

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

Monday, October 21, 2019

1

1 The Meeting of the Finance & Personnel II Committee of the City of Onalaska was called to
2 order at 4:15 p.m. on Monday, October 21, 2019. It was noted that the meeting had been
3 announced and a notice posted at City Hall.

4
5 Roll call was taken, with the following members present: Ald. Kim Smith, Ald. Jim Olson, Ald.
6 Dan Stevens. Ald. K. Smith, Ald. Olson, and Ald. Stevens are the only voting members for this
7 meeting, although the entire Common Council participates in the discussion.

8
9 Also Present: Mayor Joe Chilsen, Ald. Diane Wulf, Ald. Tom Smith, Ald. Boondi Iyer, City
10 Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, City Clerk Cari Burmaster, City Attorney Amanda Jackson,
11 Financial Services Director/Treasurer Fred Buehler, Deputy Financial Services Director Kim
12 Isensee, Human Resources Director Hope Burchell, City Engineer Jarrod Holter, Police Chief
13 Charles Ashbeck, Fire Chief Billy Hayes, Parks and Recreation Director Dan Wick, Buildings
14 Manager Brian Babiash

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

17
18 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the minutes from the previous
19 meeting as printed and on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

20
21 On voice vote, motion carried.

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

24
25 Ald. K. Smith called three times for anyone wishing to provide public input and closed that
26 portion of the meeting. Ald. K. Smith noted that Patrick Clements of Centering Onalaska had
27 addressed the Common Council at its just-completed special meeting and requested up to \$5,000
28 to water the flower baskets during the weekend. Ald. K. Smith also noted that Jan Brock had
29 submitted the following letter dated October 21, 2019:

30
31 *“I am sad that I could not attend this evening to express my support of the beautification projects*
32 *Centering Onalaska accomplishes for our community. The flagship of these projects blooms*
33 *each summer season with the 50-plus hanging flower baskets. Communities like ours have*
34 *become known for such beautiful elements, attracting not only visitors, but also potential*
35 *businesses and home buyers. The Community Development Organization researched the topic*
36 *and states: ‘Community beautification should be high on your agenda as a local leader or a*
37 *neighborhood or community organization. Simple projects range from planting some pretty*
38 *flowers or shrubs to painting planters, benches, signposts, or whatever is beginning to look a bit*
39 *tired. Volunteer-led projects such as these are one of the quickest ways to inspire more*
40 *community spirit, socializing, and action. A visually appealing community increases property*
41 *values, attracts businesses, and improves the neighborhood’s image. Beauty is one of three most*
42 *influential factors in community attachment, which means loyalty, to your particular town or*

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43 *city. Some research even shows that a nice-looking neighborhood promotes good behavior.'*

44

45 *I was recently in Caledonia, Minnesota, where they had almost every corner decorated for*
46 *autumn. It created a very positive feeling for the community. A small amount of money to help*
47 *with watering/upkeep of these flower baskets will payback multiple times and be a public*
48 *relations asset for Onalaska. Thank you for your consideration."*

49

50

Consideration and possible action on the following items:

51

FINANCE

52

**Item 4 – 2020 Proposed Executive Budget, including Budgets for General Fund, Special
53 Revenue Funds, Debt Service Funds, Enterprise Funds, Capital Project Funds, and
54 Community Development Authority Funds**

55

56
57
58 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the budget binders include a cover letter dated October 3,
59 2019 he had written to Mayor Chilsen, the alderpersons, and City of Onalaska residents. City
60 Administrator Rindfleisch noted there are components to the 2020 Executive Budget that are
61 different than in years past. To be specific, City Administrator Rindfleisch said he has asked the
62 departments to "almost have a zero-based budget where, what is the actual cost of doing business
63 within their departments." This includes training, technology, and other areas that might have
64 been underserved in recent years. The budget also includes staffing requests, including staffing
65 increases in public safety (e.g. Police Department, Fire Department); changes in compensation
66 for the elected officials; internal personnel changes and organizational efficiencies. City
67 Administrator Rindfleisch said the key component is the expenditure restraint payments the city
68 has received, noting the payments in the last decade have been as much as \$250,000. City
69 Administrator Rindfleisch said, "It is substantially less, and that has been our most difficult cap
70 to obtain. By, for one year, exceeding the expenditure restraint, but absolutely staying within the
71 levy limits cap, allows us to, in my mind, right-size the organization when it comes to staffing
72 and technology – in those two ways, in particular."

73

74 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted Hope had prepared a memo regarding the most substantial
75 personnel changes, which are categorized as follows:

76

77 1. Additional positions with no changes in salary or job description

78 • Public Works Operator (1)

79 • Firefighter/EMT (2)

80 • Police Officers (3)

81 2. New Positions

82 • IT Network Specialist (1)

83 • HR Generalist (1)

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- 84 3. Changes in Job Descriptions and Salaries
85 • Payroll/HR Specialist
86 • HR Director
87 4. Increase Hours PT 1,560 to FT, Job Description and Salary
88 • Utility Billing Assistant
89

90 City Administrator Rindfleisch told the Council all the proposed changes fit within the budget,
91 and he said the changes will, in future years, allow the city to retain its levy limit in future years.
92 The changes also will allow the city to recapture the expenditure restraint payment in future
93 years.

94
95 Ald. Wulf said she would, on behalf of the Common Council, like to thank administration, staff,
96 and department heads for answering the alderpersons' questions, noting the Council had a shorter
97 timeframe in which to review the budget compared to years past.
98

99 Ald. K. Smith noted there have been discussions regarding conducting a study to reanalyze the
100 city's wage structure and grading system, and she asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if there
101 is a reason why additional funds had not been set aside in the budget so that the Council would
102 be able to adopt it later this year upon completion of the study.
103

104 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "I believe that we'll be able to, by recapturing the
105 expenditure restraint payment in future years, fund the changes in the wages when the wage
106 study is complete, ongoing. Obviously, we would not be able to create new positions in the
107 future. We would just be able to have to make the changes that are adjusted there. Keep in mind
108 a wage study may show that there are some positions that need to be capped off as well, so that
109 may eliminate some steps for some positions as well. Within the new levy, I'm very confident
110 that we would be able to fund those changes going forward."
111

112 Ald. K. Smith said she was concerned about adding new positions and not reserving funding for
113 changes, noting it is difficult to recapture those funds any other way.
114

115 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "In the worst case, if it really comes back different, we can
116 defer the hiring of some of those positions until later on. We would still be good for January 1,
117 2021."
118

119 Ald. K. Smith noted the significant increase in the elections budget for 2020 is due to the
120 presidential election, and she asked Cari if she believes this budget adequately addresses the
121 needs for the presidential election.
122

123 Cari said yes and told the Council there have been a significant number of changes with
124 elections, with the focus being on security. Cari noted there are additional costs for adequate

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125 staffing and said it will be necessary to bring in two machines for both the April and November
126 elections “because we’re not surviving the way it is. We are still pushing to get the early voting
127 on the floor. I got a call last week from the Legislative Office. They told me will make the floor
128 in November, but that will not give us adequate time to get it in place for the April election, [but]
129 possibly for the November election. It’s taken a little bit longer than we anticipated. That will
130 be our only saving grace if we can get that passed, that we can have a little relief from having all
131 the absentee ballots processed at the polls. Yes, there is a lot of money in there for elections
132 because elections are expensive.”

133

134 Ald. K. Smith asked Cari if she believes the poll worker pay is adequate so that the city may
135 retain qualified individuals.

136

137 Cari said yes and noted there had been a slight increase because the poll workers had been placed
138 on a pay scale. Cari added, “We’ve been able to staff the polls with what we’re paying.”

139

140 **Assessment**

141

142 Fred told the Council he had estimated the assessed valuation and said he had received the final
143 statement of assessments within the last week. Fred told the Council his estimated assessment
144 ratio was 98.6 and said he had utilized that as his calculation as to what the valuation would be
145 for the city between the manufacturing. Fred said the final statement of assessments he had
146 received was 98.9544464. Fred said it would be applied to the Gundersen Health System
147 parking ramp and noted there had been a change of \$8. Fred said, “In reference to the tax bill
148 itself, it’s still sitting at \$96.” Fred added the final statement of assessment figures would be
149 utilized going forward.

150

151 Ald. K. Smith addressed the PILOT program, asking Fred to describe it to Ald. T. Smith, Ald.
152 Stevens, and Ald. Iyer, all of whom were elected this past April, and point out the businesses
153 involved in the program.

154

155 Fred said there are seven or eight locations in the city that utilize the Payment in Lieu of Taxes
156 program, one of which is Eagle Crest. Fred noted some establishments, including the YMCA
157 and Goodwill, are not required to pay a PILOT. However, Goodwill decided to make a PILOT
158 payment.

159

160 **Insurance**

161

162 Fred noted that 78.3 percent of the General Fund Budget consists of wages/benefits and COLAs
163 (Cost of Living Adjustments).

164

165 Ald. K. Smith inquired about the percentage for 2019.

166

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167 Fred told Ald. K. Smith he did not bring that data with him and estimated to be 74 or 75 percent.

168

169 **Wage**

170

171 Ald. K. Smith said, “When staff is reevaluating positions throughout the year ... I know we’re
172 going to revisit this, and ... this was a huge improvement over what we had previously. No
173 matter what the compensation system is, I think there is always room for improvement. We’ve
174 probably outgrown this one, and we’re ready to have another one. I’m looking forward to that
175 next year.” Ald. K. Smith asked Hope, “When positions are reevaluated or regraded, what is the
176 normal process for that?”

177

178 Hope told Ald. K. Smith everything originates from the job description and said when a job
179 description is redone, she goes through all the factors the city has for grading. Hope explained
180 that the factors all are weighted differently, noting that someone’s education or experience could
181 be weighted higher than if, for example, he or she has to supervise staff. Hope further explained
182 the job description is what determines where the factor system is placed.

183

184 Ald. K. Smith noted a job description normally comes before the Finance and Personnel
185 Committee, even if it is being regraded.

186

187 Hope told Ald. K. Smith she is correct.

188

189 Ald. K. Smith noted multiple positions are changing for 2020 and said she wonders how it
190 would be affected.

191

192 Ald. Stevens asked Hope if there is a reason a position that is being regraded should not come
193 before the Finance and Personnel Committee.

194

195 Hope told Ald. Stevens she cannot think of a reason and said this is the time to discuss changes.

196

197 Ald. K. Smith said she was specifically referring to Item No. 3 in Hope’s memo, meaning
198 “Changes in Job Descriptions and Salaries” to Payroll/HR Specialist and HR Director.

199

200 City Administrator Rindfleisch said that in every case, position description changes need to go
201 through the Finance and Personnel Committee, and through Finance and Personnel II as part of
202 the budget process. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “Historically, what we’re trying to do is
203 get the position changes to be done as part of the budget process because then you know they’re
204 funded any approvals made versus throughout the year, where you go to define that offsetting
205 savings somewhere else. This is the standard process now, and we make exceptions throughout
206 the year as we look at position changes this way. Keep in mind, the position scoring itself, I
207 strongly recommend, doesn’t get done in the elected body. That opens yourselves up to liability.
208 You’d want the actual scoring of the position to be done by staff, but the position descriptions

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209 themselves absolutely must be approved by a public entity, by the elected body ,because that's
210 the policy-making statement. This is what you envision for that. All the changes, as proposed
211 here, either came from department heads or from me. It's never in recognition for who is
212 currently in the position; it's for the position itself. Some of the positions, for example, are
213 filled. If people currently no longer worked in the position and I was to make a recommendation
214 to the Council to fill them, these are the positions I would recommend filling for the tasks and
215 duties that I see, and the role that I see being proposed for right now."

216

217 Ald. Wulf said, "In the future I would strongly suggest that any changes that were being
218 suggested that they be included in the budget book, because two of them were not."

219

220 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "Actually, more of them were not. The two in particular, I
221 had seen the sheets, and they somehow should have made the budget books. I don't know why
222 they didn't make the budget books. In reviewing them, there are a lot of pages here, and quite
223 frankly, I missed them in proofreading them. But there are all the positions, and that's where the
224 memo was broken into four categories that there are the position descriptions in this process that
225 the Council should review and approve, as you would normally do throughout the year."

226

227 Ald. Wulf noted the Council had received them when the meeting commenced and said the
228 alderpersons had not had time to prepare or review them. Ald. Wulf added she was aware
229 something was coming, "but I just got it."

230

231 Ald. K. Smith said, "It's just easier on the front end because when you have the whole budget
232 book and you're trying to think of one ... Every individual is important, but it's hard to pick that
233 out of the massive amount of information."

234

235 Ald. Stevens said, "Especially given the shorter timeframe."

236

237 **Budget Change**

238

239 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the changes on this page are between the department head
240 recommended budget and the administrator budget.

241

242 Ald. K. Smith asked for further information regarding the reduction to contractual inspection.

243

244 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. K. Smith the original proposal included budgeting for a
245 full staff for a full year. However, City Administrator Rindfleisch also noted there are
246 employees who may or may not be in retirement age, adding none of them has given notice. City
247 Administrator Rindfleisch said he also had budgeted for a full year of contracted services if there
248 are retirements. City Administrator Rindfleisch said it is unnecessary to budget for both; thus,
249 the contracted services portion has been pulled out. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "If we
250 have staff for the full year, we have staff for the full year. If they retire, then we have wages that

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251 we can use for contracted services. We don't need to double budget." City Administrator
252 Rindfleisch told Ald. K. Smith both were in the initial budget.

253

254 Ald. Stevens asked City Administrator Rindfleisch to discuss the IT Network Specialist and the
255 HR Generalist positions, asking, "Are these functions that will be created and then spread out to
256 other people? Are we understaffed now, or are there going to be new, additional duties that will
257 be created with these positions?"

258

259 City Administrator Rindfleisch first addressed the IT Network Specialist position, telling Ald.
260 Stevens it was a position created by the departure of a former employee. That employee had
261 supervisory requirements of that job. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "We decided, and
262 Council approved, the new position descriptions."

263

264 Jarrod said the positions are the Computer Specialist and the IT Specialist.

265

266 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the IT Network Specialist remains open, noting it was not
267 approved to fill. City Administrator Rindfleisch also noted there had not been a request to fill
268 the position at this point in time with the changes being made. This was so Jarrod could see how
269 much outside consulting the city still needs to work with, be it Adoni Networks or another
270 organization, as well as determining what the employee's exact role should be. City
271 Administrator Rindfleisch said one possibility is to hire a Database Supervisor instead of an IT
272 Network Specialist for the various duties performed in Joint Municipal Court and Finance. City
273 Administrator Rindfleisch noted the position is fully funded as it is appropriately scored, and he
274 also noted it currently is not filled. City Administrator Rindfleisch said he ultimately will be
275 bringing forward either a position change to the job description or a request to fill the position at
276 the time city staff has a better understanding as to what the position needs to be.

277

278 Jarrod said that with the reorganization of the IT functions within the city, city staff still is
279 attempting to adequately staff the positions and also determine the city's needs. Jarrod said there
280 are items within the IT budget that are yearly expenses, including Office 365 and the telephone
281 system, that would assist with staffing. However, Jarrod reiterated staff still is attempting to
282 determine the city's needs as they relate to IT, and he said, "We are requesting that that position
283 stay in. If we came to fill it, we would also at that time look at our contractual services and
284 balance those two at the same time. I would need more time to make that final decision, but this
285 budget allows us to make that decision in 2020."

286

287 City Administrator Rindfleisch next addressed the HR Generalist position, noting it is a very
288 common model for both public and private sector jobs for an organization the size of the City of
289 Onalaska. There is an HR Director, an HR Specialist, a Payroll Specialist, and an HR Generalist.
290 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the HR Director typically serves as the strategic thinker and
291 policy planner, and he/she is less involved with orientation and employee engagement. City
292 Administrator Rindfleisch said, "In an organization our size, [we're] thinking long term as to

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293 how we become the most effective and efficient. [We're] looking at every position and
294 reviewing it and making sure we're appropriately staffed and fully staffed, and [asking] where do
295 we need more staff, and where can we consolidate, perhaps. These are strategic views that we
296 really need an HR Director to focus on and not be shuffling the paper around. It's all very
297 important paperwork, but it can also be very detailed paperwork, so you need to have an
298 experienced [HR] Generalist position. It's a very common model in the private sector for
299 somebody of our size." City Administrator Rindfleisch also noted the city's departments are
300 varied and different, and he said, "It's not just that we have multiple bargaining units. We also
301 have vastly different kinds of work that needs to be done, but it's all within one organization. I
302 think the Generalist is someone who is very important and frees up our Director's role to focus
303 on providing that long-term strategic view that we need in an organization – especially one
304 where our levies will continue to be capped."

305

306 Ald. Stevens asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if he is certain there will be a sufficient
307 amount of work for the HR Generalist, or if it might be possible to possibly fill the position with
308 a part-time employee.

309

310 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Stevens, "I absolutely believe 100 percent that there is a
311 need for it immediately."

312

313 Ald. Stevens asked Hope if she believes the HR Generalist position is warranted.

314

315 Hope told Ald. Stevens, "Essentially, there are a lot of things I'm not getting done right now, and
316 I only have so much time in the day. If we really want this position to focus on doing more of
317 safety, doing more insurance, doing more other types of paperwork, I'm having less and less
318 time to be able to do that, especially with the additional duties of payroll that were added a
319 couple of years ago. That would free up some of my time to be able to look at those things. Do I
320 think there is enough work to do? Yes."

321

322 Ald. Stevens asked Hope if she believes a full-time position would be appropriate.

323

324 Hope said yes.

325

326 **Revenue**

327

328 City Administrator Rindfleisch said staff was surprised by the amount of state aid the city had
329 received for transportation, noting it was higher than anticipated. This is directly related to the
330 actions taken by the Wisconsin State Legislature.

331

332 **Expense Summary**

333

334 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

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335

336 **Common Council**

337

338 Ald. Stevens said that while he appreciates a proposed increase in compensation for the Common
339 Council, he is concerned about the nature of it. Ald. Stevens noted that presently the Council's
340 salary is split between salary, and the other half is covered as expenses, and he said he
341 understands there are "mechanics involved with that." Ald. Stevens said, "I believe we're
342 looking at increasing the expense side of the salary. I'm not sure I'm comfortable with that.
343 And even if it would negatively affect half of this body until after the following year, I think in
344 the interest of transparency, it would be more appropriate if the entirety of the Council salary
345 would be listed as a salary and not as an expense. In doing so, I believe that we would free up
346 \$3,600 from the budget on the salary side, although we would have to add that the following
347 year. Additionally, I believe that, in my short time here on Council, there is no extra
348 remuneration granted to the Council President. I've come to learn that there are certainly some
349 time-worthy and substantial duties that are expected of that person."

350

351 Motion by Ald. Stevens to approve changing the alderperson gross salary rate to a rate of \$500
352 per month, with zero for expenses, commencing after the April 2020 election, per seat, and that
353 the alderperson who is elected as Common Council President receive an additional stipend of
354 \$100 per month starting after the 2020 Reorganizational Meeting.

355

356 Motion dies for lack of a second.

357

358 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted that while all the Council members have been invited to
359 speak at this evening's Finance and Personnel II meeting, all motions and voting must be done
360 by the committee, meaning Ald. K. Smith, Ald. Olson, and Ald. Stevens.

361

362 Ald. T. Smith asked how the budget would be impacted by removing funds from the expenses
363 side.

364

365 Ald. K. Smith explained it only would have a budgetary impact in that "it has to pass your
366 election round before the pay change would go into effect if it is for the salary. If it's for the
367 expenses, it would go into effect with the budget. The proposal that we have before us increases
368 the alderpersons' salary by \$100 per month and doesn't change the expenses. Therefore, the pay
369 change would go into effect for the people who were elected this [past] April. The pay changes
370 wouldn't go into effect until the following year for the opposite group."

371

372 Fred said he believes it was City Administrator Rindfleisch's intention to increase the
373 expenditures by \$100 per month. Fred said, "It was just flipped so that each alderperson who is
374 currently residing at the location would have received \$100 per month in additional expenses. If
375 that was the intent, I'm sure Eric will agree to that. That's a simple motion to clarify that and
376 twist it where it needs to be."

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377

378 City Administrator Rindfleisch said he does not believe that was the intent, stating he believes
379 the intent was to keep the net wages the same, calling it all wages and not having any expenses.

380

381 Ald. Stevens said it is his understanding that under the proposed budget, the total compensation
382 would increase to \$500 per month, with \$200 being salary and \$300 being expenses.

383

384 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Stevens he has the correct understanding.

385

386 Ald. Stevens said he is proposing to make it all salary, “which, in the course of the next 12
387 months, would comparatively negatively impact myself and the other two alders who were
388 elected here in 2019. It would have no net effect for those elected in 2020. Case in point, they
389 would have to be reelected to realize the salary. So for the next year, if those elected in 2019
390 wanted to realize the increase in salary under my proposal, they would have to run for reelection
391 in 2021 and thus enjoy the extra \$100 a month. In the interest of transparency, I’m willing to
392 sacrifice in this case \$1,200 in salary not because I want to, but I think it’s the right thing to do. I
393 think that the spirit of the statutes that differentiate between salary and expenses, it’s designed so
394 that alderpersons can’t vote themselves a raise in their new term. I was elected in 2019. I know
395 what the salary requirements were at that time. I don’t necessarily expect it to change, and I
396 think that there is potentially conflict of interest in supporting something where the remuneration
397 for an elected official would change during that period. I think it’s a best practice, and in full
398 disclosure if we had to explain this to the public, I think it’s a better, more honest accounting of
399 remuneration for elected officials. And for the next budget year, I would like to say that even
400 with the Council President increase of \$1,200 with the extra \$100 per month, it would actually
401 remove \$2,400 from this year’s budget, which we could either save the taxpayers or spend
402 somewhere else.”

403

404 Fred said, “This was created probably 10, 12 years ago or better that the Council members were
405 getting a salary. And because of all the meetings they needed to attend, that’s how the creation
406 of an expenditure was created.”

407

408 Amanda referred to Section 2-2-9 (a) (“Salaries”) of the City of Onalaska Code of Ordinances,
409 which states: “*The Mayor and Council members who make up the Common Council, whether*
410 *operating under general or special law, may, by three-fourths vote of all the members of the*
411 *Common Council, determine the annual salaries and/or per diem compensation to be paid the*
412 *Mayor and Council members.*”

413

414 Ald. K. Smith asked Amanda if the ordinance defines salaries versus expenses.

415

416 Amanda said no.

417

418 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the committee is making recommendations this evening
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419 and said if Ald. Stevens' motion had passed, it would not have immediately affected the
420 Common Council's budget. Rather, it would have gone to the next hearing, at which the full
421 Common Council would have voted on whether or not to include it in the 2020 budget. City
422 Administrator Rindfleisch said, "I would suggest in the resolution, if that passes, what would
423 also have to be forthcoming at that point, which would be [a] three-quarters [vote] as well."
424

425 Ald. Wulf asked Cari if she recalls when the Common Council had last received a pay raise.
426

427 Cari said she does not recall when the last pay increase occurred.
428

429 Ald. K. Smith said it has been at least 10 years since expenses increased from \$100 to \$200 per
430 month.
431

432 Ald. Wulf noted she had given City Administrator Rindfleisch a League of Municipality study
433 earlier in 2019. The study, which was conducted in 2011, showed what all the municipalities in
434 the State of Wisconsin were paying their elected officials. Ald. Wulf noted there was a wide
435 range in salaries and said she had passed on the study to City Administrator Rindfleisch so that
436 he would be able to quantify any suggestion he might make.
437

438 City Administrator Rindfleisch agreed that there was a wide range of salaries and said he
439 believes it comes down to a political decision regarding community support in terms of the
440 elected officials.
441

442 Ald. K. Smith suggested that the alderpersons keep this topic on their minds and revisit it at the
443 November 11 Common Council Budget Hearing.
444

445 Ald. Stevens said, "I think there is merit to it, but I'm one of six [alderpersons]."
446

447 **Police & Fire Commission**

448
449 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.
450

451 **Municipal Court (General Fund)**

452
453 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.
454

455 **City Attorney**

456
457 Ald. K. Smith inquired about a proposed new part-time paralegal position.
458

459 Ald. K. Smith was told the position no longer is a part of the budget.
460

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461 **City Administrator**

462

463 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

464

465 **Mayor**

466

467 Ald. Stevens noted the Mayor's salary has changed within the last three years and said he wishes
468 to make a motion to remove from the 2020 Proposed Executive Budget an increase to the
469 mayoral salary.

470

471 Mayor Chilsen stated he would support such a motion by Ald. Stevens.

472

473 Motion by Ald. Stevens to amend the mayoral salary so that there is no change in the 2020
474 Proposed Executive Budget.

475

476 Motion dies for lack of a second.

477

478 Ald. K. Smith noted the proposed salary remains as is at this time and said, "If the budget were
479 to change, it doesn't go into effect. The expenses can change, but the actual salary cannot
480 change until the next election cycle."

481

482 Amanda told Ald. K. Smith she is correct and said that just as is the case with the Common
483 Council salaries, it would be necessary to amend Section 2-2-9 (b) of the Code of Ordinances,
484 which outlines the Mayor's salary.

485

486 **Finance Department**

487

488 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

489

490 **City Clerk**

491

492 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

493

494 **Elections**

495

496 Ald. Wulf noted the city is updating to Windows 10 and asked Cari if the city will be prepared
497 for the spring 2020 elections.

498

499 Cari said the IT Department is in the process of updating all city employees to Windows 10, and
500 she noted it is a requirement that the city be updated by the end of January 2020. Cari said the IT
501 Department is aware that the city must meet that timeline, and she noted city staff has completed
502 security training conducted by La Crosse County. Staff also has had election security training on

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13

503 the WisVote system.

504

505 **Auditors**

506

507 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

508

509 **Human Resources**

510

511 Ald. Wulf asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if the HR Director's position is being regraded.

512

513 City Administrator Rindfleisch said yes.

514

515 Ald. Wulf asked how the position is being regraded.

516

517 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the position is being regraded from a 21 to a 26.

518

519 Ald. K. Smith said the HR Generalist position would be a Grade 18.

520

521 Ald. Wulf noted the Payroll/HR Specialist position is being regraded from a 13 to a 15. Ald.
522 Wulf also noted the job duties are changing in order to justify the regrades.

523

524 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the scores are based on the expectations of the position.

525

526 Ald. K. Smith asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if he has determined a starting date for the
527 HR Generalist position.

528

529 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the person who is hired would not begin until after the first
530 of the year.

531

532 Ald. K. Smith asked if the position is budgeted for the full year.

533

534 City Administrator Rindfleisch said all the new positions are budgeted for the full year, adding
535 that while he does not expect all the positions to be filled on January 1, they are being prepared
536 for the following year so that they are fully budgeted for the following year.

537

538 Ald. K. Smith asked Hope if she believes her budget allows for adequate training for seminars so
539 that she may keep all of her necessary certifications valid.

540

541 Hope told Ald. K. Smith that she had increased it and said the HR Generalist position was a last-
542 minute change and said it would be a struggle if that individual had any certifications.

543

544 Ald. K. Smith asked Hope if she believes the budget for herself is adequate, and also if she is

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14

545 unsure if the HR Generalist's budget is adequate.

546

547 Hope told Ald. K. Smith that is correct.

548

549 Ald. Wulf noted the conferences and training budgets for some of the city's departments had
550 increased, and she said she appreciates that as city staff had experienced cuts in years past in
551 those areas.

552

553 **Assessor**

554

555 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

556

557 **Information Technology**

558

559 Ald. Wulf inquired about the city's current data backup and disaster recovery plan.

560

561 Jarrod said, "To be honest with you, we've been so busy doing other things that we haven't
562 gotten that far yet."

563

564 Ald. Wulf asked, "But we continue to back up day, though. We have that in place?"

565

566 Jarrod said yes.

567

568 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Wulf that data is backed up, and he said one of the
569 challenges with Ransomware is once it has infiltrated a system, it will find where data has been
570 backed up and block it out. City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the city has coverage through
571 CVMIC, which will assist the city in the recovery of data to its fullest extent after an incident.

572

573 Ald. Wulf asked if the city continues to back up offsite.

574

575 Jarrod told Ald. Wulf the Public Works Facility has a backup, noting there is a Charter
576 Communications connection between that facility and City Hall. Jarrod said, "We back up in
577 both locations."

578

579 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the city does not have contracted offsite backup through
580 AWS, noting the city is site to site.

581

582 **City Hall**

583

584 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

585

586 **Workers Compensation**

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15

587

588 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

589

590 **Police Department**

591

592 Ald. Stevens said he is happy the proposed budget includes adding three police officers, and he
593 asked Police Chief Ashbeck how he plans to utilize the three officers, should the positions come
594 to fruition.

595

596 Police Chief Ashbeck said, “We need these officers on the streets – very much so. All three
597 officers would be placed in the rotation into patrol. They would out on the streets handling
598 calls.”

599

600 Ald. Stevens asked Police Chief Ashbeck if the new officers would be added into a rotation, or if
601 the Police Department will have more officers out on the street at any given time. Ald. Stevens
602 said he is aware that the second shift tends to be a busy time for the Police Department, and he
603 also said he knows incidents such as accidents and domestic disputes require backup. Ald.
604 Stevens said he knows there are instances when the Police Department “is really kind of
605 stretched to not a whole lot of coverage,” and he asked Police Chief Ashbeck if it will be
606 possible to increase coverage with the additional officers, or if the department will essentially
607 have the same level of police protection at any given time.

608

609 Police Chief Ashbeck said, “We know for the most part our demands are second shift and some
610 day shifts. If we receive three officers, we would probably put two of those officers on second
611 shift so that we can help with those demands when they are the greatest. The third position
612 probably would be a day shift to handle all the different types of calls with the businesses that are
613 open and the accidents and the heavy traffic. ... It would increase the amount of officers out on
614 the street at a given time. One thing that certainly helps is newer officers don’t have as much
615 vacation, so that gives us more officers out on the road at any given time.”

616

617 Ald. Stevens asked Police Chief Ashbeck how many police officers would be required for the
618 Police Department and the City of Onalaska to be “right-sized.”

619

620 Police Chief Ashbeck said, “From the studies that I have looked at over the years, I would say
621 that we would need close to 10 additional officers to be where we should be – and not just patrol
622 officers out of that 10. That would probably include some investigators – at least one more
623 investigator out of that 10 – and probably at least two more supervisors so that we could have 24-
624 hour coverage of supervision, which is difficult to do at this point. There are plenty of nights
625 that we have no supervision out on the road to help with officers. To answer your question, 10
626 would be ideal. Any direction we can go that way, all of us would be appreciative.”

627

628 Ald. K. Smith asked Police Chief Ashbeck what he believes is the most time-efficient way for
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16

629 him to bring three new officers online – simultaneously, or staggered. Ald. K. Smith suggested
630 staggering the officers as they have a long probationary period.

631
632 Police Chief Ashbeck told Ald. K. Smith staggering the officers would be more beneficial so that
633 the department’s field training officers do not experience excessive fatigue, noting there
634 currently are two vacant positions. Police Chief Ashbeck noted two officers have been hired in
635 2019 – one of whom recently completed field training, and one of whom still is in field training –
636 and he told Ald. K. Smith two more officers still need to be hired. Police Chief Ashbeck said,
637 “Our limited number of field training officers have been going nonstop. Quite frankly, just by
638 the natural process, those three new positions would get staggered out throughout the year. I
639 would anticipate, if we do have quality candidates that we could hire, we would look at probably
640 the first half of the year getting a couple and maybe toward the half of the year getting the third
641 officer. I think that’s just how naturally it would fall out.”

642
643 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “Some of that answer will depend on the complete
644 resolution of the contract to be signed. While all positions are fully funded for the year, even
645 though we don’t necessarily intend to hire one January 1, that sets you up for January 1, 2021
646 that you can afford the officers you hire. But some of the issues in resolving a contract may
647 force the deferral of hiring one of those positions until later on in the year.”

648
649 Ald. Iyer noted Police Chief Ashbeck had said the City of Onalaska would need to hire 10 more
650 officers to bring the Police Department up to its ideal size, and she asked him if he wishes to hire
651 10 more officers after the three in the budget are hired, or seven more after the three in the
652 budget are hired.

653
654 Police Chief Ashbeck said he wishes to hire seven more officers after hiring three.

655
656 **Fire Department**

657
658 Ald. Stevens noted there are three different crews in the Fire Department, and he asked Fire
659 Chief Hayes how he would utilize the two new firefighter/EMTs. Ald. Stevens also asked Fire
660 Chief Hayes how many firefighters and EMTs he believes are needed to adequately protect the
661 18,000 citizens who reside in the city.

662
663 Fire Chief Hayes noted he had initially submitted three firefighters/EMT positions to City
664 Administrator Rindfleisch, and he also noted the Fire Department has three rotating shifts. Fire
665 Chief Hayes told Ald. Stevens there will be two shifts with five individuals deployed, and one
666 shift will have four individuals deployed. Fire Chief Hayes said, “Those two individuals, if
667 granted and approved in the budget, will be assigned to shifts, so they’ll be in the rotation of a
668 24-hour shift.” Fire Chief Hayes next addressed Ald. Stevens’ question regarding the number of
669 firefighters needed to adequately protect the city and said, “If you follow the International City
670 Managers Association, their model of 1.41 firefighters per 1,000 people, that should put us

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17

671 roughly ... If you say 19, I think probably during the day we're closer to 30 or 40 in the city.
672 However, [with the] residential population, probably around 26 firefighters, which we're
673 currently at 12. You're talking 14 positions is where we need to be. Right now, if we have an
674 EMS call come in with our current staffing, with four individuals assigned, [and you take away]
675 one person [for] vacations, school, [or] whatever, that takes us down to three. If you have one
676 EMS call, we essentially cannot respond to another call in the city unless we have part-timers or
677 another full-timer who will come in and backfill the station. We essentially respond one unit to
678 calls until we backfill. Adding personnel to this, our minimum staffing will increase to four, so
679 that will give us two individuals to respond on an EMS call on a rescue, and then two
680 individuals, should another call come in, they can't take the engine and go on an EMS call. If we
681 have full staffing where nobody is off that day, you have two on the rescue and three on the
682 engine, which is a full complement for that shift. Ideally, that's where we would like to be in
683 2020, but certainly I would say I'm going to be coming back in 2021 asking for more positions –
684 no doubt.

685
686 As I showed you in my presentation to the Finance and Personnel [Committee], you see that
687 continuing trend is going to go up with our calls as the population increases with at least another
688 800 to 900 people over the next year. Between Havenwood and the Abbey Road project and the
689 Great River Residences and other residential construction, those numbers are going to continue
690 to go up, [and] our service demands will continue to go up.”

691
692 Ald. Stevens said constituents have told him that public safety is “the primary factor, and he
693 noted that concerns recently have been raised regarding the fact the Police Department's growth
694 has not corresponded with the city's growth. Ald. Stevens noted the number of incidents in the
695 city has increased due to its increase in population, but he also acknowledged it is costly to add
696 staff. Ald. Stevens said the Common Council must determine how to provide adequate
697 protection for citizens without adversely affecting the tax base.

698
699 **Hydrant Fees**

700
701 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

702
703 **Inspections**

704
705 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the city currently utilizes contractual for residential
706 projects such as decks and other accessory structures. City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the
707 Common Council had approved a contract with GEC to perform these duties at an hourly rate,
708 and he said there currently is only one inspector who is qualified to perform full residential
709 inspections from start to finish. This inspector also is working on some of the major commercial
710 projects in the city. Therefore, GEC likely will be utilized for more of the residential projects
711 going forward. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “All positions, in the absence of any given
712 retirements, are fully funded throughout the year.”

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18

713

714 **Emergency Government**

715

716 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

717

718 **Jail**

719

720 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

721

722 **Engineering**

723

724 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

725

726 **Board of Public Works**

727

728 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

729

730 **Streets**

731

732 Ald. Wulf addressed the \$11,500 line item description of justification for equipment rental for
733 snow operations – one end loader – and asked Jarrod if this the end loader that is utilized on
734 dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs.

735

736 Jarrod told Ald. Wulf the city rents an end loader from November 15 through March 15 to utilize
737 in the city’s cul-de-sacs. Jarrod said, “We used to rent two years ago, and we actually purchased
738 a loader, so we took that number down to one about five years ago. We are still keeping this in
739 here. We do have a loader in the proposed Capital Improvements Budget, but the loader that it
740 would be replacing is a 1996. We’re getting to the point where we’d probably still need a rental
741 loader.”

742

743 Ald. Wulf asked Jarrod if the city will need to rent this loader next year as well as in ensuing
744 years.

745

746 Jarrod said, “I think we’ll have to see how it goes, but we’ll probably use our 1996 loader as just
747 a yard loader and see how long it lasts. I’d hate to have to take it out and try to find the money
748 again.”

749

750 Ald. T. Smith inquired about the salt budget.

751

752 Jarrod said he had increased the budgeted amount for salt, noting there had been savings in the
753 streetlight account that could be transferred to the Street Department for salt and sand. Jarrod
754 said, “It’s still not going to be enough if we have a winter like last winter. We are making

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19

755 headway on using salt brine and lowering our usage of crystal salt. But it's just one where with
756 the winters we've been having, it's not so much the fact of having a 10-inch snowfall, [but
757 rather] it's the ice events or the prolonged freezing events that hinder us. I'm not guaranteeing
758 anything, but we did try to address it partially."
759

760 **Street Signs**

761
762 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.
763

764 **Streetlights**

765
766 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.
767

768 **Animal Control**

769
770 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.
771

772 **Library**

773
774 Ald. Wulf addressed the five-year new/replacement projection, noting there are three items for
775 2019 and three for 2020. Ald. Wulf asked Dan if the three items for 2019 (moveable wall cover,
776 outside paint under walkway, carpet replacement for the adult area) have been completed.
777

778 Dan said staff is working on obtaining prices for painting under the walkway, noting that item
779 will be going before the Parks and Recreation Board. Dan told Ald. Wulf staff has not yet gotten
780 to the other two items.
781

782 Ald. Wulf asked if they had been approved under Capital Improvements.
783

784 Dan asked Ald. Wulf if she is talking about Capital Improvements or Equipment Replacement.
785

786 Ald. Wulf said she is referring to the Equipment Replacement projection, noting it says "year to
787 be purchased: 2019."
788

789 Dan told Ald. Wulf he does not have the 2019 budget in front of him and said he does not know
790 what was approved. Dan said he knows the paint under the walkway had been approved.
791

792 Brian said it is his understanding one of the ongoing items for the library is the furniture, which
793 will come before the Parks and Recreation Board at its October 28 meeting.
794

795 Ald. Wulf asked if the furniture is the chairs that were approved last year.
796

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20

797 Dan and Brian both said the chairs are part of the 2019 Capital Improvements Budget, as is the
798 painting under the walkway. Brian said the individual who had submitted the lowest bid to paint
799 has waited a month for ideal weather conditions. Brian said the third item is the ceiling fans,
800 noting he has obtained only one bid thus far as there is reluctance to install the fans due to the
801 way the building was constructed and the manner in which the fans must be mounted. Brian said
802 numerous individuals have come to the library and are attempting to figure out how to mount the
803 fans so that they do not fall.

804

805 Ald. Wulf expressed her appreciation that Dan has submitted as part of the budget a \$1.75 hourly
806 pay increase (\$11.25 to \$13) for maintenance staff.

807

808 Ald. K. Smith said the committee will take a break for a few minutes.

809

Parks

811

812 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

813

Recreation

815

816 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

817

Aquatic Center

819

820 Ald. T. Smith noted the pool is beginning to age and asked Dan if he feels comfortable that the
821 city is addressing any issues that arise.

822

823 Dan said there is a large expenditure in the 2020 Capital Improvements Budget for the Aquatic
824 Center, and he complimented the facility's staff for its efforts in maintaining the pool. Dan said
825 there are issues related to tiles, and that he has obtained an estimate for repairs that he hopes
826 remains in the 2020 CIB.

827

Urban, City & Economic

829

830 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

831

Planning & Zoning

833

834 Ald. T. Smith asked if this includes Hoisington Koegler Group, inc. (HKGi), the consultant that
835 has been assisting the city with rewriting the Zoning Code.

836

837 Ald. K. Smith said HKGi was a Capital expense for 2019.

838

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21

839 **Water**

840

841 Ald. Wulf noted the Utility Billing Assistant position is becoming a full-time Utility Billing
842 Clerk position, and the salary has been placed in various departments because it is being
843 prorated. Ald. Wulf said it is her understanding that City Administrator Rindfleisch has
844 approved this position as full-time, and she asked Jarrod if the individual who currently serves in
845 this position remaining there.

846

847 Jarrod told Ald. Wulf he would like the current part-time employee who has been working
848 approximately 1,200 hours per year to become a full-time employee, if possible.

849

850 **Sewer**

851

852 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

853

854 **Cemetery**

855

856 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

857

858 **Omni Center**

859

860 Ald. Wulf asked Hope to review the wage scale for the part-time personnel who serve as
861 concession workers and bartenders. Ald. Wulf said the wage scales appear to her to be low,
862 citing the example of an employee who performs Zamboni maintenance and earns \$9.45 an hour.

863

864 Hope said she believes some of the information that Dan had calculated was with the new wage
865 scales, which means the dollar amounts might not be correct.

866

867 Ald. Stevens noted there is a significant amount of part-time help in the budget and salaries, and
868 he asked if the city would have the ability to pay higher wages if more events are booked at the
869 Omni Center, assuming there would be additional revenue generated from those events. Ald.
870 Stevens asked, "How do we handle this in the budget going forward?"

871

872 Dan said, "If we can bring more events in, our labor costs will go up to be able to handle those
873 events. Those are all calculated into our arena rental rates and the rates that we charge users for
874 using our facility. The more events we have, our labor costs will increase strictly because we
875 have more things going on."

876

877 Ald. Stevens asked if the plan would be to go over budget on salaries, which would be offset by
878 increased revenue from events.

879

880 Dan told Ald. Stevens that salaries would not be over budget; rather, the seasonal labor account
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22

881 would be over budget.

882

883 Ald. Stevens asked if increased revenue would offset any overage in the seasonal labor account.

884

885 Dan said yes.

886

887 Ald. Stevens asked if this would be a wash to the budget.

888

889 Dan said yes and told Ald. Stevens staff has spent a significant amount of time the last couple
890 years focusing on what is being spent on labor as it pertains to concessions and maintenance.

891 Dan said, "Both of those two primary focuses that work at the Omni Center are lumped into our

892 seasonal labor account. We have been taking all of the time sheets when we're using When I

893 Work and calculating out what we spend in concessions labor versus maintenance labor for each

894 one. We're trying to get a much better detail, which this budget does show where we are

895 anticipating to be both for maintenance and for concessions with the overall hours."

896

897 Ald. Stevens said he believes maintenance and a majority of the other items would be considered

898 "not quite variable" as business needs dictate, and he asked Dan if there are any other items he

899 would classify as a variable expense.

900

901 Dan said he believes both are variable expenses as there is maintenance personnel present during

902 any event held at the Omni Center. Dan also noted maintenance is responsible for ice

903 preparation, and he said it is essential to have employees preparing the ice for the ice events held

904 at the Omni Center. Dan said, "The maintenance labor may fluctuate more than our concessions

905 staff because there are some events where they don't need concessions or don't want it. In that

906 situation, we just need to have maintenance labor there that are there to lock up the building than

907 we do to have concessions."

908

909 Ald. Wulf said she is concerned about the line item regarding concession workers.

910

911 Dan told Ald. Wulf the employee who is responsible for Zamboni lead maintenance will be

912 earning \$12.25 per hour, and the employee who is responsible for Zamboni maintenance will be

913 earning \$11.25 per hour. Dan also told Ald. Wulf he believes the lead concessions worker will

914 be earning \$10.25 per hour.

915

916 Ald. Wulf referred to the proposed gross salary for the concessions worker and noted it

917 calculates to \$5.85 per hour. Ald. Wulf also told Dan she does not believe he has sufficient

918 funding for this line item, noting there is \$9,075 budgeted for 1,550 hours.

919

920 Dan told Ald. Wulf the calculations are incorrect and said the correct calculation should have

921 been done utilizing \$8 per hour. Dan said there should be \$12,400 budgeted for concession

922 workers. Therefore, a \$3,325 increase is necessary for this line item. Dan said the new budget

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23

923 total should be \$72,310.

924

925 Fred said the committee should make a motion to transfer \$68,985 from Line Item 127 to Line
926 Item 126, and to add \$3,325 to the concession worker detail for a total of \$72,310.

927

928 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. Stevens, to transfer \$72,310 from Line Item 127, which
929 should be blank, to Line Item 126. This is due to a clerical error.

930

931 On voice vote, motion carried.

932

933 Dan said he now must find \$3,325 of revenue to increase it, or to delete from another area prior
934 to the Common Council Budget Hearing on November 11.

935

936 **Tourism**

937

938 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

939

940 **Storm Water Utility**

941

942 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

943

944 **Gundersen Lutheran Parking Ramp**

945

946 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

947

948 **Park Fund**

949

950 Ald. K. Smith asked for an explanation of the 2020 values.

951

952 Dan said the Park Fund is used with incoming development fees that are paid to the city, and he
953 explained that 100 percent of the funds may be utilized if a new subdivision is created and there
954 is nothing around it. Dan said, "As the City of Onalaska has built out, a lot of times we have
955 Park Fund that comes into neighborhoods that are currently developed. The way we spend our
956 Park Fund dollars is usually 50-50. We spend 50 percent of Park Fund dollars that we have
957 collected, and we use the other 50 percent from our Capital Improvement Budget. That's a
958 process that we have adopted and we've been moving forward with. There is nothing in the
959 2020 budget because the Capital Improvement Budget that the Board of Public Works is battling
960 with and the Council will have had such large project items. The pool project of \$200,000-
961 some is something that had to be done. We can't use Park Fund dollars for that. Other projects
962 that we're doing, we're looking at the roof at City Hall and things of that nature. We had so
963 many large Capital Improvement Projects, I didn't think we had any projects that would make it
964 through the Capital Improvement Budget to share in a cost of what we have.

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24

965
966 We have a timeframe [in which] to spend the Park Fund dollars. We have been spending our
967 Park Fund dollars on projects that have come through this committee and have been approved,
968 and we will continue to move forward with that. It's just that this year we didn't have the
969 capability of using the Capital Improvement Budget to do some things. We have, through the
970 Tourism budget, we have requested Tourism to look at more work at the Great River Landing
971 and putting in the trail system that would extend from Irvin Street north to the spillway. That is a
972 project that we have in that is currently being funded out of the Tourism account. We're
973 planning for that to use Park Fund dollars to help with the development of that in 2021. That's
974 what we're forecasting and putting out."

975
976 Ald. K. Smith noted it appears in the budget that there is a minimal amount of funds being
977 allocated from the Park Fund.

978
979 Ald. Stevens asked if Park Fund dollars could be utilized for razing the structure currently
980 located at the Great River Landing and replacing it with a more workable structure.

981
982 Dan said it will be necessary to speak to Amanda as to what the new structure would be. Dan
983 noted Park Fund dollars may not be utilized for replacement. However, Park Fund dollars
984 possibly could be utilized if the facility provides a different use or different opportunities.

985
986 Amanda noted Park Fund dollars may not be utilized for maintenance.

987
988 Ald. Stevens said he does not believe the intention of the building was maintenance, but rather
989 for public use.

990
991 Dan said he believes what Amanda had said was the city may not utilize Park Fund dollars to
992 maintain the facility. Dan said he does not know if Park Fund dollars may be utilized to
993 construct a new shelter if the city razes the current structure because it is in disrepair.

994
995 **Special Projects & Donations**

996
997 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

998
999 **Refuse & Recycling**

1000
1001 Ald. K. Smith asked Jarrod if this is with the city's new contract.

1002
1003 Jarrod said it is a continuation of the existing contract.

1004
1005 **Shared Ride**

1006
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25

1007 Ald. Wulf noted there had been input during the summer regarding the No. 9 bus, and she noted
1008 the 2020 budget does not propose any change to the No. 9 bus service.

1009
1010 Fred told Ald. Wulf that MTU Transit Manager Adam Lorentz was going to submit two
1011 proposals – one of which was to “fill the donut hole” – but the proposal was not submitted. Fred
1012 said he asked Adam why he had submitted only one proposal, and Adam responded it would take
1013 some time to do. Fred said MTU had allocated all the costs based on the hours. Therefore, an
1014 extensive amount of labor would be required to do the allocation.

1015
1016 **Equipment Replacement Fund**

1017
1018 Ald. Wulf noted she has been speaking with Nils Housker about the Nextiva telephone system,
1019 and she said she wants to assure the public staff is doing its due diligence. Ald. Wulf said Nils
1020 had emailed her and told her he would be contacting the La Crosse Library, which has just
1021 completed an update what is being proposed for the city. Ald. Wulf said Nils told her the La
1022 Crosse Public Library representative to which he had spoken was very satisfied with the Nextiva
1023 system. Nils also wrote that no IT project is problem-free, noting there had been a failure rate of
1024 4 percent on the telephone hardware – there had been issues with three of the 80 telephones.
1025 Ald. Wulf said Nils has discussed several other components of the Nextiva system, and she noted
1026 she and Nils also had contacted Scott Wied, with whom she had served on the Technology
1027 Committee.

1028
1029 Ald. Stevens said he believes funds were taken from Equipment Replacement in the 2019 budget
1030 and utilized on a salary, and he asked Fred where he believes the balance of the fund should be,
1031 and also what the city’s best approach would be to arrive there.

1032
1033 Fred asked Ald. Stevens if he is referring to the fund balance in the Equipment Replacement
1034 Fund.

1035
1036 Ald. Stevens told Fred yes and said he assumes it would be ideal to have a higher balance.

1037
1038 Fred said that when the city’s General Fund has had a positive balance in years past, the city has
1039 transferred some of the funds into the Equipment Replacement Fund and utilized the funds in the
1040 following budget year for capital projects that would not be levied. Fred noted the proposed
1041 2020 budget is taking \$225,000 of the projects and utilizing fund balance.

1042
1043 City Administrator Rindfleisch said that throughout the budgeting year, if the city is not attaining
1044 its budget expenses within each department and as an organization as a whole, those funds
1045 become reserve. A transfer occurs via Common Council action into the Equipment Replacement
1046 Fund. The remainder goes into Undesignated Balance. City Administrator Rindfleisch said,
1047 “This is the only organization I’ve been a part of where, culturally, there isn’t a race to spend
1048 everything down. We have an organization that is very conscientious about making sure

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1049 expenses are done appropriately, and thus we are able to build this Equipment Replacement Fund
1050 that most communities do not have because they're racing to spend the maximum budgeted
1051 amount by the end of the year. If we had an organizational culture where that occurred, we'd
1052 always be looking for ... These would always have to be borrowed instead of using reserves on
1053 hand. My commendation is to staff that we hopefully budget appropriately, but when we are
1054 able to generate reserves, we set it aside for future use. That's a direct savings to the taxpayers."

1055
1056 Fred noted the City of Onalaska does not budget for an emergency situation and said, "This is a
1057 location that could help the city without having to go borrow through a State Trust Fund Loan as
1058 a quick borrow to handle that additional expenditure."

1059

1060 **Joint Municipal Court**

1061

1062 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

1063

1064 **Capital Projects**

1065

1066 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

1067

1068 **Community Development Authority Management**

1069

1070 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

1071

1072 **Debt Services**

1073

1074 No questions were asked regarding proposed expenditures.

1075

1076 Ald. K. Smith asked if any city employees or alderpersons have any questions or concerns.

1077

1078 Ald. Wulf addressed the funding request brought forward by Centering Onalaska, noting it
1079 currently is unfunded.

1080

1081 City Administrator Rindfleisch said there is no current budget item or line item for the expense
1082 of watering and tending the hanging baskets on weekends and holidays. City Administrator
1083 Rindfleisch noted there is no line item to which the city may add the funding request, nor may
1084 the city create a line item without the Common Council making a policy decision regarding
1085 through which department the project may be funded. City Administrator Rindfleisch also asked
1086 if the city wishes to create a part-time position in which someone would tend to the baskets on
1087 weekends and holidays for 20 weeks, or assign overtime to various departments to complete this
1088 task. City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the city currently does not have a Business
1089 Improvement District (BID) and said, "I think that would be an expense that if the business
1090 owners downtown – I think you easily could create one for Main Street and south on the
1091 highway all the way to Kwik Trip or beyond, if necessary – where the district itself levies a fee
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1092 on their own businesses and dictates the expenses of where that goes to help improve businesses.
1093 That would be an alternative as well. If there are substantial benefits to the businesses in the
1094 area, they can help control that and the expenses and direct where that goes. I think it would also
1095 be appropriate for the Christmas decorations ... The BID could do that as well. Other
1096 alternatives would be instead of the hanging baskets, the city would take it over to avoid
1097 overtime. [The city could] purchase more of the larger pots to do that. They retain moisture and
1098 are easier. You could water them during the week and not have to water them on the weekends.
1099 [The city could] install those in the downtown area, or even do a capital project and install an
1100 automatic watering and feeding systems throughout to avoid the overtime. It's a Council
1101 decision as to which direction you would like to take with that. It's a policy decision – do you
1102 wish to fund it or not fund it? It's not a simple request as the public has made it to be because
1103 there is no expense right now for that. There is no easy place to put it without making that
1104 decision.”

1105
1106 Ald. K. Smith noted city staff waters the baskets during the week and said she would not want an
1107 outside third party to utilize the city's equipment during the weekend. Ald. K. Smith noted the
1108 city already has part-time employees who work during the weekend and said she is not certain
1109 how it is considered overtime. Ald. K. Smith said, “It would be additional staff, but it wouldn't
1110 necessarily be overtime.”

1111
1112 Ald. Wulf noted the city currently allows outside parties to utilize city equipment on weekends.
1113

1114 Dan told Ald. Wulf she is correct and said there are Centering Onalaska members who have
1115 signed waivers and utilize city equipment to water the baskets on weekends.
1116

1117 Ald. Wulf said that while she commends Centering Onalaska for the many years its members
1118 have beautified the community, she also has concerns about asking city staff to perform
1119 additional tasks. Ald. Wulf noted there would be approximately 42 days (weekends and
1120 holidays) between Memorial Day and Oktoberfest weekend in which city staff would be asked to
1121 tend to the baskets, and she said she does not know how the responsibilities would be divided.
1122 Ald. Wulf said, “I think it would be a morale-killer, to be quite honest. I realize \$5,500 is not a
1123 lot of money in the big scheme of our total budget. But having said that, if I had an extra \$5,500,
1124 I'd rather throw that at one of two places: Either increase the wages for the low-end people, or
1125 give another 550 hours to Parks and Rec for their staff considering we gave them Dash-Park to
1126 go ahead and maintain. We continue to ask that department to take on more and more and more
1127 every single year. When it comes down to it, it's about priorities. I know several of the people
1128 who are with Centering Onalaska, and they're great people. But when it comes down to it, it's a
1129 matter of priority, and at this point I cannot support asking our staff to do one more thing.”

1130
1131 Ald. K. Smith asked Dan if \$5,500 is an accurate financial figure.
1132

1133 Dan said, “If you look at just using the city's overtime ____ for Parks or Public Works

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1134 employees, it calculates out to be about \$4,400, \$4,500 not counting the holidays that you would
1135 throw in there to have. I believe that's working 20 weekends between time of the start and the
1136 finish."

1137

1138 Ald. K. Smith inquired about the current cost to the city to have the hanging baskets.

1139

1140 Dan said he does not know, but he also pointed out city staff waters the baskets four to five days
1141 a week. Dan also noted city staff is still watering because there are three different varieties of
1142 fertilizer that are applied to the plants.

1143

1144 Mayor Chilsen said he believes it would be a grave mistake for the city not to be able to have the
1145 baskets. Mayor Chilsen also said, "I understand it's a bit of a pull, but I just think that it would
1146 be a marketing disaster if we didn't do this. I think it would be a p.r. [public relations] disaster.
1147 I think it would be a marketing disaster. I know \$5,000 can be used a lot of places. I've been
1148 there, and I understand that. But I think that we should really take a real close look at trying to
1149 make this happen."

1150

1151 Ald. Stevens stated he enjoys Centering Onalaska's work, noting it separates Onalaska from
1152 other cities when someone drives along Main Street. However, Ald. Stevens also said, "It's
1153 really nice, but I'm not sure that it's necessarily the domain of our tax levy to cover that expense.
1154 What I kind of heard is the city is watering during the week and Centering Onalaska was doing it
1155 over the weekend, and now it's become both a manpower and a fundraising issue. I'm
1156 wondering if those items would be better served ... I think we can make this happen, but I don't
1157 necessarily think that tax dollars have to go into it. I would spearhead an effort to publicly
1158 fundraise the money to keep that going, and then maybe outsource it to an Onalaska business if it
1159 was required to water on the weekend. I know in the past there were frequent fundraising drives.
1160 We used to get an envelope mailed to us, and I don't think that happens any more.

1161

1162 I'm wondering if local organizations ... Perhaps the city can make a committee kind of like what
1163 we had with the sculpture at the Great River Landing. Or it can go through the OEF [Onalaska
1164 Enhancement Foundation] where we can try to raise the money to make this happen, but make it
1165 so taxpayers don't have to pay for this. I would donate to it. I would help do the labor to make it
1166 happen. I think there are a lot of interesting ways that it could be approached. For example,
1167 somebody could sponsor a basket. I know there are people in the community who enjoy the
1168 flowers, and they would like to be a part of that and make that happen. I think I would concur
1169 with Ald. Wulf that it's not the best use of public funds. Public funds should go for what is
1170 necessary. The sculpture was an example [of] no taxpayer dollars [being] used. Now we have
1171 this beautiful sculpture, and we relied on the community. If we did have some sort of committee
1172 or we pursue that option, I think we can reach out to local service organizations. We can reach
1173 out to the high school clubs. We can reach out to churches, Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, OBA
1174 [Onalaska Business Association]. I think there are a lot of people who would like to see this
1175 remain, and we can still keep this off the levy. I don't know where we would take the \$5,500

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1176 from. We already have to find another \$3,325 for the Parks Department.”

1177

1178 Ald. Olson said he agrees with Ald. Stevens and stated, “What you saw tonight from all the other
1179 people here were the people who have always kept up their part of their civic duty. They’re to be
1180 commended – John Staut and his wife and all these people have always been there for us. I think
1181 maybe we should help try to find a mechanism so that we can get to the people of this
1182 community. I will donate, along with Dan [Ald. Stevens], and I have to believe this community
1183 will come together and make something like this happen. I think we ought to try that and see
1184 what we can do.”

1185

1186 Mayor Chilsen said he has such a mechanism, meaning the Arts Commission, and he promised
1187 to utilize that mechanism. Mayor Chilsen said, “I think this is the perfect spot for the Arts
1188 Commission.”

1189

1190 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Olson, to accept the 2020 Proposed Executive Budget
1191 and forward it to the Common Council.

1192

1193 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “With the one exception, because there was the one motion
1194 regarding the Omni Center. You should probably put that in the motion, because that is the one
1195 exception we’re making.”

1196

1197 Ald. K. Smith said, “It’s understood that that includes the one change that we made during our
1198 discussions tonight.”

1199

1200 Motion restated:

1201

1202 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Olson, to accept the 2020 Proposed Executive Budget,
1203 with the exception being the change made to Omni Center – Seasonal Wages, and present it to
1204 the Common Council.

1205

1206 On roll call vote: Ald. Dan Stevens – aye, Ald. Jim Olson – aye, Ald. Kim Smith – aye. Motion
1207 carried, 3-0.

1208

1209 **Adjournment**

1210

1211 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Olson, to adjourn at 6:30 p.m.

1212

1213 On voice vote, motion carried.

1214

1215

1216 Recorded by:

1217

1218 Kirk Bey

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