

City of Stevens Point Meeting Minutes

Special Common Council Meeting

December 3, 2008, 6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, County-City Building

Mayor Andrew Halverson, presiding Roll Call: Alderpersons Myers, Walther, Hanson, Wiza, Heart, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik, Brooks

Absent: Alderperson Moore.

Also Present: Clerk Moe, Comptroller/Treasurer Schlice, City Attorney Molepske, Police Chief Morris, Fire Chief Zinda, Director Schrader, Assessor Siebers, Capt. Ruder, Reid Rocheleau, Dave Schleihs, Jan Seiler.

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2. Finance Committee minutes of budget hearing held on November 5, 2008.

3. Public hearing on the general local municipal budget for 2009.

4. Resolution adopting the budget for the City of Stevens Point for the year 2009.

5. Resolution appropriating necessary funds for the City of Stevens Point for 2009 and levying the tax rate for the year 2008.

6. Resolution providing for writing special assessments and special charges into the tax roll for 2008.

7. Adjournment.

2. Finance Committee minutes of the budget hearing held on November 5, 2008.

Ald. Stroik moved, Ald. Walther seconded to approve the Finance Committee minutes of the budget hearing held on November 5, 2008. Ayes, all; nays, none; motion carried.

3. Public hearing on the general local municipal budget for 2009.

Mayor Halverson called the public hearing open. As no one wished to speak the Mayor closed the public hearing.

4. Resolution adopting the budget for the City of Stevens Point for the year 2009.

Ald. Myers, moved, Ald. Molski seconded, to adopt the budget for the City of Stevens Point for the year 2009.

Ald. Wiza asked if the City would lose the additional patrol officer grant funding if the two senior people at the Police Department do not retire and the two officers with the least seniority are let go as one of these positions is subsidized by the grant.

Chief Morris said the funding would not be lost as the number of officers on the street will be the same. The City will keep the grant.

Ald. Wiza asked if the City has that in writing.

Chief Morris replied that the Department has spoken with the State and they have signed off on the City's plans. While the State would not put it in writing, it is their interpretation that the Department did increase the number of officers on the street in compliance with the grant

Ald. Wiza said the proposed budget takes into account the creation of a new department. He asked if, for example, the new I.T. position does not get approved, how that would affect the Department and the budget.

C/T Schlice said that once the budget is approved, the departments will have to work with those numbers.

Dave Schleihs, President of the Police and Fire Commission, stated that the priority of the Commission is to maintain street level services. If the other position changes do not come to fruition then they will have to make adjustments as needed.

Ald. Wiza is concerned that their plan is based on the Department having two people retire.

Mayor Halverson noted that if the retirements do not occur, then there would be a downward shift in rank. The officers with the least amount of seniority would lose their positions.

Dave Schleihs stated their goal is to not lose any of the street level positions.

Chief Morris noted that if the Department does not do this, positions would still have to be cut because of the shortfall. He has not heard any other option. He would not have spent six months on this if he didn't think it was a reality. The "what if" that has been happening has caused a lot of consternation among the young officers and others. He does not know how to find \$300,000 in the Department's budget other than to get it in personnel.

Ald. Wiza asked what the savings are for the worst case scenario if there are no retirements and two officers are let go.

Mayor Halverson noted that there is downward pressure on the salaries as the individuals would drop in rank.

Chief Morris stated that with the cut the City would eliminate the Captain and Lieutenant positions so they would have forty-three officers instead of 45. The savings would be from those two positions and other savings. It is unfair to look at only this scenario and imply that it is the only scenario to get \$300,000. If the City does not get the voluntary retirements then the Department will have to go back and reexamine how to get the savings but the focus will be on personnel.

Ald. Wiza said he was under the impression that officers were not all making the same amount.

Chief Morris stated that they have steps - an entry level, a two year step, and a five year step.

Ald. Wiza said then there would be a reduction in savings in the worst case scenario.

Chief Morris replied that this is correct.

Mayor Halverson said that is not correct. The positions the Council is eliminating have a total value of approximately \$195,000. If the individuals in those positions stay on and are pushed down, their new salaries are lower than what they are making now.

Ald. Wiza asked what is the potential savings then that are lost.

Mayor Halverson said it would be minimal, a couple of thousand.

Capt. Ruder said they ran the numbers for the worst case scenario and came up with \$60,000.

Chief Morris and Mayor Halverson disagreed with those figures as two management positions would be eliminated so there would be savings in salary and benefits amounting to nearly \$200,000.

Chief Morris said the Department will run the numbers and get it to the alderpersons. He noted again that these are two management positions being eliminating. If the individuals stay on then they would be bumped down into positions that are already there.

Ald. Stroik asked for clarification on the reduction of pay if people are shifted down.

Chief Morris stated that pay is set by time on the job and grade. He will get them the information tomorrow.

Ald. Wiza said the Department should have done a worst case scenario.

Dave Schleih said the Commission would have to reevaluate the situation if the management positions are not eliminated.

Mayor Halverson noted that the \$300,000 is the total reduction for both the Police and Fire Departments.

Ald. Molski said the Department has a total budget to work with and will have to make adjustments if needed. She believes that Council members should not be trying to micromanage them. Whatever they have to do to make it work that is their job and that is what they were hired for.

Ald. Brooks wanted to confirm that the number of officers on the streets would not be reduced.

Dave Schleih said that is the goal of the Commission.

Ald. Slowinski asked about the \$10,000 that was moved from the General Fund to the Room Tax.

C/T Schlice said that on page 43 the fund balance usage was adjusted to balance it out to zero. The City has had money sitting in the Room Tax account that has not been expended in prior years. As this is a non-levy fund, the adjustment is made at the end of the year for the new budget so it balances out.

Roll Call: Ayes: Myers, Walther, Hanson, Wiza, Heart, Slowinski, Molski, Stroik, Brooks.

Nays: Trzebiatowski. Motion Adopted (Vote: 9-1).

5. Resolution appropriating necessary funds for the City of Stevens Point for 2009 and levying the tax rate for the year 2008.

Ald. Stroik moved, Ald. Walther seconded, approval of the Resolution appropriating necessary funds for the City of Stevens Point for 2009 and levying the tax rate for the year 2008.

Roll Call: Ayes: Myers, Walther, Hanson, Wiza, Heart, Trzebiatowski, Slowinski, Molski, Stroik, Brooks.

Nays: None, Motion Adopted (Vote: 10-0).

6. Resolution providing for writing special assessments and special charges into the tax roll for 2008.

Ald. Molski moved, Ald. Slowinski seconded, approval of the Resolution providing for writing special assessments and special charges into the tax roll for 2008.

Roll Call: Ayes: Myers, Walther, Hanson, Wiza, Heart, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik, Brooks.

Nays: None, Motion Adopted (Vote: 10-0).

Adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

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