

436

437 Ald. Stevens said this item was placed on the Non-Consent Agenda due to the cost.

438

439 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Nott, to approve partially non-budgeted telephone  
440 system replacement at City Hall, Omni Center and Public Works Facility with potential partial  
441 reimbursement through the CARES grant for COVID related expenses.

442

443 Ald. T. Smith asked if some of the funding will fall under the CARES grant.

444

445 Mayor K. Smith said yes.

446

447 Ald. T. Smith asked why some of the funding would fall under the CARES grant.

448

449 City Administrator Rindfleisch said there is an opportunity to upgrade the proposed system for  
450 functions that make it easier for remote work, and he used the example of someone contacting  
451 him on his City Hall office number and his computer will ring a telephone number and he can  
452 answer it remotely no matter where he is. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "There are  
453 certain features that will be allowed here that make a remote response easier. It's the upgrade to  
454 the system that makes it more than just a desk phone."

455

456 Ald. Wulf said that if for any reason the funding mechanisms do not follow through, the entire  
457 item will return to the Finance and Personnel Committee for further review.

458

459 On voice vote, motion carried.

460

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461 F. Review and consideration of non-budgeted automatic flush valves and faucets at City  
462 owned facilities with potential reimbursement through the CARES grant for COVID  
463 related expense  
464

465 Ald. Stevens noted there had been a late attachment and said the difference had to do with the  
466 fact the valves must be professionally installed and city staff cannot install them. The valves  
467 must be professionally installed to comply with the city's own guidelines.  
468

469 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. T. Smith, to approve non-budgeted automatic flush  
470 valves and faucets at City owned facilities with potential reimbursement through the CARES  
471 grant for COVID related expense.  
472

473 On voice vote, motion carried.  
474

475 **Item 9 – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**  
476

477 A. Discussion and possible action regarding staff vacancies  
478

479 Hope reported the following:  
480

- 481 • The city must now hire an Assistant Fire Chief now that Troy Gudie has been promoted  
482 to Fire Chief. The Police and Fire Commission meeting that was scheduled for July 13  
483 will need to be rescheduled to determine a timeline for filling that position.
- 484 • JoAnn has been promoted to City Clerk, and Stacy Wilk has been named the new Deputy  
485 City Clerk after serving in an Office Clerical Support position. Stacy's previous position  
486 is currently vacant and will be held until budgets may be reviewed.
- 487 • An offer of employment was made for a police officer position, pending a background  
488 check. However, there was a resignation in the Police Department during the time Hope  
489 was on leave. Another eligibility list will be established, and the goal is to begin the  
490 process in August.
- 491 • A new firefighter will begin August 3, and another individual has been offered a  
492 firefighter position pending a background check as well as physical and psychological  
493 exams.
- 494 • The Administrative Assistant – Paralegal position is being held until budgets may be  
495 reviewed.
- 496 • The Office Clerical Support position, previously held by Lisa Schmidt, has been filled by  
497 Amanda Robbert.
- 498 • The consulting firm will be handling the duties Calvin and Mac were responsible for  
499 prior to their respective retirements.
- 500 • MCS will be handling the additional workload caused by a vacancy in the Computer  
501 Support Specialist position until the budgets may be reviewed.

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13

502  
503 Hope said staff is waiting to make a decision on the open positions until they obtain more budget  
504 information via the budget process, and she noted councilmembers have indicated they would  
505 like more police and fire positions to be filled so that the city is not hiring people, only to lay  
506 them off at a later date.

507  
508 Mayor K. Smith asked Hope and City Administrator Rindfleisch if they need Council approval  
509 to fill any of the positions, or if they have approval for the positions for which they are moving  
510 forward.

511  
512 Hope said it her understanding it is the Council's purview if councilmembers wish to fill any of  
513 the positions that are being held.

514  
515 City Administrator Rindfleisch said there is a blanket ability to fill any positions that are not  
516 substantially changed, and he told councilmembers he had held the positions for which the  
517 recruitment process either had not begun or had barely begun. These positions were held for the  
518 reason the Council could make different choices with the existing vacant positions, particularly  
519 in the public safety departments. City Administrator Rindfleisch said the Council may tell staff  
520 not to fill the positions and instead utilize the funding elsewhere. City Administrator Rindfleisch  
521 said barring that, staff will continue with its process as long as it meets the budgetary  
522 considerations, which will not be known until later in the meeting.

523  
524 Ald. Wulf asked City Administrator Rindfleisch to identify the positions that are currently open.

525  
526 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Wulf the open positions are: Assistant Fire Chief,  
527 Administrative Assistant – Paralegal, and Office Clerical Support in the Finance Department.  
528 Per Hope's report, City Administrator Rindfleisch said the city is upgrading its contract with  
529 MCS to address the vacant Computer Support Specialist position.

530  
531 Ald. Wulf asked if staff will proceed with filling the aforementioned positions unless the Council  
532 takes action this evening.

533  
534 Ald. Wulf was told yes.

535  
536 Ald. Stevens asked City Administrator Rindfleisch which position or positions must be filled,  
537 and which position or positions may the city delay filling.

538  
539 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Stevens he considers both the Administrative Assistant  
540 – Paralegal and Office Clerical Support positions must-haves as there are tasks that must be  
541 completed. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "It was not a judgment call to say that these  
542 could be held off," noting he had put a hold on them so the Council potentially could take action  
543 on them, if councilmembers so desired. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "I would say the  
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544 only way to eliminate the ‘must-have’ title would be to do a full reorg as part of the budget  
545 process.” City Administrator Rindfleisch addressed the Administrative Assistant – Paralegal  
546 position, and he told Ald. Stevens there are citations that have been listed and they are not being  
547 acted upon at this time. City Administrator Rindfleisch said Amanda needs that assistance,  
548 noting the Administrative Assistant – Paralegal position has been vacant since January. City  
549 Administrator Rindfleisch told councilmembers he believes Fred would agree that the Office  
550 Clerical Support position in the Finance Department also is a must-have.

551  
552 City Administrator Rindfleisch referred back to Fred’s presentation at the June 10 Special  
553 Common Council meeting and noted the city is at a break-even point financially even though  
554 there is a deficit of approximately \$300,000. City Administrator Rindfleisch told  
555 councilmembers the city is breaking even because it effectively is not hiring six positions for  
556 portions of the year. City Administrator Rindfleisch pointed out that is not a decision the  
557 Council made; rather, it was a decision the budget had made in response to the pandemic. City  
558 Administrator Rindfleisch said that by holding those positions, he had anticipated that the  
559 Council would decide to do something else with those funds, and also make a decision as to  
560 whether or not to fill the six budgeted positions. City Administrator Rindfleisch said city staff  
561 will continue to make recommendations regarding what is most efficient for the positions, and he  
562 forewarned councilmembers the 2021 budget will be very difficult, and that there will be  
563 changes made in that budget. City Administrator Rindfleisch admitted he might have a bias  
564 toward hiring an Administrative Assistant – Paralegal as he shares the department with Amanda,  
565 but he also said it is reaching a critical point now. City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the city  
566 had budgeted for a recodification project, but he said that project cannot be done unless there is  
567 assistance in his suite. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “These positions should be filled,  
568 need to be filled, but the Council’s never had the opportunity to make that decision [regarding]  
569 the limited funds we have, who gets that?”

570  
571 Ald. Wulf noted the city was considering entering into a contract for the recodification project,  
572 and she asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if the city has entered into that contract yet.

573  
574 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Wulf the city has borrowed for that and needs to expend  
575 those funds in a timely manner or it will be breaking its debt covenants for the projects. City  
576 Administrator Rindfleisch said it is critical that the city move forward on the project, and he  
577 asked Amanda if the contract has been signed.

578  
579 Amanda’s response was inaudible on the recording.

580  
581 Ald. Wulf inquired about the status of the titles, asking if the process is nearing completion.

582  
583 Amanda’s response to Ald. Wulf’s question was inaudible on the recording.

584  
585 Ald. Wulf asked if the plan is to have them through by the end of 2020.

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586

587 Amanda response to Ald. Wulf's question was inaudible on the recording.

588

589 Ald. T. Smith asked what the impact would be if the city held off filling all six positions and  
590 focused on filling the positions in the Police Department and the Fire Department.

591

592 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. T. Smith the six positions that have not been filled,  
593 based on the budget, are three positions in the Police Department and three positions in the Fire  
594 Department. City Administrator Rindfleisch said the positions he had held off filling are the  
595 Administrative Assistant – Paralegal and Office Clerical Support positions.

596

597 Ald. T. Smith said he believes the city should prioritize hiring the positions in the Police  
598 Department and the Fire Department.

599

600 Ald. Stevens said he believes it will be much easier to make some of these determinations once  
601 councilmembers know what the budget will look like. Ald. Stevens noted the budget process  
602 still is three months away and said, "If we had a position we got by without since January  
603 [Administrative Assistant – Paralegal], I understand there's work that has been built up and  
604 we're paying our City Attorney to do paralegal work with Municipal Court. It's not really fair to  
605 the position, but these are tough times. And rather than either get rid of the position or fill it now  
606 prematurely and have to furlough that person later, I think there's a lot of wisdom in determining  
607 what our priorities are to fill. I want to migrate to filling the public safety positions, but we have  
608 to have the money to do that. I would love to fill all the positions that we have now ... but we  
609 have to make some choices as to what we need to do and how we get to where we want to be. If  
610 one or perhaps two of those [positions] absolutely needed to be filled now, if there was a way  
611 that could be prioritized and presented to Council, I think that would have value.

612

613 We talked about delaying and scheduling starts of the public safety officers over the next year,  
614 but we have these other city positions that are going to need to be filled at some point. I'm  
615 suggesting that maybe they don't all have to be filled right now, and we can make that decision  
616 after we have a more clear picture in about three months after the budgetary process, accepting if  
617 there was something that we must have now because there's this project that's coming up and no  
618 one else can do it, and if we don't have that position filled the whole department is going to  
619 explode. I think what we're looking for is a little bit more information so that we can make the  
620 decisions necessary to get through the pandemic and get to where the city is operating as normal.  
621 We want all the city positions filled. We want things staffed appropriately, and we want to get to  
622 the point where we get the public safety positions up to a level that we want. We're not going to  
623 be able to do that all right now. We have to plan it out, maybe [hire] one position at a time, and  
624 hopefully get to that point by the end of 2021."

625

626 Mayor K. Smith said, "Speaking for Eric a little bit, I think the direction he kind of is holding off  
627 is more for if there were to be any reorganization to make our city run more efficiently. We have

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628 the most vacant positions that we've ever had right now, so now would be the time to do it. And  
629 if he starts filling those positions, then a reorganization would be more difficult."

630

631 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the reorganization would be forced without filling the  
632 positions, and he noted city staff is currently involved in the 2021 budget process. City  
633 Administrator Rindfleisch said the reason this item has come before the Council is the city has a  
634 short-term issue regarding 2020 (e.g. decisions that must be made about public safety and these  
635 positions), and he told councilmembers that leads directly to the 2021 budget, which in turn leads  
636 to the question of what does the organization look like in 2021, 2022, and beyond. City  
637 Administrator Rindfleisch said, "It's here to make that decision. If the decision is not to fill  
638 these positions, that does force those changes within the 2021 budget process. When I'm talking  
639 about changes, I'm talking about less staff overall. There will be other departments with less  
640 staff, and public safety will have more."

641

642 Ald. Nott said that while he agrees with most of Ald. Stevens' statements, "I think we're still  
643 missing some information here, and that's cost. Obviously we have what we're saying are  
644 savings by not filling these positions, but there are also costs by not filling these positions,  
645 especially on the emergency responder side. I'm assuming there is a certain amount of overtime  
646 that is being accrued right now by not filling these. And if we're relying on firefighters and  
647 police officers on a routine basis to have to take overtime, my experience is that folks who do  
648 overtime every now and then view that as a bonus. But people who make it become part of their  
649 routine and part of life, it impacts their morale because now they're not even able to give their  
650 families that much."

651

652 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the number of calls to both the Police Department and the  
653 Fire Department during the "Safer At Home" order in the state was down. City Administrator  
654 Rindfleisch told Ald. Nott that while he does not have the current data for overtime, he does  
655 agree with him in terms of the impact overtime has on employees who do not wish to have that  
656 impact. City Administrator Rindfleisch noted some of the budget expenses and shortfall is not  
657 just because of the COVID-19 response, and he said that while the city had budgeted for wage  
658 increases in those departments, it had not budgeted for the net impact that it ended up with. City  
659 Administrator Rindfleisch said, "Some of the additional costs that we're dealing with that we  
660 have to respond are actually costs that went to those departments as well above and beyond what  
661 was already budgeted for."

662

663 Hope said a possible alternative might be to fill the positions on a part-time basis.

664

665 City Administrator Rindfleisch said one option would be to hire a part-time employee in the  
666 Finance Department.

667

668 Ald. Stevens asked if perhaps a temporary employee might be an option.

669

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17

670 Fire Chief Gudie noted there currently are two vacancies in the Fire Department that are being  
671 filled, and he also noted one of his firefighters could be on light duty for up to six months. Fire  
672 Chief Gudie said he currently has four firefighters on one shift, three on one shift, and two on  
673 another. Fire Chief Gudie told councilmembers the overtime Ald. Nott had mentioned is “very  
674 real,” and he also told them he hopes they consider filling the vacant Assistant Fire Chief  
675 position “because we’re looking at new positions, but now we’re starting to talk about vacancies  
676 and not filling them. I think that’s a real safety concern I have. I’m not sure if we’re discussing  
677 not filling the Assistant Fire Chief, because I want to be clear on that.”  
678

679 Ald. Nott expressed concern about the number of firefighters on a shift, and he asked Fire Chief  
680 Gudie if there is a minimum number of firefighters required when an engine rolls.  
681

682 Fire Chief Gudie told Ald. Nott the Fire Department should be rolling out with four firefighters,  
683 and he said there are instances when the department responds with three firefighters on an  
684 engine. Fire Chief Gudie said ideally there are four firefighters on an engine, which is why the  
685 Fire Department has pushed to have five firefighters per shift, and the staffing the majority of the  
686 time would be maintained as four.  
687

688 Mayor K. Smith said the goal is for the Fire Department to have five firefighters per shift by the  
689 end of 2021.  
690

691 Ald. Nott said he is especially concerned about the shift on which there are only two firefighters  
692 as their safety and the safety of the citizens is being put at risk.  
693

694 Fire Chief Gudie reiterated that the two positions that currently are vacant are being filled, and  
695 he told councilmembers that when he was serving as Assistant Fire Chief he would roll out either  
696 on an engine or a command vehicle. Fire Chief Gudie said, “I think if you’re talking about needs  
697 or must-have or critical, I would say the Assistant Chief’s job is critical for emergency services  
698 in the Fire Department.”  
699

700 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted he had spoken with Hope and told councilmembers she had  
701 suggested making both the Office Clerical Support position in the Finance Department and the  
702 Administrative Assistant – Paralegal positions part-time (1,200 hours). City Administrator  
703 Rindfleisch also noted the conversation regarding the Fire Department pertains to the three new  
704 firefighter positions that were budgeted for.  
705

706 Ald. Wulf referred to the July 8 Finance and Personnel Committee meeting and noted  
707 approximately 65 percent of the Police Department’s overtime budget remained, while 18  
708 percent of the Fire Department’s overtime budget remained. Ald. Wulf also noted that as of June  
709 the Police Department’s overtime budget was not projected to go over, while the Fire  
710 Department was projected to exceed its overtime budget by \$40,000.  
711

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18

712 Mayor K. Smith said she believes part of the reason the Police Department's overtime budget has  
713 not gone over is because it has been maintaining more of a minimum staffing pattern than the  
714 ideal pattern that would be full coverage for the city. Mayor K. Smith said, "They have reduced  
715 their service in order to hold at that level with their staff issues."

716  
717 Mayor K. Smith told councilmembers City Administrator Rindfleisch will proceed within the  
718 constraints of the budget if no one makes a motion.

719  
720 Ald. Stevens asked if temporary employees through the budget process are an option for both the  
721 Office Clerical Support and Administrative Assistant – Paralegal positions.

722  
723 City Administrator Rindfleisch told councilmembers there had been a temporary position on the  
724 second floor of City Hall to fill a position, and he said he believes the expectation of a temporary  
725 position is the city will be getting someone who has more of a clerical background rather than  
726 someone who has expertise as a paralegal.

727  
728 Ald. Stevens said one of the advantages of utilizing a temporary employee is the city can avoid  
729 having to furlough an employee or having to make changes due to reorganization. However,  
730 Ald. Stevens also said, "If it's not going to do the job, then maybe we don't go down that road."

731  
732 Ald. Nott asked if there is a difference if the city hires a part-time employee versus a temporary  
733 employee in whether or not the city is allowed to offer that individual the full-time position if it  
734 goes to full-time.

735  
736 City Administrator Rindfleisch from the city's standpoint, it would be the contract for the agency  
737 through which a temporary employee would be hired.

738  
739 Ald. Nott said he assumes at some point the city will want the position to be full-time, and he  
740 asked if that individual would be able to compete for the job.

741  
742 City Administrator Rindfleisch said it depends on the master contract the city signs with an  
743 agency.

744  
745 Amanda told councilmembers City Administrator Rindfleisch is correct in terms of a temporary  
746 employee, and she told Ald. Nott the city would not have the same issue with a part-time  
747 employee if the city directly hired a part-time employee and then brought him/her up to full time.  
748 Amanda said that would be a possibility.

749  
750 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "We have not been able to move forward on the item on the  
751 agenda, but we do have a plan to at least start bringing possibly up to two positions in public  
752 safety in 2020 while still hiring these positions at this point in time. That's a little bit ahead of  
753 the time, but it's not an all six or none proposition. It is potentially, in terms of the decision here,

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19

754 we could increase the opportunity to do more than two this year. But regardless, I don't think  
755 there's any way we'll be getting all six this year."

756

757 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Stevens, to direct staff to fill the vacant Assistant Fire  
758 Chief Position.

759

760 Motion by Ald. Stevens to add a friendly amendment to the previous motion and also fill the  
761 vacant Office Clerical Support position in the Finance Department. All remaining positions will  
762 remain open and unfilled until either feasible or determined after the 2021 budget hearing  
763 process.

764

765 Mayor K. Smith told Ald. Stevens his friendly amendment is lengthy and asked him to withdraw  
766 it and start again if that is how he wishes to proceed.

767

768 Motion and second withdrawn.

769

770 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Wulf, to approve proceeding with immediately filling  
771 the vacant Assistant Fire Chief position and a part-time Office Clerical Support position in the  
772 Finance Department. All remaining vacant positions will remain open and unfilled until deemed  
773 feasible after the 2021 budget hearing process in October.

774

775 Ald. Wulf said she does not believe nothing is finalized until the November budget hearing.

776

777 Mayor K. Smith noted this item does not pertain to the six new public safety positions, which  
778 will be discussed under Item C.

779

780 City Administrator Rindfleisch said when he hears the words "all positions" minus these very  
781 specific positions, he interprets it to mean all positions, including the vacant positions in both the  
782 Police Department and the Fire Department at the current staffing levels.

783

784 Ald. Stevens told City Administrator Rindfleisch that was not the intention of his motion.

785

786 City Administrator Rindfleisch said there only would be one position, which is the  
787 Administrative Assistant – Paralegal position.

788

789 Mayor K. Smith said it is not including the public safety positions.

790

791 Police Chief Ashbeck said he wants to ensure that the vacant Police Officer position may be  
792 filled as soon as there is an eligible candidate.

793

794 Mayor K. Smith asked that the motion on the floor be clarified so there is no confusion.

795

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20

796 Ald. Stevens said the intention of his motion is for the city to fill the vacant Assistant Fire Chief  
797 position, hire a part-time Office Clerical Support employee in the Finance Department, and also  
798 allow the hiring process for the existing public safety positions to proceed as normal. The  
799 remaining positions will be determined after the 2021 budgetary cycle.

800  
801 Ald. Wulf said she will keep her second to the motion.

802  
803 Mayor K. Smith asked which positions will remain vacant.

804  
805 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the Council is stating by its motion the Administrative  
806 Assistant – Paralegal position will not be filled.

807  
808 Ald. Wulf said her motion to fill the vacant Assistant Fire Chief position was a starting point,  
809 and she told councilmembers they were welcome to add positions if they so desired. Ald. Wulf  
810 stated she supports the Administrative Assistant – Paralegal position and said she believes it  
811 needs to be monitored. Ald. Wulf inquired about the availability of part-time paralegals.

812  
813 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Wulf that perhaps while a part-time employee could be  
814 found for the paralegal position, it would be challenging to hire a temporary employee.

815  
816 Mayor K. Smith said the challenge will occur when Joint Municipal Court resumes, noting  
817 Amanda will be spending a significant amount of time addressing court-related issues.

818  
819 City Administrator Rindfleisch cautioned councilmembers the response the city is currently  
820 getting from Amanda will decrease dramatically if the paralegal position is not filled. City  
821 Administrator Rindfleisch said, “I will express my disappointment by not filling that position  
822 because it is absolutely vital. It’s gone unrecognized because we’ve taken one for the team, and  
823 for it not to be filled to me at this time doesn’t recognize the importance of the [City]  
824 Administrator, and especially the City Attorney position. It needs assistance right now, and  
825 we’re not filling it.”

826  
827 Ald. Nott stated that while he understands City Administrator Rindfleisch’s position, he also  
828 would assume that every position identified on the payroll for the City of Onalaska is important.  
829 Ald. Nott said, “At this point we don’t know where our budget is going to be, and I think that’s  
830 where a lot of us are concerned. Certainly I understand what paralegals do and they are very  
831 important because it is better to free up your attorney to do things that attorneys need to do and  
832 that’s what they’re getting paid for. I understand that. But we’re kind of up against it right now  
833 in the budget for next year. We just don’t know how badly.”

834  
835 On voice vote, motion carried.

836  
837 B. Approval of 2020-2022 International Association of Firefighters Local 127 Contract and  
Reviewed 7/20/2020 by JoAnn Marcon

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21

838 Memorandum of Understanding

839

840 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Olson, to approve 2020-2022 International Association  
841 of Firefighters Local 127 Contract and Memorandum of Understanding.

842

843 Ald. Wulf told councilmembers that per an email from Hope, a motion will need to be made to  
844 include the changes listed in the attachment to the contract, and then a motion to approve the  
845 contract will need to be made.

846

847 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Wulf, to amend the previous motion and approve the  
848 changes to Article 23 listed in the attachment to the 2020-2022 International Association of  
849 Firefighters Local 127 Contract and Memorandum of Understanding.

850

851 Vote on the amendment:

852

853 On voice vote, motion carried.

854

855 Original motion restated:

856

857 To approve the 2020-2022 International Association of Firefighters Local 127 Contract and  
858 Memorandum of Understanding, including the amendment.

859

860 Ald. Wulf thanked everyone who had worked on the contract, and she also thanked Ald. Stevens,  
861 who had agreed to work on the contract.

862

863 On voice vote, motion carried.

864

865 C. Discussion and possible action regarding filling budgeted Public Safety position effective  
866 October 1, 2020 or later

867

868 Ald. Stevens noted this originally was a Police Officer position, but it was amended to a Public  
869 Safety position to allow for flexibility, and also to allow the entire Council to discuss this item.

870

871 Motion by Ald. Stevens to approve filling a budgeted Public Safety position effective October 1,  
872 2020 or later.

873

874 Mayor K. Smith asked Ald. Stevens if the position he wishes to approve would be one Police  
875 Department position or one Fire Department position.

876

877 Ald. Stevens noted the item states it is a Public Safety position and said based off the earlier  
878 testimony, he believes there is a greater need in the Fire Department. Ald. Stevens stressed he  
879 does not want to pit Fire Chief Gudie against Police Chief Ashbeck, and he said he hopes the  
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22

880 discussion will show where the priority should be. Ald. Stevens said that while it would be ideal  
881 to add more positions, “we need to start the ball rolling at some point.”

882

883 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Wulf, to approve filling a budgeted Firefighter position  
884 effective October 1, 2020 or later.

885

886 City Administrator Rindfleisch told councilmembers that at its July 8 meeting the Finance and  
887 Personnel Committee had discussed bringing forward one Public Safety position, and he said  
888 there is a belief he can fit in the current budget if the starting date is in October. City  
889 Administrator Rindfleisch noted Police Chief Ashbeck had said there was a resignation in his  
890 department, and it will take some time to fill that position. City Administrator Rindfleisch said  
891 the gap of deferred wages could be utilized in 2020 for hiring a second position, and he told  
892 councilmembers, “Ultimately the question at hand is if you desire to do more than the two  
893 [positions], we’re always under budgetary constraints, but the whole point of [Item 9A] and this  
894 item is, what the Council’s priorities are in the current year’s budget and going forward will be  
895 changed to match those priorities. If the goal is more than two, that’s your purview and we’ll  
896 make the changes necessary to make that happen. This is still your budget, and you did not have  
897 the opportunity to say we’re not filling the six positions; the COVID response and our budgetary  
898 challenges did that. For your discussion is, what are your priorities? And we’ll as staff that  
899 reports to you make sure it happens.”

900

901 Mayor K. Smith noted she had brought forward the suggestion of hiring one police officer who  
902 would start October 1 or later, and she said her intention had been to hire one police officer, with  
903 the next priority being to fill three firefighter positions. Mayor K. Smith told councilmembers  
904 her goal is to have all six public safety employees hired by the end of 2021, and she said her  
905 vision for that has not changed. Mayor K. Smith said she had looked at staffing patterns as well  
906 as the other vacancies that need to be filled, and she told councilmembers the pattern she had  
907 seen was to hire one police officer, three firefighters, then go back either to the Police  
908 Department or the Fire Department as the budget were to allow.

909

910 Ald. Stevens asked Fred how comfortable he is with filling the two positions, and he said the city  
911 needs to exercise caution and be precise as to what it is doing and why it is doing it in terms of  
912 filling a public safety position if it is delaying hiring other city positions. Ald. Stevens also said  
913 he would like both Police Chief Ashbeck and Fire Chief Gudie to tell the Council if there are any  
914 differences in the training process, and he asked, “If we hire three firefighters at the same time, is  
915 there a benefit to, a, having a new Assistant [Fire] Chief on the force, and b, is it easier to train  
916 them all at once, or is it [easier] individually? Secondly, [I have] the same question for the  
917 Police Department. Is it easier to train individually, or all at once?”

918

919 Police Chief Ashbeck told councilmembers the Police Department trains individually, and there  
920 is no advantage to hire in a group type setting. Police Chief Ashbeck said his department easily  
921 could accommodate hiring two officers at approximately the same time, and he stated he would

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23

922 appreciate it if the Police Department had that opportunity.

923

924 Fire Chief Gudie told councilmembers he believes the Fire Department will benefit greatly by  
925 having five firefighters per shift, and he said if there is a way the department could hire three  
926 firefighters all three could participate simultaneously in the in-house academy. Fire Chief Gudie  
927 stated he would not want to lose any positions, and he told councilmembers training three  
928 firefighters simultaneously would work well with the shifts. New firefighters typically work 8  
929 a.m. to 5 p.m., 40 hours per week, and the new firefighters would be assigned a shift after several  
930 weeks of training.

931

932 Ald. Stevens asked Fire Chief Gudie, “Knowing we’re not going to be able to hire three positions  
933 all at once, are you saying you’ll take them as they come as the preference to waiting to train  
934 them all at once?”

935

936 Fire Chief Gudie said, “I think if the Mayor is stating they would try to find a way to bring all  
937 three on, possibly early in 2021, I think that would be beneficial. But I don’t want to lose any  
938 positions and go through 2021 and not have any positions coming into the Fire Department. If  
939 somebody leaves and you get your staffing up to four per shift or if somebody gets injured, you  
940 always have that one shift that might have five where you could move somebody over. I’m not  
941 going to battle the chief on positions. I just want to get my staffing back up and then focus on  
942 those additional three, however that works into the budget process.”

943

944 Ald. Wulf said it is her understanding the city could hire two Public Safety positions, and she  
945 asked the other alderpersons how they would feel about hiring one police officer and one  
946 firefighter. Ald. Wulf also asked that Ald. Stevens withdraw his motion, and then a new motion  
947 may be made if the alderpersons are amenable to hiring two Public Safety positions. Ald. Wulf  
948 stated she will be supporting hiring one police officer and one firefighter.

949

950 Ald. Nott told Ald. Wulf he also was going to suggest hiring one police officer and one  
951 firefighter, but with one caveat. Ald. Nott inquired about the budgetary impact if the city hires  
952 two positions versus one, and he asked if the city has the ability to hire two positions.

953

954 City Administrator Rindfleisch said he believes that with the vacancy in the Police Department,  
955 as long as it takes several months to fill, the city probably can fit it in. However, City  
956 Administrator Rindfleisch also said, “We have a short-term problem, which leads to 2021’s  
957 budget. Ultimately, if the goal and the plan that we present to you is all six [positions], I can  
958 begin the restructuring now. ... I know we’re not saying all six in 2020, but if that is the  
959 prioritization – which is what I’m asking clearly for is prioritization – we can begin that  
960 process.”

961

962 Ald. Nott said if he is prioritizing things out of what government functions do, public safety must  
963 come first, and he stated that while everything is important, public safety is the number-one

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964 function of government. Ald. Nott said, “Does that mean we fill all six as soon as possible?  
965 Maybe, maybe not. The resources come into play. But if we’re going to prioritize things, in my  
966 mind police and fire are number one.”

967  
968 Ald. Stevens said he had started with looking at adding a firefighter due to the fact there only are  
969 two firefighters on one shift and the Fire Department’s overtime budget is almost expended for  
970 2020. Ald. Stevens said, “Now, after discussion, I kind of see the point the Mayor was making.  
971 If we budgeted to approve one position and it was a police position this year, and then we wanted  
972 to bring three firefighters on in 2021, my question to the City Administrator is, how realistic is to  
973 start the three positions if we were to hire them at once in 2021? Are we looking at spring, or are  
974 we looking at maybe we have to wait and see what the budget looks like? Or is this something  
975 that could potentially get dragged on to later, which we don’t want to do.”

976  
977 Mayor K. Smith said the starting date of the three firefighters will affect it, as well as if the  
978 Council still is committed to the other positions within the same year.

979  
980 City Administrative Rindfleisch told Ald. Stevens the budgets always are perspective, and  
981 assumptions are made on current status. City Administrator Rindfleisch said staff has always  
982 known 2021 would be challenging even prior to the 2020 budget, but he stated staff was  
983 confident enough under the normal circumstances that “[the city] “would be able to do it.” City  
984 Administrator Rindfleisch said, “The cost of signing the contracts caught us by surprise, and of  
985 course the biggest surprise of all is the COVID-19 pandemic. The challenge we’re facing for  
986 2021 is, once again, trying to have perspective about what the future holds again. As much as  
987 we do our best to be accurate with forward thinking ... we will certainly make our best attempts  
988 going forward. Unless the economy turns around and unless we replace the revenue that is being  
989 lost, the original 2021 plan is already out the window – make no mistake about that. ... How  
990 many years is it going to take to get back to where we were? I don’t know. The answer to your  
991 question is, at what rate do you wish to bring them in? That’s the budget we’ll make plans for,  
992 and we’ll make the changes necessary to get that in.”

993  
994 City Administrator Rindfleisch reiterated Fire Chief Gudie’s comments that he would prefer  
995 hiring all three new firefighter positions at once, hold training simultaneously for all three,  
996 initially assign them to the same shifts, and eventually assign them to new shifts. City  
997 Administrator Rindfleisch also referred to Police Chief Ashbeck’s comments that training either  
998 one or two officers at once is the best way to ensure that both officers are brought up to the high  
999 standards that are expected of city employees. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “The  
1000 priorities, and I think how the chiefs would rather have those employees come in, would dictate  
1001 the rest of the response for the budget.”

1002  
1003 Ald. Nott asked Fire Chief Gudie if it would be more desirable for him if one firefighter and one  
1004 police officer are hired effective October 1 or later, and then the city hires two additional  
1005 firefighters at a later date.

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1006

1007 Fire Chief Gudie nodded in the affirmative.

1008

1009 Ald. Nott noted he had had a fire department serve under him when he was stationed at Fort  
1010 McCoy, and he asked Fire Chief Gudie to repeat the current breakdown of firefighters on each  
1011 shift.

1012

1013 Fire Chief Gudie told Ald. Nott there currently are four firefighters on one shift, three on one  
1014 shift, and two on the remaining shift. Fire Chief Gudie reiterated there currently are two  
1015 vacancies, and he told Ald. Nott one of the new firefighters who is filling a vacancy begins  
1016 employment August 3. Fire Chief Gudie said that firefighter will be assigned to the shift that  
1017 currently only has two firefighters.

1018

1019 Mayor K. Smith reiterated one of the firefighters currently is on medical leave.

1020

1021 Fire Chief Gudie said the amount of time the firefighter will be on medical leave is unknown.  
1022 Fire Chief Gudie also said a firefighter has accepted the offer to fill the second vacancy, and he  
1023 told Ald. Nott there would be four firefighters on each shift following the hiring of a new  
1024 Assistant Fire Chief.

1025

1026 Police Chief Ashbeck reminded the Council the Police Department also is running two staff  
1027 members short, meaning there are two shifts that are understaffed. Police Chief Ashbeck noted  
1028 this affects overtime.

1029

1030 Mayor K. Smith asked Police Chief Ashbeck how long the Police Department has had the  
1031 number of sworn officers it currently has.

1032

1033 Police Chief Ashbeck told Mayor K. Smith it has been 20 years since the Police Department has  
1034 added any positions within the department. Police Chief Ashbeck also noted the City of  
1035 Onalaska's population has increased, and the Police Department's calls for service and demands  
1036 per call also have increased.

1037

1038 Mayor K. Smith said, "I think we've reaffirmed tonight why the six positions were added to this  
1039 year's budget."

1040

1041 Ald. Nott said he is leaning toward hiring one police officer based on what he has heard this  
1042 evening.

1043

1044 Ald. Stevens said that based on City Administrator Rindfleisch's comments, "I think if we went  
1045 with the one police officer now as part of the plan to start the ball rolling, that gives us a little  
1046 more flexibility than starting one of each. But I feel strongly that we need to address the  
1047 firefighter positions, and I think there's a lot of merit to doing the academy and training them at

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26

1048 once. But I'm a little nervous leaving that open to chance as to if that starts or not. Based off of  
1049 discussion, I think the approach we want to take is to start with the one police officer now, do  
1050 three firefighter positions hopefully sometime before April 1, and then as the course of the year  
1051 goes on, then we plug in those other police officer positions. What I'm hearing is if we make a  
1052 priority that can happen, but there are a lot of questions [regarding] the budget. We know that  
1053 2021 is not going to be a fun year for us to navigate through, and I don't want to take any  
1054 existing positions at City Hall and make things more difficult where we have to furlough or  
1055 eliminate other positions. We have some really big challenges. Maybe I'm not looking for an  
1056 assurance, but maybe a general nod that we can start with the one police officer, [hire] the three  
1057 firefighters in the spring, and then see what the rest of the year looks like. I believe I'm inclined  
1058 to go with that unless I heard large objections or things we need to be concerned about. But the  
1059 will of the Council, I think we should get a consensus. I think everybody wants the same thing.  
1060 It's just, what order do we get there?"

1061  
1062 Ald. T. Smith asked Fire Chief Gudie about the chances of having three firefighters in a class  
1063 simultaneously.

1064  
1065 Fire Chief Gudie said he has an eligibility list.

1066  
1067 Motion by Ald. Nott, second by Ald. T. Smith, to amend the previous motion and change  
1068 "Firefighter" to "Police Officer."

1069  
1070 Mayor K. Smith said the amended motion would be to approve filling a budgeted Police Officer  
1071 position effective October 1, 2020 or later.

1072  
1073 City Administrator Rindfleisch said that while he will leave it to the alderperson who made the  
1074 original motion, amendments generally are not allowed under Robert's Rules of Order if they  
1075 change the original intent of the original motion.

1076  
1077 Mayor K. Smith said the amendment has been declared invalid.

1078  
1079 Motion by Ald. Wulf to approve hiring one Firefighter and one Police Officer effective October  
1080 1, 2020 or later.

1081  
1082 Ald. Stevens noted there already is a motion on the floor and said that motion needs to be  
1083 resolved.

1084  
1085 Mayor K. Smith noted the amendment had been removed, and she said the Council either must  
1086 withdraw the current motion on the floor or vote it down.

1087  
1088 Ald. Stevens said he would consider withdrawing the original motion, and he asked both Police  
1089 Chief Ashbeck and Fire Chief Gudie, "Based off the intent of what the discussion was, is the  
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27

1090 plan presented by Council that may happen if I withdraw this motion, is that amenable to both  
1091 [the Police Department and the Fire Department]?”

1092

1093 Police Chief Ashbeck and Fire Chief Gudie both nodded in the affirmative.

1094

1095 Motion and second withdrawn.

1096

1097 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Nott, to approve filling one Police Officer position and one  
1098 Firefighter position effective October 1, 2020 or later.

1099

1100 Ald. Wulf asked both Police Chief Ashbeck and Fire Chief Gudie if they would be amenable to  
1101 her motion.

1102

1103 Police Chief Ashbeck and Fire Chief Gudie both nodded in the affirmative.

1104

1105 Ald. Wulf said, “None of us want to pit department against department. I think we all bring to  
1106 the table our opinions and feelings, and I feel very comfortable with this Council openly talking  
1107 about what we feel about the City of Onalaska and doing right by it. Just talking with both chiefs  
1108 recently, I kidded Chief Ashbeck last week that I think that the two chiefs have the same script  
1109 they’re reading from because I see two chiefs who are sincerely working together. I for one  
1110 could not be happier to see that. I think the City of Onalaska is heading in an excellent direction  
1111 for the first time in many years, and I couldn’t be happier about that. I think we would do well  
1112 by filling one position each.”

1113

1114 Ald. T. Smith told Ald. Wulf he supports her motion and said he believes filling one position  
1115 each sends a positive message as both the Police Department and Fire Department are very  
1116 important. Ald. T. Smith said, “We can’t fill everybody, but I think the message is, let’s at least  
1117 get one going on each side. I think it sends a nice message we support both sides. Let’s get that  
1118 going, and hopefully we can catch up with the rest later. I’ll support that.”

1119

1120 Ald. Nott noted the Council had approved filling the vacant Assistant Fire Chief position earlier  
1121 this evening, and he said the Council is actually approving two Fire Department positions and  
1122 one Police Department position if this motion passes. Ald. Nott said that based on Fire Chief  
1123 Gudie’s comments, the Fire Department will have four firefighters on each of its three shifts  
1124 once the two new firefighters start, an Assistant Fire Chief is hired, and the firefighter currently  
1125 on light duty returns. Ald. Nott reiterated he always will prioritize both the Police Department  
1126 and the Fire Department when it comes to filling positions, and he said, “But with that caveat of  
1127 resources, have to get a vote as well. I think we’re putting the city in some pretty tough positions  
1128 by adding the third person.”

1129

1130 City Administrator Rindfleisch asked Ald. Nott to clarify which third position of which he is  
1131 speaking.

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1132

1133 Ald. Nott said he is including as a Fire Department position the Assistant Fire Chief position the  
1134 Council already has approved this evening.

1135

1136 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Nott he always prefers to look at opportunities, and he  
1137 said, “The opportunity to refocus and prioritize, as the Council’s desires to do public safety, the  
1138 conversation about 2021 and staggering was really moot because it’s 2022 then. If you’re  
1139 staggering them in 2021, you’re setting yourself up for failure in 2022. If at whatever point you  
1140 can bring in budget-wise all three [positions] in all departments, that’s when you should bring  
1141 them in. In the short term, I believe we can squeeze in the third position. But without the actual  
1142 financials ... We know there’s going to be an impact in 2021 regardless. If it’s challenging to  
1143 get that second person or third person in, as you’re stating, we will find a way. That’s our  
1144 responsibility as Administrator and Finance Director and Human Resources. I’m confident we  
1145 can do so, but if we can’t we’ll find a way.”

1146

1147 Mayor K. Smith said Ald. Nott was only speaking about one of the new positions when he made  
1148 the reference to the Assistant Fire Chief position, the currently vacant position, and one of the  
1149 three new firefighters for a total of three.

1150

1151 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “The overall plan to bring in all six now will have major  
1152 impacts on 2021 and 2022. When it’s appropriate to bring in three, I would suggest bringing in  
1153 three. If it’s 2021, it’s January 1, 2021 because if you stagger them in 2021, we will be here a  
1154 year from now worried about, how do we get them all in 2022 since you’re budgeting partial  
1155 years only? We’re here to respond to what your priorities are. ... I’m confident we can bring in,  
1156 as per the motion ... However, if as we move forward with the budget and we can’t fit it in the  
1157 budget as requested, I will follow the prioritization and make the changes necessary. I’m  
1158 confident you can do it with the proposal and the motions at hand. If we can’t, we’re simply  
1159 advancing the choices that we have to make in 2021. We’ll make it happen.”

1160

1161 Ald. Stevens noted there had been a plan of hiring one police officer and three firefighters, and  
1162 then hiring two police officers at a later date. Ald. Stevens said that approving the motion on the  
1163 floor means one police officer and one firefighter will be hired, and he asked if any thought has  
1164 been given as to what the two remaining positions in both departments would look like the  
1165 following year.

1166

1167 Mayor K. Smith said it would go to the 2021 budget, and she told Ald. Stevens that City  
1168 Administrator Rindfleisch needs to budget the entire year for the positions. Mayor K. Smith  
1169 said, “Whether they’re filled or not is a different conversation, but he’s going to budget them the  
1170 whole year.” Mayor K. Smith said she believes what City Administrator Rindfleisch is  
1171 attempting to point out is when a commitment has been made to the Police Department and the  
1172 Fire Department, he will return to the other positions that are left vacant or reduced in hours, and  
1173 then the city will be facing a different inefficiency, such as City Administrator Rindfleisch

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1174 performing the tasks a paralegal normally would.

1175

1176 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “That’s a decision we have to do in 2021 either with a reorg  
1177 or downsizing or whatever it is to make that budget balance. We can advance that on a case-by-  
1178 case basis in 2020 so that with the positions you wish to hire, we’ll make sure they get hired.  
1179 Mayor Smith is correct – that’s a substantial change.”

1180

1181 Ald. Wulf said she believes there currently are seven individuals on the Fire Department’s  
1182 eligibility list, but she added that might have changed as the list is a few weeks old.

1183

1184 Mayor K. Smith noted the Fire Department had hired a new firefighter.

1185

1186 Ald. Wulf asked Fire Chief Gudie how someone gets on the eligibility list, also asking if the  
1187 individuals on the list have completed the physical testing.

1188

1189 Fire Chief Gudie said yes, noting the individuals either have completed the physical testing in  
1190 house or they have submitted a CPAT.

1191

1192 Ald. Wulf asked how one moves from the eligibility list to being hired.

1193

1194 Fire Chief Gudie told Ald. Wulf individuals must pass background checks and a psychological  
1195 evaluation.

1196

1197 Ald. Wulf said that while there might be six names on the eligibility list, based on past  
1198 experience it does not mean all six will still be there because someone might not pass a test or  
1199 they have moved out of the area. Ald. Wulf said, “If we have the possibility to fill [both] police  
1200 and fire [positions] this evening, I don’t know what’s going to happen come January. I don’t  
1201 know what’s going to happen budget-wise. I’m personally going to jump at the opportunity to  
1202 fill one police [position] and one fire [position] because come January I don’t know what that  
1203 eligibility list is going to look like. It might be rosier, but I doubt it. I think in a perfect world, to  
1204 be able to train all three at once is ideal. The chance of that happening, no one can predict that.  
1205 That’s why I’m personally not banking on that possibly happening. I just know with past  
1206 eligibility lists that doesn’t always come to fruition. That’s why I’m supporting the one police  
1207 [position] and the one fire [position] this evening.”

1208

1209 On voice vote, motion carried.

1210

1211 **Item 10 – JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

1212

1213 A. Recommendation and discussion on salary & expenses for Common Council and Mayor

1214

1215 Ald. Nott noted councilmembers had received a memorandum from Amanda earlier Tuesday that  
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30

1216 goes into greater detail than what is included in their packets. Ald. Nott pointed out there are  
1217 four short-term options available, and there also is a long-term option. Ald. Nott said, “I  
1218 personally believe we should be focusing our efforts on long-term solutions instead of short-term  
1219 fixes.”

1220

1221 Motion by Ald. Nott, second by Ald. Stevens, to adopt Option B: Long-Term Options Moving  
1222 Forward regarding salary and expenses for the Common Council and the Mayor.

1223

1224 Ald. Nott said Option B includes the following:

1225

- 1226 • There will be a salary increase for all elected officials beginning with the April 2021  
1227 terms.
- 1228 • Salaries will increase by \$100 per month, and salaries will be tied to the cost of living  
1229 adjustment (COLA).
- 1230 • All of the funds are salary; there no longer are expenses.
- 1231 • Councilmembers are expected to pay for their normal daily requirements out of that  
1232 salary increase.

1233

1234 Ald. Wulf said the small raise in salary in 2019 that was approved by the Common Council and  
1235 budgeted for will now decrease as of January 1, 2021 for everyone. Ald. Wulf noted only the  
1236 individuals who win elections in April 2021 will receive the salary, and the other half of the  
1237 Council will not receive the preapproved salary from January 2021 through March 2022, until if  
1238 and when they are reelected in April 2022. This means they will forego the increase for 15  
1239 months. Ald. Wulf noted she is one of two alderpersons who will be foregoing the increase and  
1240 stated, “I am extremely disappointed, but I certainly support a long-term solution. But I am not  
1241 very pleased, nonetheless.”

1242

1243 Ald. Stevens said he remembers that when this item was discussed in 2019, he had spoken at  
1244 length looking to have what essentially is Option B, adding he is pleased to see the COLA  
1245 adjustment. Ald. Stevens noted there are differing levels of activity on common councils based  
1246 off of the position, and he said there are communities in which the council president had received  
1247 a slight honorarium increase in addition to what the normal council had received.

1248

1249 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Wulf, to amend the previous motion and include an  
1250 increase of an extra \$100 per month to the Common Council President.

1251

1252 Mayor K. Smith asked, “Would it be part of the understanding that ... It says, ‘*Instead we would*  
1253 *propose that salaries be increased for all elected officials beginning with the April 2021 term.*’  
1254 Part of that would encompass this perhaps that what the salaries would be adjusted to would have  
1255 to be part of a bigger discussion going forward.”

1256

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1257 Amanda said what the salaries will be adjusted to would be in the ordinance, and she told  
1258 councilmembers now is the time to have a discussion if there is a desire to change the amount set  
1259 forth at the bottom of the memo.

1260  
1261 Ald. Olson asked Amanda, “Where did this come from, the increase? What was the reasoning  
1262 behind it?”

1263  
1264 Amanda said the increase is to reflect the increase that was proposed to be included beginning in  
1265 2021, but it was not able to happen due to the timing. Amanda told Ald. Olson it is incorporating  
1266 that moving forward.

1267  
1268 Mayor K. Smith explained that the salary increase passed in the budget; however, there was no  
1269 resolution supporting it. Mayor K. Smith said that even though the funds had been budgeted,  
1270 they could not be expended to the members of the Council.

1271  
1272 Amanda said she believes this includes a slight increase for the Mayor.

1273  
1274 Amanda was told she is correct.

1275  
1276 Ald. Wulf noted this was approved in the fall of 2019 for the 2020 year. This means all  
1277 Common Council members for 2020 were to receive the \$500 total compensation. Ald. Wulf  
1278 said all councilmembers were to qualify for the \$500 in 2020. Ald. Wulf also noted there will be  
1279 a decrease come January 1, 2021, with the April 2021 election taking care of half the Common  
1280 Council, but not the other half.

1281  
1282 Mayor K. Smith said she is not certain she understood what Ald. Wulf had just explained.

1283  
1284 Amanda said there was a proposal to put \$100 for expenses in the 2020 budget, and she told  
1285 councilmembers that ultimately the Council decided to make that salary. Amanda said had it  
1286 been implemented, it would have been implemented in two phases. The individuals elected in  
1287 the April 2020 election would have received it that April, and the other half of the Council would  
1288 have received it in April 2021. Amanda said, “Because of when it was approved, we couldn’t do  
1289 an ordinance in time to make that happen. Now this is essentially pushing it back one year. The  
1290 people in 2021 would still receive that increase that you essentially preapproved via the budget  
1291 process in 2021. The people who would have received it in 2020 will now get it at reelection in  
1292 2022. But we are proposing to move it all to salary.”

1293  
1294 Ald. Stevens said moving away from expenses and to salary “is more transparent and the way  
1295 that we should go. I think the rationale for having part of this be on the expense side is there was  
1296 able to be parity amongst Council. Is it patently unfair there is going to be differing levels? Yes.  
1297 I suggested this last year knowing it would benefit the people on the other side of the Council  
1298 from \_\_\_\_\_, but I still think it’s the right thing to do. The important thing to note, especially with

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1299 the COLA adjustment, is this is all salary. We've essentially fixed this problem, potentially  
1300 forever going forward. There's an awkward year, and it's going to be unfair to two sitting  
1301 members of Council. It's very unfortunate, but what department here has it to where they  
1302 haven't had to make some sacrifices?"

1303  
1304 Ald. Stevens referenced the amendment that is being discussed, and he said it is not uncustomary  
1305 for Common Council Presidents to receive a type of remuneration because they have additional  
1306 duties. Ald. Stevens noted Ald. Wulf had had to step in for former Mayor Joe Chilsen, who  
1307 resigned in December 2019 due to health issues, and assume his responsibilities. Ald. Stevens  
1308 also noted former Second District Alderperson Bob Muth had had to serve as City Administrator  
1309 for an extended period of time prior to City Administrator Rindfleisch's arrival. Ald. Stevens  
1310 said former Ald. Muth had been paid the same base salary as a regular councilmember. Ald.  
1311 Stevens said he is aware that Ald. Wulf, the current Common Council President, does a  
1312 significant amount of extra activities, and he noted he has devoted more time than he would have  
1313 anticipated since being elected Second District Alderperson in April 2019. Ald. Stevens said he  
1314 knows Ald. Wulf takes her role as Council President very seriously, and he asked her if she  
1315 knows how much extra time she puts in, and if she feels there is value in that.

1316  
1317 Ald. Wulf said she believes former Ald. Muth had had to serve as City Administrator for more  
1318 than one year, and she also said she decided this past April to log the time she devoted to  
1319 meetings or when she was called in to City Hall. Ald. Wulf noted she has logged nearly 40  
1320 hours since April, and she said she willingly serves at the pleasure of the Council and is proud to  
1321 represent it and the City of Onalaska. Ald. Wulf said, "Whether I were to serve going forward  
1322 next year or not, I would support some extra remuneration for Council President. It's not  
1323 uncommon. I believe the City of La Crosse pays its Council President an extra \$200 a month. If  
1324 you look at the La Crosse County Board, their board members earn \$700. Their Vice-Chair and  
1325 Second Vice-Chair earn \$1,400. I can't go on record to know what they do, so I will never  
1326 diminish what they do and what they bring to the table because that's not for me to say because  
1327 I've never done their job. I have chosen to remain mute on the subject because I've been serving  
1328 in this role the last year and a half. ... It requires close communication with the Mayor, with our  
1329 City Administrator, and with staff. Whether there was pay or not, I would continue to serve. But  
1330 it would certainly go a long way to have a small stipend just for the job that it requires."

1331  
1332 Amanda said the intent of the amendment would be the \$1,200 per year salary, which also would  
1333 have a cost of living increase.

1334  
1335 Ald. Stevens said he believes the merit of the cost of living agreement is that councilmembers  
1336 would receive the same amount as city staff. Ald. Stevens said he believes there is much  
1337 wisdom in that as "we're all part of the city." Ald. Stevens also said, "The intent for the Council  
1338 salary to be \$500 a month, with COLA adjustments going forward, with the amendment I  
1339 proposed, but I'm not wedded to an extra \$100 a month for the Council President, also with the  
1340 COLA going forward."

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1341

1342 Ald. Wulf said she assumes Ald. Stevens' amendment would be tied to the election of the  
1343 Council President every April.

1344

1345 Ald. Olson noted this is his 23<sup>rd</sup> year serving on the Common Council, and also that he had  
1346 served in the past as Council President. Ald. Olson said he had declined the difference for the  
1347 extra amount because in his opinion, "I am here to serve other people. I don't expect to be  
1348 remunerated for every extra thing that I do. That's just my personal opinion, and I've been told  
1349 I'm entitled to that."

1350

1351 Ald. Nott told councilmembers he originally was unconvinced regarding the amendment, but he  
1352 said the points Ald. Stevens had raised changed his mind. Ald. Nott next addressed the salary  
1353 issue, stating he believes councilmembers' salaries should be less valuable than their actual time  
1354 as "this is supposed to be a service that is voluntary from citizens who wish to run. It should  
1355 primarily be assistant service, with a limited compensation. If we don't do that, we're going to  
1356 open a door that inevitably certain councilmembers will be running for office simply for a large  
1357 salary. There are certain municipalities across the country where I would argue that's already the  
1358 case. Their salary is so large compared to what they do that it's becoming their job as opposed to  
1359 a service, and we don't want to go down there. I don't think we're there. In fact, I know our  
1360 salaries are far less than a number of communities just in our area alone." Ald. Nott then raised a  
1361 concern regarding the memory hole, stating that while any future Council may vote whatever it  
1362 wants, it will be up to city staff and potentially on the current councilmembers to remember why  
1363 expenses have been eliminated. Ald. Nott said his main concern is that within the next five to six  
1364 years future councilmembers will wonder why they do not have expense accounts. Ald. Nott  
1365 noted expenses have been eliminated and councilmembers are receiving all salary "so that this  
1366 becomes clearer and less legally troublesome."

1367

1368 Ald. T. Smith said he likes the idea of having a long-term solution, stating he likes going to all  
1369 salary as well as the cost of living aspect.

1370

1371 Mayor K. Smith reminded the alderpersons the amendment on the floor is for the Council  
1372 President to receive an additional \$100 per month salary that also will be subject to the cost of  
1373 living increase.

1374

1375 Ald. Nott said that would take effect after the April election.

1376

1377 Vote on the amendment:

1378

1379 On voice vote, motion carried.

1380

1381 Original motion restated:

1382

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1383 To adopt Option B: Long-Term Options Moving Forward regarding salary and expenses for the  
1384 Common Council and the Mayor, including an additional \$100 per month salary for the  
1385 Common Council President.

1386

1387 On voice vote, motion carried.

1388

1389 **B. Ordinance 1671-2020** – to amend Title 3 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of  
1390 Onalaska relating to Finance

1391

1392 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. T. Smith, to approve Ordinance 1671-2020 – to amend  
1393 Title 3 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Onalaska relating to Finance.

1394

1395 Ald. Wulf noted Amanda had sent her the Finance Manual, and she said Amanda has assured her  
1396 that going forward sometime this fall she will address in that manual how to dispose of the  
1397 surplus property and then notify the Common Council. Ald. Wulf said her only question was  
1398 related to Chapter 3 (“Disposal of Lost, Abandoned and Surplus Property”), Division 1  
1399 (“Authority”), Section 3.03.11 (“Disposal of Surplus City Property”), Subsection C(1)  
1400 (“Disposition of Surplus City Property”), which reads, “*Whenever it is determined that an item  
1401 of property is surplus City property, it shall be disposed of in accordance with the City's Finance  
1402 Policy Manual or as required by law.*” Ald. Wulf noted there was no clear-cut answer in the  
1403 Finance Policy Manual, and she reiterated Amanda assured her that will be addressed this fall.

1404

1405 On roll call vote: Ald. Steven Nott – aye, Ald. Diane Wulf – aye, Ald. Dan Stevens – aye, Ald.  
1406 Jim Olson – aye, Ald. Tom Smith – aye. Motion carried.

1407

1408 **C. Ordinance 1674-2020** – to amend Title 5 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of  
1409 Onalaska relating to Public Safety

1410

1411 Ald. Nott said this item was placed on the Non-Consent Agenda due to a concern he had raised.

1412

1413 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Wulf, to approve Ordinance 1674-2020 – to amend  
1414 Title 5 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Onalaska relating to Public Safety.

1415

1416 Ald. Nott said his concern pertains to Section 5.01.18(A) (“Civilians to Assist”), which reads,  
1417 “*All persons in the City, when called upon by any police officer or peace officer, shall promptly  
1418 aid and assist them in the execution of their duties and whoever shall neglect or refuse to give  
1419 such aid or assistance shall be subject to the general penalty as provided in Title 1 of this Code  
1420 of Ordinances.*” Ald. Nott said, “If we’re going to require them under penalty of law, I had a  
1421 question of whether or not citizens would then be covered by Qualified Immunity.”

1422

1423 Amanda told Ald. Nott she does not believe citizens would be covered by Qualified Immunity as  
1424 she does not believe they would meet the definition of an agent of the state in that situation. The

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1425 State of Wisconsin has a Good Samaritan Law in place, and Amanda said there was a question of  
1426 whether or not citizens would qualify under that. Amanda said that is more about one providing  
1427 assistance on his/her own volition as opposed to being ordered to. Amanda noted she had talked  
1428 with Police Chief Ashbeck, and she said both of them would be comfortable with removing that  
1429 section from the ordinance as they do not believe it is likely someone would be penalized under  
1430 that ordinance. Amanda said, "In most cases we would be asking for help and not ordering."

1431  
1432 Motion by Ald. Nott, second by Ald. Wulf, to amend the previous motion and remove Section  
1433 5.01.18 ("Civilians to Assist") from Ordinance 1674-2020.

1434  
1435 Vote on the amendment:

1436  
1437 On voice vote, motion carried.

1438  
1439 Original motion restated:

1440  
1441 To approve Ordinance 1674-2020 – to amend Title 5 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of  
1442 Onalaska relating to Public Safety, with Section 5.01.18 now removed.

1443  
1444 Ald. Wulf said there had been a question related to Section 5.04.27 ("Permits for Private Alarm  
1445 Systems").

1446  
1447 Amanda said there is a one-time fee.

1448  
1449 On roll call vote: Ald. Jim Olson – aye, Ald. Dan Stevens – aye, Ald. Diane Wulf – aye, Ald.  
1450 Steven Nott – aye, Ald. Tom Smith – aye. Motion carried.

1451  
1452 **Item 11 – ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE**

1453  
1454 A. Approval of Change of Agent for Manny's Mexican Cocina, Inc., 301 Hampton Court,  
1455 Onalaska to Lynnae Rivera

1456  
1457 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Nott, to approve Change of Agent for Manny's  
1458 Mexican Cocina, Inc., 301 Hampton Court, Onalaska to Lynnae Rivera.

1459  
1460 On voice vote, motion carried.

1461  
1462 **Item 12 – BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS**

1463  
1464 A. Review and consideration of policy for removal or damage to trees on City owned right  
1465 of ways or lands

1466  
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36

1467 Ald. Wulf noted there is an updated version of the policy.

1468

1469 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, to approve policy for removal or damage to trees on  
1470 City-owned right of ways or lands.

1471

1472 On voice vote, motion carried.

1473

1474 B. Update regarding 2020 Pavement Project

1475

1476 Jarrod told councilmembers Sand Lake Road is closed down. Paving could not be finished  
1477 Tuesday due to a mechanical failure, and thus paving will be completed Wednesday. The road  
1478 will be shouldered Thursday, and the goal is for striping to occur Friday. Jarrod said the goal is  
1479 for the road to reopen at the end of the day Friday, barring any more weather-related delays.

1480

1481 C. Update regarding pick up of used yard waste containers

1482

1483 Jarrod said citizens who purchased a 2020 yard waste sticker will receive a postcard notifying  
1484 them Harter's Quick Clean-Up will pick up any used yard waste containers on Tuesday, August  
1485 4.

1486

1487 Ald. Wulf inquired about the number of yard waste stickers the city has sold.

1488

1489 Jarrod told Ald. Wulf slightly more than 3,000 yard waste stickers have been sold.

1490

1491 Ald. Stevens asked if there are other methodologies for citizens who did not purchase a yard  
1492 waste sticker to be informed about Harter's collecting used yard waste containers.

1493

1494 Jarrod said a notice will be placed on the city's website, and there also will be a news release.

1495 Jarrod told Ald. Stevens citizens should not have yard waste containers that is being unused if  
1496 they did not purchase the new automated cart.

1497

1498 **Item 13 – CLOSED SESSION**

1499

1500 To consider a motion to convene in Closed Session under Section 19.85(1)(e) of the Wisconsin  
1501 Statutes for the purpose of deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the  
1502 investing of public funds or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or  
1503 bargaining reasons require a closed session:

1504

- Outline for Negotiation and Financing for Potential TID #6

1506

1507 To consider a motion to convene in Closed Session under Section 19.85(1)(g) of the Wisconsin  
1508 Statutes for the purpose of conferring with legal counsel for the governmental body who is

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37

1509 rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with respect to  
1510 litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved:

1511

1512                   • Slip and fall on sidewalk on the 500 block of 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave S., Onalaska, WI

1513

1514 If any action is required in Open Session, as a result of the Closed Session, the Common Council  
1515 will reconvene in Open Session to take the necessary action and/or continue on with the printed  
1516 agenda.

1517

1518 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Wulf, to convene in Closed Session.

1519

1520 On roll call vote: Ald. Diane Wulf – aye, Ald. Dan Stevens – aye, Ald. Jim Olson – aye, Ald.  
1521 Tom Smith – aye, Ald. Steven Nott – aye. In Closed Session at 9:42 p.m.

1522

1523

1524 Recorded by:

1525

1526 Kirk Bey