

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

Wednesday, May 6, 2020

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2 The Meeting of the Finance & Personnel Committee of the City of Onalaska was called to order
3 at 7:15 p.m. on Wednesday, May 6, 2020. It was noted that the meeting had been announced and
4 a notice posted at City Hall.

5

6 Roll call was taken, with the following members present: Ald. Dan Stevens, Ald. Jim Olson,
7 Ald. Diane Wulf

8

9 Also Present: City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, Mayor Kim Smith, City Attorney Amanda
10 Jackson, City Clerk Cari Burmaster, Financial Services Director/Treasurer Fred Buehler, Human
11 Resource Director Hope Burchell, Parks and Recreation Director Dan Wick, Police Chief
12 Charles Ashbeck, Acting Fire Chief Troy Gudie, Ald. Tom Smith

13

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

15

16 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Wulf, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting
17 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. Stevens called three times for anyone wishing to provide public input and closed that
24 portion of the meeting.

25

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

27

28 **FINANCE**

29

30 **Item 4 – 2020 Omni Center Financials**

31

32 Fred noted the Omni Center would receive \$11,272 in room tax funding (\$5,543 in January,
33 \$5,729 in February) and said the facility’s deficit would be \$32,767.21 once that \$11,272 is
34 applied to the \$44,039.21 deficit that is listed in committee members’ packets. Fred directed
35 committee members’ attention to Revenue Account No. 640-00000-49201 (“Operating Transfer
36 In”) and said it consists of funds coming from the Special Projects Fund for the first quarter. The
37 “Fiscal Activity” column shows \$19,418.50.

38

39 Ald. Stevens asked Fred how he sees the city overcoming the financial challenges associated
40 with the COVID-19 pandemic and the closing of the Omni Center.

41

42 Fred said he will allow Dan to address Ald. Stevens’ question first.

Reviewed 5/8/2020 by Fred Buehler & Hope Burchell

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43
44 Dan told Ald. Stevens there is no way to know when the city will be able to reopen the Omni
45 Center and said staff is continuing to book events and re-book cancelled events. Dan said that
46 while he will not tell committee members that the facility will be profitable by the end of 2020,
47 “I think that as we look at our revenues being down, our expenses are also going to be down.
48 We have no seasonal staff working; just our full-time staff working. Our utilities, because of the
49 fact our chillers aren’t running, are less than what they’ve been in the past. We haven’t seen the
50 real effect of this, understanding that the room tax has also shrunk considerably. That will also
51 have an effect on the Omni Center budget. I think we need to monitor this, but this financial
52 statement is pretty early until we can see the big picture of when we possibly can get started and
53 get back open.”

54
55 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Wulf, to accept the 2020 Omni Center Financials.

56
57 On voice vote, motion carried.

58
59 **Item 5 – 2020 General Fund Financials**

60
61 Fred’s report included the following:

- 62
- 63 • The General Fund contains approximately four months of revenue.
 - 64 • Under Revenue Account No. 100-00000-43530 (“State Aid Road Allotment”), Fred said
65 the city had anticipated receiving \$860,000. Fred noted the State of Wisconsin sends
66 quarterly payments and told committee members the city has received half its funding for
67 2020.
 - 68 • There is no fiscal activity under Revenue Account No. 100-00000-44170 (“Cable TV
69 License”) because it’s paid on a quarterly basis and the payment was received after the
70 financials had been run.
 - 71 • Interest income (\$86,832.19) is close to what was anticipated for 2020 (\$250,000).
 - 72 • Under the Common Council’s expenditures, the March invoices are paid in April.

73
74 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, to accept the 2020 General Fund Financials.

75
76 On voice vote, motion carried.

77
78 **Item 6 – Gundersen Health System Parking Ramp Financials for 1st Quarter 2020**

79
80 Fred noted that per the bond issue, the City of Onalaska is required to pay \$1,250 quarterly
81 (\$5,000 yearly). Fred also noted that every March, Gundersen Health System is required to pay
82 the city the differential of what the taxes were the previous year compared to what the original
83 cash flow performance showed. The payment Gundersen made to the city this March was

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84 approximately \$14,000.

85

86 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, to approve Gundersen Health System Parking
87 Ramp Financials for 1st Quarter 2020.

88

89 On voice vote, motion carried.

90

91 **Item 7 – Collection on individual fines deemed uncollectable**

92

93 Amanda told committee members there is an individual in Municipal Court who has fines that
94 date back to 2007 and total approximately \$10,000. Amanda said this individual has been
95 incarcerated in prison for several years, and will remain incarcerated for a few more years.

96 Amanda said that per the State Debt Collection, the State of Wisconsin deems individuals who
97 are sent to prison uncollectible, and this designation lasts regardless of whether they remain

98 incarcerated or are released and do not commit any more crimes. Amanda said, “The city is left
99 in this position where our normal avenue of collection through the state is unavailable. If we

100 want to retain the right to continue to collect on any individuals in the future, under the statute
101 we have to continue to make a collection effort on a regular basis. We’re just looking for some

102 guidance if it makes sense in these situations where we think there’s a high probability that the
103 debt will not be collectable, [and] if we want to expend the time, effort, [and] postage to continue

104 to make collection efforts without any real certainty of being able to collect in the future.”

105

106 Ald. Stevens asked if this is being looked at as writing the debt off the balance sheet, which
107 means the city still could collect the debt if it wanted to, but it is not claiming that debt as an

108 asset, or if the city is saying it does not expect to collect the debt in the future and no longer
109 wishes to deal with it.

110

111 Amanda told Ald. Stevens the latter is correct.

112

113 Fred reminded committee members that in February he had brought before both the Finance and
114 Personnel Committee and the Common Council an item to purge any outstanding debt from

115 December 31, 2013 and back. Fred said, “We purged it off from a dollar value, but we still have
116 it on record that they may be paying.” Fred then asked Amanda how much of the \$10,000 owed

117 is due to offenses committed prior to December 31, 2013.

118

119 Amanda said all of it is.

120

121 Fred said the \$10,000 is technically already removed from the books.

122

123 Ald. Stevens said it is his understanding the city must make only one documented collection
124 attempt per year, and he asked if the city wants to give that up. Ald. Stevens said it is possible in
125 the future the individual will be released from prison, and that the city might be able to collect

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126 some of what the individual owes.

127

128 Amanda told Ald. Stevens a collection letter can be sent to the prison in which the person is
129 incarcerated, but it would be necessary to calendar the individual's prison release date, ensure
130 that the person was released, and track down a future address or find a way to track the person so
131 that the city may keep the collection effort moving forward. Amanda noted the city does not do
132 much collection internally outside of sending a demand letter and said the city would have to
133 turn over the matter to a collection agency because the state will not take it back for State Debt
134 Collection purposes once the outstanding fines are deemed uncollectable. Amanda said, "We
135 would have to look at putting a whole new system in place for these individuals, of which there's
136 kind of a handful that end up in this description."

137

138 Ald. Stevens told Amanda that while he understands that such a task takes effort, he also said he
139 is not sure that the city wants to give up the right to potentially collect some of what it is owed in
140 the future. Ald. Stevens inquired about the possibility of turning over the matter to a third-party
141 collector, suggesting that the city could pass on the burden to the collector and still retain the
142 ability to potentially collect something. Ald. Stevens said, "I'm not sure that it's in the city's
143 interest to give that away. I understand that it would take some time, but I think we'd only have
144 to send a letter to the last address on record to comply with the spirit of the law. ... I don't like
145 letting old collections go. It comes with my industry."

146

147 Fred said he believes the agency with which the city worked prior to the city working with the
148 State Debt Collection took 20 to 30 percent of the funds from any outstanding debt. Fred also
149 said that when the city utilized the services of a collection agency, the return on the funds from
150 the agency "did not pay." Therefore, Fred said it was an easy decision for the city to remove the
151 collection agency from its responsibilities and transfer the debt to the State Debt Collection.
152 Fred said the city's collections have increased significantly as a result.

153

154 Ald. Stevens asked if perhaps the city could utilize the services of both the State Debt Collection
155 and another collection agency. The State Debt Collection would be the primary collection
156 agency, and the secondary collection agency would be responsible for the cases that are harder to
157 collect and the State Debt Collection does not want to take back the file.

158

159 Fred told Ald. Stevens he can look into it, but he also said he is not sure the city will be able to
160 find an agency with individuals who will want to buy any of these accounts. Fred said, "There's
161 nothing wrong with checking."

162

163 Ald. Olson said he agrees with Fred in that he does not think the city can find an agency willing
164 to take on a case such as the individual who is incarcerated and owes \$10,000. However, Ald.
165 Olson also told Fred he is welcome to do some research.

166

167 Ald. Wulf said she wants to know which staff member(s) would be responsible for monitoring

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168 when individuals would be released from prison and finding out that person's new address.

169

170 Fred told Ald. Wulf that in approximately 2017 the alderpersons serving on the Common
171 Council at the time had made it clear that from the time citations are issued after a certain
172 amount of days, the Finance Department takes over the debt through the debt collection agency.

173

174 Amanda noted the debt of the individual she had mentioned is 13 years old, and she said she is
175 not certain the city has met the burden of making a once a year mailing given the condition of the
176 Municipal Court office prior to the Finance Department assuming responsibility for the debt.
177 Amanda told committee members, "We do have some of these out there where likely we
178 wouldn't necessarily have met that criteria."

179

180 Ald. Wulf asked if this agenda item is addressing the individual to which Amanda had referred,
181 or if it pertains to the overall philosophy regarding this matter.

182

183 Amanda told Ald. Wulf, "Overall. This was a recent example. I think we'd just like to set a
184 practice moving forward."

185

186 Ald. Stevens inquired about the number of accounts being debt-filed, asking, "Is it just this one?"

187

188 Amanda said, "This one I don't know if we could just because of the fact that we weren't aware
189 of the account until recently. It's been sitting for years without any collection effort." Amanda
190 told Ald. Stevens she can ask Municipal Court Supervisor Hildie McIntyre to access a
191 spreadsheet and see how many cases the city has.

192

193 Ald. Wulf asked City Administrator Rindfleisch for his input.

194

195 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Wulf his preference is to write off debts that are non-
196 collectable and said, "Is there the possibility of something out in the future? To me, it becomes
197 the comparison of the effort to gain it versus the return on that." City Administrator Rindfleisch
198 said he agrees with Amanda in that the case she had brought before the committee probably has
199 not met the burden over time. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "Those that remain
200 collectible, I would suggest that we continue to use the systems that we are through State Debt
201 Collection. No one likes to write off possible collections of debt, especially something owed to
202 us. But for finance purposes, once it's past seven years I recommend writing them off anyway."

203

204 Motion by Ald. Wulf to refer for further discussion to the June 3 Finance and Personnel
205 Committee meeting collection on individual fines deemed uncollectable.

206

207 Ald. Wulf asked that the committee be given the number of cases and the amount that is owed so
208 that further discussion may take place at the June 3 meeting.

209

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210 Ald. Olson asked Ald. Wulf, “If we do that, what are we looking for that we don’t have now for
211 information?”

212

213 Fred told Ald. Olson he can answer that question, citing the example Amanda had brought before
214 the committee and noting the individual in question has been incarcerated for several year. Fred
215 said, “We weren’t aware of the situation where when an individual is in jail there has to be
216 annual notices being sent. That criteria has not been met. We can find out how many other
217 individuals meet this same criteria as this one individual.”

218

219 Ald. Stevens said, “What we’re looking at is, what is the total potential that we would essentially
220 charge off and not be able to collect, notwithstanding this one particular account.”

221

222 Ald. Wulf stated that while she typically will not refer an item for one month, “this is one case in
223 point where I feel comfortable referring this for one more month just to get more information.”

224

225 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, to refer for further discussion to the June 3 Finance
226 and Personnel Committee meeting collection on individual fines deemed uncollectable.

227

228 Amanda said it is her understanding committee members wish to know the number of individuals
229 deemed uncollectible by the State Debt Collection, as well as the amount of debt owed.

230

231 Ald. Stevens told Amanda that is correct and, if it is readily available, he also asked for data
232 pertaining to how many might exceed the year threshold of not being collectible even if the city
233 decided it wanted to.

234

235 On voice vote, motion carried.

236

237 **PERSONNEL**

238

239 **Item 8 – Update from Police Chief on Body Camera grant program – (For Information**
240 **Only)**

241

242 Police Chief Ashbeck told committee members it was his intention through the planning of the
243 2021 Capital Projects Budget to implement a body camera program for the Police Department.
244 Police Chief Ashbeck also told committee members the City of La Crosse Police Department had
245 informed him it intends to apply for a body camera grant the federal government has put out.
246 Police Chief Ashbeck said the La Crosse Police Department wants other La Crosse County
247 agencies to join under the auspice of the more departments that are on a unified program creates
248 efficiencies for everyone, including the District Attorney’s office, which is the City of Onalaska
249 Police Department’s largest requestor of records. Police Chief Ashbeck said the department
250 receives daily requests for videos, reports, and body camera footage, and he told committee
251 members he is very interested in participating because he already was interested in bringing body

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252 cameras to his department. Police Chief Ashbeck noted the grant is a 50-percent match, and he
253 said, “To me, it would only make sense to try to become part of that and essentially save 50
254 percent of what I was going to be bringing forward anyway.”

255
256 Police Chief Ashbeck told committee members he had spoken with some Police Department
257 staff members and Mayor K. Smith, and he said they felt it was important for him to bring
258 forward this item to the committee. Police Chief Ashbeck said May 5 was the deadline to submit
259 the grant, and he noted the City of La Crosse was the writer of the grant. Police Chief Ashbeck
260 said, “It was noncommittal in the sense that we did not commit any finances. We agreed to be
261 named in the grant so that the City of La Crosse essentially had permission to use Onalaska and
262 the other agencies that wanted to join in as part of the grant. We still have the opportunity, if we
263 are awarded ... I know that this would have to come forward through the budget process and
264 may or may not be approved at that time, and that is perfectly acceptable. But we had to make a
265 decision before [Tuesday] in order to be part of this or not. That’s where it’s at right now.”

266
267 Ald. Stevens asked Police Chief Ashbeck if he knows when he will find out if the grant has been
268 awarded.

269
270 Police Chief Ashbeck said he does not know, noting he does not have a complete copy of the
271 grant. Police Chief Ashbeck told Ald. Stevens that City of La Crosse Assistant Police Chief Rob
272 Abraham had written the grant and he still was awaiting the details. Police Chief Ashbeck said
273 he assumes he will know within the next two to three months if the grant has been awarded,
274 adding that there likely will be thousands of entries from agencies across the nation.

275
276 Ald. Stevens asked how the body camera footage would be managed, also asking if there would
277 be one central location, or if the City of Onalaska Police Department would retain its own visual
278 data.

279
280 Police Chief Ashbeck told Ald. Stevens the storage is Cloud-based and is individual to each
281 agency. Each agency has its own, unique log-in and only sees its own data. In addition, Police
282 Chief Ashbeck said the Police Department has the ability to share the data with whomever it
283 chooses, such as the District Attorney’s office, which would have its own log-in and be able to
284 access all the video that it typically would need to request through the Police Department. Police
285 Chief Ashbeck told Ald. Stevens no other agency or entity would have access to the Police
286 Department’s data – only the entities to which the department gave access would be able to view
287 the data.

288
289 **Item 9 – Update from Human Resources on staff vacancies – (For Information Only)**

290
291 Hope referred to the copy of her memo dated April 29 that was included in committee members’
292 packets and shared the following:

293

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- 294 • Billy Hayes submitted his resignation as Fire Chief on April 24, and the Police and Fire
295 Commission had approved the hiring timeline. The position has been posted in several
296 locations, including the International Association of Fire Chiefs website. Hope told
297 committee members she has received a few applications, and the Police and Fire
298 Commission will begin reviewing them.
- 299 • Cari has announced her retirement as City Clerk, and Hope said she would like to begin
300 the hiring process soon. If the position were to be filled internally, the Deputy City
301 Clerk's position would then be posted.
- 302 • Western Technical College has reopened physical readiness testing for police officers.
303 There still is one opening for a police officer. A written examination and physical agility
304 testing are scheduled for May 22.
- 305 • The Fire Department is still down two firefighters. Contingent offers have been made to
306 two individuals, and Police Department Sergeant Tim Berg is assisting with background
307 checks.
- 308 • The Administrative Assistant/Paralegal position is held in flux. Hope said it is not
309 possible to hire someone until staff is available to train that individual.
- 310 • Lisa Schmidt, who worked in the Finance Department, has been hired for the Office
311 Clerical Support-Inspection position. Lisa's position in the Finance Department has been
312 posted.
- 313 • Building Inspector Mac McGuire has given his notice of retirement. GEC will handle the
314 plumbing and general heating inspections.
- 315 • Seasonal staffing is currently "hit and miss."

316
317 Ald. Stevens told Hope that the Finance and Personnel Committee liked receiving verbal updates
318 in 2019 regarding staff vacancies, and he also told her the memo she had provided to committee
319 members far exceeded what they were looking for.

320
321 Ald. Wulf told Hope she also appreciates having the memo because the committee is meeting
322 remotely.

323
324 **Item 10 – Review and consideration of authorization to replace, post and advertise the City**
325 **Clerk position, and if promoted within the department, a Deputy City Clerk position**
326

327 Hope told committee members that while she believes there is a qualified internal candidate for
328 Cari's position, it will be posted externally for at least a couple weeks. Hope said she believes
329 posting the position for at least a couple weeks will attract applicants so that the process is
330 competitive. Hope said if the internal candidate is hired for the City Clerk position, she would
331 like to proceed with hiring a new Deputy City Clerk position so the hiring process is not delayed.
332

333 Ald. Stevens asked how long the city typically holds open a position for applications when
334 positions are posted.

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335
336 Hope told Ald. Stevens it depends, noting the Fire Chief position will remain open until it is
337 filled. Hope reiterated there is a strong internal candidate for the City Clerk position and said she
338 does not know what the external market will look like as she believes it is a unique position.
339 Hope told committee members the City of Tomah's City Clerk has retired and said, "If we don't
340 get enough qualified applicants to apply, we'll have to address that at that time. But I think we'll
341 have some applicants apply."

342
343 Ald. Wulf asked Hope if she believes two weeks is an adequate amount of time to post the
344 position.

345
346 Hope said she does.

347
348 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, to approve authorization to replace, post and
349 advertise the City Clerk position, and if promoted within the department, a Deputy City Clerk
350 position.

351
352 Ald. Wulf said she believes it is a good thing for the city to post the City Clerk position, and that
353 she agrees with Hope that whoever is the strongest candidate should be hired. Ald. Wulf said, "I
354 do have full confidence in who we have currently in the position. But I think it is the proper
355 thing to do. I think it's a good, all-around policy to have in place. Secondly, I think that we
356 need to continue, if the Deputy City Clerk position were to get the City Clerk position, we need
357 to make sure that Human Resources has the ability to go ahead and keep moving forward so we
358 do not slow down the process. We have a limited window here, and we need to keep moving
359 forward." Ald. Wulf also thanked Cari for her many years of service to the City of Onalaska.

360
361 Ald. Stevens said it is his understanding the internal candidate is qualified for the City Clerk
362 position, and he also said he believes two weeks is "a narrow timeframe." Ald. Stevens stated he
363 would almost feel comfortable if the timeframe were increased to three weeks, and he said he is
364 unsure what type of impact that would have on Cari's upcoming retirement and the ability to fill
365 and train the position. Ald. Stevens asked if it would be a problem if the timeframe were longer.

366
367 Cari told Ald. Stevens she believes the two-week timeframe would be adequate, and she said she
368 believes the city is in a unique situation as "maybe people are more at home looking at things
369 like this. ... I think we have a lot of people out there looking. I feel that we'll have some
370 candidates that will apply, so I think two weeks would be adequate in this situation because
371 we're not doing a national search. We're looking for somebody that's probably going to be local
372 or at least probably within the state, or within the radius."

373
374 On voice vote, motion carried.

375
376 **Item 11 – Review and consideration of approval of job description(s):**

Reviewed 5/8/2020 by Fred Buehler & Hope Burchell

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a. City Clerk

Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Wulf, to approve the City Clerk job description.

Hope told committee members some of the changes include updating some of the essential functions. Hope also told committee members she had asked Cari to put them in order of their relative importance. The changes include:

- The City Clerk position initially did payroll, but the new City Clerk will not be responsible for payroll.
- There are updates to some of the office programs (Word, Outlook, election software).
- The new City Clerk position should have a degree in Business, Public Administration, Records Management, paralegal, or related field. The position requires a Wisconsin Certified Clerk, with a preference for Wisconsin Professional Clerk.

Ald. Stevens described the position as being “more City Clerk-centric,” and some of the finance aspects have been removed.

Hope told Ald. Stevens that is correct and reiterated some of the payroll function has been removed.

On voice vote, motion carried.

Item 12 – Review and consideration of changes to Policy 6.08 Employee Attire

Hope told committee members the “business casual” style has been transitioning toward a “smarter business casual” style. Some of the changes include:

- Leggings are considered “smart or business casual.”
- Jeans may be worn if they are in good repair and paired with articles of clothing (e.g. a blazer) that make them look professional.
- Fridays would be known as “Casual Friday.”
- The word “accessories” has been added to the “Jewelry, Accessories and Tattoo Policy,” and accessories may include, for example, a scarf.

Ald. Stevens asked Hope to define the term “smart casual.”

Hope described it as being a newer term that is similar to business casual, but an employee still may wear nice blue jeans, sneakers, or dress shoes with a blazer. Hope said the clothes are not baggy, nor are they ripped, and they are considered professional dress.

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419 Amanda said the best way to describe “smart casual” is to envision someone wearing nice jeans
420 and shoes with a button-down dress shirt and blazer when going to a restaurant. Amanda said in
421 a woman’s case, she would wear a dress shirt, blazer, and a nice pair of jeans. Amanda
422 described “smart casual” as incorporating professional elements with more casual bottoms in a
423 manner that still appears professional.

424

425 City Administrator Rindfleisch said “smart casual” reflects the common practice of what
426 employees are currently wearing in the workplace. City Administrator Rindfleisch also said he
427 does not anticipate any substantial change to what is seen around City Hall.

428

429 Ald. Stevens addressed language in the policy regarding jewelry, hair color, and tattoos, and he
430 said he assumes that while dyeing his hair blonde would be acceptable as it is a natural hair
431 color, he could not, for example, dye it magenta.

432

433 Hope said that while it is acceptable for an employee to temporarily dye his/her hair for an
434 occasion such as Halloween, it is not acceptable to permanently dye it another color such as
435 green or blue.

436

437 Ald. Stevens asked if tattoos are acceptable as long as they are covered and not distracting.

438

439 Hope said yes and told Ald. Stevens no one is attempting to infringe on anyone’s right to express
440 himself or herself. Hope said she does not think citizens are ready to see employees who have
441 piercings or visible tattoos on their face or hands. Hope said an employee could be asked to
442 cover a tattoo if someone finds it offensive.

443

444 Ald. Wulf asked if the entire “Jewelry, Accessories, and Tattoo Policy” section is a new section
445 of the policy.

446

447 Hope said this section was approved in approximately 2014.

448

449 Ald. Wulf asked if tattoos already were part of the policy.

450

451 Hope said yes.

452

453 Ald. Wulf noted the policy states that “*no tattoos shall be visible from the neck and head, or the*
454 *wrist and hands.*”

455

456 Hope cited the example of someone who has tattooed a ring on his/her hand and said she does
457 not have an issue with that.

458

459 Ald. Wulf noted there are individuals who have tattooed a wedding ring on their hand rather than

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460 wear an actual ring due to their profession (e.g. factory worker).

461

462 Hope reiterated she does not object to an employee having such a tattoo and said staff usually
463 takes it on a case-by-case basis. Hope said someone who has a tattoo of a profane word on
464 his/her knuckle would have to cover it.

465

466 Ald. Wulf asked Hope what was added to the “Jewelry, Accessories, and Tattoo Policy” section.

467

468 Hope said only accessories were added, citing the example of employees who wished to cover
469 their face with a scarf. Hope also noted the word “accessories” had been added.

470

471 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, to approve changes to Policy 6.08 Employee Attire.

472

473 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted there are individuals who have unnatural hair colors such
474 as blue, green, and purple, and he asked Ald. Olson, “Do we care if it’s colored? Do we care if
475 it’s still done in a professional manner?”

476

477 Ald. Olson told City Administrator Rindfleisch he has seen hair with an accent piece on 75-year-
478 old women that looks appealing. Ald. Olson said, “It depends on if it’s not offensive and it’s not
479 obtrusive, there is nothing wrong with it, in my opinion.”

480

481 Ald. Stevens asked if having a highlight or an unnatural hair color affects someone’s ability to do
482 his or her job. Ald. Stevens also asked how much of a priority is being placed on what some
483 citizens think.

484

485 Ald. Olson said he does not see anyone around City Hall who would be that offended if someone
486 colored his or her hair in good taste. Ald. Olson said it would be different if an employee was
487 being distracting with what he or she had done.

488

489 Ald. Stevens asked if perhaps the motion should be amended to relax restrictions on hair color.

490

491 Hope said this is a topic she struggles with because while an unnatural hair color might look
492 good on some individuals, it would not look good on others. Hope said, “It’s not for me to
493 decide that.”

494

495 Ald. Olson said he believes too much of an emphasis is being placed on this topic and stated, “If
496 you’re hiring somebody who is distracting everybody else, we probably have the wrong person.”

497

498 Ald. Wulf said she is not sure the term “unnatural hair color” is needed in the policy, stating it
499 seems to her to be a bit of an overreach.

500

501 Ald. Stevens asked if perhaps this item should appear on the Non-Consent Agenda for the May
Reviewed 5/8/2020 by Fred Buehler & Hope Burchell

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

Wednesday, May 6, 2020

13

502 12 Common Council meeting, stating he does not know if hair color should be policed.

503

504 Ald. Wulf said she does not want to be setting policy for hair color, suggesting that the
505 committee pass this item tonight and place it on the Council's Non-Consent Agenda.

506

507 On voice vote, motion carried.

508

509 **Item 13 – Closed Session**

510

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

515

- 516 • IAFF, International Association of Firefighters, Local 127
- 517 • OPPA, Onalaska Professional Police Association, Memorandum of Understanding
- 518 Recruits

519

520 And to consider a motion to convene in Closed Session under Section 19.85(1)(g) of the
521 Wisconsin Statutes for the purpose of conferring with legal counsel for the governmental body
522 who is rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with
523 respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved:

524

- 525 • IAFF, International Association of Firefighters, Local 127: Prohibited Practice
- 526 Complaint – RE: Part-Time EMTs

527

528 If any action is required in Open Session, as a result of the Closed Session, the Committee will
529 reconvene in Open Session to take the necessary action and/or continue on with the printed
530 agenda.

531

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

533

534 On roll call vote: Ald. Jim Olson – aye, Ald. Diane Wulf – aye, Ald. Dan Stevens – aye. In
535 Closed Session.

536

537

538 Recorded by:

539

540 Kirk Bey