



CITY OF MERRILL

COMMON COUNCIL

MINUTES • TUESDAY JANUARY 8, 2019

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

7:00 PM

1. Call to Order

Mayor Woellner called the meeting to order at 7:06 P.M.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Paul Russell	Aldersperson - First District	Present	
Steve Hass	Aldersperson - Second District	Present	
Rick Blake	Aldersperson - Third District	Present	
Steve Osness	Aldersperson - Fourth District	Present	
John M. Van Lieshout	Aldersperson - Fifth District	Present	
Dave Sukow	Aldersperson - Sixth District	Present	
Rob Norton	Aldersperson - Seventh District	Present	
Tim Meehean	Aldersperson - Eighth District	Present	
Derek Woellner	Mayor	Present	

2. Silent Prayer

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Roll Call

5. Public Comment Period

Mark Bares stated that he has no confidence in the current City Administration. In his opinion, poor decisions have been made because the Common Council gave the administration a “rubber stamp”.

Dave Schult requested that consideration be given to a controlled intersection at the corner of East Eighth Street and Kyes Street. He went on to say that it seems there is growing distrust of the City Administration, and it is time to listen to the people.

William Rice issued a reminder that the City Administration works for the people. To him, it seems as if taxes are being increased constantly.

Lee Opsahl is of the opinion that the City is doing a good job. Progress is being made and he supports the City Administration.

Donald Zimmerman stated that the tax increase was ridiculous and the eventual tax increase should have been shared with the public earlier. He questioned the wisdom of buying property for \$100,000 and then selling it for \$1.

Ron McCallister complimented Alderman Hass and Alderman Osness for their efforts during the budget process. He suggested that an outside, independent investigation into aspects of city government is necessary.

LaDonna Fermanich thanked the Mayor and the Common Council for their work. She then stated that people are not happy with a majority of the Common Council, and are also not happy with City Administrator Johnson or Finance Director Unertl. She has a hard time grasping the process of a 3% tax increase evolving into a 7.4% increase.

James Swanson asked why the budget could not be balanced. He is appalled at the “skullduggery” behind the tax increase and suggested that the City need better managers and representatives.

Steve Sabatke questioned the authority and wisdom of allowing City Administrator Johnson and Finance Director Unertl to become “real estate agents” for the City. He added that, in his opinion, they are not good at it.

Wayne Plant stated that the tax increase is ridiculous. Some wider streets are not being plowed, yet streets that are narrower are being plowed. He added that the Festival Grounds is losing money.

Pat Buckett stated that he would like to see information on the costs related to removing mature pine trees at the Festival Grounds and replacing them with immature trees.

6. Minutes of previous Common Council meeting(s):

1. Minutes of December 11, 2018 meeting

Motion (Norton/Osness) to approve.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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7. Revenue & Expense Reports(s):

1. December report will be considered at February Common Council meeting

No action was taken.

8. Placing Committee Reports on File:

1. Consider placing the following committee reports on file: Airport Commission, Festival Grounds Committee, Merrill Enrichment Center Committee, Skate Park Special Committee and Transit Commission.

Motion (Norton/Sukow) to place on file.

RESULT:	PLACED ON FILE
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9. Personnel and Finance Committee:

1. Consider any recommendation(s) from January 8th, 2019 Personnel and Finance Committee meeting.

At that meeting, the Personnel and Finance Committee made no recommendations.

The Common Council took no action.

10. Mayor's Appointments:

1. Adam Rekau to the Community Development Committee, term to expire May 1st, 2021.

Motion (Norton/Meehean) to approve the appointment.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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11. Ordinances:

None.

12. Resolutions:

1. A Resolution honoring Eleanor "Ellie" Schwartz for her long-time service to the City of Merrill (Resolution #2591).

WHEREAS, Eleanor "Ellie" Schwartz has served the City of Merrill T.B. Scott Library for 44 years; and,

WHEREAS, these years of service have been marked by dedication to the best interests of our community and citizens; and

WHEREAS, Eleanor "Ellie" Schwartz has earned the admiration and respect of her fellow employees by the way in which she has carried out her duties; and

WHEREAS, Eleanor "Ellie" Schwartz's skills and experience will be missed at the City of Merrill T.B. Scott Library;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN this 8th day of January, 2019, that the Common Council, and the people of Merrill officially acknowledge with deep appreciation the dedicated and faithful service Eleanor "Ellie" Schwartz has given the City of Merrill T.B. Scott Library and commends her for those 44 years of service; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we hereby commend the meritorious and dedicated service of Eleanor "Ellie" Schwartz, congratulate her upon the occasion of her retirement from the City of Merrill T.B. Scott Library, and extend our warmest wishes for her enjoyment of continued prosperity in the years that lie ahead.

Motion (Common Council/Common Council) to approve.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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13. Mayor's Communications

Mayor Woellner cited a tax summary sheet that was included in the packet of a budget meeting. This summary sheets includes a 5% tax increase. He speculated that the higher tax increase may be due to miscommunication.

Mayor Woellner then announced that he would remain after the conclusion of the meeting to participate in informal discussion with meeting attendees.

14. Adjournment

Motion (Norton/Meehean) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 7:38 P.M.