



CITY OF MERRILL
PERSONNEL AND FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES • TUESDAY MARCH 26, 2019

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

5:00 PM

I. Call to Order

Alderman Russell called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Tim Meehean	Aldersperson - Eighth District	Present	
Paul Russell	Aldersperson - First District	Present	
Steve Osness	Aldersperson - Fourth District	Present	

Also in attendance: City Administrator Dave Johnson, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Fire Chief Josh Klug, Alderman Steve Hass, Alderman Dave Sukow, Alderman Rick Blake, Alderman John Van Lieshout, Alderman Rob Norton, LaDonna Fermanich, Lori Anderson-Malm, Laura Schulte, John Kraegenbrink, Paul Peterson, Dean Dietrich and City Clerk Bill Heideman. A representative from Merrill Productions was present to videotape the meeting.

II. Vouchers:

1. Vouchers

Motion (Meehean/Osness) to place on file.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

III. Monthly Reports:

1. Municipal Court

The monthly reports were in the meeting packet.

2. Finance Director Unertl

The monthly reports were in the meeting packet.

3. City Attoreny Hayden

The monthly reports were in the meeting packet.

4. City Clerk Heideman

The monthly reports were in the meeting packet.

5. City Administrator Johnson

The monthly reports were in the meeting packet.

City Administrator Johnson answered questions and provided additional details related to the reports.

6. Consider placing monthly reports on file

Motion (Meehean/Osness) to place on file.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

IV. Establish date, time and location of next regular meeting

Tuesday, April 23rd, 2019 at 5:00 P.M. on the City Hall Common Council Chambers.

V. Public Comment Period

LaDonna Fermanich commended Alderman Hass for his agenda request for discussion on a hiring freeze.

Alderman Norton responded that there is already a hiring policy in place, and he asked the Personnel and Finance Committee to deny the request for a hiring freeze.

VI. Agenda items for consideration:

1. Request from Alderman Hass to consider placing a hiring freeze in effect.

Alderman Hass explained that, based on the current City debt, he is not in favor of automatically filling vacant positions. He also does not want to see new positions created.

City Administrator Johnson responded that a hiring policy is already in place and that new positions require prior Common Council approval. Alderman Meehean added that the hiring freeze for vacant positions was lifted in order to speed up the process when filling positions.

Alderman Russell thanked Alderman Hass for requesting this agenda item.

No action was taken.

2. Grievance filed by Merrill Firefighters Local 847 related to the creation of "Lead Inspector" and "Lead Paramedic" positions.

Information related to the grievance was in the meeting packet.

Representing Merrill Firefighters Local 847, John Kraegenbrink reported that the union is of the opinion that this issue is subject to bargaining. He added that he has already discussed the grievance with both Fire Chief Klug and City Administrator Johnson.

Fire Chief Klug reported that both the City and Fire Department contend that this is not an issue subject to bargaining.

If the grievance is not resolved at this step, the next step would be arbitration.

City Administrator Johnson verbally reviewed the grievance and provided the City's response.

No action was taken at this time.

VII. Closed Session(s):

The Committee may convene in closed session pursuant to Wisconsin State Statutes 19.85(1)(c) to consider employment, promotion, compensation, or performance data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility, and may convene in closed session pursuant to Wisconsin State Statutes 19.85(1)(e) for deliberating or negotiating the purchase of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session, in order to:

Motion (Meehean/Russell) to convene in closed session. Carried 2 to 1 on roll call vote. Voting No - Alderman Osness.

Convened in closed session at 5:31 P.M.

1. Further discuss and consider grievance filed by Merrill Firefighters Union 847 related to the creation of "Lead Inspector" and "Lead Paramedic" positions.

Discussion on the grievance continued in closed session.

2. Update on performance evaluations of City employees.

To date, the minutes have not been submitted by the minute-taker.

VIII. Reconvene in Open Session:

The Committee may reconvene in open session for potential action(s) on closed session issues.

By motion, the committee opted to reconvene in open session at 6:46 P.M.

Motion (Meehean/Russell) to deny the grievance. Carried.

IX. Discussion and possible action on financial audit

Alderman Osness has requested that, based on recent budget/tax issues, a forensic audit of City finances be approved. Alderman Meehean responded that an annual audit is already being done.

Motion (Osness/Russell) to approve a forensic audit. After discussion, Alderman Russell requested that his second be withdrawn. Without objection, it was so ordered. Per City Special Counsel Dietrich, the motion fails due to lack of a second.

Special Counsel Dietrich was instructed to conduct research to determine the status of the current (2018) audit, and to report his findings at a future meeting.

X. Adjournment

Motion (Meehean/Osness) to adjourn. Carred. Adjourned at 6:55 P.M.