

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

Wednesday, May 5, 2021

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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, May 5, 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 (either in person or remotely): City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, Mayor Kim
9 Smith, City Clerk JoAnn Marcon, City Attorney Amanda Jackson, 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,
12 Buildings Manager Brian Babiash, Omni Center Event Coordinator Justin Swartling, Ald. Cari
13 Burmaster, Ald. Dan Stevens

14
15 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from the previous meeting**

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

19
20 On voice vote, motion carried.

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

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

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

28
29 **FINANCE**

30
31 **Item 4 – 2021 Omni Center Financials**

32
33 Fred told committee members the city had undergone an audit in mid-March and said the
34 financials that are before them this evening is prior to any adjusted journal entries for 2020. Fred
35 told committee members all the journal entries have been inputted and said the months of
36 January, February, and March currently are “a little bit in limbo” due to closure of a variety of
37 items. Further, Fred noted the Omni Center receives no room tax until February and said the
38 first quarter statistics are not available until May. Fred told committee members they will see the
39 results of the first quarter in June. Fred next directed committee members to page 3 of the Omni
40 Center financials and noted the deficit as of March 31 was \$34,739.70 (\$103,857.50 in revenues,
41 \$138,597.20 in expenditures). Fred reiterated this does not include room tax dollars which,
42 while not removing the deficit, would reduce it.

Reviewed 05/06/2021 by Eric Rindfleisch & Fred Buehler

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43
44 Dan reported the Omni Center has been the host site for several events over the past few
45 weekends, including both the La Crosse Area Builders Association Home Show and the National
46 Association Breweriana Advertising Collectors Show this past weekend. Dan said an event is
47 scheduled this weekend in Arena No. 1, a volleyball tournament is scheduled for Arena No. 2,
48 and a rock and gem show will be held in the west wing.

49
50 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the 2021 Omni Center Financials.

51
52 Ald. T. Smith noted the city could be receiving government funding due to COVID-19 and said
53 event cancellations and a loss of revenue due to the pandemic had affected the Omni Center.

54 Ald. T. Smith said that while there will be a significant number of restrictions tied to the funding,
55 he also asked if perhaps the funds could assist in addressing some of the Omni Center's deficits.

56
57 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. T. Smith the city had received additional guidance from
58 the Department of Revenue and said, "The key component when it comes to losses is to bring the
59 service up to the level of service of previous budgeted years – not to expand the services or not
60 to just plug one-time holes. The question is, what level of service are we not providing at the
61 Omni Center that we were providing in, say, 2019 [and] pre-pandemic? That would be an
62 eligible expense as an example, but simply replacing revenue would not be. They're also very
63 clear when it comes to the Department of Revenue that funds cannot be used to expand your
64 expenses in future years past 2024. We're generally looking at one-time only expenses in terms
65 of bringing up the service to previous levels only."

66
67 On voice vote, motion carried.

68
69 **Item 5 – 2021 General Fund Financials**

70
71 Fred told committee members they will have more information in June as the tax revenue will be
72 brought in and the current deficit of \$1,891,722.06 (\$537,891.61 in revenues, \$2,429,613.67 in
73 expenditures) will decrease.

74
75 Jarrod reported that both the city's salt sheds are currently at capacity and said no funds for salt
76 have been expended in the 2021 budget year as the city had purchased all of its salt with funds in
77 the 2020 budget.

78
79 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the 2021 General Fund Financials.

80
81 On voice vote, motion carried.

82
83 **Item 6 – Authorization to participate in Wisconsin Bureau of Transportation Safety Grant**
84 **(BOTS) with the Town of Campbell**

Reviewed 05/06/2021 by Eric Rindfleisch & Fred Buehler

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85
86 Police Chief Ashbeck said this is a safety grant in which the City of Onalaska pairs with the
87 Town of Campbell to dispatch extra officers to monitor speed limits and other items the grant
88 addresses.

89
90 Ald. Wulf asked Police Chief Ashbeck if there is any cost to the city.

91
92 Police Chief Ashbeck told Ald. Wulf he believes this is a typical 80/20 soft match and said,
93 “Typically, we can fund that 20 percent through fringe benefits and other particulars. Typically,
94 there’s not any additional costs that come out of the city budget.”

95
96 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to approve authorization to participate in
97 Wisconsin Bureau of Transportation Safety Grant (BOTS) with the Town of Campbell.

98
99 On voice vote, motion carried.

100
101 **Item 7 – Authorization to purchase External Uniform Carriers, pouches to hold gear on the**
102 **external carrier and Uniform Shirts specifically made to be worn under the external**
103 **carriers not to exceed \$7,876.50 (non-budgeted items)**

104
105 Police Chief Ashbeck told committee members the Police Department is continuing to move
106 forward with its Officer Wellness Program and attempting to outfit officers with the external
107 carriers so the equipment may be removed from their duty belt and hips. Police Chief Ashbeck
108 noted the purchases typically are coming from funds obtained from the sale of squad cars or city
109 property, and he said, “They were not budgeted, but with those funds we’re able to continue
110 moving forward with this project.”

111
112 Fred told committee members, “[There is] one thing I wanted to mention. It’s in [Police Chief
113 Ashbeck’s] memo, but it’s not written in the motion, which I’ll make sure the wording is in there
114 at the [Common] Council level. All of this transaction is a non-budgeted item that will be going
115 through the Special Revenue Fund, which is the Equipment Replacement Fund. The sale of the
116 items and the purchasing of what he is requesting will go through Fund 207.”

117
118 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to approve authorization to purchase External
119 Uniform Carriers, pouches to hold gear on the external carrier and Uniform Shirts specifically
120 made to be worn under the external carriers not to exceed \$7,876.50 (non-budgeted item).

121
122 On voice vote, motion carried.

123
124 **PERSONNEL**

125
126 **Item 8 – Discussion and possible action on approving proposed organizational charts for**
Reviewed 05/06/2021 by Eric Rindfleisch & Fred Buehler

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127 **the following departments:**

128

129 A. Parks & Recreation

130

131 Dan noted a few staff members have left and said he and staff have taken the opportunity to
132 examine a different way to restructure in an attempt to reorganize the department. Dan noted
133 there currently are six direct reports that come to him and said he is looking to reduce that
134 number to three and create a couple more layers within the department. Dan stressed there are
135 no added positions and said, “This is working within the budget that was given to us as of
136 January 1. There are no added positions at this time what you see before you tonight.”

137

138 City Administrator Rindfleisch told committee members, “You’ll see the same with Jarrod when
139 it comes to Public Works. The point at this moment is to review the organizational chart to make
140 sure it’s something the Finance and Personnel Committee as well as the Council is comfortable
141 with. If [they] are comfortable with it, the next step is to implement the chart by doing position
142 descriptions and scoring descriptions, as appropriate. We felt important that the Council have
143 their input first prior to beginning that effort so we don’t go too far down the line that you’re not
144 comfortable with it.”

145

146 Ald. T. Smith asked if, under the proposed chart, all the facilities either fall under the Omni
147 Center or City Hall.

148

149 Dan told Ald. T. Smith the library also is included.

150

151 Ald. T. Smith asked if the Aquatic Specialist position is a current position.

152

153 Dan told Ald. T. Smith it is a seasonal position, noting the city has employed the same individual
154 since the Aquatic Center opened. Dan noted the individual is WSA-certified, trains all of the
155 lifeguards, schedules staff, and works with the lifeguards at the Aquatic Center. Dan added the
156 position is hourly and in the budget.

157

158 Ald. Wulf asked Dan if he believes the current staff members will have the skillset to fill these
159 positions, adding she realizes there currently are some open positions.

160

161 Dan said, “Yes, I do. I believe we have a talented staff that we can move into some of these
162 positions. Then, with additional work with them on more supervisory training [and] leadership
163 training we can make this a very successful path for us going forward.”

164

165 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the proposed organizational chart for
166 the Parks and Recreation Department.

167

168 On voice vote, motion carried.

Reviewed 05/06/2021 by Eric Rindfleisch & Fred Buehler

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B. Public Works

Jarrold said that with the upcoming retirement of Public Works Manager Jim Prindle, he had been tasked with examining the organizational structure of the Public Works Department. Jarrold told committee members the Public Works Department was reorganized when he took over in 2006, and there had been a structural reorganization in 2017. Jarrold said at that time there were both a Public Works Manager and an Assistant Public Works Manager, and the goal was to utilize staff members for multiple functions. Jarrold said, “I think we’ve been successful in that area, and it’s been very good moving forward that way. But one of the things we found is that there were a lot of duties that was under everyone’s plate. What you see tonight ... we have operations on one side. We have some of the other items such as utility billing, IT, and the cemetery under a different manager.” Jarrold noted the Public Works Department had taken over full-time support of IT services approximately two years ago, and he told committee members that is a major component of one side of the organizational chart. Jarrold said, “We would also be using everyone that we had budgeted as of January 1, 2021. We would be one less because we do not re-budget for Jim Prindle, the Public Works Manager, in the budget, so we will be dropping that position. Within what we have budgeted in the Public Works budget is what you see here. We will re-score positions as the City Administrator stated and come forward with job descriptions.”

Ald. Wulf told Jarrold she assumes he has examined a number of options to arrive at what he is presenting to the committee.

Jarrold told Ald. Wulf he had begun the process in late 2020 and had examined different scenarios with City Administrator Rindfleisch. Jarrold noted he had come up with eight different options and multiple scenarios in the original output of what both he and City Administrator Rindfleisch had looked at. Jarrold said the option that is before the committee this evening had been refined approximately a half-dozen times prior to what he is proposing. Jarrold said, “This has been a multi-month effort of where the direction and the future of the Public Works Department will be, and how we accomplish our mission.”

Ald. Wulf asked Jarrold if he believes the current personnel has the skillset for these positions.

Jarrold said, “As Dan Wick stated for his department, my department has a very skilled workforce. We have dedicated individuals who have multiple years of experience within our department, and I feel there are staff within the department that can assume these rolls. Obviously, we will need to continue to train individuals and to strive to do the best we can. But I feel our staff are up to the challenge, and we really have a great staff to move forward with into this new organizational chart.”

Ald. Wulf noted the committee is looking to receive job descriptions within approximately the next month, and she said, “It would be at that point in time that we could also entertain the

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211 possibility of whether or not we were looking to do any type of a full recruitment or posting of
212 positions. That could possibly be a consideration of Council at a later time. That's not
213 something we have to decide tonight. That would be something we could decide at a later time."

214

215 Jarrod told Ald. Wulf he agrees with her statement.

216

217 Ald. T. Smith asked why the Onalaska Cemetery and Public Works would not fall under
218 "Operations."

219

220 Jarrod told Ald. T. Smith, "We would be sharing individuals back and forth. Just because you're
221 on one side of the chart doesn't mean you would never plow snow or if we needed help in the
222 cemetery. The cemetery is kind of its own distinct place. It does sometimes require individual
223 management to go out there and make sure things are running correctly and working with the
224 [City] Clerk's Office on making sure the graves are properly sold. I thought it was a fit to put it
225 under that area with those tasks and how they lined up. That's not to say I don't think it couldn't
226 go under the operations side. But I thought [about] trying to balance the workload a little bit
227 [because] the operations side is pretty heavy right now. I wanted to try and make sure that we
228 balance things."

229

230 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the proposed organizational chart for
231 the Public Works Department.

232

233 On voice vote, motion carried.

234

235 **Item 9 – Update from Human Resources on staffing**

236

237 Amanda provided the following update:

238

- 239 • Amanda Robbert has been hired as the Payroll Clerk, and Casey Poindexter has been
240 hired as a full-time Office Support Finance Specialist. Both employees began their new
241 roles May 3.
- 242 • Amy Frandsen is the city's new Human Resources Manager.
- 243 • Applications are being accepted for the Buildings Supervisor, Financial Services
244 Director, and the Human Resources Generalist positions as well as seasonal positions.
- 245 • Professional panel interviews are being scheduled for both the Police Department and the
246 Fire Department. Police and Fire Commission interviews for the Police Department are
247 slated for late May, and interviews for the Fire Department are slated for early June.

248

249 **Adjournment**

250

251 Motion by Ald. T. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to adjourn at 7:42 p.m.

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252

253 On voice vote, motion carried.

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256 Recorded by:

257

258 Kirk Bey