

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

Thursday, July 5, 2018

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1 The Meeting of the Finance & Personnel Committee of the City of Onalaska was called to order
2 at 7:45 p.m. on Thursday, July 5, 2018. It was noted that the meeting had been announced and a
3 notice posted at City Hall.

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5 Roll call was taken, with the following members present: Ald. Jim Olson, Ald. Jerry Every, Ald.
6 Kim Smith

7
8 Also Present: City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, Mayor Joe Chilsen, Financial Services
9 Director/Treasurer Fred Buehler, Human Resource Director Hope Burchell, Ald. Jim Binash,
10 Ald. Ron Gjertsen, Ald. Diane Wulf, Parks and Recreation Director Dan Wick

11

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

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14 Motion by Ald. Every, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting
15 as printed and on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

16

17 On voice vote, motion carried.

18

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

20

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

23

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

25

26 **FINANCE**

27

28 **Item 4 – Omni Center financials for 2018**

29

30 Fred said the Omni Center financials dated June 13, 2018 and included in committee members’
31 packets consist of the May invoices paid in June. There was a deficit of \$22,974.77. Fred noted
32 Account No. 640-00000-49201 (“Operating Transfer In”) represents the room tax collected
33 through April (\$47,859.41), adding the May room tax is collected in June. Fred noted a majority
34 of the hoteliers pay at the end of June and said the city receives the payments either the first or
35 second week of July. Expenditures, which total \$266,285.33, are through May 31.

36

37 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Every, to accept and place on file the Omni Center
38 financials for 2018.

39

40 Ald. Every inquired about the total of the one month of room tax.

41

42 Fred estimated the total to be between \$12,000 and \$13,000 and said, “But here’s a little bit of a
Reviewed 7/10/18 by Hope Burchell & Fred Buehler

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43 catch. That's what it would have been in most cases. However, there was a fire at Stoney Creek
44 [Inn], and I think they were pretty much shut down the entire month of June."

45

46 Ald. Smith noted the fire occurred in mid-April.

47

48 Mayor Chilsen said, "I think that for rooms they were shut down for two weeks. But they were
49 shut down much longer for events."

50

51 Fred said Stoney Creek's sales were down for the entire month.

52

53 Mayor Chilsen reiterated Stoney Creek was shut down for two weeks in terms of rooms
54 "according to correspondence I had with them."

55

56 Ald. Every said, "We're still down is what I was trying to get at."

57

58 On voice vote, motion carried.

59

60 **Item 5 – General Fund Financials 2018**

61

62 Fred said the General Fund revenues encompass through May 31, telling committee members a
63 majority of the June revenues are not recognized. Fred referred to the expenditures and Street
64 Department Account No. 100-53311-370 ("Salt & Sand") and said it was necessary to utilize a
65 significant amount of salt during the three snow events that occurred in April. Fred told
66 committee members City Engineer Jarrod Holter is estimating it will be necessary to purchase an
67 additional 200 tons of salt, which means this account will be an estimated \$19,000 over budget
68 for 2018. Fred said, "That is based on the fact of what is left would be utilized and used in the
69 months of October, November and December. If what is left stays what [Jarrod] is anticipating,
70 it would be roughly \$19,000 short."

71

72 Ald. Every said, "You might have some other projects that are over."

73

74 Fred told Ald. Every he is correct.

75

76 Ald. Smith said she believes Jarrod does an exceptional job of estimating the amount of salt that
77 will be needed. Ald. Smith also said she believes it typically is better to have a little extra
78 because if the city's supplies are dwindling so are other municipalities' supplies, thereby
79 increasing the price.

80

81 Fred said he believes Jarrod had told him the cost per ton was \$2 less than the prior year.

82

83 Ald. Every addressed Room Tax Revenue (Account No. 100-00000-41210), said it appears some
84 of the funds had been utilized, and asked Fred how he can find out where the funds had gone.

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85
86 Fred referred to the "Tourism" section of the budget book and said, "We, through state statute,
87 take everything possible we can take. The [Common] Council has routed it into two different
88 directions. A small portion goes into the General Fund, which you see here, and the balance of
89 the city's maximum allowable, by state statute, goes into the Special Projects Fund, which is also
90 outlined. It is clearly outlined in the Tourism book." Fred noted \$40,037 had been budgeted for
91 room tax revenue and said the maximum balance allowed by state statute is directed toward the
92 Special Projects Fund. Fred said that in the past the Special Projects Fund has funded Omni
93 Center projects. Funds also have been routed to the Community Development Authority, and
94 they also were utilized during discussions regarding potential placement of the Badger-Coulee
95 Line in the city. Fred explained the full 8 percent room tax is not directed toward Tourism,
96 noting Tourism receives its required funding. Fred further explained that Tourism has routed 1
97 percent of sales toward the Omni Center.

98
99 Ald. Smith said she believes Ald. Every was asking where the funds that been withdrawn from
100 the account had been transferred.

101
102 Fred said the funds were transferred into the account and explained, "What is being transferred in
103 here is through the month of April, [which is] our maximum allowable to the General Fund."

104
105 Mayor Chilsen told Ald. Every, "The formula to that is very convoluted. The portion that we
106 take ... You have three different parts to it. It's a nasty, ugly formula. It's not just a straight 3 or
107 4 percent. It's a real convoluted number. It's coming from three different spots. Depending on
108 the timeframe there are different percentages."

109
110 Fred explained, "It's a certain percentage that we can take. Whatever our room tax was at a
111 certain time of the year, we get 'x' amount of dollars. If your room tax changes between years
112 you get a different percentage. We also established over the years how much of the General
113 Fund's portion goes to the General Fund, and how much goes to Special Projects."

114
115 Ald. Smith asked if this is a State of Wisconsin regulation.

116
117 Fred said yes, adding, "With the exception of the allocation. The allocation between the General
118 Fund and the Special Projects Fund is something that the Council has established in the past.
119 The maximum allowable is the state statute."

120
121 Ald. Smith noted how the funds are divided is the Common Council's purview.

122
123 Fred told Ald. Smith she is correct.

124
125 Ald. Every addressed Account No. 100-00000-41300 ("Payment in Lieu of Taxes"), noted the
126 payment was \$99,403.97, and asked where these funds had gone.

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127
128 Fred noted \$86,000 comes from Eagle Crest based on the assessed value based on independent
129 living, memory care, and assisted living. Fred explained the \$86,000 is part of the \$126,000 that
130 was budgeted and said, “It’s the valuation established by the assessor, how much is between
131 those different categories. When you have the valuation multiplied by the local mill rate, that
132 goes directly here. When we have a PILOT, it goes directly to this account. It’s not split
133 between ... All the PILOTs we have in place are all PILOTs that have been established before ...
134 Roughly two years ago a state law was passed that if the city ever enters into future PILOTs, we
135 must share it with the Onalaska School District, La Crosse County, Western Technical College,
136 and local. We have not established any PILOTs from that day forward. All the PILOTs we have
137 in place are grandfathered into the city’s 100-percent share.”
138

139 City Administrator Rindfleisch explained that once the revenue reaches the non-departmental
140 General Fund, it is not allocated for any specific purposes. City Administrator Rindfleisch
141 further explained part of the \$9,023,087 for non-departmental revenue is later expended on the
142 expense side of the General Fund budget. City Administrator Rindfleisch returned to the room
143 tax portion and said the \$40,037 is not necessarily designated for tourism purposes. City
144 Administrator Rindfleisch said, “In the budget books, the portion that must be for tourism is
145 allocated in a separate fund from here. That must be justified. Dan has done a good job this year
146 of creating the ‘heads in beds’ checklist to verify that we are spending that on tourism activities.”
147

148 Fred said the local portion does not need to be supported by substantiation between room tax
149 dollars utilized, but rather only the funds that are generated, excluding the General Fund portion.
150

151 Ald. Smith said these are two methods, in addition to property tax revenue, by which the city
152 obtains revenue.
153

154 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted there also are more than two pages in committee members’
155 packets listing methods by which the city obtains General Fund revenues.
156

157 Motion by Ald. Every, second by Ald. Olson, to accept and place on file the General Fund
158 Financials for 2018.
159

160 **Item 6 – Request from City Administrator to engage Ehlers, Inc. for the potential need to**
161 **create Tax Increment District #5, including a pro forma analysis of potential project**
162 **located on City-owned land on Court Street in an amount not to exceed \$15,000, using**
163 **City’s Special Projects Fund (City’s portion of Room Tax)**
164

165 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the documents had been included in committee members’
166 packets, and he said he has had the opportunity to work with Ehlers, Inc. in the past in other
167 communities regarding TID districts. City Administrator Rindfleisch said he has discovered
168 Ehlers, Inc. takes its fiduciary capacity “very seriously,” and he referred to the copy of Ehlers

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169 Inc.'s cover letter in committee members' packets, which states Ehlers, Inc. has "a duty of
170 loyalty and a duty of care" to the municipality to provide sound advice in all cases. City
171 Administrator Rindfleisch said, "While I'm very competent and confident in bringing a possible
172 TIF district forward, I would always recommend hiring an advisor just to make sure ... it is done
173 in an absolutely appropriate manner." City Administrator Rindfleisch said this would be TID
174 District No. 5 and referred to a copy of a map included in committee members' packets. The
175 map shows city-owned property, and City Administrator Rindfleisch said he is of the opinion
176 this property, which is located on the waterfront and also in close proximity to State Trunk
177 Highway 35 and the city's key downtown corridor intersection, is underutilized. City
178 Administrator Rindfleisch said, "I think it's prime land that's currently generating zero taxes for
179 all-tax entity. All the properties in the proposed district have zero tax. The city owns it all or it
180 is right-of-way."

181
182 City Administrator Rindfleisch referred to Appendix B of Ehlers, Inc.'s proposal and said he is
183 requesting two types of services. The first is assistance with the creation of TID District No. 5
184 for the purposes of possibly allowing development. The creation steps include a feasibility
185 analysis, a project plan development (the TIF district plan, the TIF creation process), and
186 submittal to the State of Wisconsin. City Administrator Rindfleisch noted Ehlers, Inc. does not
187 create the TID district, nor does it state its opinion regarding the feasibility of the TID district.
188 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "It just allows us to begin that process of doing the full
189 analysis."

190
191 City Administrator Rindfleisch next addressed another letter included in Ehlers, Inc.'s proposal
192 that outlines the following proposed tasks based on its understanding of the project:
193

194 **1. Project Review**

- 195 • Review project specifics and details based on currently available information.
- 196 • Review valuation and tax increment projections.

197 **2. Pro Forma Analysis**

- 198 • Prepare pro forma analysis – Compare development and operating costs,
199 revenues, financing structure and projected return on investment with industry
200 standards.
- 201 • Based on the analysis, determine and recommend an appropriate level of public
202 assistance for project completion.

203 **3. Negotiations and Revisions**

- 204 • Participate in discussions with developer to communicate rationale for
205 recommended assistance.
- 206 • Revise analysis throughout negotiations.

207 **4. Document Findings**

- 208 • Prepare memorandum summarizing the pro forma analysis and outlining
209 recommendations for level of assistance.

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City Administrator Rindfleisch referred to the proposed TIF district and noted it is significantly smaller than TID districts have been in the past. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “I’m not comfortable in a built-up area recommending a broad district. I would like to suggest a site-specific district so that any project that gets done on that smaller site must cash-flow itself versus traditional TIDs where there’s a large district and focused development on a certain area of the district, but you’re relying on increment generated in other areas that may be currently providing tax to support that. It makes sense if there is a lot of capital investment that needs to be done, but there is not a lot of capital investment that would need to be done in this area. I think it warrants itself to be smaller and site-specific, allowing for just those developers that would be able to cash flow that project with no burden to the taxpayer. ... I anticipate if we agree to engage Ehlers that in the August CDA meeting, followed up by the August Common Council meeting, there will be the presentation of a potential project. But that really can’t occur unless there is a sense that a district would be created.

Finally, the hiring of an advisor in this entire process will absolutely ensure that the ‘but for clause,’ which is necessary for TID funding and development, is met, [and] that the legal standards are met, both by the state and our fiduciary responsibility to our bondholders and our debtholders, that we’re not exposing the city to unnecessary risk in order to gain some tax revenues down the road. That ‘but for clause’ is solid and defensible, and that’s what Ehlers will do on our behalf as well.”

Ald. Every said it is his understanding the committee is not approving a TIF district, but rather an advisory relationship with Ehlers, Inc. to provide the city with the necessary information “based on what they tell us, which is going to be specific about who pays for what, and when, and then we decide if we want to do a TIF district or not.”

City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Every he is correct.

Ald. Every said he is somewhat familiar with how TIF districts operate and stated that while some are successful, others are not. Ald. Every said, “This to me sounds like it would work well,” and he asked if the city would be working with developer Marvin Wanders.

City Administrator Rindfleisch said Marvin Wanders likely would be the developer with whom the city would work.

Ald. Every noted Marvin had expressed interest at a previous meeting.

Fred noted the City of Onalaska had started the Special Projects Fund in 2015, and he said \$80,000 had been anticipated to come into the Special Projects Fund this past year. Fred noted \$71,000 had been transferred out to subsidize the Omni Center, leaving \$9,000 unspent. Fred

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252 said, "The fund balance, strictly from 2015 to today, the summary is \$66,010. [That is] the fund
253 balance related to dollars to be spent for projects such as this."

254

255 Ald. Every asked, "When you vote to take this money out of the Special Projects Fund, do you
256 need a two-thirds vote or a three-quarters vote?"

257

258 Fred said a budget amendment would be done in the future, adding, "Keep in mind that this is
259 not the General Fund. This is not tied into any mandates as the Special Revenue Funds. We will
260 have the expenditures, so obviously your expenditures are going to be more than we anticipated.
261 But it's the dollars that you have for a fund balance of \$66,000."

262

263 Ald. Every asked, "So you're not spending money that was intended for a specific purpose?"

264

265 Fred told Ald. Every he is correct.

266

267 Ald. Smith said, "I think it was intended for a purpose like this so that we had money on hand
268 when we had an opportunity to gather information and see if it makes sense to pursue a
269 development opportunity."

270

271 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the expenses of creating a TID district are TID-eligible
272 expenses, meaning that the TID, once there is financial movement, will reimburse the Special
273 Projects Fund for the expenses. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "When you're creating a
274 TID district, it's the district itself creating the increment and the revenue. The district will offset
275 the city's costs, wherever that came from. Any legal fees or my time or staff time or advisor fees
276 that go into the creation of the TID district and the project plan ... I will make sure it's in the
277 development agreement that that will be offset and we will recoup those costs. It's temporary; it
278 will come back at some point."

279

280 Ald. Every said he believes the costs can be recouped in the second year.

281

282 Ald. Smith noted the City of Onalaska has had a history of success utilizing TID districts,
283 adding, "Part of the reason I think we have those is we have put a lot of effort and forethought
284 into [being thorough] and knowing where the money is coming from and how long it will take to
285 pay back. What we do or do not want to include is very important. I think this one is a little
286 different because of its narrow scope. But it also is property that I think is, from the city's
287 standpoint, very high value. That's helping reform what we view as the heart of our
288 community."

289

290 Motion by Ald. Every, second by Ald. Olson, to approve engaging Ehlers, Inc. for the potential
291 need to create Tax Increment District #5, including a pro forma analysis of potential project
292 located on City-owned land on Court Street in an amount not to exceed \$15,000, using City's
293 Special Projects Fund (City's portion of Room Tax).

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294

295 On voice vote, motion carried.

296

297 **Item 7 – Options regarding the contractual services of legal counsel for 2019 and future**
298 **years**

299

300 City Administrator Rindfleisch said 2018 is the final year of the City of Onalaska's current
301 agreement with City Attorney Sean O'Flaherty to provide legal services. City Administrator
302 Rindfleisch told committee members that as the city enters the budget-preparing process he is
303 seeking policy guidance from both the Finance and Personnel Committee and the Common
304 Council as to which direction to take. City Administrator Rindfleisch said he believes the city
305 has three options:

306

- 307 1. Do a full Request for Proposals for services. City Administrator Rindfleisch said he
308 believes there likely would only be two law firms in contention and the end result likely
309 would be the city continuing to utilize O'Flaherty Heim Birnbaum Kirchner & Curtis,
310 Ltd. unless the city chose to seek services from outside the area.
- 311 2. Sean appears willing to do a small cost of living adjustment and enter into another
312 contract with the city, thereby extending the contract.
- 313 3. Create an in-house City Attorney position. This individual would be a City of Onalaska
314 employee rather than the city contracting out for legal services. City Administrator
315 Rindfleisch said he is not certain he has the ability to create a new, budget-neutral
316 position at this time without examining some changes within the budget so that the city is
317 able to fund that position.

318

319 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "I do believe there probably are efficiencies that can be
320 created for all of our staff by having somebody in-house. I can speak to the fact that we are
321 obviously not Sean's prime client. We get a discounted rate from his services, but that also
322 means that he has a business to run, so we're probably not first on the agenda all the time.
323 Oftentimes there will be moments that we need to communicate with the attorney, but obviously
324 with other clients instead of us being a primary client we have to wait for a result. The challenge
325 of course is, under expenditure restraints, how do I justify efficiencies created by staff that we're
326 able to do other things that we're doing in a more efficient manner? But if that's the direction
327 that this committee would like me to take, that is something I would be willing to present further
328 within the budget process."

329

330 Ald. Smith asked either City Administrator Rindfleisch or Fred to further explain the document
331 pertaining to this agenda item. Ald. Smith also said she is aware the city has legal fees outside of
332 what Sean is providing, and she asked for clarification on the graph included in committee
333 members' packets.

334

335 City Administrator Rindfleisch said there are attorney costs involved with the city's debt

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336 issuances; however, they are under the debt issuance costs and would not be allocated here. City
337 Administrator Rindfleisch said he had once sought permission to acquire outside legal services.
338 However, the issue that would have required these services did not come to fruition, and
339 therefore there were no expenses made on that behalf. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “I
340 believe outside of that all other legal fees really did come through this graph here as shown,
341 especially for 2017.”

342

343 Fred returned to the city’s three options and asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if Sean has
344 proposed a one-year extension.

345

346 City Administrator Rindfleisch said Sean told him he would be able to give the city a one-year
347 extension at the current rate, plus a cost of living adjustment, if the city decides to hire internally.
348 However, City Administrator Rindfleisch also said Sean is seeking another five-year contract
349 from the city if the second option is chosen.

350

351 Fred referred to the graph titled “City of Onalaska Legal Counsel Hours/Dollars” included in
352 committee members’ packets and noted 391.29 hours had been utilized in 2017 by O’Flaherty
353 Heim Birnbaum Kirchner & Curtis, Ltd. for the Joint Municipal Court. An outside attorney
354 logged 148.55 hours in 2017 for additional JMC services as Attorney Amanda Jackson was on
355 maternity leave. Fred said the contract is structured so that if it is necessary to utilize a substitute
356 attorney, O’Flaherty Heim Birnbaum Kirchner & Curtis, Ltd. does not charge any more than the
357 city’s current hourly rate with the current legal counsel. Fred noted 506.35 hours were logged
358 pertaining to general government issues in 2017, and 18.64 hours were logged pertaining to
359 employment. Fred referred to a second graph on the page and said it represents the hourly rate
360 for the different areas, and the funds spent are listed below. According to the graph, the city
361 spent \$125,043.28 on legal fees in 2017 (\$44,020.13 for the JMC; \$16,711,88 for additional JMC
362 fees; \$62,027.88 on general government issues; and \$2,283.40 on employment).

363

364 Ald. Olson asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if the city has a procedure as to who has access
365 to the City Attorney, and he also asked, “Does that come through you who gives authority to
366 who has access to him and billable hours?”

367

368 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “The relationship should come through me, but each
369 department head is aware there are certain times I will allow them to directly communicate with
370 the attorney when they need that for purposes of efficiency ... but it’s not a blank check. I’m
371 aware of when there should be some conversation.”

372

373 Ald. Olson asked, “You’re comfortable so far with the way that’s set up?”

374

375 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “I think there have been times where some requests may
376 have gone out that I felt I should have been aware of first and foremost. But I’ve taken that up
377 with the individuals when that has occurred.”

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378
379 Ald. Every said he has gone on record stating he would like the City of Onalaska to have a full-
380 time City Attorney. Ald. Every also said, "Looking at the financials, I think we come pretty
381 close in what we pay out between General [Government Issues] and [Joint] Municipal Court.
382 And we certainly would create some efficiencies, especially where the Municipal Court is
383 concerned if we decide to go ahead with that, which I hope we don't. We would create a lot of
384 efficiencies there. As far as bond issues, I don't think an in-house attorney is probably qualified
385 for that at all. You would still have to go outside for that; there is a lot of expertise connected
386 with that. The only thing is, based on what you've shown here, I don't think the dollar figures
387 would be so far apart. I don't know where we would house one. Of course he's going to need a
388 secretary and he's going to need office staff and other things. But I would like to see that being
389 prepared as an option for the budget, at any rate, if that is possible. Even if it is just there as an
390 option, we could still consider it down the line."

391
392 Ald. Smith said, "This is something I've definitely put some thought into as well. Of course it
393 comes down to, what do we need and how much does it cost? I think for pros, we have had
394 O'Flaherty for quite some time. We have a lot of continuity with them. The relationship is built,
395 so I do respect that. Looking purely at the cost, have you done a preliminary cost analysis? I
396 feel that the cost of, number one, a full-time attorney wouldn't be just the hourly rate. It would
397 be a full-time employee with full city benefits. Then it wouldn't be just that person; it would
398 actually be a department because they would need some kind of clerical assistance beyond what
399 we're getting. My second concern is that I'm not sure how the relationship would work when
400 we're hiring on at a rate and we're getting the person we need to do the job, if that person isn't
401 available, then what are we going to do? There have been times in the past when we have had
402 personnel issues that required litigation and we needed a different attorney than the City
403 Attorney to do this. It's not impossible, and I think we should explore it. But I just have a lot of
404 questions and concerns."

405
406 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "You're exactly at the point of why I'm coming to the
407 committee to get the insight and input. Looking at the numbers initially, I felt the same way
408 realizing there would always be some kind of outside legal counsel assistance required. There
409 would have to be a budget item for that, to reserve \$10,000 or \$20,000 or something of that
410 amount. [Regarding] salary, of course there would be benefit costs on top of that. The personnel
411 costs are the number-one cost that we have in the city, so we would be adding to that. Then
412 [regarding] clerical support, are there hours available with existing staff where we'd have to
413 increase the amount of clerical support to fund either a full-time clerical worker or a part-time
414 assistant to the City Attorney's position? I do not believe that I can do it within \$125,000
415 completely budget-neutral. I believe it would be slightly under budget-neutral, but that really
416 enters a policy. That's where I'm seeking assistance from you. If that is the direction you would
417 like to go as I prepare the budget, I will either prepare it under the guidelines or as Jerry said,
418 with the option to compare that to present that. But before I get into an exact figure, I think a
419 policy decision should be made by this committee and the Council."

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421 Ald. Smith said, “We’re looking at averaging 1,000 hours a year of using an attorney. Do we
422 really have enough justification – not only from a financial savings, which would be important –
423 but do we really have enough work to keep a full-time employee busy for 40 hours? Again, that
424 potentially, depending upon how the money breaks down, that would affect this. What we’re
425 paying now might end up being a bargain if you break it down per hour of service, if we’re only
426 needing them 1,000 hours a year but yet we’re paying them this full-time wage.”

427
428 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the chart included in committee members’ packets shows
429 billable hours for the moments Sean has billed the city, and he told Ald. Smith, “I can say that
430 there are plenty of hours that he has not billed us, but it would still be hours having somebody on
431 staff would take up the time. I think the total number of hours would clearly be more than 1,000
432 hours of actual use time that we have needs for here within the city. Would it be the full 2,080?
433 I don’t know. Perhaps. But how we’d pay the attorney wouldn’t be hourly. It would be a salary
434 regardless of the number of hours that we’d have the expectation. On one hand, we’d be creating
435 more efficiency by fully allocating those unbilled hours. But on the other hand, you’re creating
436 inefficiency because you might not be getting 2,080 a year. Or maybe you would get more; you
437 don’t know. You’re paying regardless.”

438
439 Motion by Ald. Every, second by Ald. Olson, to direct City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch to
440 proceed with preparing a cost comparison in preparation for the City of Onalaska’s budget
441 meetings for the specific purpose of comparing a permanent, in-house City Attorney to the city’s
442 current system.

443
444 Ald. Smith asked when the cost comparison should be completed.

445
446 Fred said it will need to be completed by the August 8 Finance and Personnel Committee
447 meeting if the committee decides it wishes to go out for RFPs.

448
449 Ald. Smith said she does not believe RFPs are an option the committee is discussing at this time.

450
451 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “If that’s the case, I would suggest at the budget
452 presentation to do that. ... You will have the information, in my view. At budget time you can
453 look at options.”

454
455 Ald. Smith asked if the city has a deadline with its current contract with O’Flaherty Heim
456 Birnbaum Kirchner & Curtis, Ltd.

457
458 Fred said the deadline is December 31, 2018.

459
460 On voice vote, motion carried.

461
Reviewed 7/10/18 by Hope Burchell & Fred Buehler

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462 **Item 8 – Authorization to accept a \$1,000 grant (non-matching) from the Bureau of**
463 **Transportation Safety (BOTS) for the purchase of safety cones, etc.**

464

465 Motion by Ald. Every, second by Ald. Olson, to approve authorization to accept a \$1,000 grant
466 (non-matching) from the Bureau of Transportation Safety (BOTS) for the purchase of safety
467 cones, etc.

468

469 On voice vote, motion carried.

470

471 **PERSONNEL**

472

473 **Item 9 – Review and consideration of acceptance of the Wisconsin’s Bureau of**
474 **Transportation and Safety Grant not to exceed \$1,000**

475

476 Hope noted this is a duplicate of Item 8.

477

478 **Item 10 – Review and consideration of out-of-state travel for Jim Hansen to attend Vactor**
479 **Training in Elgin, Illinois at a date to be determined**

480

481 Hope said she had spoken to City Engineer Jarrod Holter, who asked to include this item on
482 tonight’s agenda, and she told committee members there had been a last-minute cancellation at
483 the Vactor Training. Hope said the city staff member could not go because the request would
484 have had to receive committee approval as it would be out-of-state travel. Hope told committee
485 members no date has been set as of yet; however, she also said Jarrod wants to send Jim Hansen,
486 the city’s new lead mechanic, to the training when it becomes available again later this year.
487 Hope said she believes one training session is held in the spring, and another one is held in the
488 fall. Hope also said it is her understanding the training typically is paid for by the company. The
489 City of Onalaska is responsible for paying the wages.

490

491 Ald. Every inquired about the duration of the training.

492

493 Hope said she believes it lasts at least a couple of days.

494

495 Motion by Ald. Every, second by Ald. Olson, to approve out-of-state travel for Jim Hansen to
496 attend Vactor Training in Elgin, Illinois at a date to be determined.

497

498 On voice vote, motion carried.

499

500 **Item 11 – Review and consideration of job description for in-house City Attorney**

501

502 Hope told committee members she had created the job description under City Administrator
503 Rindfleisch’s direction. Hope noted what is before the committee this evening is a rough draft
Reviewed 7/10/18 by Hope Burchell & Fred Buehler

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504 and said both she and City Administrator Rindfleisch had reviewed it. Hope said, “I think it
505 covers a majority of aspects of what our current City Attorney would do. I think there is always
506 going to be some of those things that will need to be contracted out. I think labor laws is
507 typically one of those items. But I think for the most part this covers a majority of the items that
508 we’re looking for.” Hope added she can include financial figures as part of the budget process if
509 the committee approves of the job description.

510

511 Ald. Smith asked if it is correct to say that the committee does not necessarily have to approve
512 this item at this time, but rather place it on file for later consideration.

513

514 Hope told Ald. Smith she is correct.

515

516 Ald. Every noted the job description states the City Attorney should be able to lift 50 pounds,
517 and he asked Hope if the State of Wisconsin states that a person should be able to lift 40 pounds.

518

519 Hope said that while she is uncertain about the state’s guidelines, the boxes that would need to be
520 carried typically weigh approximately 50 pounds. Therefore, the city typically uses 50 pounds as
521 a guideline.

522

Item 12 – Review and consideration of 2016 and 2017 Human Resources Annual Report

523

524
525 Hope said a color copy of the report has been included in committee members’ packets, and she
526 highlighted the following:

527

- 528 • Hope said she handles benefits, training and development, safety, workers
529 compensation, orientation, and employee and labor relations in addition to
530 recruitment and compensation.
- 531 • An intern conducted a job analysis in 2016 and had all city employees review job
532 descriptions so they could be put into the ADA format. Job descriptions also
533 were updated.
- 534 • Human Resources was tasked in 2016 to review, along with a committee, as to
535 whether the city should change to a full-time City Administrator and part-time
536 Mayor. Also in 2016, Human Resources coordinated the reorganization of the
537 first-floor departments at City Hall (Finance, City Clerk, Human Resources). The
538 reorganization included moving Information Technology Department from
539 Finance to Human Resources. Human Resources also assisted the Parks and
540 Recreation Department with the reorganization of the Recreation Department,
541 Omni Center, and Aquatic Center positions.
- 542 • In 2017, Human Resources was tasked with three reorganizations. The first was
543 the Parks and Recreation Department due to turnover and a lack of qualified
544 applicants to review the previous changes from 2016. Second was the

Reviewed 7/10/18 by Hope Burchell & Fred Buehler

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545 reorganization of the Street and Utility departments into Public Works. Third was
546 the reorganization of Payroll from Finance to Human Resources. Also in 2017,
547 Human Resources assisted the Common Council with recruiting a City
548 Administrator.

- 549 • The average cost of recruitment for a permanent employee search in 2016 was
550 \$236.85. By comparison, the average cost of recruitment for a permanent
551 employee search in 2017 was \$166.61. Hope said that while there have been
552 several postings open, the costs have decreased because the city is utilizing
553 websites that do not have a cost.
- 554 • The city participated in the following salary surveys: La Crosse Area Society for
555 Human Resource Management Compensation Survey 2016 & 2017; Carlson
556 Dettman 2017 Annual Survey on Wage Increases; U.S. Census Bureau Annual
557 Public Employment & Payroll Survey 2016 & 2017; La Crosse County Housing
558 Authority.
- 559 • Human Resources processed 218 health insurance additions, changes, and
560 deletions in 2017. This included moving all employees from Gundersen to Quartz
561 and Health Traditions to Quartz. Human Resources also processed 115 insurance
562 additions, changes, and deletions to Short & Long-Term Disability Plans from
563 Kansas City Life for employees working 30 hours or more per week. Human
564 Resources also switched plans from Unum to Kansas City Life for 2018. This
565 required all employees to complete new paperwork.
- 566 • Regarding workers compensation, the city's experience modification in 2017 was
567 .73, compared to .69 in 2016. Eighteen workers compensation claims were filed
568 in 2017, compared to 11 in 2016. Hope complimented the city's department
569 heads and the city's employees and their commitment to safety.
- 570 • Human Resources reviewed and modified 69 job descriptions between 2016 and
571 2017. Human Resources also was responsible for the negotiation of three union
572 contracts during that time.

573

574 Ald. Every asked where he can obtain copies of the job descriptions for both the City
575 Administrator and Mayor positions.

576

577 Hope told Ald. Every she will be able to provide him with copies of both job descriptions.

578

579 Motion by Ald. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to accept and place on file the 2016 and 2017
580 Human Resources Annual Report.

581

582 On voice vote, motion carried.

583

584 **Item 13 – Closed Session**

585

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

590

- 591 • Negotiating strategy for outstanding municipal court tickets

592

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

596

597 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Smith, to convene in Closed Session.

598

599 On roll call vote: Ald. Jerry Every – nay, Ald. Jim Olson – aye, Ald. Kim Smith – aye. In
600 Closed Session.

601

602 Motion by Ald. Smith, second by Ald. Olson, to adjourn in Closed Session at 9:20 p.m.

603

604 On roll call vote: Ald. Jerry Every – nay, Ald. Jim Olson – aye, Ald. Kim Smith – aye.

605

606

607 Recorded by:

608

609 Kirk Bey