

**FINANCE COMMITTEE  
MAY 9, 2017 AT 6:48 P.M.  
LINCOLN CENTER – 1519 WATER STREET**

**PRESENT:** Ald. Phillips, Kneebone, Shorr, McComb, and Johnson

**ALSO**

**PRESENT:** C/T Ladick; Mayor Wiza; City Attorney Beveridge; Clerk Moe; Directors Schrader, Ostrowski, Lemke; Police Chief Skibba; Fire Chief Finn; Ald. Slowinski, Morrow, Oberstadt, Dugan, Jennings, Nebel; Larry Oathout

**ITEM #1 – ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON.**

Ald. Kneebone nominated Ald. Johnson to the position of Vice-Chairperson of the Finance Committee.

Motion made by Ald. McComb, seconded by Ald. Shorr, to appoint Ald. Johnson the Vice-Chairperson of the Finance Committee.

Ayes: All                      Nays: None                      Motion carried.

**ITEM #2 – DESIGNATION OF OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER.**

City Attorney Beveridge stated that although we only received one bid from the Portage County Gazette, the bid came in with price increases from 48%-124%, so about \$8,000. The official City newspaper is an old concept and there has been some motion in Madison to review it.

C/T Ladick stated that the Portage County Gazette made several inquiries, before bidding, on past bids and how many other bidders we have had. Presumably, they realized they have been the only bidder now for two years.

Mayor Wiza stated that the Stevens Point Journal used to bid, but the locally owned Portage County Gazette came in lower so he believes that is why we have not received any other bids in the last few years. The Portage County Gazette has recently sold to MMC, who also owns the City Times. Due to the circumstances, he stated he would recommend postponing this item until we can gather more information.

City Attorney Beveridge stated the language in the statute that he will be focusing on is “the paper making the lowest effective bid for the City’s legal notices shall be awarded the contract”, so “shall” being the word stating we have to do this; however the one word he is focusing on is “effective.” He needs to do more research on it. He also needs to verify what the meaning of the sentence that stated “legal rate for like work” means. He would like to research these things further before Council next week, so he agrees with the Mayor to forward to Council with no recommendation at this time.

Motion made by Ald. McComb, seconded by Ald. Johnson, to postpone the designation of official newspaper until the Council meeting on Monday.

Mayor Wiza stated that there is a bill floating through the legislature that would allow us to publish digitally and he encouraged anyone who felt that was a good idea to contact their legislators. He stated he will be in Madison on Wednesday.

Ald. Kneebone agrees that postponing this is a good idea and with small newspapers going out of business, there may not be any options in the future.

Ayes: All                      Nays: None                      Motion carried.

**ITEM #3 – TRANSFER OF LIBRARY ENDOWMENT TO THE PORTAGE COUNTY LIBRARY FOUNDATION.**

C/T Ladick stated we have \$60,000 in an endowment fund to support the Public Library, which is from when the Public Library used to be a Municipal function run by the City of Stevens Point. Some time ago, the County developed a consolidated County library system, took over the function of providing a library and we continued to keep that endowment, manage it, and send a check every six months to the Public Library for the proceeds from the endowment. After speaking to the Library Director, he had stated that they also had an endowment fund for the library, so it made sense to consolidate the two to have it all in one place. All of the money would be put in the Portage County Public Library Foundation and they have agreed to honor the commitment that we made with the donors to continue to support the library.

Ald. Johnson questioned if there was a resolution or if there was an original charter related to that money as to how it can be used. C/T Ladick stated he is not aware of any commitment of the funds. The money did come from multiple donors over time for the purpose of purchasing library materials. This was money that was donated to the City going back a significant period of time. He stated how important it was that the Library foundation has agreed to honor what our obligations are for those funds, which has been discussed with the Library Director. He has provided a letter from the Foundation, signed by the President of the Foundation, that states that they are agreeing not to touch the principal and to continue to use it to support the library. He also spoke with our auditors to make sure there will not be any issues with it, since it is considered a permanent Fund, and has received the go ahead from them.

Ald. Johnson questioned if the Finance Committee was being asked to make this transfer without any agreement. C/T Ladick stated he could show them the letter from the Foundation. Ald. Johnson stated this is a lot of money and felt like it should have been included as a formality. C/T Ladick stated that he would provide the letter and that, in the future, if there is documentation that they would like to see in the packet, to let us know. Mayor Wiza stated we will include it with the Council packets.

Mayor Wiza asked that the letter be emailed to all the alderpersons tomorrow morning.

Ald. Kneebone questioned if our auditors would require an annual type of report in the future. C/T Ladick stated our auditors would not as the library is not a City operation.

C/T Ladick stated that the Portage County Library actually has a formal Foundation Board.

Mayor Wiza commented that this is a Portage County Library, so they do not do an annual report to the City, but it is available publically and anyone can look at it.

Larry Oathout, Director of the Portage County Public Library, stated they do have a spreadsheet set up, just for this money, that divides it up based on all the original donors and their requirements. He stated that the money is put into a bank account and it is left to accumulate for several years and then it is moved over to another account that they then spend it from. They are always willing to share the information.

Ald. McComb stated that she is on the Library Board, and she was on the Foundation Board for a while, and the bookkeeping is excellent.

Ald. Johnson asked what the rate of return is on the endowment. C/T Ladick stated right now it is in a municipal bond and making about 3%. Mayor Wiza asked Ald. Johnson what the Community Foundation is making, she replied 5%, which is in longer term investments, 80% bonds, 20% stocks. C/T Ladick stated that for the City, a stock or an equity is not an authorized investment under State Statute.

Motion made by Ald. Kneebone, seconded by Ald. McComb, to transfer the Library Endowment to the Portage County Public Library Foundation, contingent upon receiving the letter regarding the transfer.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Motion carried.

**ITEM #4 - SETTLEMENT AND CLOSEOUT OF THE ROOM TAX FUND, INCLUDING TRANSFERS TO THE WILLETT ICE ARENA FUND, ARTS CENTER FUND, AND RIVERFRONT RENDEZVOUS FUND.**

C/T Ladick explained that there have been a lot of changes in the past few years regarding room tax. Starting 1-1-17, the monies that are collected for room tax and designated for tourism promotion and development are now under the Tourism Commission. Everything that was collected before 2017 is still under the control of the City Council. We had to wait until the year was completed to do the final closeout. In the past, when the City controlled it, we had different categories designated, including major projects, planned maintenance, special events and the Riverfront Arts Center.

C/T Ladick explained that in order to allocate the remaining monies, we matched the various categories to the appropriate funds. The amount remaining in major projects and planned maintenance was put into the Willett Ice Arena fund because the plan for that money was to support some major upgrades to the Arena. We also have a \$100,000 transfer to the debt service fund to cover some money that the major projects fund owed for the Goerke Stadium renovation that happened 7-8 years ago. The money designated for the Riverfront Arts Center was transferred to the Arts Center fund. He also noted that not all money in the Riverfront Arts Center is room tax dollars, there are also donations, art sales proceeds, etc. It started out as a Room Tax Entity and started out in that Fund, but since then we have created a different fund, so it is basically moving the money into that Fund. We would then like the money that was left in the Special Events Fund moved to the Riverfront Rendezvous Fund to stay with the original intentions of how the room tax monies were divided when it was under the City Councils authority.

Motion made by Ald. Johnson, seconded by Ald. McComb, to transfer \$100,000 to the Debt Service Fund (Fund 300), \$352,169.77 to the Willett Ice Arena Fund (Fund 249), \$80,570.74 to the Arts Center Fund (Fund 251) and \$12,890.12 to the Riverfront Fund (Fund 215).

Ayes: All                      Nays: None                      Motion carried.

**ITEM #5 – CONTRACT WITH STATE OF WISCONSIN FOR WEIGHTS AND MEASURES INSPECTION SERVICES.**

C/T Ladick stated that this is a recurring contract with the State of Wisconsin. He stated the price did increase a little bit, but not significantly.

Ald. Johnson questioned if we can recoup any of the increased fees with inspection fees. Director Ostrowski replied we can look at it based on the number of samples.

Ald. Kneebone stated it is consumer confidence too, we know we are getting what we pay for.

Ald. McComb stated the scale at her store is inspected too and cautions against adding more fees to the very small businesses.

Motion made by Ald. Johnson, seconded by Ald. Shorr, to approve the contract with the State of Wisconsin for weights and measures inspection services.

Ayes: All                      Nays: None                      Motion carried.

**ITEM #6 – CONTRACT WITH LARRY’S HELPING HAND LLC FOR WEED REMOVAL AND NUISANCE ABATEMENT.**

Motion made by Ald. Johnson, seconded by Ald. Shorr, to approve the contract with Larry's Helping Hand LLC for weed removal and nuisance abatement.

Ald. Johnson questioned how we are defining weeds and if the 15% markup on the disposal fee was for another disposal site because yard waste is banned at landfills. Mayor Wiza replied that she was correct and stated the weeds are defined in the ordinance, but is not just weeds, it's also grass clippings. Director Ostrowski stated weeds and grass and anywhere an order is issued by the Community Development office. The 15% markup would also pertain to bulk items. He stated the

definition is vegetation that is in violation of our ordinance in terms of the height, whether its grass, obnoxious weeds, etc. There are people who turn in natural landscape plans to their office, so those would not be a problem.

Ald. McComb questioned what nuisance abatement was. Director Ostrowski stated it would be stuff left at the curb, garbage in the yard, etc. This contractor does nuisance abatement, grass and weed removal as well as snow and ice.

Ald. Johnson stated that since we are seeing more and more managed yards and we want to have a definition of what weeds are to know what is acceptable and what is not.

Ald. Kneebone questioned if we follow what the State has for a definition of noxious weeds, Director Ostrowski replied yes.

Ayes: All                      Nays: None                      Motion carried.

**ITEM #7 – APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF CLAIMS.**

Motion made by Ald. Johnson, seconded by Ald. Kneebone, to accept the payment of claims in the amount of \$907,862.21.

Ayes: All                      Nays: None                      Motion carried.

**ITEM #8 – ADJOURN INTO CLOSED SESSION (APPROXIMATELY 6:50 P.M.) PURSUANT TO WISCONSIN STATUTES 19.85(1)(E) (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) ON THE FOLLOWING: A. NEGOTIATING THE POTENTIAL PURCHASE, SALE, AND/OR LEASE OF REAL ESTATE IN ORDER TO MEET CURRENT NEEDS FOR CITY ADMINISTRATIVE AND POLICE DEPARTMENT FACILITIES.**

Motion made by Ald. McComb, seconded by Ald. Johnson, to adjourn into closed session at 7:28 P.M.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Johnson, Kneebone, McComb, Shorr, and Phillips                      Nays: None  
Motion carried.

Adjourned in closed session at 7:54 P.M.