

**Special Common Council  
of the City of Onalaska**

Monday, October 21, 2019

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1 The Special Meeting of the Common Council was called to order at 4:01 p.m. on Monday,  
2 October 21, 2019. It was noted that the meeting had been announced and a notice posted at City  
3 Hall.

4  
5 Roll call was taken, with the following members present: Mayor Joe Chilsen, Ald. Tom Smith,  
6 Ald. Jim Olson, Ald. Dan Stevens, Ald. Boondi Iyer, Ald. Diane Wulf, Ald. Kim Smith

7  
8 Also Present: City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, City Clerk Cari Burmaster, Human  
9 Resources Director Hope Burchell, Parks and Recreation Director Dan Wick

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11 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from previous meeting**

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13 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Ald. T. Smith, to approve the minutes from the previous  
14 meeting as printed and on file in the City Clerk's Office.

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16 On voice vote, motion carried.

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

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20 Mayor Chilsen called for anyone wishing to provide public input.

21

22 **Patrick Clements**

23 **3009 Wild Rose Lane**

24 **Onalaska**

25

26 “I am the president of Centering Onalaska, and I’m here today to ask for input into the budget to  
27 support our projects that we’ve been doing now for close to 25 years. For you who don’t know  
28 what Centering Onalaska is, we’ve been doing this since 1996. If you see the flower baskets, if  
29 you see the Christmas wreaths, if you see the decorations outside your door, that’s it. We  
30 brought some of the members here today – if you would stand up – I want to thank them for all  
31 the things they’ve done. I’ve just been here for a couple of years. These guys have been doing it  
32 for years and years and years, so they’ve passed the torch to me. One more thing: Thank you to  
33 our First Responders, and for you for being here today. Thank you for your time. We’d like to  
34 come to you and ask for input into this year’s budget for up to \$5,000 to help us water on the  
35 weekends. What Centering Onalaska does is, we buy the flowers. We go to Red Wing. We  
36 bring them down. We maintain them. You water [during] the week, we water on the weekend.  
37 We just can’t do that anymore, so we’re asking for some help with some part-time help – a  
38 college kid, whatever – and input into the budget to help us water. In 2003, we started with six  
39 flower baskets. We now have 52 flower baskets, including down in the Great River Landing.  
40 This is a lot of work, and it’s a lot of work for us. We put in well over 100 hours a year in  
41 volunteer time to this great city of ours, and we’re proud of them. We believe that these flowers  
42 are a signature of Onalaska. I have not yet heard one complaint about our flower baskets from  
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43 anybody; in fact, it's quite the opposite. I see people saying, 'How do you do that? And how  
44 come Onalaska's doesn't look like Red Wing's and others?' It's because we care about them,  
45 and we believe that this is a great place and it adds what I call 'curb appeal' to our community.  
46 We also have been putting up the Christmas wreaths and working with kids year to year. Last  
47 year we bought eight new wreaths because our wreaths are now 15, 16 years old and they're  
48 starting to age out. [With] some of our wreaths, we're spending three, four, five hours just trying  
49 to repair them and get them up before the Christmas holidays. Again [there is] a lot of volunteer  
50 work there. [There also is] a lot of partnership with the city. I want to give a shout out to our  
51 Parks and Rec [employees]. I know the guys who work in Parks and Rec. I know their first  
52 names because I care, and they care. I still can't find a speck of trash on the streets or in the  
53 parks here in Onalaska because they care. [It is the] same thing with our Street Department  
54 [employees] – they care. My streets are plowed. I know the guy who plows my street because  
55 he's out there when I'm not, so I thank you. We have this great partnership with them. They  
56 help us hang it. They help us maintain them. We have this great partnership that's been going  
57 for a long time. What we're asking for now is just some help on weekends to help us water, and  
58 we're asking for up to ...”

59

60 Cari informed Patrick he had reached his three-minute speaking limit.

61

62 Patrick thanked the Council for its time.

63

64 Mayor Chilsen called three times for anyone else wishing to provide public input and closed that  
65 portion of the meeting.

66

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

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69 **Item 4 – Resolution 37-2019 – To Withdraw Request to Create La Crosse Area**  
70 **Metropolitan Sewerage District**

71

72 City Administrator Rindfleisch told the alderpersons the resolution before them this afternoon  
73 reverses the action taken by the Common Council in late 2018 requesting that the Wisconsin  
74 Department of Natural Resources hold a hearing and possibly create the La Crosse Area  
75 Metropolitan Sewerage District. City Administrator Rindfleisch told the alderpersons they are  
76 welcome to read the entire resolution, a copy of which was included in their packets, and he said  
77 the two key components are:

78

- 79 1. That the City of Onalaska continue to negotiate for a long-term contract. City  
80 Administrator Rindfleisch noted this seems to be “a sticking point” with the City of La  
81 Crosse, which he said has made it clear it does not wish to participate. City  
82 Administrator Rindfleisch said, “That’s, quite frankly, a shame because there is no more  
83 purer way of having a regional service than what was proposed here in the Metropolitan  
84 Sewerage District. I applaud the Common Council for taking the action a year ago, and

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85 subsequently supported by this body, to really look at the greatest way we can regionalize  
86 a service and share the costs and share the benefits of that service.  
87 2. The resolution passed by the City of La Crosse, which would include any contracts, must  
88 include an unrelated regional services fee. City Administrator Rindfleisch said it denies  
89 the purpose of the LAMSD by having the resolution present, and he told the Council he  
90 recommends approval of the resolution before the body today.

91

92 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. Stevens, to approve Resolution 37-2019 – To Withdraw  
93 Request to Create La Crosse Area Metropolitan Sewerage District.

94

95 On voice vote, motion carried.

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97 **Item 5 – Review and consideration of authorization to fill Event Coordinator position**

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99 Hope told the Council this position is coming forward once more as the individual who was hired  
100 this past summer has resigned due to a family-related scheduling matter. Hope said she is  
101 seeking Council approval to fill the position, noting she still has a list of candidates she can  
102 contact.

103

104 Motion by Ald. K. Smith, second by Ald. Wulf, to approve authorization to fill the Event  
105 Coordinator position.

106

107 Ald. Stevens asked Hope if other individuals will be able to apply for the position in addition to  
108 her list of candidates.

109

110 Hope told Ald. Stevens there was a “very good second” and said she wishes to utilize the list  
111 rather than reposting the position, which drew more than 100 applicants. Hope expressed  
112 confidence in the existing pool of candidates, stating she believes it would be in the city’s best  
113 interest to utilize her list.

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115 On voice vote, motion carried.

116

117 **Adjournment**

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119 Motion by Ald. K. Smith, second by Ald. T. Smith, to adjourn at 4:11 p.m.

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121 On voice vote, motion carried.

122

123

124 Recorded by:

125

126 Kirk Bey

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