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**City of Merrill  
Committee of the Whole  
Tuesday, October 15, 2013 at 5:30 P.M.  
City Hall Common Council Chambers  
1004 East First Street**

Committee of the Whole members present (8 of 9): Mayor Bill Bialecki, 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). Alderman Chris Malm (First District) was absent.

Other attendees: City Administrator Dave Johnson, Police Captain Corey Bennett, Fire Captain Mike Drury, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Utility Superintendent Kim Kriewald, Street Commissioner Richard Lupton, Library Director Stacy Stevens, Finance Director Kathy Unertl, City Hall Maintenance Supervisor Ramona Vanderkam, Parks & Recreation Director Dan Wendorf, Greg Hartwig, Tom Wistein, Roger Drewek and City Clerk Bill Heideman.

**Call to order**

Mayor Bialecki called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

**Proposed Wellness program and fiscal participation penalties.**

Information was in the meeting packet.

Finance Director Unertl reported on a proposed Wellness Program for City employees.

**Proposed HMO and HSA plans and fiscal costs, employee cost sharing %**

The meeting packet included information on six employee medical plan options available through Security Health.

Finance Director Unertl reported that, of the six options, City staff is recommending that Option #4 and Option #5 be offered to employees, as follows:

- Option #4 - High Deductible Health Plan. This plan is cost neutral for City and employees.

- Option #5 – Traditional Plan. This plan reduces City costs and increases employee out-of-pocket expenses.

Alderman Norton suggested that no decisions be made until after it has been determined, based on the outcome of ongoing union negotiations, which health insurance option(s) the members of the Police and Fire unions will be offered. He was told that, as part of those negotiations, the City is offering Option #4 and Option #5 to union members.

Alderwoman Caylor mentioned that she was pleased to see that the City is offering employees health insurance options.

Motion (Caylor/Sukow) to approve, as presented, the establishment of a Wellness Plan for City employees, and to approve offering to City employees, as presented, Option #4 and Option #5 as Employee Medical Insurance Plan options through Security Health, in 2014. Carried.

### **Proposed pay grids and salary adjustments**

New pay grids being proposed by City Administrator Johnson were in the meeting packet.

City Administrator Johnson is recommending grade adjustments for three positions. He distributed information on those positions. The recommendations he is making are as follows:

1. Utility Superintendent: Grade 9 to Grade 10. The annual salary for the employee currently in that position (Kim Kriewald) would increase from \$64,490.00 to \$68,641.68.
2. Utility Clerk: Grade 5 to Grade 6. The annual salary for the employee currently in that position (Angie Holz) would increase from \$39,249.60 to \$41,260.00.
3. Parks and Recreation Director: Grade 7 to Grade 9. The annual salary for the employee currently in that position (Dan Wendorf) would increase from \$58,287.00 to \$62,032.00.

Alderman Hass said he wonders how raises can be given before the Common Council members have even seen a draft copy of the 2014 operational budget. Alderwoman Caylor agreed, stating that she was uncomfortable with approving compensation adjustments prior to being able to see and review the operational budget.

No action was taken on any of the three recommendations.

Alderman Norton mentioned that recently City Administrator Johnson proposed adding part-time clerical positions in the Street Department and Fire Department. Alderman Norton then requested that the funding for those positions be included when preparing the proposed 2014 operational budget.

### **2014 Capital Equipment and Project requests**

Information on the requests was in the meeting packet. Information on one additional Streets project “Streetlights – East Main Street (Mill Street to Scott Street)” was distributed at the meeting.

The 2014 capital budget requests were considered by department, as follows:

#### **Infrastructure**

Finance Director Unertl and City Administrator Johnson provided information on the following requests:

- Sidewalk Maintenance – M-2 Project
- Street Infrastructure – Taylor Street
- Street Sealcoat

No changes were made at this time.

#### **City Hall**

Finance Director Unertl, City Administrator Johnson, and City Hall Maintenance Supervisor Vanderkam provided information on the following requests:

- City Hall – Front Entryway
- City Hall – Steam Boiler Replacement
- Carpeting Replacement – City Hall

Motion (Hass/Caylor) to delete the “City Hall – Front Entryway” (\$40,000) project from the 2014 Capital Budget. Carried.

Motion (Hass/Caylor) to delete the 2014 Capital Budget amount (\$25,000) from the “City Hall - Steam Boiler Replacement” project. Carried.

Motion (Hass/Sukow) to reduce the “Carpeting Replacement – City Hall” 2014 Capital Budget amount from \$5,000 to \$3,000. Carried.

### **Merrill Municipal Airport**

Finance Director Unertl provided information on the following request:

- Merrill Airport Local Match

No changes were made at this time.

### **Parks and Recreation**

Parks and Recreation Director Wendorf provided information on the following requests:

- Park Mower Replacement
- Smith Center HVAC Replacements
- Riverside Park Shelter
- Stange Park – Shelter Roof/Repaint
- Stange Park – Restroom Replacement

Motion (Hass/Caylor) to delete the “Stange Park – Restroom Replacement” (\$175,000) project from the 2014 Capital Budget. Carried.

### **Police**

Finance Director Unertl and Police Captain Bennett provided information on the following requests:

- Replace Marked Squad Car
- Replace Police Handguns

No changes were made at this time.

### **Streets**

Street Commissioner Lupton provided information on the following requests:

- Streets – Replace One Ton Dump Truck
- Streets – Garbage Truck – Recycling
- Mowing Equipment – Former Airport Tractor
- City Garage – East Side Visitor – ADA Parking
- City Garage – Overhead Door (West End)
- Parking Lot #4 – Blacktop Replacement
- Storm Sewer – Hot Water Thawer
- Streetlights – East Main Street (Mill Street to Scott Street)

Motion (Hass/Schwartzman) to delete the “Streets – Replace One Ton Dump Truck” from the 2014 Capital Budget and add \$10,000 to the 2014 Capital Budget for the purchase of a dump box. Carried.

### **Tax Increment Districts**

Finance Director Unertl provided information on the following requests:

- Thielman Street Culvert Replacement
- North Pine Ridge Avenue/East Sixth Street
- Highway 107 Area – Streetlights
- MARC Soccer Parking and Access Ways
- Blaine Street – Pavement Replacement
- Public Parking Lot #2 – Grand Ave./N. Prospect St.

Motion (Hass) to reduce the “North Pine Ridge Avenue/East Sixth Street” 2014 Capital Budget amount from \$150,000 to \$75,000. Motion failed due to lack of a second.

Motion (Caylor/Hass/) to delete the “North Pine Ridge Avenue/East Sixth Street” project from the 2014 Capital Budget. Motion failed 2-5 on roll call vote. Voting Yes – Alderman Hass and Alderwoman Caylor.

Motion (Caylor/Hass) to delete the “MARC Soccer Parking and Access Ways” project (\$40,000) from the 2014 Capital Budget. Carried.

Motion (Caylor/Hass) to delete the “Highway 107 – Streetlights” project (\$150,000) from the 2014 Capital Budget. Motion failed 2-5 on roll call vote. Voting Yes – Alderman Hass and Alderwoman Caylor.

Motion (Caylor/Hass) to reduce the “Highway 107 – Streetlights” 2014 Capital Budget amount from \$150,000 to \$50,000. Motion carried 4-3 on roll call vote. Voting No – Alderman Burgener, Alderman Sukow and Alderman Norton.

### **Transit**

City Administrator Johnson provided information on the following request:

- Transit Garage – Former Fire Station

It was noted that the total cost of the project would be \$200,000, but that the City would only be responsible for 20% (\$40,000).

No changes were made at this time.

### **Utility**

Utility Superintendent Kriewald provided information on the following requests:

- Install generator @ Riverside Ave. lift station
- Replace pumps @ Riverside Ave. lift station
- Replace existing garage doors @ WWT Plant
- Grit removal system @ WWT Plant (proposal has already been approved)
- Replace force main – West Main Street
- Replace roof @ WWT Plant
- East Street water tower work (already approved by the Common Council) .

No changes were made at this time.

### **Public Comment**

None.

### **Recess**

At 7:40 P.M., Mayor Bialecki announced a five-minute recess. At 7:45 P.M., he called the meeting back to order.

### **Motion to convene in closed session**

Motion (Hass/Schwartzman) to convene in closed session pursuant to Wisconsin State Statutes Section 19.85(1)(e) for deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session, to consider Police Union and Fire Union contracts. Carried 6-1 on roll call vote. Voting No – Alderman Norton.

### **Closed session – Police and Fire Union contracts**

The closed session portion of the meeting began at 7:46 P.M. Attending: Bialecki, Malm, Hass, Schwartzman, Burgener, Norton, Caylor, Johnson, Hayden, Unertl, and Heideman.

City Administrator Johnson provided summary information on the ongoing negotiations with the Police and Fire unions. He also provided details on the salaries and benefits that the City is offering at this time to those union members.

**Adjournment**

Motion (Hass/Caylor) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned (from closed session) at 7:55 P.M.

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

William N. Heideman, CMC, WCMC  
City Clerk