

**Common Council
of the City of Onalaska**
Tuesday, September 8, 2020

1

1 The Meeting of the Common Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 8,
2 2020. 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, City Attorney
8 Amanda Jackson, City Engineer Jarrod Holter, Financial Services Director/Treasurer Fred
9 Buehler, Police Chief Charles Ashbeck, Fire Chief Troy Gudie, Human Resource Director Hope
10 Burchell, Parks and Recreation Director Dan Wick and Planning Manager Katie Aspenson

11
12 **Item 2 – Pledge of Allegiance**

13
14 The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

15
16 **Item 3 – Rules of the City of Onalaska Common Council and its Sub Committees –**
17 **Harassment Free Forum**

18
19 Mayor K. Smith read the following: *“The City Council and Sub-Committee meetings shall be*
20 *conducted in a courteous manner. Citizens, Council, and Committee members shall be allowed*
21 *to state their positions in an atmosphere free of slander, insults, obscene remarks, threats of*
22 *violence, or for use of Council or Committee as a forum for politics. Sufficient warnings may be*
23 *given by the Sergeant at Arms at any time during the remarks. In the event that any individual*
24 *shall violate the rules of decorum heretofore set forth, such person may then be cut off from*
25 *comment or debate.”*

26
27 **Item 4 – PUBLIC INPUT: (limited to 3 minutes/individual)**

28
29 Mayor K. Smith called three times for anyone wishing to provide public input and closed that
30 portion of the meeting.

31
32 **Item 5 – REPORT FROM THE MAYOR:**

- 33
34 A. Recognition of Part-time Firefighters completing probation:
35 1. Zach Zolondeck, Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician
36 2. Casey Stadler, Firefighter/Emergency Medical Responder

37
38 Mayor K. Smith congratulated both Zach Zolondeck and Casey Stadler for completing their
39 probation.

- 40
41 B. Appointment of Greg Marso, 333 Larkspur Lane West, to the Parks, Recreation &
42 Library Board

Reviewed 09/10/2020 by JoAnn Marcon

**Common Council
of the City of Onalaska**

Tuesday, September 8, 2020

2

43

44 Mayor K. Smith noted Councilmembers' packets include two pages of information about Greg
45 Marso.

46

47 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Nott, to appoint Greg Marso, 333 Larkspur Lane West,
48 to the Parks, Recreation & Library Board.

49

50 Ald. Stevens noted Greg serves as a member of the Onalaska Hilltopper Rotary Club and said he
51 believes Greg will be a good appointment for the Parks, Recreation & Library Board.

52

53 On roll call vote: Ald. Steven Nott – aye, Ald. Diane Wulf – aye, Ald. Jim Olson – aye, Ald.
54 Tom Smith – aye, Ald. Dan Stevens – aye. Motion carried, 5-0.

55

56 C. Appointment of Jiten (Jay) Patel, 1548 West Young Drive, to the Room Tax Commission

57

58 Mayor K. Smith noted Councilmembers' packets include information about Jay Patel.

59

60 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. T. Smith, to appoint Jiten (Jay) Patel, 1548 West Young
61 Drive, to the Room Tax Commission.

62

63 Ald. Stevens noted he serves with Jay Patel on the La Crosse County Convention and Visitors
64 Bureau, also noting that Jay owns and operates several area hotels, and he resides in the City of
65 Onalaska. Ald. Stevens said it is those reasons that make Jay an excellent addition to the Room
66 Tax Commission.

67

68 On roll call vote: Ald. Dan Stevens – aye, Ald. Tom Smith – aye, Ald. Jim Olson – aye, Ald.
69 Diane Wulf – aye, Ald. Steven Nott – aye. Motion carried, 5-0.

70

71 D. Announcement of Open House and Information Meeting for 2020 Cemetery Master Plan

72

73 Mayor K. Smith said the open house will be held from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday, September 24,
74 at the Omni Center. Mayor K. Smith also noted there is information online regarding the event.

75

76 Jarrod said the city had planned to hold this event earlier this summer, but it was delayed due to
77 the COVID-19 pandemic. Jarrod said city staff believes the Omni Center has the ability to
78 provide adequate social distancing, and he referred viewers to cityofonalaska.com/cemetery if
79 they wish to view the plan. There also is an online form that citizens may fill out if they are
80 unable to attend the meeting.

81

82 Ald. Nott asked if perhaps the event could be advertised in funeral homes and churches.

83

84 Jarrod said city staff is reaching out to the community in a variety of ways, and he told Ald. Nott

Reviewed 09/10/2020 by JoAnn Marcon

85 he believes it would be beneficial to also reach out to funeral homes and churches. Jarrod said
86 the public hearing notice and the questionnaire will be sent to citizens whose names appear on
87 the city's email list. Jarrod also noted he had mentioned the event the week of August 30-
88 September 5 when he appeared on WIZM-AM 1410, adding that the event will appear in the
89 newspaper, and a press release had been written and posted on the city's website.

90

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

93

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

98

99 **Item 6 – Consent Agenda**

100

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

102

103 **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

104

105 B. Approval of 2020 Omni Center Financials

106 C. Approval of 2020 General Fund Financials

107

108 **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

109

110 D. Update from Human Resources on staff vacancies

111 E. Approval of changes to the following job descriptions:

112 1. Building Inspector III

113 2. Lead Inspector

114

115 **JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

116

117 F. Approval of **Ordinance 1676- 2020** – to rezone parcel located in Sections 29 and 33,
118 Township 17, Range 7 in the City of Onalaska, La Crosse County, Wisconsin from Light
119 Industrial (I-1) to Multi-Family (R-4) (Century Place)

120 G. Approval of **Ordinance 1680-2020** – to Amend Title 10 of the Code Of Ordinances of
121 the City Of Onalaska Relating to Motor Vehicles and Traffic Code

122 H. Approval of **Ordinance 1681-2020** – to Amend Title 11 of the Code Of Ordinances of
123 the City Of Onalaska Relating to Offenses

124

125 **ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE**

126

- 127 I. Approval of Operator’s Licenses as listed on report dated September 2, 2020
- 128 J. Approval of Special Events Permit for:
- 129 1. First Lutheran Church, 410 Main Street, for outdoor worship on Sunday mornings
- 130 from August 23rd to October 25th, with permission to close 5th Avenue South from
- 131 Main Street to Irvin Street
- 132 2. Pineview Street Block Party on September 26, 2020 from 2:00 PM – 8:30 PM
- 133 K. Approval of Amendment to the Outdoor Venue License for David Reay’s Modern Diner,
- 134 214 Main Street, Onalaska
- 135 L. Approval of 2020 Cemetery Financials

136
137 **BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS**

- 138
- 139 M. Approval of a snowmobile trail within the City of Onalaska for the 2020-2021 winter
- 140 season
- 141 N. Approval of golf cart operation map including crossing at 11th Avenue and Main Street
- 142 O. Approval of Professional Engineering construction services by Strand Associates for
- 143 2020 Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition upgrades and Green Coulee Reservoir
- 144 project not to exceed \$14,000
- 145 P. Approval of the agreement for general engineering services with Short Elliot
- 146 Hendrickson Inc. in the amount of \$7,000
- 147 Q. Approval of the final 2020 special assessment costs
- 148 R. Approval of the 2020 miscellaneous concrete Americans with Disabilities Act project by
- 149 Fowler & Hammer, Inc. in the amount of \$58,410

150
151 **PLAN COMMISSION**

- 152
- 153 S. Approval of a General Development Plan to create a Planned Unit Development (PUD)
- 154 application filed by Adam Aspenson of Traditional Trades, Inc., 1641 Sand Lake Road,
- 155 Onalaska, WI 54650 on behalf of Elmwood Partners Limited Partnership, 1859 Sand
- 156 Lake Road, Onalaska, WI 54650, to allow for a mixed-use development containing a
- 157 combination of townhomes, multi-family dwellings, and commercial uses located at Sand
- 158 Lake Road, 1500 Sand Lake Road, and Sand Lake Road, Onalaska, WI 54650 (Tax
- 159 Parcels # 18-4515-0, 18-4516-0, and 18-4521-0)
- 160 T. Approval of Theater Road Center Planned Commercial Industrial Development (PCID)
- 161 Amendment application filed by Don Brenengen of Brenengen Chevrolet Cadillac, 531
- 162 Theater Road, Onalaska, WI 54650, on behalf of Time Enterprises, Inc., 3151 Edgewater
- 163 Drive, La Crosse, WI 54603 to allow deviations from the Sign Ordinance on the parcel
- 164 located at 531 Theater Road, Onalaska, WI 54650 (Tax Parcel #18-3580-5)
- 165 U. Denial of the Pineview Estates Planned Unit Development (PUD) Amendment
- 166 application filed by the City of Onalaska, 415 Main Street, Onalaska, WI 54650, to
- 167 amend the Pineview Estates PUD associated with the Pineview Estates Subdivision
- 168 which encompasses twenty-eight (28) parcels in Onalaska, WI

- 169 V. Approval of the rezoning application submitted by Nick Roush of Roush Rentals, LLC,
170 1707 La Crosse Street, La Crosse, WI 54601 on behalf of CC of La Crosse, PO Box
171 1625, La Crosse, WI 54602, to rezone Light Industrial District to Mixed Use High
172 Density Residential (R-4) to allow for a multi-family development on the property
173 located at 430 Century Place/2651 East Avenue North, 475 Century Place, 455 Century
174 Place, 435 Century Place, and 415 Century Place, Onalaska, WI 54650 (Tax Parcels # 18-
175 6303-0, 18-6302-0, 18-6301-0, 18-6300-0, and 18-6299-0).
- 176 W. Approval of a Site Plan Amendment submitted by Jansen Dahl of Chase 2010, LLC,
177 3819 Creekside Lane, Holmen, WI 54636 to modify the parking stall/stall striping
178 requirements located at 2520 Midwest Drive, Onalaska, WI 54650 (Tax Parcel # 18-
179 3568-40)

180
181 **ROOM TAX COMMISSION**

- 182
183 X. Approval of 2nd Quarter 2020 financials
184

185 **UTILITIES COMMITTEE**

- 186
187 Y. Approval of Shared Ride Financials
188 Z. Approval of Third Amendment to the 2017-18 Shared Ride Taxi Agreement between the
189 City of Onalaska and Running, Inc.
- 190 AA. Approval of City of Onalaska 2020 Storm Water Financials
191 BB. Approval of City of Onalaska 2020 Sewer Financials
192 CC. Approval of City of Onalaska 2020 Water Financials
193

194 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Nott, to approve the Consent Agenda.

195
196 On voice vote, motion carried.
197

198 **Non-Consent Agenda**

199
200 **Item 7 – RECAP ITEMS PULLED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA**

201
202 As there were no items removed from the Consent Agenda, Item 8 was addressed next.
203

204 **Item 8 – FINANCE COMMITTEE**

- 205
206 A. Vouchers
207

208 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the vouchers expended since the last
209 Common Council meeting on August 11, 2020 in the amount of \$1,823,397.49.
210

Reviewed 09/10/2020 by JoAnn Marcon

211 On voice vote, motion carried.

212

213 B. **Resolution 37-2020** – to Eliminate Fixed Expenses for Common Council and Mayor

214

215 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Olson, to approve Resolution 37-2020 – to Eliminate
216 Fixed Expenses for Common Council and Mayor.

217

218 Ald. Wulf said she wishes to confirm that the Common Council is not approving the item that
219 was included in Councilmembers’ packets, but rather the one that JoAnn had sent them via email
220 earlier Tuesday.

221

222 Ald. Stevens said it is his understanding the revised copy with the corrected date (2022) is part of
223 the motion on the floor and not the original version.

224

225 Amanda told Councilmembers the one typographical error she was aware of has been corrected,
226 and they had received the revised version earlier Tuesday.

227

228 Ald. Stevens noted the motion is for the corrected, revised clause.

229

230 On voice vote, motion carried.

231

232 **Item 9 – PLAN COMMISSION**

233

234 A. Consideration and possible action on **Resolution 38-2020** to Create Tax Incremental
235 District No. 6, Approving its Project Plan and Establishing its Boundaries in the City Of
236 Onalaska, Wisconsin

237

238 Motion by Ald. Nott, second by Ald. T. Smith, to approve Resolution 38-2020 – to Create Tax
239 Incremental District No. 6, Approving its Project Plan and Establishing its Boundaries in the City
240 of Onalaska, Wisconsin.

241

242 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the Plan Commission had voted at its August 25 meeting to
243 recommend approval of TID No. 6. If the Common Council votes this evening to approve TID
244 No. 6, the Joint Review Board will convene September 16 and vote on the creation of TID No. 6.

245

246 A presentation by Sean Lentz of Ehlers, Inc., included the following information regarding TID
247 No. 6:

248

- 249 • The tool of tax increment financing is the most powerful economic and redevelopment
250 tool a city possesses to assist in funding incentives, and primarily infrastructure, to make
251 a development occur, and also to make that development feasible.

- 252 • The property being proposed to be put into TID No. 6 is taxed by all the taxing
253 jurisdictions. This will continue for the entire life of the district. The Menards site is
254 being placed into the district. That value has been taxed in the past and has gone to all
255 the taxing jurisdictions, and that will continue for the life of the district. That value is not
256 being captured by this district. What is being captured from the point the district is
257 created until it closes is any new value that is constructed on the site, as well as any
258 inflationary value or any redevelopment value. That value is categorized as increment
259 value, and is taxed at exactly the same rate as all other value in the city. The difference is
260 the taxes on increment value – in this case, new residential and commercial development
261 – within the boundaries of the TIF go to a special fund the city is allowed to utilize to pay
262 back for infrastructure and other investments that are necessary for that development to
263 occur. During the life of the district, the TID fund collects all the taxing jurisdictions’
264 share of the tax increment revenue until the expenses, infrastructure, and incentive are
265 repaid.
- 266 • The district is proposed to be a mixed-use district, with its purpose being to create a
267 district that will provide a variety of housing and commercial uses. The goal is to expand
268 residential and commercial activity in the City of Onalaska. At least 50 percent must be
269 suitable for mixed use (commercial, residential, industrial development), and that was
270 found to be the case on this site. Preliminary projects include streetlights and engineering
271 services; a traffic roundabout; sewer, water, and stormwater utilities extensions and
272 mainlines into the area; and a temporary roadway. Including these projects in the TID
273 plan allows the city to utilize the new potential revenue source to repay the expenditures
274 over the TID’s life. The projects themselves – when, during the implementation of the
275 project plan – will need to be individually approved as the city approves other
276 infrastructure projects regardless of whether or not they are in a TID.
- 277 • The expectation is that with full development of the site, the city could have
278 approximately \$62.6 million in new taxable valuation in the City of Onalaska. While the
279 TID is in place, taxes on the \$62.6 million will go to the TID fund. When Phase 1 occurs
280 – construction is projected to begin in 2022, and tax revenue would be collected
281 beginning in 2024 – between \$250,000 and \$260,000 in revenue is anticipated. If and
282 when the full \$62.6 million is constructed, annual revenue would exceed \$1.2 million a
283 year. Over the maximum 20-year life of TID No. 6, the projection is to collect
284 approximately \$17.9 million in potential tax increment revenue generated by the district
285 from the new tax value of \$62.6 million.
- 286 • The previously discussed projects have been phased out into potential financings for
287 them. TID projects typically are financed either with advances from other city funds, or
288 with debt issues, which is what is being shown to the Common Council over the first 15
289 years of the TID’s 20-year life. The expenses in comparison to the revenues have been
290 examined, and the expectation is that by 2033 the city will have accumulated enough
291 money in TID No. 6 to prepay the debt and potentially close the TID. When a TID
292 closes, the value that has been generated in the district – in this case, \$62.6 million – no

293 longer would be in the special fund, but instead would shift back and be part of the tax
294 base for all the taxing jurisdictions, including the City of Onalaska. The \$62.6 million
295 would be added to the city’s General Fund tax base, as well as the tax base for La Crosse
296 County, Western Technical College, and the Holmen School District. Those jurisdictions
297 are foregoing collection of this revenue while the TIF is in place. However, the
298 expenditures are necessary to create the \$62.6 million, otherwise the property is much
299 more likely to remain undeveloped.

300
301 Ald. Stevens said one thing he finds intriguing about TID No. 6 is there is no financial risk to the
302 city if it is not utilized. Ald. Stevens asked, “In the event it is not utilized after a determined
303 period of time where there’s no value added ... If we put this tax district in place and nothing
304 happens with it, should it be the policy of the city to keep it open? Or should we incorporate
305 something like a ‘use it or lose it’ clause? The follow-up question would be, if nothing happens
306 with the district – we pass that and it’s opened – what happens to the increment on the base land
307 value while it’s open? Meaning, if nothing happens and we set up this tax district, will it just
308 collect money until 2041? What happens at that point?”

309
310 City Administrator Rindfleisch explained that the existing taxable value based on the land will
311 continue to be collected and shared with all the taxing entities until construction occurs. Only
312 the incremental value of what is constructed will become taxes that are collected by the district
313 for use of expenses. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “The second part of that is, based on
314 the projects list, if the district is created by the Council approval, followed up by the Joint
315 Review Board approval ... You can see the earliest that we would be looking at some
316 expenditures would be 2023 for streetlights on Sand Lake Road up and down. If no dirt is
317 moved and there are no projects going on, there’s no reason to keep the district open. There is a
318 20-year window open on recouping your expenses, and there is a 15-year window on the
319 expenses themselves. If a particular project doesn’t start moving dirt and there doesn’t seem to
320 be any dirt, the district should be closed. And potentially, if there is a new development that
321 comes down the road and if there is a need to recreate a district, you would look at that at that
322 time. Having it stay open and not doing anything – not generating any expenses, not collecting
323 any incremental revenue – it doesn’t make any sense with that clock ticking.”

324
325 Sean said the expenditure period of the district is the first 15 years of the 20-year period. Sean
326 next addressed Ald. Stevens’ question and used the example of the city keeping the district open
327 even though nothing was happening. Sean said, “Once you got to year 16, if any costs you did
328 have related to the district had been paid back, at that point you’re out of your expenditure period
329 and the district has to close at that point because there’s no opportunity to add new expenses.
330 But you are allowed to keep the district open for that first 15-year period because you can incur
331 new expenses for the first 15 years of the 20 years of the Tax Increment District. If you change
332 your mind and you’re not going to do anything with it, I agree with what Eric said: Most likely
333 you’re just going to close it. But technically those would be the rules.”

335 Motion restated:

336

337 To approve Resolution 38-2020 – to Create Tax Incremental District No. 6, Approving its
338 Project Plan and Establishing its Boundaries in the City of Onalaska, Wisconsin.

339

340 On roll call vote: Ald. Tom Smith – aye, Ald. Dan Stevens – aye, Ald. Steven Nott – aye, Ald.
341 Jim Olson – aye, Ald. Diane Wulf – aye. Motion carried, 5-0.

342

343 **Item 10 – ROOM TAX COMMISSION**

344

345 A. Review and consideration of changing the meeting date and time for the next Room Tax
346 Commission meeting to Wednesday, January 6, 2021 at 4:00 PM

347

348 Ald. Stevens noted the Room Tax Commission’s next scheduled meeting either abutted
349 Christmas or New Year’s, and he said it was the consensus of the commission for the next
350 meeting to occur at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, January 6.

351

352 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Nott, to approve changing the meeting date and time for
353 the next Room Tax Commission meeting to Wednesday, January 6, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

354

355 On voice vote, motion carried.

356

357 **Item 11 – REPORT FROM THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR**

358

359 A. Review and consideration of non-budgeted audio-visual updates for City Hall Council
360 Chambers, Conference Room 112, Police Training Room and Fire Training Room with
361 potential reimbursement through CARES Grant for COVID related expense

362

363 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Councilmembers that Tierney, which is based in St. Paul and
364 is currently servicing the city’s audio/visual system, had submitted a proposal. City
365 Administrator Rindfleisch apologized for not bringing forward this item the week of August 30-
366 September 5 as city staff did not receive the quote in time, and he said, “Initially what staff had
367 done was that as we were looking for that CARES grant, the response to improve the facilities so
368 that we can best allow remote access for the public to our meetings, and hold remote meetings,
369 as qualified expenses. We looked at the entire building and every room where we have the
370 ability to meet and meet with the public. We received a very large quote from [Tierney], and we
371 had to chop it down to the four rooms that are listed. That is the proposal that is front of you
372 today.” City Administrator Rindfleisch noted that Tierney has the state bid contracts, and all the
373 equipment would be at the state bid prices, thereby avoiding the overall bidding prices.

374

375 The following updates are being proposed:

376

Reviewed 09/10/2020 by JoAnn Marcon

**Common Council
of the City of Onalaska**

Tuesday, September 8, 2020

10

- 377 • The existing camera in the Common Council Chambers would be removed, which would
378 allow for a more dynamic visual presentation. City Administrator Rindfleisch said
379 wireless microphones also would be purchased, noting the existing microphones do a
380 substandard job of picking up audio unless the speaker is in very close proximity.
381 Wireless microphones also could be moved depending on how the Council Chambers are
382 set up.
- 383 • A camera would be installed in Room 112, which currently only has the capability for
384 audio recordings, and wireless microphones also would be installed.
- 385 • Updates to the Fire and Police Training Rooms would allow part-time firefighters and
386 police officers to participate in remote training.
387

388 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Councilmembers that after speaking with Fred they both feel
389 confident the city will be reimbursed for these expenses, particularly the expenses for the
390 Common Council Chambers and Room 112.

391
392 Amanda told Councilmembers part of the reason the updates are reimbursable is it gives the city
393 the ability to socially distance and offer more flexibility, particularly in the Common Council
394 Chambers, where there are limits due to the wired microphones that are currently being utilized.
395 Amanda said she is optimistic the city will be able to return to holding hybrid meetings that will
396 allow city staff to be in City Hall – both in the Council Chambers and Room 112 – utilize
397 wireless microphones and spread out.

398
399 Ald. Olson asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if it is proper for him to say that the city will
400 not proceed with this project if it does not receive reimbursement via the CARES Grant.

401
402 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Olson that these are expense reimbursements and said
403 the city must pay for the projects and submit for reimbursement once the projects have been
404 completed. City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the window for reimbursement is the end of
405 October, meaning the city must expend the funds in order to submit for reimbursement. City
406 Administrator Rindfleisch admitted that while there is a risk in that the request to be reimbursed
407 will not be approved, the risk for projects such as these is minimal. City Administrator
408 Rindfleisch said there would have been a risk if the city had included the rooms the public does
409 not utilize, but those rooms had been removed from consideration.

410
411 Ald. Nott noted the cost of the third project is \$36,500, and he asked how the city will fund the
412 projects if it is not reimbursed for one or more of them.

413
414 Fred told Councilmembers that prior to the invoices being paid this evening, the cost of COVID-
415 19 related projects totaled an estimated \$64,000. Fred said \$48,952 must be added to the
416 \$64,000 for the touchless faucets both the Finance and Personnel Committee and the Common
417 Council had authorized, contingent upon being approved. Further, both the Finance and

**Common Council
of the City of Onalaska**

Tuesday, September 8, 2020

11

418 Personnel Committee and the Common Council had authorized \$39,877 for the telephone
419 system, contingent upon reimbursement. There also is \$13,000 for elections. Fred said the total
420 is \$330,000 on a \$308,698 grant, and he noted more funds will have been spent than received.

421
422 Ald. Wulf noted she had spoken with city staff members earlier Tuesday, and she said they felt
423 confident that Items 1 and 2 (A-2 and B-2) would be covered. Ald. Wulf acknowledged there is
424 some risk involved with Items 3 and 4 (Fire Training Room and Police Training Room) and
425 noted the cost of those items totals approximately \$78,000. Ald. Wulf asked, "If we expend
426 those dollars and get turned down, where would that approximately \$78,000 come from? How
427 do we pay for those?"

428
429 Fred said, "All of these projects, whether it's these projects, the telephone project ... these
430 projects would most likely be coming out of Fund 207. However, if I can directly relate some of
431 these items, if it's not eligible, to an enterprise fund, I will do so proportionately."

432
433 Ald. Wulf inquired about Fund 207.

434
435 Fred told Ald. Wulf that Fund 207 is the Equipment Replacement Fund.

436
437 Mayor K. Smith asked Ald. Wulf about the total cost of A-2 and B-2.

438
439 Ald. Wulf said the combined cost of A-2 and B-2 is \$85,015.64.

440
441 Ald. Wulf noted Councilmembers had received a significant amount of information in their
442 packets late in the day September 4, and also had received an update late Tuesday afternoon.
443 Ald. Wulf said she realizes the city is on a specific timeline, and also that she appreciates the fact
444 a significant amount of work had gone into compiling the information Councilmembers had
445 received. Ald. Wulf said she believes this was a significant amount of information for
446 Councilmembers to digest over the Labor Day weekend, and she stated, "I have a confidence
447 level for Items 1 and 2, [and] a little bit less for Items 3 and 4 even though I would like to see
448 that we get them. My one concern is the style in which the scope of the integration services was
449 written up. If I can be assured that how they wrote it up in actual line items for the quotes, [if]
450 they match up, it's something that I can support. I didn't like the way it was written up. It was
451 hard to discern, from a layperson point of view, was Tierney supporting it? It's just the way they
452 presented it. I wasn't sure at times, were they providing it? Were we being charged for it? It
453 was all over the place. I would have liked a little tighter scope of services when writing it up.
454 But if I can be assured that they match up, I can certainly go on record and support the first two
455 proposals – A-2 and B-2. ... It's not for a lack of support of E and G. If someone else wants to
456 go ahead and make a follow-up motion, I will certainly consider that."

457
458 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Nott, to approve the purchase of non-budgeted audio-
459 visual updates from Tierney, including Item A-2 (Common Council Chambers Update with
Reviewed 09/10/2020 by JoAnn Marcon

460 Gooseneck Microphones) at a cost of \$33,473.01, and Item B-2 (Room 112 Audio/Video Update
461 with Wireless Microphones) at a cost of \$51,542.63, with potential reimbursement through
462 CARES Grant for COVID related expense.

463
464 Jarrod said Nils Housker, the city's IT employee, had spent a considerable amount of time
465 working on this project over the last six weeks, including meeting with several city staff
466 members. Jarrod said, "When I look at the price quote that is given, it's very detailed in the fact
467 it's got screws and cables, and it's detailed to point I feel comfortable in the fact it has
468 everything that we need to make these projects work. The people from Tierney have been very
469 good at fixing what we have and getting it to work. They've been very good at explaining these
470 items to us. I have not been down to the nuts and bolts area like our IT person has, but I have
471 confidence in him that we're going to get a product that's going to work at the end of the day."

472
473 Ald. Nott said he is seeking reassurance that the city will be able to locate the funds for these two
474 items in its current budget if it does not receive reimbursement, and he asked Fred to provide
475 more specific details.

476
477 Fred told Ald. Nott there is \$1,272,000 in the undesignated fund balance within the Equipment
478 Replacement Fund.

479
480 Ald. Stevens echoed Ald. Wulf's point that Councilmembers had received this information on a
481 holiday weekend, noting he had read the material. Ald. Stevens said he likes to take his time and
482 analyze information, and he told Councilmembers he is a little hesitant to take action right away.
483 Ald. Stevens said, "I guess I don't have a problem with the items, per se, but I'm wondering if
484 other people maybe didn't have enough time to process this, and if this potentially ought to be
485 referred to next month."

486
487 Amanda told Ald. Stevens this item cannot be referred to October due to timing and said the
488 Common Council may hold a special meeting the week of September 13-19 if its members wish
489 to take action then.

490
491 Ald. Nott said he is hearing hesitancy from the other alderpersons and that he is open to holding
492 a special meeting.

493
494 Ald. Wulf noted she had contacted City Administrator Rindfleisch when she had received the
495 email last Thursday evening and asked if they could discuss this item as she knew he would not
496 be working Friday. Ald. Wulf expressed her displeasure at trying to squeeze in everything at the
497 last minute the day that the Common Council meets. Ald. Wulf noted she had examined the
498 information for an hour last Thursday evening before contacting City Administrator Rindfleisch.
499 Ald. Wulf said that while City Administrator Rindfleisch had answered a majority of her
500 questions, she also said she agrees with Ald. Stevens in that it is a significant amount of
501 information to process. Ald. Wulf said, "I was able to sit on it and take a lot of it in since

**Common Council
of the City of Onalaska**

Tuesday, September 8, 2020

13

502 Thursday night, so I have a greater comfort level with it. I would have liked to have had more
503 time with it because it is a big project. It's a lot of dollars, and it's a big scope of a project. But I
504 can also appreciate the fast turnaround time. I know it was a very large project for staff to take
505 on, and it's not something that Nils was able to just gather in a handful of days. There were a lot
506 of departments, and it is a very large scope of a project [with] a lot of players involved. I can
507 understand why it took quite awhile to develop. But if there is hesitancy on other people's parts,
508 I certainly would be open to a Special [Common] Council meeting. I can understand [why we]
509 can't take another month. If we have another meeting in another week, I am certainly open to
510 that."

511
512 Ald. T. Smith said he too is hesitant due to the short notice Councilmembers had received as well
513 as the cost of the project and the fact the city does not have a 100-percent guarantee. Ald. T.
514 Smith said he believes a decision should be delayed at least one week, with the understanding the
515 Common Council will have to act quickly. Ald. T. Smith added he believes delaying a decision
516 will help the Council examine this proposal and the options.

517
518 Ald. Olson noted that the funds are taxpayer funds, and he said he wants to ensure that the
519 Councilmembers have answers to any questions the taxpayers might ask.

520
521 Ald. Stevens noted both Fred and Jarrod have expressed "a high degree of confidence" that these
522 projects would be reimbursed under the CARES Act, and he said, "This appears to be a 'time is
523 of the essence' issue, as per Amanda's statement. I guess I'm looking at it that ... My takeaway
524 is that this is probably going to be reimbursed, and we would be doing a disservice to the
525 taxpayers of Onalaska if we left that on the table. The follow up of what I was thinking about is,
526 in the event we had to pay for this ourselves and it [was an] Equipment Replacement expense, is
527 this something we ought to do or should do anyway? I know they put a lot of work into it, and I
528 don't think this was something that was intentionally dropped on us at the 11th hour. I think if
529 we waited a week I would probably vote for this. While I'm fine referring it, and it would
530 probably be the smart thing to do, does anybody think their position is going to change in a
531 week? Do we have to have another meeting just to approve something? I can go either way,
532 [but] I have a few evening appointments next week. It may be a little more difficult to meet
533 everybody's schedule."

534
535 Ald. Nott stated he is comfortable voting for the first two items, per the motion currently on the
536 floor. However, Ald. Nott also said he does not have an issue with waiting if the other
537 alderpersons are not comfortable as "this was a fairly last-minute notification."

538
539 Ald. T. Smith asked if the Council could vote to approve the two items that are part of Ald.
540 Wulf's motion and think about the other two items as there are questions as to whether or not the
541 city would be reimbursed for them.

542
543 City Administrator Rindfleisch addressed the first two items and stated he does not believe either
Reviewed 09/10/2020 by JoAnn Marcon

**Common Council
of the City of Onalaska**

Tuesday, September 8, 2020

14

544 his or Fred's recommendation will change over the course of one week, reiterating he is very
545 confident they will be reimbursed. City Administrator Rindfleisch told Councilmembers he
546 cannot give them any greater promises the city will be reimbursed until the items are purchased
547 and then submitted for reimbursement. However, City Administrator Rindfleisch also noted the
548 first two items strongly fit the guidelines for what is reimbursable, and he also said he does not
549 think he can change his answer that he is less comfortable with the other two items between
550 tonight and next week, adding he will not be able to confirm they would be reimbursed once they
551 are submitted. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "If you share the comfort level that I have,
552 and I think Fred has, I'll let him answer that question on those first two items. My
553 recommendation would be to approve those first two items, and if we can come back next week
554 and provide a great level of confidence, then maybe we'll recommend to the Mayor and the
555 Council President [Ald. Wulf] that we hold a special meeting. But I don't want to schedule one
556 with the anticipation that something changes when, quite frankly, at this point I don't think
557 something will change between now and next week with that. If we can get you some
558 confidence, then I think we can have that meeting."
559

560 Mayor K. Smith said she believes the only thing that will change is the Councilmembers will
561 have more time to read over the detail of the packet, adding, "The facts of the matter aren't going
562 to change. The facts that it's a reimbursement [and] we don't know for sure if we're going to get
563 it or not."
564

565 Ald. Nott addressed Ald. Stevens' comments and said, "If these are projects we should be doing
566 anyway, including the two that are not currently included in the motion, if you would be
567 recommending we do them even if we are not reimbursed ... If we would support something like
568 that, we should do it now when there is at least a chance of it being reimbursed. It sounds like
569 we have the funds to cover it if it's not." Ald. Nott then asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if
570 he is comfortable recommending all of the projects whether or not the city receives
571 reimbursement.
572

573 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "As strong as I can be on the first two items on my
574 recommendation they will be reimbursed, I can do that. I can't say 100 percent, but as strong as
575 I can be. That does drop down for the other two items. I think there is that question about that.
576 My rationale behind that is because of the public use of the Council Chambers and the committee
577 meeting room in Room 112, that seems to be the guidelines for there. The other ones are more
578 internal. We're protecting employees for that one, so the confidence will drop a little bit. The
579 other rooms we had in there – for example, Room 140 by the Mayor's office – that is the
580 professional conference room, but the public uses it very little. I was less confident that one
581 would be reimbursed."
582

583 Ald. Nott restated his question, asking City Administrator Rindfleisch if he would be
584 recommending these projects anyway if reimbursement was not part of the picture. Ald. Nott
585 said, "If it's something we would support without reimbursement, then we probably should

Reviewed 09/10/2020 by JoAnn Marcon

586 support it because we have a chance of being reimbursed.”

587

588 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Nott he would recommend these projects – especially
589 the Common Council Chambers and Room 112 – even if the city would not be reimbursed for
590 them, stating, “I think there is great value to them and we do need to do them.” City
591 Administrator Rindfleisch added the Council Chambers and Room 112 have been “sore spots”
592 for him since he first became City Administrator in 2017.

593

594 Motion restated:

595

596 To approve Items A-2 and B-2 for non-budgeted audio/visual updates for the City Hall Common
597 Council Chambers and Conference Room 112 at a cost of \$85,015.64.

598

599 Mayor K. Smith suggested that the Council first vote on the motion on the floor before deciding
600 if there should be a second motion or no motion.

601

602 On roll call vote: Ald. Dan Stevens – aye, Ald. Steven Nott – aye, Ald. Jim Olson – nay, Ald.
603 Tom Smith – aye, Ald. Diane Wulf – aye. Motion carried, 4-1.

604

605 Mayor K. Smith asked Councilmembers if they wish to discuss the audio/visual updates to both
606 the Police Training Room and the Fire Training Room.

607

608 Ald. Wulf stated she is not prepared to support Items 3 and 4 (e – Fire and g – Police) at this time
609 and said she is open to holding a Special Common Council meeting in the next week. Ald. Wulf
610 said she has some concern the city is taking on some risk and stated that while she will not speak
611 for the other alderpersons, “I have a feeling there might be a combination of people that may
612 have concern about the risk combined with they haven’t had much time to sit on this. Maybe
613 they need to reach out to staff. I would encourage them to reach out to Jarrod and/or Nils or to
614 Eric. Lastly, when I look at Items ‘e’ and ‘g’, [it’s] about \$78,000 worth, for me personally, I
615 look at this – I hear Eric saying this is something he would support – I look at this as if it were on
616 the Board of Public Works and whether or not this is something ... Would it make the cut? I’m
617 not saying whether I would support it or not if it was on the Capital Improvements [Projects list],
618 but that’s kind of how I look at it [regarding] whether I would support it or not.”

619

620 Ald. Stevens noted part of the audio/visual upgrade was going toward the Emergency Operations
621 Center, and it is currently included in the 2021 Capital Improvements Budget. Ald. Stevens said,
622 “This might be one of those things that if we are able to get grant money to pay for something
623 that we would otherwise be doing ourselves, I would rather get grant money than levy it against
624 the City of Onalaska taxpayers. Would this upgrade be something that we would be looking at
625 as part of the EOC updates?”

626

627 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Stevens it is not a grant, and also that he has brought up

628 a very powerful point. City Administrator Rindfleisch told Councilmembers that city staff
629 members always are seeking grant funding for projects, and he said, “While this is a
630 reimbursement versus a grant, it acts in a similar nature that it’s someone else’s money that we
631 can use to spend. The strings, however, is what’s important here. It has to be non-budgeted for
632 2020, so it could not have been a budgeted item that we spent it on, including capital projects. It
633 must be non-budgeted, and it has to be in response to COVID-19. Some of those other
634 technologies that we’re looking at throughout the building, which I feel strongly that we should
635 look at doing at some point in time, isn’t necessarily in response to COVID-19. How do you
636 justify that? And that’s where that comfort level about reimbursement comes in – are the
637 expenses that we’re putting in in response to COVID-19, and can we show it? Is there some
638 justification behind that? I haven’t really seen a lot of grants for our EOC. Generally, the
639 FEMA money is in response to an emergency. There is very little proactive that we really
640 qualify for, but we always keep our eyes open. The EOC really isn’t in response to the COVID-
641 19. That’s the one trick that we have there. ... That’s where that rationale comes to play that we
642 have to be careful about. Is it EOC purposes? Is it COVID-19 response? Part of the reason why
643 those other projects got pulled out is it’s hard to identify that it’s not just a wish list for City Hall
644 purposes to upgrade technology in general, but it’s in response to the EOC.”

645
646 Amanda told Councilmembers that city staff had looked at both Police and Fire because they
647 both play a significant role in responding to COVID-19. Amanda said, “From a COVID-19
648 reimbursable standpoint, we felt that those were reimbursable. We also discussed primarily
649 focusing on the Police Training Room as the room that we would want to do those upgrades to
650 because of its close proximity to the EOC. In that sense, we felt we were hitting two birds with
651 one stone.” Amanda noted the Police Training Room is located a few steps away from the EOC
652 and said the Police Training Room likely still would be intact if the EOC was. Amanda said, “In
653 that sense, by doing the Police Training Room we are also kind of doing the EOC.”

654
655 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “For COVID-19 response purposes and not EOC purposes.”

656
657 Ald. Stevens asked if it would be fair to say that the upgrade to the EOC would have a higher
658 level of confidence of being reimbursed than the other training rooms.

659
660 Mayor K. Smith said, “Not the EOC – the Police Training Room.”

661
662 Ald. Stevens said it is his understanding there is less certainty as to whether or not it qualifies for
663 reimbursement, and he asked if the two are being grouped together.

664
665 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Stevens the two effectively are being grouped together,
666 noting that the Police Training Room would be utilized for the telecommunications purposes the
667 city is attempting to bring in for the EOC. City Administrator Rindfleisch said the Police
668 Training Room might be the best location from which to communicate out if the elected officials
669 and city staff members are in the EOC due to an emergency as it would be isolated from noise

**Common Council
of the City of Onalaska**

Tuesday, September 8, 2020

17

670 and chaos. City Administrator Rindfleisch added, “Ultimately, in terms of even submitting that,
671 this is through Council action, but Fred and I have to have confidence that it’s going to be
672 reimbursed. It’s not just me you have to convince or Amanda has to be convinced or Jarrod has
673 to be convinced. Fred has to be convinced that this will be reimbursed before we’ll even
674 consider it.”

675
676 Fred reiterated that while he is very comfortable with both A-2 and B-2, he is not comfortable
677 with ‘e’ and ‘g’. Fred also noted the city would be \$30,000 over budget if the Council voted to
678 approve all four projects.

679
680 Mayor K. Smith noted it would be \$30,000 over the maximum reimbursable expenses.

681
682 Fred said it would be \$30,000 over budget from the expenditures prior to what was approved this
683 evening.

684
685 Mayor K. Smith suggested moving on with the agenda and told Councilmembers if they wish to
686 see a special meeting on this they will have to take action to bring it forward again.

687
688 B. Update regarding installation of multipurpose trail along State Trunk Highway 16

689
690 Jarrod said La Crosse County had informed him late last week that it had received a
691 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant for the STH 16 off-street trail. This would be
692 a connection from South Kinney Coulee Road to Landfill Road and up to the La Crosse County
693 Landfill entrance, where the new traffic signal light will be installed. The trail would connect to
694 the Nathan Hill Estates area, and it would connect to the existing trail that runs along STH 16
695 from the La Crosse River toward the La Crosse County Landfill. The grant also includes a
696 bridge over the La Crosse River, and it would allow safe access to the Village of West Salem.

697
698 Jarrod noted the City of Onalaska had passed a resolution stating that the city supports the grant.
699 Both the grant and La Crosse County will pay for construction, but the City of Onalaska
700 ultimately will have maintenance jurisdiction over the path as it is located within its corporate
701 limits. Jarrod also noted that through the city’s Capital Improvements Projects list over the next
702 few years, the city will be required to finish the trail between the city limit line located at Dick’s
703 Sporting Goods and South Kinney Coulee Road. Jarrod told Councilmembers the City of
704 Onalaska had applied for a grant for this approximately 10 years ago, but the application had
705 been declined. Jarrod also noted La Crosse County has applied a couple times, and he said it will
706 be beneficial to have a fully off-street path for pedestrian and bicycle travel along STH 16.

707
708 **Item 12 – REPORT FROM THE CITY CLERK**

709
710 A. Preliminary Estimate of the January 1, 2020 Population

711
Reviewed 09/10/2020 by JoAnn Marcon

712 JoAnn said she had received the preliminary estimate from the Wisconsin Department of
713 Administration for the City of Onalaska's population as of January 1, 2020. The estimated
714 population as of January 1 was 19,330. That is an increase of 342 residents from the 2019
715 population.

716

717 **Adjournment**

718

719 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. T. Smith, to adjourn at 8:21 p.m.

720

721 On voice vote, motion carried.

722

723

724 Recorded by:

725

726 Kirk Bey