

130890

**City of Merrill
Committee of the Whole
Monday, October 7, 2013 at 6:00 P.M.
City Hall Common Council Chambers
1004 East First Street**

Committee of the Whole members present (9 of 9): Mayor Bill Bialecki, Alderman Chris Malm (First District), Alderman Steve Hass (Second District), Alderman Ryan Schwartzman (Third District), Alderwoman Kandy Peterson (Fourth District), Alderman John Burgener (Fifth District), Alderman Dave Sukow (Sixth District), Alderman Rob Norton (Seventh District) and Alderwoman Anne Caylor (Eighth District).

Other attendees: City Administrator Dave Johnson, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Street Commissioner Richard Lupton, Fire Chief Dave Savone, Police Chief Ken Neff, Finance Director Kathy Unertl, Utility Superintendent Kim Kriewald, City Hall Maintenance Supervisor Ramona Vanderkam, Vince Conrad, Kortney Pike, Tom Wistein, Matt Kucirek, Chris Marion, Vicki Thoreson, Duane Pfister and City Clerk Bill Heideman. A student was in attendance to videotape the meeting for the Cable Access Channel.

Call to order

Mayor Bialecki called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Consider pricing for City-owned Wittman Heights lots

No information was in the meeting packet.

City staff is seeking input from the committee on establishing a price for several vacant lots in the Wittman Heights Subdivision, located on Alexander Street and at the corner of Alexander Street and Jackson Street. The City currently owns the lots and is seeking potential purchasers who would hopefully then develop the lots.

City Attorney Hayden distributed a Certified Survey Map depicting the lots. The total area of all the lots is approximately 42,000 square feet. City Attorney Hayden reported that one non-profit organization has approached the City regarding the possible purchase of the lot labeled Lot #3.

Mayor Bialecki suggested establishing a price of \$2,400 per lot.

Finance Director Unertl suggested that, for any lot(s) sold to non-profit entities, a Payment in Lieu of Taxes agreement be prepared.

The Committee of the Whole suggested that all of the lots be appraised prior to any prices being established. Without objection, it was so ordered.

No formal action was taken.

Consider 2014 compensation for Mayor, Council President & Alderpersons

Information and a proposed ordinance were in the meeting packet.

At a meeting on July 23rd, 2013, the Personnel and Finance Committee made the following recommendations, which, if approved, would take effect for the terms beginning in 2014:

1. Annual compensation for Common Council President to be increased by \$520
2. Annual compensation for Common Council members who are not the President to be increased by \$260
3. Annual compensation for the Mayor to be increased from \$12,600 to \$18,000

The proposed ordinance would incorporate those increases into the Code of Ordinances.

Motion (Caylor/Schwartzman) to recommend adopting the ordinance.

Motion (Caylor/Sukow) to amend by changing the sentence "Alderman attending the annual budget meeting shall be compensated One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) for the day" to read "Alderman attending the annual **all day** budget meeting shall be compensated One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) for the day". Motion to amend carried.

Motion to recommend adopting the ordinance, as amended, carried.

The ordinance (as amended) will be on the November 12th, 2013 Common Council meeting agenda.

Review and consider City Organizational Charts for 2014

Information was in the meeting packet. Updated organizational charts were distributed.

City Administrator Johnson reviewed the charts. He stated that he was not looking for approval of the charts at this time. He noted that the charts can be used as a tool/guide during the 2014 budget preparation process.

No action was taken.

Review and consider comparable compensation report and recommendations

Information was in the meeting packet. City Administrator Johnson distributed updated information.

City Administrator Johnson reported that, in some cases, City of Merrill employees are receiving a higher compensation than in other municipalities, and in other cases they are receiving a lower compensation. He added that the Utility Superintendent is receiving a significantly lower compensation than in other municipalities.

City Administrator Johnson explained that, at this time, the report was being provided for information only.

No action was requested, necessary or taken.

Review and consider proposed new non-union compensation plan

Information was in the meeting packet.

City Administrator Johnson reported on the employee compensation step/grade schedules currently in effect. The current schedules have wide deviations in annual adjustments, and employees reach the top of their pay scale relatively quickly. Therefore, City Administrator Johnson is proposing the adoption of new schedules.

The proposed new *Administrative, Professional, Supervisory and Technical Personnel* schedule has 14 grades and 13 steps. The proposed new *Clerical and Other Support Staff* schedule has 8 grades and 10 steps.

Compensation amounts for members of the police and fire unions are currently being negotiated.

Two proposed *Former AFSCME Personnel* schedules were presented for consideration. One of the schedules has 11 grades and the other has 12 grades. City Administrator Johnson is recommending the schedule with 12 grades.

City Administrator Johnson suggested that the new schedules could be incorporated into the 2014 budget. The schedules will be considered further at the October 29th Committee of the Whole meeting.

Alderman Caylor expressed concern that increases for long-term employees will be proposed in the event the new schedules are ultimately approved.

No action was necessary, requested or taken at this time.

Schedule additional Committee of the Whole meetings

Information was in the meeting packet. City staff is proposing that Committee of the Whole meetings will be held on Tuesday, October 15th and Tuesday, October 29th. The October 15th meeting will begin at 5:30 P.M. and concentrate on the 2014 Capital Budget. The October 29th meeting will begin at 6:00 P.M. and will concentrate on the 2014 Operational Budget.

Without objection, the meetings were scheduled for the indicated dates at the indicated times.

Distribution of updated Highway 64 project schedule

City Administrator Johnson distributed an updated schedule of the ongoing Highway 64 project.

Public Comment

None.

Distribution of potential employee health insurance options information

Vicki Thoreson, a representative of M-3 (the company that oversees the City's employee health insurance program with Security Health) distributed information on the pending employee health insurance renewal and potential insurance options.

Motion to convene in closed session (no motion was made)

Note: No motion was made to convene in closed session.

Adjournment

Motion (Caylor/Hass) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 7:06 P.M.

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

William N. Heideman, CMC, WCMC
City Clerk