



CITY OF MERRILL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES • FRIDAY OCTOBER 21, 2016

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

8:15 AM

I. Call to Order

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Paul Russell	Aldersperson - First District	Present	
Pete Lokemoen	Aldersperson - Second District	Present	
Ryan Schwartzman	Aldersperson - Third District	Present	
Kandy Peterson	Aldersperson - Fourth District	Present	
John Burgener	Aldersperson - Fifth District & President	Absent	
Mary Ball	Aldersperson - Sixth District	Present	
Rob Norton	Aldersperson - Seventh District	Present	
Tim Meehean	Aldersperson - Eighth District	Present	
Bill Bialecki	Mayor	Present	

Also in attendance: City Administrator Dave Johnson, Street Superintendent Dustin Bonack, Transit Director Rich Grenfell, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Utility Superintendent Kim Kriewald, Enrichment Center Director Tammie Mrachek, Police Chief Ken Neff, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Darin Pagel, Fire Chef Dave Savone, Library Director Stacy Stevens, Municipal Judge Ned Seubert, Finance Director Kathy Unertl, Park and Recreation Director Dan Wendorf, City Hall Maintenance Supervisor Nick Wszakek, Police Captain Corey Bennett, Duane Pfister and City Clerk Bill Heideman. A representative from the Cable Access Channel was in attendance to videotape the meeting.

II. Public Comment Period

None.

III. 2016 fiscal status issues:

1. Update on 2016 fiscal status, including Undesignated General Fund Balance

Finance Director Unertl reported that it will be necessary to have another Committee of the Whole budget meeting, to discuss portions of the budget not ready for consideration at this time.

It is anticipated that, at the end of 2016, the Undesignated General Fund balance will be approximately \$1.75 million.

Net new growth was reviewed.

The City is aggressively paying down the debt service, at a rate of approximately \$1 million annually.

The wages component of the proposed 2017 budget was discussed. The proposed budget includes a 1% wage increase in December of 2016 and a 1% increase in the middle of 2017.

The Wisconsin Retirement System was reviewed.

Finance Director Unertl provided highlights related to the proposed 2017 operating budget.

IV. Consideration of Personnel Services Items:

1. City's Group Health Insurance for 2017

Finance Director Unertl reported that additional health insurance options under consideration were in the meeting packet. City staff is recommending option #4. Unfortunately, both the deductible and out-of-pocket expenses to the employee will be increasing.

The various health care options were discussed. Alderman Meehan and Alderman Schwartzman would like to have the various options presented to the employees, so that the employees could have input in the decision-making process. Alderman Russell suggested holding professional development sessions for employees to discuss the options as well as receive employee questions and input on the various options.

2. Potential new Poice Drug Investigator position

Finance Director Unertl announced that this item would be discussed later in the meeting.

3. Potential full-time Utility Administrative Assistant position

Finance Director Unertl announced that this item would be discussed later in the meeting.

4. Potential new part-time Enrichment Department position

Finance Director Unertl turned the meeting over to Enrichment Center Director Mrachek.

V. Consideration of 2017 Budget Requests:

1. Merrill Festival Grounds, Expo Center and Enrichment Department

Enrichment Center Director Mrachek distributed information on her request for a new position in her department. This position would work a maximum of 16 hours per week. The position had already been included in the proposed 2017 budget. Enrichment Center Director Mrachek noted that revenues at the Enrichment Center have been increasing over the last few years.

Finance Director Unertl reported on the Room Tax budget. Parks and Recreation Director Wendorf added comments related to tourism.

Finance Director Unertl reported on the Festival Grounds - Events/Sponsored budget.

At 9:47 A.M., Mayor Bialecki announced a break. At 10:05 A.M., he called the meeting back to order.

Finance Director Unertl reported on the TID #3 - Festival Grounds budget.

Enrichment Center Director Mrachek presented her request for new equipment and appliances for the new Enrichment Center.

City Administrator Johnson reported on the following capital budgets related to the Festival Grounds: Expo Center - Furnishings, Cattle Barn - Electrical Improvements, Plastic Fencing and Swinging Gates.

Alderman Lokemoen stated that, until there are sufficient funds to finish construction of the Expo Center, he would prefer to have it boarded up and not used. The current shortfall is estimated to be approximately \$438,780.

Motion (Lokemoen/Schwartzman) to cease construction on the Expo Center as soon as all funds designated for that purpose have been exhausted. On roll call vote, motion failed 1-6. Voting Yes - Alderman Lokemoen.

2. General Fund/Tax Levy Supported Operations

Discussion was then held on the Police Department request for a new Drug Investigator position.

Motion (Norton/Russell) to create a new Police Department Drug Investigator position, to be funded via the General Fund. On roll call vote, motion failed 2-5. Voting Yes - Alderman Russell and Alderman Norton.

Motion (Schwartzman/Russell) to hold a referendum on exceeding the State Levy Limits to fund the Drug Investigator position.

Motion (Meehean/Norton) to amend by adding that, if the referendum to approve the position passes, funding for the position would be via the General Fund.

Original motion (as amended) on holding a referendum carried.

Finance Director Unertl reviewed the following sections of the proposed 2017 operating budget: Non-Departmental, Common Council, Municipal Court, City Attorney, Mayor, City Administrator, Personnel - HR, City Clerk, Clerk/Treasurer Staff, Elections, Treasurer/Finance Director, Information Technology, Assessment of Property, Independent Auditing, Over-Collected Taxes, Insurance/Employee, City Sealer, City Hall Maintenance, Building Inspection/Zoning, Community Development, CDGB Grants/Loans, Economic Development and Police.

At 12:00 (noon), Mayor Bialecki announced a break for lunch. At 12:36 P.M., he called the meeting back to order.

Finance Director Unertl reviewed the following sections of the proposed 2017 operating budget: Traffic Control, Fire Protection - Hydrants, Fire Protection, Ambulance/EMS, Public Works/Engineer, Stormwater Plan/Construction, Street Commissioner, Street Superintendent, Garage Maintenance, Operations Support (M&E), Roads, Street Cleaning, Snow & Ice, Streets - Sealcoat, Stormwater Maintenance, Street Painting - Marking, Marking - Pedestrian & Bicycle, Street Leave Expenses, Garbage Collection, Recycling, Weed & Nuisance Control, Christmas Decorations, Street Lighting, Airport, Aviation Fuel, Transit, Health Officer, Library, Parks, River Bend Trail, Athletic Park Lights, Ott's Park Lights, Lion's Park Lights, Recreation Programs, MARC - Smith Center, Aquatic Center, Marketing - PR, CATV - MP3, Cable Franchise and Outside Agencies.

3. General Capital Equipment and Purchases

This portion of the budget is not yet ready for consideration. It will be considered at the next budget meeting.

4. Utility - Landfill, Water, Sewer and Utility Capital

Finance Director Unertl and Utility Superintendent Kriewald reported on a request for a new full-time Administrative Assistant position at the Water Utility. Discussion was held on the request and position.

5. Potential Sewer Rate adjustments for 2017 and future years

Finance Director Unertl requested input from the committee on suggestions for future sewer adjustments.

Utility Superintendent Kriewald reported on the status of the equipment and the equipment replacement fund.

Various percentages for sewer rate adjustments were suggested and discussed. Finance Director Unertl will calculate the fiscal impact on various adjustments. She will report on this at the next budget meeting.

Finance Director Unertl reported on the Sewer budget.

Finance Director Unertl and Utility Superintendent Kriewald reviewed the Utility Capital budgets.

Motion (Meehean/Lokemoen) to approve, as presented, the proposed 2017 budget. Carried.

6. Tax Increment Districts (TIDs)

Information on the Tax Increment Districts was distributed. This will be discussed at the next budget meeting.

7. Update on Debt Service and City Borrowing Capacity

Debt service was discussed earlier in the meeting, and borrowing will be discussed at a future meeting.

VI. Next steps/meetings on 2017 Budget

The next Committee of the Whole budget meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, November 3rd. It will be held in the City Hall Common Council Chambers and will begin at 5:15 P.M.

VII. Adjournment

Motion (Norton/Ball) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 2:18 P.M.