

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

Wednesday, July 8, 2020

1

1 The Meeting of the Finance & Personnel Committee of the City of Onalaska was called to order
2 on Wednesday, July 8, 2020. It was noted that the meeting had been announced and a notice
3 posted at City Hall.

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

7
8 Also Present: City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, Mayor Kim Smith, City Clerk JoAnn
9 Marcon, City Attorney Amanda Jackson, Financial Services Director/Treasurer Fred Buehler,
10 City Engineer Jarrod Holter, Parks and Recreation Director Dan Wick, Police Chief Charles
11 Ashbeck, Fire Chief Troy Gudie, Nils Housker of IT Services, Omni Center Sales Manager Tony
12 Meyers, Ald. Tom Smith

13

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

15

16 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, 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 alderpersons, Mayor K. Smith, and City Administrator Rindfleisch had received
33 copies of the forecasted Omni Center Financials through December 31, 2020.

34

35 Dan referred to the document Fred, the alderpersons, Mayor K. Smith, and City Administrator
36 Rindfleisch had received and noted the Omni Center was on pace for a very strong year
37 financially as the facility had generated \$10,000 more in revenue than it had the previous three
38 years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Omni Center was closed March 25 per Wisconsin
39 Governor Tony Evers’ “Safer at Home” order. Dan referred to Attachment No. 1, which lists the
40 events that had to be cancelled, along with the dates of the events, and the anticipated revenue.

41 Dan noted much of the revenue-related data (lost revenue, lost concessions, catering, number of
42 room nights) is from reoccurring events or similar events that were held in years past. Dan noted
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43 the document also includes the events that have been rebooked.

44

45 Dan next addressed Attachment No. 2, which shows the Omni Center's information from July 1
46 through December 31, including booked events and anticipated revenue moving forward. Dan
47 told committee members the Omni Center had reopened earlier Wednesday, and he noted
48 representatives from four of the listed events had called since Monday to cancel due to the
49 uncertainty related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Dan next addressed Attachment No. 3, which
50 includes the Omni Center's accounts and the staff's financial projections (revenues,
51 expenditures) for the remainder of 2020. Dan told committee members the anticipated loss is
52 \$184,415, and he noted Attachment No. 3 also shows the anticipated revenue and less in room
53 tax. Dan said based on the COVID-19 pandemic, the Omni Center's loss is \$216,000.

54

55 Ald. Stevens asked Dan if he has any indication as to how other communities are faring, and also
56 if he knows how the City of Onalaska is faring compared to other communities that also are
57 dealing with cancellations.

58

59 Dan told Ald. Stevens he believes every situation is different, noting that many facilities have a
60 multi-sheet ice arena. Dan said many of those facilities do not work as hard to try to book as
61 many trade shows and multipurpose events, adding he believes some of that is very difficult to
62 tell as to what is occurring. Dan noted someone from Municipality Magazine had spoken to 17
63 different municipalities regarding room tax, and he told committee members it shows the amount
64 of lost room tax revenue in each community. Dan said, "It is something that is affecting
65 everybody. I will say the staff, with the support of our City Administrator and City Attorney, we
66 have worked very hard to try to get the facility back open, which I'm happy to say we did
67 [Wednesday]. We have a commodity that people want to utilize. Unfortunately we've lost
68 months of activity in there, and it's going to be very difficult to bring that back. Our hope is that
69 we can get open and we can stay open and do the best that we can on continuing to generate
70 revenue going forward."

71

72 Ald. Stevens noted there is a \$600,000 shortfall in the City of Eau Claire, and a \$10 million
73 shortfall in the City of Madison. Ald. Stevens said he appreciates Tony's efforts to attempt to
74 book events and make the situation less challenging.

75

76 Dan referred back to Attachment No. 1 and told committee members there are events that have
77 rebooked for 2021 or later, and he complimented Omni Center staff for developing relationships
78 with event organizers so that they want to return to the Omni Center.

79

80 Fred noted that a few years ago the City of Onalaska had undesignated funds in the room tax
81 prior to changes in the law as it relates to the stipulation for which the funds may be utilized.
82 Fred noted \$1.5 million was moved from Tourism's Enterprise Fund to the Special Projects Fund
83 204. Fred said that for at least the last five years the City of Onalaska has been utilizing any type
84 of Capital Projects the Omni Center has needed. Fred said \$937,019.62 remained in that fund as
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85 of December 31, 2019, and he told committee members it might be necessary to withdraw funds
86 from that fund.

87

88 Ald. Stevens asked if a portion of the funds from Fund 204 could be utilized to address the
89 shortfall.

90

91 Fred noted the funds in Fund 204 originally were in the Tourism Fund, and he told committee
92 members funds from that fund had been utilized for legal fees that exceeded \$100,000 regarding
93 the placement of the Badger Coulee Line. Fred noted the funds are restricted for what the
94 Common Council feels necessary to which to apply them, and he said, "To me, it fits the criteria
95 because it was originally events being held at the Omni Center as it relates to bed nights and
96 reimbursements. To me, it's acceptable [funding] that could be used to neutralize the deficit
97 within the Omni Center."

98

99 Fred noted the Omni Center financials included in committee members' packets are through
100 June, also noted revenues totaled \$174,918.99 and expenditures totaled \$268,965.06 for a deficit
101 of \$94,046.07. Fred noted the April room tax (\$1,683.67) would be the only offset.

102

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

104

105 On voice vote, motion carried.

106

107 **Item 5 – 2020 General Fund Financials**

108

109 Fred reminded committee members the anticipated interest income shortfall for 2020 would be
110 approximately \$63,163, and he noted the interest rate had decreased earlier in 2020 from 1.71
111 percent to 1.10 percent. Fred said that the interest rate had since decreased further, falling from
112 1.10 percent to 0.66 percent. Fred noted the interest rates had been very similar in 2017, also
113 noting \$250,000 had been budgeted for interest income in 2020. Fred told committee members
114 the city had received \$81,000 in interest income in 2017, and he noted the city has earned
115 \$86,832.35 thus far in 2020. Fred said the city will budget \$100,000 in interest income in the
116 2021 budget if the interest rate remains at 0.66 percent.

117

118 Fred asked Dan if there is anything he will add back to receive any additional income.

119

120 Dan said, "Not where I'm at right now. If we would have been able to open up and continue to
121 run programs like we started to and then had to close up our services, we may have been able to
122 increase things. But right now we are going to hold tight with what we have. ... From the
123 income, nothing has changed from what we put together in the plans last month."

124

125 Ald. Stevens asked Fred if it is correct to say the funds budgeted for interest income are funds
126 that the city has on hand that would earn interest and be utilized to pay for expenses and fees the

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127 city might receive from the bank for doing services there.

128

129 Fred told Ald. Stevens the \$250,000 was the anticipated interest income on the city's
130 investments, and he noted the city does not receive the sediment of the taxes until mid to late
131 August. Fred also noted the city will receive the shared revenue November 15, and he said the
132 city is utilizing its fund balance funds that are invested, and the goal is to utilize them "very
133 sparingly." Fred also said funds for operating budget invoices must come from the city's cash
134 flow, and the city is utilizing Capital Project Fund investments to pay for capital projects. Fred
135 told Ald. Stevens the \$250,000 represents the investment income from the city's current fund
136 balance funds. Fred also told Ald. Stevens that \$8 million of the fund balance is called ICS, and
137 the bank goes through various banks to be under the FDIC regulations, and they are guaranteed
138 and protected through collateralization through Bremer Bank or protected by the FDIC. Fred
139 said the city utilizes many different banks throughout the nation to utilize its interest on
140 investments, and also protect the city's investment dollars so the city shows no exposure of any
141 uncollateralized funds.

142

143 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, to approve 2020 General Fund Financials.

144

145 On voice vote, motion carried.

146

147 **Item 6 – Resolution 30-2020 – Onalaska is Essential – Support of Fair, Direct Federal**
148 **Emergency Support to Reopen and Rebuild Local American Economies**

149

150 Fred told committee members the city potentially could be eligible for \$308,000 via grant
151 funding.

152

153 City Administrator Rindfleisch told committee members the CARES Act is specifically in
154 response to expenses driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, citing technology for remote working,
155 cleaning supplies, and the plexiglass installed at the City Hall counters as examples. City
156 Administrator Rindfleisch told committee members many communities have lost revenue, and he
157 said the city must backfill revenue loss, which also could lead to eliminating positions within the
158 organization and cuts in services municipalities provide for their residents. City Administrator
159 Rindfleisch said they are not necessarily reimbursable because they are not directly related to an
160 expense made in response to the COVID-19 reply. City Administrator Rindfleisch said this
161 resolution asks for the Common Council's support, and the resolution will be sent to the United
162 States legislators asking that some of the losses be recouped so that the city may maintain of the
163 vital services it provides. City Administrator Rindfleisch said some of those services might be
164 affected by the fact there are revenue losses.

165

166 Fred told committee members that Governor Evers in June had announced \$190 million
167 available to local governments in relation to COVID-19 expenses. Fred stressed that the grant
168 funding must be utilized for non-budgeted items.

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169

170 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, to approve Resolution 30-2020 – Onalaska is
171 Essential – Support of Fair, Direct Federal Emergency Support to Reopen and Rebuild Local
172 American Economies.

173

174 On voice vote, motion carried.

175

176 **Item 7 – Resolution 31-2020 – For the Authorization of Expense Reimbursement Submittal**
177 **for Routes to Recovery Grant**

178

179 Fred said that in order for the city to be eligible for reimbursement, it must pass a resolution to
180 follow the rules and regulations of reimbursements from state funding. The following items are
181 looked at as the criteria for reimbursement:

182

183 1. Emergency operations activities, including those related to public health, emergency
184 services and public safety responses

185 2. Purchases of personal protective equipment

186 3. Cleaning/sanitizing supplies and services, including those related to elections
187 administration

188 4. Temporary isolation housing for infected or at-risk individuals

189 5. Testing and contact tracing costs above those covered by existing State programs

190 6. FMLA and sick leave for public health and safety employees to take COVID-19
191 precautions

192 7. Meeting local math requirements for expenses submitted for reimbursement by FEMA

193

194 Fred said the period in which the city may be reimbursed for the aforementioned expenditures is
195 from March 1, 2020 to December 30, 2020.

196

197 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted there are three reimbursement windows throughout the
198 year, and they do not necessarily line up with Common Council meetings. City Administrator
199 Rindfleisch said, “What we’re asking for under the last resolution clause is provided that the
200 Finance Director and [City] Administrator can determine that matches one of those seven
201 expenses, and that there are new expenses that are reimbursable that will not have a net impact
202 on our bottom line budget, that we’re able to submit those expenses on behalf of the city without
203 coming back to the Council every month because we may miss those cycles. It is granting, on a
204 temporary basis, authority of staff to manage those expenses so long as they meet those
205 qualifications on your behalf.”

206

207 Fred told committee members the city had a list of items from March 1 to October 31 totaling
208 \$50,078.20, and he said the items that were somewhat budgeted and would not meet the criteria
209 must be removed from the list. Fred assured committee members both he and City Administrator
210 Rindfleisch will be in concurrence that items meet the criteria, are eligible, and are non-budgeted

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211 before submitting a reimbursement request to the State of Wisconsin. Fred said he believes the
212 first drawdown is scheduled for July 16, and that the funds already have to have been spent.
213 Fred said the city potentially might have a small reimbursement for the first one, and the city
214 may continue to apply for reimbursement in the coming months. Fred told committee members
215 he has scanned the invoices, cancelled checks and purchase orders for audit purposes.

216

217 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, to approve Resolution 31-2020 – For the
218 Authorization of Expense Reimbursement Submittal for Routes to Recovery Grant.

219

220 Ald. Stevens asked Fred to discuss the timeframe between when the city makes a purchase and
221 when it receives reimbursement.

222

223 Fred told Ald. Stevens the City of Onalaska had requested a reimbursement in May or June for
224 election material, and he said the city had received the funds in less than two weeks. Fred told
225 Ald. Stevens the turnaround time would be approximately two weeks.

226

227 Ald. Stevens asked Fred, “It sounds like you and Eric will be pretty confident of anything
228 submitted that will be reimbursed. In the event that it’s not and we’ve already made those
229 expenses, how would we handle that?”

230

231 Fred told Ald. Stevens a State of Wisconsin representative also will ensure that the city is in
232 compliance, and he said he will be “pretty confident” that items will meet the criteria before the
233 city requests reimbursement. Fred said, “A vast majority of these funding reimbursements, some
234 of these are in General Fund, but a fair amount of these are going to be coming out of, for
235 example, the Equipment Replacement Fund. I’m pretty confident ... I’m not going to ask for
236 reimbursement unless I am 99.99 percent that it meets the criteria.”

237

238 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “We don’t want to authorize an expense unless we are
239 confident it will be reimbursable. The state obviously is operating the account. These are
240 federal funds, and no amount of the \$308,000 is worth Fred or I going to jail over.”

241

242 On voice vote, motion carried.

243

244 **Item 8 – School / Police Liaison Officer Agreement between City of Onalaska and Onalaska**
245 **School District for the 2020 / 2021 school year**

246

247 Police Chief Ashbeck told committee members an Onalaska School District representative had
248 recently contacted him to ask that he submit the School/Police Liaison Officer Agreement for
249 approval. Police Chief Ashbeck noted the following changes from previous years had been
250 made:

251

- 252
- Section II (“Reporting Time”) now reads in part: *“The Officer shall work 180 days as the*
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- 253 *SRO at the School District of Onalaska to include scheduled days of student attendance*
254 *and additional hours as mutually agreed upon.”*
- 255 • “Terms of Employment” also now reads in part: *“The Officer shall work 180 days as the*
256 *SRO at the School District of Onalaska to include scheduled days of student attendance*
257 *and additional hours as mutually agreed upon.”*
 - 258 • The following item was added under “Job Goals:” *“Attend School District staff training,*
259 *seminars, and other relevant in-service instruction when deemed appropriate by school*
260 *staff and the SRO's supervisor.”*

261

262 Police Chief Ashbeck noted there had been a previous discussion regarding the Police
263 Department monitoring the amount of overtime the department was spending at events to see if
264 the city wanted to send an invoice to the school. Police Chief Ashbeck told committee members
265 Assistant Police Chief Troy Miller has been tracking overtime and said he believes the overtime
266 totaled 59 hours before the Police Department stopped attending events in early March due to the
267 pandemic. Police Chief Ashbeck noted that included two officers because the Police Department
268 had switched SROs earlier in the school year. Police Chief Ashbeck said Officer Tyler Blair had
269 accepted the SRO position and undergone training, which included attending sporting events and
270 thus increased the amount of overtime. Police Chief Ashbeck stated he prefers that the city not
271 send an invoice to the school “because there are certainly days throughout the school year that
272 the SRO maybe takes vacation or has some mandatory in-house training, and the school is not
273 turning around and asking for a refund of the 180 days that they are paying for. I feel like we
274 have a very good relationship and understanding that we’re not going to nitpick them and they’re
275 not going to nitpick us back and forth. I think that’s why we went through this exercise this year
276 to see how much overtime we are really talking about. I think in a normal year it will be less
277 than 59 hours because it would be a single officer. I would rather keep the relationship as is with
278 the school if the committee and the Council so choose.”

279

280 Ald. Wulf asked Police Chief Ashbeck if he is suggesting that Section III (“Overtime”) not be
281 included as part of the agreement.

282

283 Police Chief Ashbeck told Ald. Wulf he is not sure if this contract has gone in front of the
284 Onalaska School Board and if the board has passed it. Police Chief Ashbeck said he believes the
285 intention was to bring forward the agreement to the school board, and he reiterated he does not
286 wish to send the school an invoice for overtime. Police Chief Ashbeck said, “If that means it’s
287 cleaner to take it out of there, or if it’s cleaner to leave it in there because then it kind of gives us
288 that agreement between the 180 days and the overtime, it’s kind of that mutual understanding.”

289

290 Ald. Wulf told Police Chief Ashbeck she appreciates the fact he does not want to nitpick the
291 Onalaska School District and said it is her understanding the city has had a longstanding,
292 excellent working relationship with the district. Ald. Wulf told Police Chief Ashbeck she likes
293 his approach that this is a situation that benefits both parties. Ald. Wulf also asked City

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8

294 Administrator Rindfleisch if he believes Section III should remain in the agreement or be
295 removed.

296
297 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the schools will be surprised if they are charged for the
298 Police Department's overtime if they have not been charged for it in the past. City Administrator
299 Rindfleisch also said, "Those are actual and real costs of overtime that someone is paying. Right
300 now, the city is paying for those overtime costs. I would rather have them in so we have an
301 agreement in place that we do charge that. If we need to ease into those costs, I think that's fair.
302 But I would definitely say that we should keep that in. It's there already. We haven't charged it,
303 but quite frankly we should have charged it. Those are hours that are being billed to the
304 Onalaska taxpayers as overtime, but they're not actually getting overtime use of an officer
305 because they're at security at the schools and what have you. I know where Chief Ashbeck is
306 coming from in terms of keeping it flexible and keeping that relationship built. Purely as a
307 financial consideration or a legal consideration, I would suggest keeping it in."

308
309 Ald. Stevens suggested not charging the school district for a minimal amount of overtime such as
310 a quarter hour. However, Ald. Stevens also said, "If they are agreeing to pay it and they're
311 making use of that SRO extensively, and if the funds have to come from somewhere, we should
312 probably charge it. I think I'm inclined to agree with the City Administrator that maybe we
313 ought not to strike it, and whether we choose to enforce it, if it's agreed upon we can make that
314 decision later as the case arises."

315
316 City Administrator Rindfleisch said he does not believe the school district is aware of the clause,
317 and he stated, "It's ultimately a relationship issue. But purely as a contractual or a billing issue,
318 in my mind it should stay in there and be collected. How do we get there? I think that's to be
319 determined."

320
321 Ald. Stevens said he believes the key word is "request," stating if the school district requests
322 extra time, it probably should be aware that there are costs the city has to incur, and then that can
323 factor into its decision-making process.

324
325 Police Chief Ashbeck asked committee members if they are saying the city should be billing the
326 school district for the overtime as it currently stands.

327
328 Ald. Stevens said that speaking for himself, "The City of Onalaska is responsible for paying the
329 salary of the SRO. If this got to be a matter where we're talking tens of dollars, as a
330 management perspective I would probably just not charge it to the school district. But if it got to
331 be \$10,000-plus, that has to come from somewhere and it has to be a budgeted item. We need to
332 understand the impact of that extra time on the budget if it's going to be significant [and] if there
333 is a large imbalance that we need to address. If it's minor, I see your point where just the
334 management of the program could be more onerous than settling up to make sure we get every
335 penny. But if it's a lot of pennies, then we have to pay it."

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336
337 Ald. Wulf said, "I'm hearing two different things. I'm hearing a Police Chief who is looking to
338 continue and foster a good working relationship with the school district, but still is cognizant of
339 taxpayer dollars. And I hear our City Administrator, who I think probably is top five, whose
340 bottom line is about protecting the taxpayer and tax dollars. I see both sides of the issue, and
341 that's why I'm a little bit torn on this because I appreciate both of their approaches. But I think
342 at the end of the day, I'm personally going to have to lean more toward if the service is being
343 used I think they need to pay for it. I might be able to be talked out of that, but I think the chief
344 is looking for direction because I think he is hearing two different sides here and I think he needs
345 direction whatever we as the Finance and Personnel Committee choose to recommend, and then
346 whatever Council decides next Tuesday."

347
348 Ald. Stevens asked Police Chief Ashbeck if he can estimate the amount of overtime.

349
350 Police Chief Ashbeck reiterated there were 59 hours of overtime during the 2019-20 school year,
351 which he admitted is not insignificant. Police Chief Ashbeck said, "The counter to that is if an
352 officer takes a week of vacation, there's 40-plus hours that the school is now not receiving, but
353 we are still billing them for. In my opinion, honestly I believe we are coming out ahead because
354 there is probably more than ... I know 59 straight hours is not the same as 59 overtime hours.
355 But my guess would be we are probably not in the school more than 59 hours a year, and the
356 school has not balked at [that and said], 'Bill us less for those hours that your officer was on
357 vacation or in training.' That's why I feel like we are probably coming out ahead on the deal."

358
359 Ald. Stevens suggested perhaps budgeting some money for some overtime, and if the school
360 district requests an amount Ald. Stevens described as "extravagant," the city would begin
361 utilizing the billing process.

362
363 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted 59 hours at time-and-a-half is slightly less than 89 hours,
364 and he said, "I think the challenge is there really are two boundaries. Every school they have lies
365 within the City of Onalaska, but the boundaries of their district exceed the boundaries of the City
366 of Onalaska. And keep in mind we have two school districts that support the city residents
367 where their kids go to school, both Holmen as well as the Onalaska School District. The best
368 spread of the dollar on the SRO is within the district boundaries, which exceeds our boundaries
369 to a large degree, and applied to that body of taxpayers. Those are the ones who are receiving
370 that service that otherwise is not being utilized for city policing services."

371
372 Amanda told committee members she believes there are a lot of unknowns on both sides for the
373 2020-21 school year, noting that the overtime is utilized for events such as football games and
374 dances, but it is not known if they will even occur due to the pandemic. Amanda said there also
375 is much uncertainty in general regarding how schools will approach policing moving forward,
376 and she told committee members, "I think our thought was to not stir the pot and make any major
377 contract changes this year. I still think that that is a good approach, at least for the '20-'21

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378 school year. If we're going to look at a major change in implementing how we bill the school
379 district, I guess I would advocate to do so with caution. We have a contract that's worked in the
380 past. They're willing to move forward with it, and I think to continue that good working
381 relationship, maybe for this year we continue with what we have agreed upon."

382
383 Police Chief Ashbeck offered to again have the department track overtime for the 2020-21
384 school year, and also track the number of days the SRO is not in the school, to determine if the
385 city or the school district is receiving a better value. Then the city could examine potentially
386 altering the contract for the 2021-22 school year.

387
388 Ald. Stevens said he believes this item should be discussed further at the July 14 Common
389 Council meeting and asked if it should be forwarded and placed on the Non-Consent Agenda.

390
391 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, to refer without a recommendation to the July 14
392 Common Council meeting the School/Police Liaison Officer Agreement between City of
393 Onalaska and Onalaska School District for the 2020/2021 school year.

394
395 Ald. Wulf said she had made a motion to refer this item to the Council without a
396 recommendation because all five alderpersons will be in attendance, and the meeting will be held
397 in person at City Hall instead of via Zoom. Ald. Wulf said she believes meeting in person will
398 allow the Council to reach a decision more quickly.

399
400 Ald. Stevens said it is his understanding everyone is very supportive of the SRO position and
401 what it does for the Onalaska School District and its value to the city. Ald. Stevens said, "We're
402 just working out some of the kinks here and trying to figure out what's the best approach for us
403 to go. I agree having other people weigh in, and having another week to think about what we
404 want to do, is beneficial."

405
406 On voice vote, motion carried.

407
408 **Item 9 – Authorization to approve a non-budgeted City department expenditure in the**
409 **Equipment Replacement Fund to purchase 3 refurbished DS-200 voting machines not to**
410 **exceed \$12,420 with potential reimbursement through the CARES grant for COVID**
411 **related expense**

412
413 JoAnn told committee members this item was included on this evening's agenda for
414 consideration due to the volume of absentee ballots city staff is now processing due to concerns
415 related to in-person voting at the polls due to COVID-19. JoAnn said staff is projecting that 75
416 percent of the city's voters will vote via absentee ballot, noting that that number previously was
417 approximately 25 percent. JoAnn told committee members staff already has sent out 5½ times
418 the number of absentee ballots for the August 11 partisan primary than were sent out for the
419 August 2018 partisan primary. JoAnn noted that absentee ballots take significantly more time to

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420 process, which thereby necessitates the second machine at each of the three districts. JoAnn
421 said, “This will allow us to have a dedicated machine for processing absentee ballots while
422 leaving the other machine open for in-person voters. This will enable us to keep the lines
423 moving at a polling location, and also avoids the need for our election workers to stay into the
424 early hours of the morning processing those ballots. We feel this meets the criteria of the
425 requirements of the CARES Act, and we appreciate your consideration on this.”

426
427 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Wulf, to approve authorization to approve a non-budgeted
428 City department expenditure in the Equipment Replacement Fund to purchase 3 refurbished DS-
429 200 voting machines not to exceed \$12,420 with potential reimbursement through the CARES
430 grant for COVID related expense.

431
432 On voice vote, motion carried.

433
434 **Item 10 – Authorization to approve a non-budgeted City department expenditure in the**
435 **Equipment Replacement Fund to purchase 18 single station voting booths not to exceed**
436 **\$3,128.35 with potential reimbursement through the CARES grant for COVID related**
437 **expenses**

438
439 JoAnn noted the city’s current voting booths are side-by-side booths, which she said do not fit
440 the current criteria. JoAnn said staff wishes to purchase single station voting booths that may be
441 separated by 6 feet or more.

442
443 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, to approve authorization to approve a non-budgeted
444 City department expenditure in the Equipment Replacement Fund to purchase 18 single station
445 voting booths not to exceed \$3,128.35 with potential reimbursement through the CARES grant
446 for COVID related expenses.

447
448 On voice vote, motion carried.

449
450 **Item 11 – Review and consideration of partially non-budgeted telephone system**
451 **replacement at City Hall, Omni Center and Public Works Facility with potential partial**
452 **reimbursement through the CARES grant for COVID related expense**

453
454 Jarrod told committee members a memo regarding the replacement of the telephone system has
455 been included in their packets. Jarrod noted the telephone system currently being utilized at City
456 Hall is original to the building, which opened in 2000. The telephone system utilized at the
457 Public Works Facility is original from 2007. Jarrod said staff has been looking at purchasing a
458 new phone system for approximately five years, and becoming more serious about it the last two
459 years. Jarrod noted an outline for a proposed telephone system has been included in committee
460 members’ packets, and he said the city was looking at a hosted telephone system as part of the
461 approved 2020 budget. Jarrod said, “With that budget, and with what the IT Department was

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462 going through at that time, we're trying to find a solution because our IT infrastructure was not
463 up to the point that we want it to be. We felt that the phone system on our server would not be
464 the best option. Now, going through the phone system and the IT work Nils Housker has done
465 with our IT Department in coordination with MCS Networks, we have gotten the server up to the
466 point where I feel confident we can put the phone system on the server and run a phone system
467 like we have today.”

468
469 Jarrod noted the operating budget included hosting a yearly cost as well as telephone hardware.
470 Jarrod noted MCS Networks has proposed the telephone system included in committee
471 members' packets, and he said the city's IT staff as well as its consultant believe this is a good
472 solution for the city. Jarrod said the system has features that would assist city staff during the
473 pandemic, including working from home and working remotely. Jarrod outlined the proposed
474 costs of the telephone system:

- 475
- 476 • \$79,125.05 for telephone system equipment
 - 477 • \$4,500 for paging system equipment
 - 478 • \$13,500 for installation/configuration by MCS Networks
 - 479 • \$97,125.05 for the total cost

480
481 Jarrod outlined the following funding sources:

- 482
- 483 • \$37,248 in the 2020 Operating Budget (hosted yearly cost)
 - 484 • \$20,000 in the 2020 Equipment Replacement Budget (telephone hardware)
 - 485 • \$57,248 total

486
487 Jarrod said the non-budgeted funding amount needed is \$39,877.05, and he told committee
488 members he, City Administrator Rindfleisch, Fred, and Amanda all believe it potentially could
489 be a COVID-19 reimbursable expense, and they all feel confident it would be. Jarrod said staff
490 is looking for a recommendation to replace the city telephone system, and he told committee
491 members MCS Networks staff has told him the new system could arrive within 60 days of
492 approval. Jarrod said he is hopeful the new system could be operational within the next three to
493 four months.

494
495 Ald. Stevens asked Jarrod if the city potentially could have had the entire cost of the telephone
496 system covered if the city had not budgeted for it.

497
498 Jarrod said, “We could have. It gets into the fact of, what is a benefit through COVID, and what
499 is not. I think you'd probably have ... In talking with [Amanda] and [Fred], this is probably a
500 good portion of it that is a fair assessment of the COVID part of it. If we were trying to get the
501 whole thing, even if it wasn't budgeted, we still have benefit to the city. I think this is good just
502 the way we had it budgeted. It's falling in line with a good split.”

503

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504 Fred asked Jarrod to address the remote functioning feature of the system.

505

506 Jarrod referred to the memo included in committee members' packets that lists the new telephone
507 system's features:

508

509 • Direct extension receive & dial calls

510 • Easy access voicemail system

511 • Full call-tree directory on city staff's computer

512 • Staff members may make calls from the system while offsite, but calls appear that they
513 are at the office

514 • Easy multi-person teleconferencing

515

516 Nils said the cell phone component of this system would be an employee's regular extension, and
517 no extra configuration would be required. Employees working on a laptop could boot up the cell
518 phone program, and it would be the same as their work extension.

519

520 Fred said there are many instances in which the general public wants to reach the city, but the
521 general telephone number is "an end to nowhere." Fred said the goal with the new system is for
522 citizens who call to be able to leave a message with the city employee they are trying to reach
523 and be confident their call will be returned. Fred told committee members that currently a call
524 that is transferred, for example, to the Engineering Department is returned to the City Clerk's
525 office voicemail if no one is present.

526

527 For clarification, Ald. Wulf asked if the committee will be approving the total project cost of
528 \$97,125.05.

529

530 Jarrod said yes.

531

532 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the 2020 telephone system replacement
533 at City Hall, Omni Center and Public Works Facility by MCS Networks at a cost of \$97,125.05.

534

535 Ald. Olson inquired about the amount the city potentially would be reimbursed.

536

537 Fred said the city potentially would be reimbursed \$39,877.05, and he told Ald. Olson, "Believe
538 me, before the city makes out a purchase order the potential will be a heck of a lot stronger than
539 just the potential."

540

541 Ald. Wulf asked Fred if he will be coming back in front of the Finance and Personnel Committee
542 and informing its members complications have arisen if he becomes uncertain the city will
543 receive reimbursement.

544

545 Fred said, "I guess the reason we put the word 'potential' is because I didn't want to wait another

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546 30 days because if it is eligible for the phone system we want to move expeditiously. That's why
547 I didn't want to delay it. The easiest way not to delay it was adding the word 'potential' and
548 guaranteeing it's covered before the purchase order. If it's not covered, then it's probably going
549 to come right back either through another year of budgeting the difference or using some funds
550 in the Equipment Replacement Fund to pick up the difference."
551

552 Ald. Wulf said this is an item that is long overdue and stated, "One way or another we need to
553 find a way to fund it and get it done."
554

555 Ald. Stevens stated he understands Ald. Olson's apprehension, and he asked if the city still will
556 be purchasing the system if it is not funded and then "figuring out the rest later."
557

558 Fred told Ald. Stevens the item would return to the Finance and Personnel Committee, and its
559 members would need to decide whether or not to utilize monies from the Undesignated Fund
560 Balance within the Equipment Replacement Fund to address the \$39,877.05.
561

562 Ald. Stevens said, "I want to make sure I understand succinctly. We would be buying the phones
563 no matter what. If the funds are not reimbursed for the [\$39,877.05], we're still buying the
564 phones, it's coming back to Finance and Personnel so we're figuring out where we're drawing
565 the other money from? Or are we figuring out if we're going to execute the order to buy the
566 phones?"
567

568 Fred said, "If in fact it doesn't meet the criteria, it's put in a hold pattern until it comes to
569 Finance and Personnel next month."
570

571 On voice vote, motion carried.
572

573 **Item 12 – Review and consideration of contractual services for Information Technology**
574 **computer support**
575

576 Jarrod referred to the memo included in committee members' packets and said that with the
577 departure of the IT Computer Support Specialist he is proposing to upgrade MCS Networks'
578 level of support of the city's PCs from Silver to Gold at a cost of \$11,143.41. Jarrod said this
579 would be a budget-neutral item as the city would not be filling the IT Computer Support
580 Specialist position. Jarrod said, "We need someone to backfill that work being that that position
581 is not here." The upgrade would last through the remainder of 2020.
582

583 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Wulf, to approve contractual services for Information
584 Technology computer support with MCS Networks through December 31, 2020 at a cost of
585 \$11,143.41.
586

587 On voice vote, motion carried.

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15

588

589 **Item 13 – Review and consideration of non-budgeted automatic flush valves and faucets at**
590 **City owned facilities with potential reimbursement through the CARES grant for COVID**
591 **related expense**

592

593 Dan said staff is looking to replace all the faucets and toilet flush valves with automatic flushers
594 and faucets at City Hall, the Public Works Facility, and the Omni Center. Dan noted he had
595 received two quotes and said he is recommending hiring Ferguson at a cost of \$33,952.46.

596

597 City Administrator Rindfleisch said he believes this is a reimbursable item, and that is why it is
598 being presented to the Finance and Personnel Committee this evening.

599

600 Ald. Wulf asked if the quote includes installation, or if city staff will perform the installation.

601

602 Dan told Ald. Wulf the bid is for the equipment only and city staff would install it.

603

604 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the purchase of automatic flush valves
605 and faucets at City owned facilities from Ferguson at a cost of \$33,952.46.

606

607 On voice vote, motion carried.

608

609 **PERSONNEL**

610

611 **Item 14 – Review options from Human Resources on staff vacancies**

612

613 City Administrator Rindfleisch referred to a memo from Human Resource Director Hope
614 Burchell dated June 30 updating the Common Council on the recruitment and open positions
615 within the city, and he told committee members they may examine it at their convenience.

616

617 Ald. Stevens referred to the vacant IT Computer Support Specialist position and Jarrod's
618 comments about the position being budget neutral, and he said he thought he had heard initially
619 there would be a small cost savings over the current fiscal year.

620

621 City Administrator Rindfleisch said there will be a small savings over a partial year, and he told
622 Ald. Stevens that Hope's comments in the memo that states in part "until the budgets can be
623 reviewed" refers to 2021 for a full year to compare the MCS' Gold Package to the IT Computer
624 Support Specialist position.

625

626 Ald. Stevens asked if the intention for 2021 is to outsource the position to MCS going forward,
627 to fill the position, or to determine what course of action to take, post-budget.

628

629 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the city will be able to compare MCS' Gold Package with its
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630 Silver Package the remainder of 2021, and then staff will be able to make a recommendation
631 based on those results as part of the budget process whether to outsource the position or have it
632 be a city position.

633

634 Ald. Wulf noted there is an open Office Clerical Support – Finance position due to Stacy Wilk’s
635 promotion to Deputy City Clerk, and she also noted that per Hope’s memo the position will be
636 held until budgets can be reviewed. Ald. Wulf asked City Administrator Rindfleisch to give her
637 an update regarding that position.

638

639 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “The conversation later on in this meeting regarding filling
640 positions will dictate that in terms of the budgets being reviewed. Potentially we could be filling
641 that position depending on what Council action is on those filling of the other positions.”

642

643 Ald. Wulf asked City Administrator Rindfleisch which item he is referring to later in the agenda.

644

645 City Administrator Rindfleisch said this item typically is only a report, and it is appropriate
646 under this item to discuss filling the public safety positions. City Administrator Rindfleisch told
647 Ald. Wulf that will determine whether or not the Office Clerical Support – Finance position will
648 be filled.

649

650 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the Common Council had given direction in June to
651 develop a plan to bring in three new positions apiece in the Police Department and the Fire
652 Department. All six positions were included in the 2020 budget. City Administrator Rindfleisch
653 also noted there had been a conversation at that time that the impact on the General Fund budget
654 was basically a break-even point. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “While it’s break-even, if
655 we don’t bring those positions on that we’re budgeting for. The reason those positions are
656 vacant – the Paralegal position is vacant, the Office Clerical Support position is vacant, and to
657 some degree the IT Computer Support Specialist, we’ve already dealt with that one – I held those
658 vacant in the chance that the Council would like to advance some of those positions, as
659 requested, and why would I fill a budgeted position when that’s a decision the Council needs to
660 make. If the Council would like to fill or have a plan during 2020 to fill any of those six new
661 positions that were originally budgeted for, this is the time to have that conversation about filling
662 that. That will determine whether we fill the other positions or not at this point in time.”

663

664 Ald. Stevens said he believes the general consensus of the Common Council was there was a
665 commitment to at least begin the process of filling those positions. However, Ald. Stevens also
666 noted there was an asterisk that the city had to ensure that the positions were budget-friendly.

667 Ald. Stevens said he believes the Council wants to establish a timeline and begin the process of
668 “seeing what it would look like and seeing what the impact to the budget is” to perhaps start a
669 new employee or employees in the Police Department and/or the Fire Department in late 2020.
670 The other two positions in each department would be filled sometime during 2021.

671

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17

672 Ald. Stevens said, “I know there is a lag from when Council gives its approval to when that
673 person actually starts working for us, [and] it can take months. My hope was that we would be
674 able to get a nod from Council to at least start the commitment to filling one of these positions
675 later this year, after the budget period starts and we know where we’re standing, and then lay the
676 framework for when we would expect to hire the additional public safety positions. I would like
677 to see the process at least started. We don’t want to paint ourselves into a corner where we’re
678 putting other positions at risk, but this is something we budgeted for, and I think most of the can
679 is going to be kicked into 2021. But we need to start the process at some point of getting to that
680 goal of filling those positions. By the end of next year I would like to see all three filled and
681 have that start sometime at the end of this year.”

682
683 Ald. Olson reminded committee members the city is conducting a wage study, and the Council
684 had made a promise to city staff to do something regarding that study. Ald. Olson said that it has
685 to be in consideration with some of the positions that are being funded because “you have to put
686 the priorities where they should be and the promises that we made to staff and keep that in mind.
687 These are the things we’re going to have to decide.”

688
689 Ald. Wulf stated she agrees with both Ald. Stevens and Ald. Olson, and she said, “I think the
690 most important thing, personally, is that we need a timeline. I think we need to set up a timeline,
691 [and ask] what is it going to look like. I think it’s important for staff to see what the timeline is,
692 and we need to work toward that expectation. I think we’re all disappointed that we’re not
693 farther ahead in the process, but no one ever predicted COVID was going to come along and rain
694 on our parade. I liked what came out of our budget meeting last month where I felt we were all
695 on the same page, and that we had made a commitment. We need to try to honor that
696 commitment as soon as possible, and as feasibly possible. For me, I’m looking for a timeline –
697 what is feasibly possible and financially possible? I’ll be looking to the City Administrator for
698 input, and for some type of a timeline. Alderperson Stevens is correct that Council can say
699 today, ‘We’re going to approve this,’ but how many months is it going to take? The sooner we
700 have a timeline, the more we can lay that out and start working toward that goal.”

701
702 Ald. Stevens asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if he believes he will be able to produce a
703 timeline that would be able to work within the confines of the budget. Ald. Stevens also asked
704 what factors those would have on some of the other positions and the wage study. Ald. Stevens
705 said, “I think it would help us to figure out when to pull the trigger if we knew what the full
706 picture looked like and the implications of if we hire a police officer, a firefighter in December,
707 what does that mean for the Assistant Paralegal position? Or can we do both?”

708
709 City Administrator Rindfleisch told committee members Mayor K. Smith had a proposal she had
710 discussed with Fred, and he said he is confident the city could execute this proposal, at least in
711 2020.

712
713 Mayor K. Smith told committee members she had met with several individuals, and that is why
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18

714 she had requested that Item 17 to appear on this evening's agenda. Mayor K. Smith said she is
715 recommending that the budgeted Police Officer position be filled on October 1, 2020 or later
716 "because looking at all the vacancies ... we do have a lot of vacancies, which gives us a lot of
717 choices. We obviously know that we are not going to be able to fill them all. The firefighters
718 are still working on filling two of their vacancies. Just by their normal process it's going to be
719 difficult for them to get in a position where they're even ready to hire additional staff by the end
720 of the year. I think it's really important that regardless of how the other pieces come to fit
721 together that we start moving on filling this Police Officer position because if you decide this
722 meeting cycle, it will be October before we can get to the place where we're ready to potentially
723 fill the position. If we wait another month, then it will be November, et cetera. Time is of the
724 essence because this is such a lengthy process, and that is without even the unknown if another
725 police officer vacancy were to happen, then we would have that position in addition that we
726 would have to fill.

727
728 Obviously I hope that all of our city employees stay here and nobody leaves, but the reality is
729 that could very well happen. I would like to see us give staff the go-ahead to start working on
730 getting that police officer [position] filled with a start date not to be until after October 1. Then
731 as these budget numbers become more clear, we can start to fill in the other positions as Eric has
732 prioritized them."

733
734 City Administrator Rindfleisch told committee members he is confident the city will be able to
735 continue filling positions that are currently vacant based on the hiring timeline for the police
736 officer position.

737
738 Fred told committee members he is confident he will know the city's financial status by early
739 October when the Common Council receives the 2021 budget books.

740
741 Ald. Stevens said it is his understanding the Council then would have a more sound basis to lay
742 out the timeline entering 2021 for when the other public safety positions could be filled.

743
744 Mayor K. Smith told Ald. Stevens he is correct.

745
746 Ald. Wulf referred to Hope's memo and noted conditional offers have been made to the top two
747 candidates for the open positions in the Fire Department, while the remaining seven candidates
748 have been placed on an eligibility list. Ald. Wulf asked, "Why not a firefighter? If there are
749 seven more on the eligibility list ... Does it have to do with training because you're going to be
750 bringing two new people on? I understand with the training ... That would be my question:
751 Why a police [officer] and not a firefighter?"

752
753 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "Not to pick sides between two great and vital departments,
754 one, a police officer could be targeted to the shift with the most calls, for example. One
755 firefighter, due to their 24-hour rotation, you're not necessarily targeting the day. You don't

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19

756 know the day or the shift that's going to have the most calls. I think the value in firefighters
757 really lies in being able to fill one firefighter per shift for a total of three. ... If anything else, if
758 there's only one, I would say due to the type of shifts it may be most effective in the Police
759 Department."

760
761 Ald. Wulf said she was seeking justification, stating she, like City Administrator Rindfleisch,
762 does not want to pit the Police Department and the Fire Department against each other. Ald.
763 Wulf said, "I'm just looking at the whole scope of things and trying to make justification like,
764 where does one start?"

765
766 Ald. Stevens asked, "When it comes time sometime in 2021 to start filling the other positions,
767 don't we have that same problem where the police positions can kind of swap times a little bit
768 more evenly ... Are we looking at hiring all three firefighters at the same time to avoid that? Or
769 are we going to [hire] a police [position] and then a fire [position], and then a police [position]
770 and then a fire [position]? If you don't hire all three firefighters at the same time, we're going to
771 have that same problem."

772
773 Fire Chief Gudie told Ald. Wulf he believes the Fire Department is attempting to find out when
774 one of the candidates for the Firefighter position may start, and he said he believes that
775 individual will be given a two-week notice to fill one of the vacancies. Fire Chief Gudie noted
776 one individual had not passed the physical agility test, and he said an offer should be extended to
777 the third candidate on the eligibility list to fill the second vacancy. Fire Chief Gudie told
778 committee members the Fire Department is still filling its vacancies, and he said he would like it
779 if one of the three new positions could start at the end of 2020, if it is possible. Fire Chief Gudie
780 said, "We don't have to bring all three on at the same time, but I believe the Police Department
781 brings one on at a time, and they have a very extensive training that they have to do, but Chief
782 Ashbeck could talk about that. We could look at bringing in the other two sometime in early
783 2021 if that's an option. But just for clarification, we should hopefully have one of the vacancies
784 filled in the next two to three weeks. Then hopefully the other one will get going through the
785 process and we'll fill that second vacancy."

786
787 Ald. Stevens stated for clarification that the vacancies are existing positions and are not the new
788 positions that were budgeted for 2020.

789
790 Fred reminded committee members there is approximately \$116,000 of additional hours because
791 of the rotation change from 1,947.59 hours to 2,069 hours. Fred said a police officer's salary,
792 with benefits, is approximately \$60,888, and he told committee members Police Chief Ashbeck
793 is aware that he will not be able to hire all three officers because it takes \$60,888 of the
794 \$116,000. Fred said, "[Police Chief Ashbeck] has already lost one of them because there is no
795 money put in the 2021 budget to offset for that. ... The other hurdle we continue to face, which
796 will be monitored throughout this entire process, is that all six of these positions, when the
797 Council put this in the budget, were effective April 1. You have to keep in mind as we move

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20

798 forward on these positions, it is a fact we have to be very cautious, and we also have three
799 months' worth of non-budgeted that we have to make sure we can fit within the 2021 budget."

800

801 Ald. Stevens said he believes the city is taking a cautious approach by waiting until
802 councilmembers know what the budget is and then spacing out the hirings over 2021.

803

804 Fred told Ald. Stevens he agrees the city is taking a cautious approach and said he wanted to
805 ensure committee members are cognizant of that. Fred said, "I think we have."

806

807 Ald. Wulf asked if the city had gained more hours when the city bought out the police contract.

808

809 Fred said, "You gained hours, but there was non-budgeted when the entire fleet took the ...
810 Moving forward, the additional 121.41 hours per police officer is not something that through the
811 budget process last year that we anticipated was going to happen."

812

813 Ald. Wulf told committee members she is leaning toward filling a firefighter position at this
814 point in time. For clarification, Ald. Wulf said, "When we're looking at a timeline. I'm just
815 thinking about, we've gotten those additional hours. We've looked at the overtime that [the] Fire
816 [Department] is accumulating, and the burnout. When I visited all three shifts last year, that was
817 very telling to me. It was a very difficult decision for me to go ahead, budget-wise, and do three
818 and three in each department because looking at the budget ... But I also knew it was time
819 because we needed to move forward. That was a tough decision for me. But what pushed me to
820 say 'yes' for three Fire [Department positions] was the burnout and doing those in-person visits
821 with all those three shifts. I'm going to have to support filling the Fire [Department] position."

822

823 City Administrator Rindfleisch said if the committee is looking at one position, and then he can
824 give his approval to fill the remainder of the vacancies that are on hold. City Administrator
825 Rindfleisch said the discussion pertaining to which position and the timeline may be deferred
826 until Item 17.

827

828 Fred reminded committee members there is only a \$5,000 differential between a starting police
829 officer and a starting firefighter, and he said, "You can make that decision at a later date."

830

831 Ald. Stevens said he will suggest having the entire Common Council provide input when the
832 committee reaches Item 17.

833

Item 15 – Review and consideration of Human Resources 2019 Annual Report

834

835
836 Ald. Wulf suggested allowing Hope to present the Human Resources 2019 Annual Report at the
837 August 5 Finance and Personnel Committee meeting.

838

839 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the Human Resources 2019 Annual Report will be part of
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21

840 Hope's presentation at the August 5 Finance and Personnel Committee meeting.

841

842 **Item 16 – Review and consideration of 2020-2022 International Association of Firefighters**
843 **Local 127 Contract and Memorandum of Understanding**

844

845 City Administrator Rindfleisch said it is his understanding that while the contract proposal has
846 been approved, he does not have a signed copy. City Administrator Rindfleisch said he hopes
847 there will be a signed copy the Common Council may vote on at its July 14 meeting. City
848 Administrator Rindfleisch said he believes the key thing that impacts the city, and one of the
849 goals the city had established for itself, is that the city maintains competitiveness. City
850 Administrator Rindfleisch referred to Appendix III (“Wages Longevity”) and noted the
851 following:

852

- 853 • After one year, two years, and three years have been doubled to two years, four years,
854 and six years. City Administrator Rindfleisch said time it takes to move up step to step
855 has been shortened.
- 856 • After four years, there is an additional step beyond what was offered in the past. An
857 individual either must have Fire Officer I or Fire Inspector I to qualify for this step after
858 four years. There is an attempt to incentivize additional education and experience.
- 859 • This is a three-year agreement, with 2.1 percent yearly increases across the board.
- 860 • The contract will commence January 1 once it is approved and signed by both parties.
- 861 • There will be a budgetary impact as the city will need to go back and compensate at the
862 higher wages for hours worked in 2020.

863

864 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Stevens, to refer to the July 14 Common Council meeting
865 the 2020-2022 International Association of Firefighters Local 127 Contract and Memorandum of
866 Understanding.

867

868 On voice vote, motion carried.

869

870 **Item 17 – Review and consideration of filling budgeted Police Officer position effective**
871 **October 1, 2020 or later**

872

873 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Wulf, to change the wording of Item 17 so that it reads
874 as follows: Review and consideration of filling budgeted Public Safety position effective October
875 1, 2020 or later.

876

877 Mayor K. Smith said, “I think part of the direction Eric is looking for is, back to Item 14, those
878 other staff vacancies exist. Eric, correct me if I’m wrong, but the implication once the Council
879 commits to this is then you’re going to decide to go ahead and fill those other positions.”

880

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22

881 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Mayor K. Smith yes and said, “What I’m hearing here is a
882 position, and as Fred pointed out, the difference is about \$5,000 between either one. I would still
883 be comfortable if there is a position hired as per your plan, [which is] October 1 or beyond. I
884 would then go ahead and begin filling the other vacant positions.”

885
886 Mayor K. Smith said, “I do think there is an urgency for filling the Fire [Department] positions
887 as well. I just think that they’re further out. They currently have an Assistant [Fire] Chief
888 vacancy. They need to fill that person. It potentially could be someone from within. They have
889 two other current vacancies that they’re in the process of filling, so that’s two to three new
890 positions that they’re going to be bringing online. No matter the experience of the candidates, it
891 will take them awhile to acclimate to the new group of firefighters that they’re working with, or
892 if they’re new recruits they’ll have a lot of training to undergo. That’s why I was thinking ahead
893 that by the time those newer people are seasoned, it would be better to bring in hopefully two or
894 three more new firefighters. I know the way they do their training they can accommodate more,
895 whereas the Police Department is a little better if they just have one or maybe two new ones at a
896 time. I just really want everyone to understand that we have an unprecedented amount of vacant
897 positions right now. It would be something to think about if all those should be filled, as stated.”

898
899 Ald. Wulf thanked Mayor K. Smith for providing more background and said she will take it
900 under consideration.

901
902 Ald. Stevens asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if he feels confident that the city may start
903 filling the other open vacancies if the Common Council approves hiring one Public Safety
904 position, be it a police officer or a firefighter, that would start after October 1.

905
906 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “If there is one position, I feel good about that. If the
907 Council says two or more, then those positions or other positions would need to be looked at in
908 2020.”

909
910 Ald. Wulf asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if that will be up for a final discussion at the
911 July 14 Common Council meeting.

912
913 City Administrator Rindfleisch said yes and told Ald. Wulf the Council agenda item will read as
914 Ald. Stevens’ recommendation to change the wording to Public Safety position. City
915 Administrator Rindfleisch said, “I don’t think we have to go back and do [Item] No. 14. There’s
916 nothing official about the position being held open that I held open. Once the decision is made
917 and I know it fits within the budgetary document, I will continue to fill those positions.”

918
919 Ald. Wulf said she did not know if Item No. 17 needed to be rephrased a little more that would
920 include other positions. Ald. Wulf said, “I think we still may want to have an open discussion
921 about some open positions, about the validity of filling them.”

922

Reviewed 07/14/2020 by Hope Burchell & Fred Buehler

Finance & Personnel Committee

of the City of Onalaska

Wednesday, July 8, 2020

23

923 Ald. Stevens said, “If we’re only filling one position, then the other positions, as I understand it,
924 staff could start to fill ...”

925

926 Ald. Wulf said that is what she would like to talk about as a full Council.

927

928 Ald. Stevens asked committee members if the motion on the floor should be amended so that the
929 Council may discuss the other positions, or if Item 14 should be pulled and placed on the
930 Council’s Non-Consent Agenda.

931

932 Fred told Ald. Stevens he believes Item No. 14 may be placed on the Council’s Non-Consent
933 Agenda.

934

935 On voice vote, motion carried.

936

937 **Item 18 – Closed Session**

938

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

943

- 944 • Slip and fall on sidewalk on the 500 block of 2nd Ave. S., Onalaska, WI

945

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

949

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

951

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

954

955

956 Recorded by:

957

958 Kirk Bey