

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

Wednesday, July 7, 2021

1

1 The Meeting of the Finance & Personnel Committee of the City of Onalaska was called to order  
2 at 7:15 p.m. on Wednesday, July 7, 2021. It was noted that the meeting had been announced and  
3 a notice posted at City Hall.

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

7  
8 Also Present: City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, Mayor Kim Smith, City Clerk JoAnn  
9 Marcon, New Financial Services Director/Treasurer Sabrina Steger, Retiring Financial Services  
10 Director/Treasurer Fred Buehler, Human Resources Manager Amy Frandsen, City Engineer  
11 Jarrod Holter, Parks and Recreation Director Dan Wick, Police Chief Charles Ashbeck, Fire  
12 Chief Troy Gudie, Assistant Fire Chief Les Norin, Ald. Cari Burmaster, Ald. Dan Stevens

13  
14 **Item 2 – Consideration and action on minutes from the previous meeting**

15  
16 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. T. Smith, to approve the minutes from the previous  
17 meeting as printed and on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

18  
19 On voice vote, motion carried.

20  
21 **Item 3 – Public Input (limited to 3 minutes/individual)**

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

25  
26 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

27  
28 **FINANCE**

29  
30 **Item 4 – Swearing in of new City of Onalaska Finance Director/Treasurer, Sabrina Steger**

31  
32 JoAnn swore in Sabrina Steger as the City of Onalaska’s new Financial Services  
33 Director/Treasurer.

34  
35 **Item 5 – 2021 Omni Center Financials**

36  
37 Fred reported there was a deficit of \$20,601.23 (\$193,555.49 in revenues, \$214,156.72 in  
38 expenditures). However, Fred also reported the general entry for the second half of the funds  
39 coming from the Special Projects Fund will total approximately \$18,000. The city also will be  
40 receiving the second quarter room tax funds, which Fred noted averages between \$12,000 and  
41 \$14,000, and will be arriving in a couple months.

42

Reviewed 7/9/2021 by Sabrina Steger & Amy Frandsen

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43 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to accept and place on file the 2021 Omni  
44 Center Financials.

45

46 On voice vote, motion carried.

47

48 **Item 6 – 2021 General Fund Financials**

49

50 Fred reported that interest income as of June 30 totaled \$7,536.99 (\$50,000 had been budgeted).

51

52 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to accept and place on file the 2021 General  
53 Fund Financials.

54

55 On voice vote, motion carried.

56

57 **Item 7 – Approve School Resource Officer for 2021-22**

58

59 Police Chief Ashbeck told committee members he believes the Onalaska School District Board  
60 has approved the School Resource Officer for the 2021-22 school year and forwarded its signed  
61 copy to the city.

62

63 Ald. Wulf referred to page 29 in committee members' packets and said she assumes the rates  
64 have been adjusted for employees. Ald. Wulf said she also assumes there have been no  
65 substantial changes to this agreement compared to previous years.

66

67 Police Chief Ashbeck told Ald. Wulf the Onalaska School District had suggested a minor change  
68 to agreement regarding mutual consent between the school district and the city if there is a desire  
69 to change the job description or the hours. Police Chief Ashbeck said that protects both the city  
70 and the school district because per the previous agreement, the school district could have altered  
71 the resource officer's hours.

72

73 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to approve School Resource Officer for 2021-  
74 22.

75

76 On voice vote, motion carried.

77

78 **Item 8 – Denial of a request for reimbursement of municipal citations**

79

80 City Administrator Rindfleisch referred to a memo included in committee members' packets  
81 written by City Attorney Amanda Jackson that expresses her recommendation to deny the  
82 request and her reasons for doing so. City Administrator Rindfleisch explained it is in the hands  
83 of the Wisconsin State Debt Collection Agency, and he said, "There's been no indication of what  
84 [the individual seeking reimbursement] claimed in her request to us to reverse is record of that on  
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85 our behalf. We recommend denial of her request.”

86

87 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to deny a request for reimbursement of  
88 municipal citations.

89

90 On voice vote, motion carried.

91

92 **Item 9 – Authorization of a request in the amount of \$2,235.50 from the Police Department**  
93 **Equipment Designated Fund Balance Account for purchase of external WIFI access points**

94

95 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. T. Smith, to approve authorization of a request in the  
96 amount of \$2,235.50 from the Police Department Equipment Designated Fund Balance Account  
97 for purchase of external WI-FI access points.

98

99 Ald. T. Smith asked Police Chief Ashbeck, “We don’t have that already?”

100

101 Police Chief Ashbeck told Ald. T. Smith this is to manage the Police Department’s wireless  
102 uploads from its squad cars for videos. Police Chief Ashbeck further explained it gives officers a  
103 broader range around the building to manage that instead of only inside the garage.

104

105 Ald. Wulf referred to the memo written by Police Chief Ashbeck that was included in committee  
106 members’ packets and noted it states this is the first phase of strategically installing access  
107 points. Ald. Wulf asked Police Chief Ashbeck if he knows how many phases there will be.

108

109 Police Chief Ashbeck told Ald. Wulf it will depend on funding and said the Police Department is  
110 partnering with the IT Department on this project. Police Chief Ashbeck noted the IT  
111 Department is funding 50 percent, and the Police Department is funding the other 50 percent.  
112 Police Chief Ashbeck also noted an access point will be installed at the Omni Center as part of  
113 this project, and he said that will allow squad cars to park there and upload videos instead of  
114 having to return to the Police Department. Police Chief Ashbeck said, “As part of that, as the  
115 city installs fiber around town, our hope is that other facilities such as the library or maybe well  
116 stations or other areas we could install these access points. Squads could then stay parked on the  
117 east side of town and upload instead of always driving back here. ... I’m hoping maybe one more  
118 phase, but it might be two more phases.”

119

120 Ald. T. Smith asked if the funds are in the designated account.

121

122 Fred’s answer was inaudible on the recording.

123

124 On voice vote, motion carried.

125

126 **PERSONNEL**

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127

128 **Item 1 – Recruitment update from HR Manager Amy Frandsen**

129

130 Amy reported the following:

131

- 132 • There is active recruitment for both the Public Works Operator and Public Works  
133 Operator/Lab Assistant positions.
- 134 • Lexi Wozney was hired as the Human Resources Generalist. Sabrina Steger was hired as  
135 the Financial Services Director/Treasurer. Sami Meyer has been hired as the Parks and  
136 Recreation Office Specialist.
- 137 • There are four vacancies in the Police Department. One position has been filled by  
138 Cooper Zumach. Contingent offers have been made to two candidates. The city also is  
139 in the process of determining a candidate for the remaining vacancy. It is possible  
140 another eligibility list might be created.
- 141 • There are three vacancies in the Fire Department. A contingent offer has been extended  
142 to one candidate. Two candidates are undergoing the background process.

143

144 **Item 2 – Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Onalaska and the La Crosse**  
145 **Area Professional Fire Fighters Local #127**

146

147 Assistant Fire Chief Norin said this is a proposal to create an addition to the non-uniform  
148 clothing items available to members so that they are allowed to wear shorts during the summer  
149 months. Assistant Fire Chief Norin noted temperatures have been warmer than normal in recent  
150 weeks and said Local No. 127 members wish to take action now while the weather is still warm.

151

152 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to approve a Memorandum of Understanding  
153 between the City of Onalaska and the La Crosse Area Professional Fire Fighters Local #127.

154

155 City Administrator Rindfleisch stated for clarification it becomes an optional approved item for  
156 the duration of the agreement, noting it is not mandatory, nor is it a city policy at this point in  
157 time.

158

159 On voice vote, motion carried.

160

161 **Item 3 – Approval of position descriptions with grades and to recruit positions in the**  
162 **following departments:**

163

164 A. Parks and Recreation

165

166 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted both the Finance and Personnel Committee and the  
167 Common Council had previously approved the organizational charts, and he told committee

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168 members the same organizational charts are before them this evening, but there have been some  
169 additions, including the scoring of those positions. The actual job descriptions for each  
170 department also are included. City Administrator Rindfleisch referred to the just-completed  
171 compensation study and said, “It really did two things for us. The first thing it did for us was  
172 compare positions as per the job descriptions in a competitive marketplace. It did cost almost  
173 \$200,000 to move people at least to a competitive wage, which was done as of January 1 this  
174 particular year. The second thing it did was provide the scoring mechanism we have to maintain  
175 the program, which is applied for these positions as well, and position descriptions.

176  
177 The scoring methodology, furthermore, was utilized for all positions across both these  
178 departments to make sure we were consistent in the scoring and for the job requirements across  
179 all the job factors. Perhaps the reason for the lengthy process is both rewriting the job  
180 descriptions and then verifying that the scoring was done in an equitable and a consistent manner  
181 across both departments.”

182  
183 Dan told committee members he will answer any questions they might have.  
184

185 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to approve position descriptions with grades and  
186 to recruit positions in the Parks and Recreation Department.  
187

188 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted there has been communication with some of the  
189 alderpersons and said some minor modifications will need to be done. City Administrator  
190 Rindfleisch advised both the committee and the Common Council that if this item is approved,  
191 the changes that would be made would be non-substantive (i.e., minor changes, clerical changes,  
192 administrative changes) that would not change the scoring or anything else regarding the  
193 positions. City Administrator Rindfleisch encouraged committee members to notify city staff if  
194 they see anything that concerns them and the changes will be made, and he said he does not  
195 believe those future changes would require Common Council action.  
196

197 Ald. T. Smith asked Dan, “Do you think this gets us in a better position now?”  
198

199 Dan told Ald. T. Smith he believes it does and said, “We have a lot of staff that have stepped up  
200 and done things with some of the reductions that we’ve had and some staff leaving. I think this  
201 puts us in a great place moving forward. We have a lot of great staff here, and we can move  
202 them into the positions they have been working on for the last few months, doing that and being  
203 able to move in the right direction. I’m very confident that this [organizational] chart and  
204 descriptions is moving us in the right direction.”  
205

206 On voice vote, motion carried.  
207

208 B. Public Works  
209

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210 Jarrod told committee members that this is many months in the making, noting the process had  
211 begun during the last half of 2020. Jarrod noted both the Public Works Manager and the  
212 Assistant Public Works Manager both have departed, which led to the restructuring of the  
213 organizational chart that is before the committee this evening. Jarrod noted there had been  
214 extensive discussions regarding the organizational chart, and also that several options were  
215 considered. Jarrod said, "I think we've gotten to the point where we have something that we can  
216 move forward with and get some leadership positions back in our department and move  
217 forward."

218

219 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to approve position descriptions with grades and  
220 to recruit positions in Public Works.

221

222 Ald. T. Smith asked Jarrod if he, like Dan, believes this will put the city in a better position.

223

224 Jarrod told Ald. T. Smith yes and said, "I believe moving forward, right now with the departures  
225 of our managers that we had, we need some leadership in our department to make decisions in  
226 my absence. I think moving forward this will get us in a very good spot that we can have duties  
227 delegated, and it will be operational versus departmental. Our sub-departments within our  
228 department will be more operational so we can continue what we started of trying to work  
229 together as a Public Works Department and do multiple tasks with multiple people."

230

231 Ald. Burmaster addressed the GIS/IT Asset Manager job description, noting one of the job  
232 requirements is a Master's Degree in GIS, Geography, Computer Science, Urban Planning or  
233 Engineering, or equivalent experience required. Ald. Burmaster said, "We don't have any job  
234 descriptions in the city that require a Master's Degree, so I was wondering if we could change  
235 that to a Bachelor's Degree, with a preferred Master's Degree so we would have a wide enough  
236 pool of candidates when we would have the need to advertise for that."

237

238 Ald. Burmaster next addressed the requirement for possessing a water license, noting she is  
239 aware that while the city is required to have only one water license, the city does not want to  
240 have only one. Ald. Burmaster said she questions if possessing a water license is necessary for  
241 the positions that do not work directly with water. Ald. Burmaster noted she is questioning the  
242 Public Works Superintendent position, and she said, "There are actually two positions. I didn't  
243 know if there would be one person that would be working mostly with the Street [Department]  
244 side if they would have that need to have that license."

245

246 Ald. Burmaster noted one of the job requirements for the Public Works Superintendent positions  
247 reads as follows: "*Possess water operator's license in groundwater and distribution by the*  
248 *Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, or ability to obtain within one year.*" Ald.  
249 Burmaster said, "It costs the city money to have them get their license. They have to go through  
250 training. They have to pay for the license. They have to do recertification all the time to keep  
251 that license current. If they're not really working with the water itself, it might even create

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252 difficulty for them to even be able to study that and know the details of what they're supposed to  
253 be taking. [Regarding] the Public Works Superintendent, I guess I don't know the division of  
254 duties there, so maybe Jarrod can address that. But the cemetery [Public Works Maintenance  
255 Worker – Cemetery position], I just couldn't see that there was any opportunity for that person to  
256 be working with the water. ... Those are just the concerns that I had with those positions."

257  
258 Jarrod first addressed the Public Works Maintenance Worker – Cemetery position and said, "I  
259 did go back and forth with this position to see whether it would need a water license. Our  
260 current cemetery sexton cemetery worker does have a water license that participates within our  
261 on-call rotation. Part of the reason having multiple individuals with the water license is then we  
262 put them into our on-call rotation. When there's a well lift station and something goes down in  
263 the middle of the night, we want to have our water operators go out and be able to fix those  
264 things and attend to them. We're trying to keep our on-call rotation down. With only a limited  
265 number, we try to keep that number as many as we can so that way we can be rotating through  
266 people. That way we don't have a few people who are always on call. With our current  
267 cemetery worker actually having a water license, I do see that it is not a need in the cemetery to  
268 have a water license, [and] I do agree with that. But I am looking department-wide at the fact  
269 that we would then be trying to strengthen our numbers for our on-call rotation. I am willing to  
270 look at that one. With that one, I would be open to comments."

271  
272 Ald. Wulf told Jarrod that while he said he is open for comments regarding the requirement of a  
273 water license for the Public Works Maintenance Worker – Cemetery position, it is her  
274 understanding that he would prefer to keep the requirement as it is written in the job description.  
275

276 Jarrod told Ald. Wulf, "I would prefer to keep that due to the fact of trying to keep as many  
277 Public Works maintenance workers [as possible] on the on-call rotation."  
278

279 Ald. Wulf asked who is responsible for the payment of the Wisconsin Department of Natural  
280 Resources certification.  
281

282 Jarrod told Ald. Wulf the City of Onalaska is responsible for the payment and noted it is every  
283 two years at a cost of approximately \$150. Jarrod further stated that Ald. Burmaster is correct  
284 with the job descriptions of maintenance workers 1, 2, and 3, and he said, "If you have a water  
285 certification, you can get a higher level of grade."  
286

287 Jarrod next addressed the Public Works Superintendent position and said, "Right now we are  
288 showing both those, two positions. With the number and tasks spanning a wide range of duties,  
289 we feel we need two superintendents. I would want to have both superintendents have their  
290 water license and be able to answer questions, for instance, if there's an on-call emergency in  
291 any area of the Public Works Department on a weekend, or at night or whenever they would get  
292 the call. What we're trying to do here is have, as we've been working toward for a number of  
293 years, is having multiple individuals who can do multiple jobs and functions within the Public  
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8

294 Works Department. [Regarding] the Public Works Department cross-training, I do understand  
295 that there will be areas that not everyone will be an expert in every area. But we do want to be  
296 cross-trained and be able to answer those questions. For instance, if the Public Works  
297 Superintendent is out of town or on vacation, the other Public Works Superintendent can step in  
298 and assist with those functions. That one I really feel we should have the water certification with  
299 it so that way we're still a combined department keeping it one unit."

300

301 Jarrod next addressed the GIS/IT Asset Manager job description and said he would be agreeable  
302 with Ald. Burmaster's suggestion to edit the job description so that it states that a Master's  
303 Degree is preferred rather than required in GIS, Geography, Computer Science, Urban Planning  
304 or Engineering.

305

306 City Administrator Rindfleisch told committee members, "I would suggest, especially with  
307 Jarrod's comments that he is supportive of that change suggested by Alder Burmaster, that we  
308 will make that change prior to the [July 13 Common] Council [meeting] without a motion. We  
309 will do that before the final vote."

310

311 Ald. Wulf told both Ald. Olson and Ald. T. Smith that unless they tell her otherwise, she is going  
312 to assume there is a consensus that the water certification will remain as a requirement for the  
313 two positions.

314

315 Ald. T. Smith answered in the affirmative.

316

317 On voice vote, motion carried.

318

319 **Item 4 – Out of State Travel request for Assistant Fire Chief Les Norin to attend Fire**  
320 **Tactics Class in Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri from 7/15/2021 – 7/18/2021**

321

322 Fire Chief Gudie told committee members Assistant Fire Chief Norin had registered for this  
323 conference while serving as a captain at his previous department. Fire Chief Gudie said it  
324 appears to be a very good seminar that will assist Assistant Fire Chief Norin in his professional  
325 development as a chief officer. Fire Chief Gudie said he recommends that the city pay for hotel  
326 accommodations, travel, and a meal allowance in an amount not to exceed \$525, should  
327 Assistant Fire Chief Norin utilize that amount. Fire Chief Gudie told committee members  
328 Assistant Fire Chief Norin would prefer to drive to the conference, noting he will utilize a City of  
329 Onalaska vehicle. Fire Chief Gudie also noted Assistant Fire Chief Norin would not utilize  
330 benefit vacation time to attend the conference.

331

332 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to approve Out of State Travel request for  
333 Assistant Fire Chief Les Norin to attend Fire Tactics Class in Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri from  
334 7/15/2021 – 7/18/2021 in an amount not to exceed \$525 for general travel expenses.

335

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9

336 On voice vote, motion carried.

337

338 **Adjournment**

339

340 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to adjourn at 7:51 p.m.

341

342 On voice vote, motion carried.

343

344

345 Recorded by:

346

347 Kirk Bey