

Meeting Minutes
Finance Committee
May 14, 2007, 7:15 P.M.
City Water Department, 300 Bliss Ave.

PRESENT: Alderpersons Molski, Walther, Moore, Stroik and Hanson
ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Halverson; C/T Schlice; City Attorney Molepske; City Clerk Moe; Directors Euclide, Gardner, Schrader, Halverson; Fire Chief Barnes; Chief Morris; Capt. Ruder; Deputy C/T Wroblewski; Ald. Wiza, Barber, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Myers, Heart; Gene Kemmeter; Mary Ann Laszewski; Jamie Gebert; Bonnie Groshek; Bernice Sevenich; Tony Karner; Ron Newby

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1. Request from the Association of Downtown Businesses for an additional three years funding.
2. Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) application.
3. Report on ANR lawsuit settlement.
4. Official newspaper designation.
5. Additional items for 2007A short term borrowing: A) Repair fire truck \$42,000 B) Cost share for Portage County Sheriff's Dept. firing range \$20,000 C) Repairs to Fire Station II cost unknown D) Police "in squad" video camera system \$58,000
6. Annual TIF report.
7. Purchase of land from Tony's Landscaping. (End of Mason St.)
8. Sale of land behind 1000 Main St.
9. Funding for an ATM.
10. Authorization to negotiate the purchase of 172 W Clark St.
11. Animal License/Ordinance.
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13. Approval of payment of claims.
14. Adjournment.

1. REQUEST FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES FOR AN ADDITIONAL THREE YEARS FUNDING.

C/T Schlice stated that for the past three years the City has allocated \$30,000 for the Association of Downtown Businesses. The Association is requesting another three year allocation of \$30,000 for the continued development of the downtown program. The requested amount is the same so it would be an extension of a current grant and would not require additional new levy funds.

Jamie Gebert, Association of Downtown Businesses Manager, stated that herself, Bonnie Groshek, who is the Treasurer of the Association, and several other Board Members were here to answer any questions.

Ald. Stroik questioned if this \$30,000 is budgeted annually or if we plan on this on a yearly basis.

C/T Schlice stated that it was a three year contract and they are requesting another three year agreement, so we do it year by year.

Ald. Stroik questioned Jamie Gebert if they are getting more self sufficient.

Jamie Gebert answered they are trying to become more self sufficient but will need the additional \$30,000 for the next few years. Main Street programs suggest that to be a successfully that funding should be a third, a third and a third, with a third coming from City Government, a third from people in the Downtown and a third from constituents or businesses at large.

Ald. Stroik questioned how much the County Government gave, he thought it was about \$20,000.

Jamie Gebert stated that this past year Mark Maslowski increased that by another \$10,000, so they are actually giving \$30,000. She stated that they do go back to them year after year and ask them for money also.

Bernice Sevenich, 1324 4th Avenue, stated that she is on the Board and when government agencies contribute people appreciate it and it is a help when asking others for donations. She also stated that Main Street Downtown has changed a lot in the past few years and it looks a lot better than it did a number of years ago.

Ald. Trzebiatowski questioned if the one third from the Downtown Association is from membership or donations.

Jamie Gebert replied a little of both.

Motion made by Ald. Hanson, seconded by Ald. Walther to approve the request from the Association of Downtown Businesses for an additional three years of funding at \$30,000 for each year.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

2. WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVES PROGRAM (WHIP) APPLICATION.

C/T Schlice stated this program is for work on the Plover River. The City cost will be limited to some staff time and equipment usage.

Ald. Moore questioned Director Schrader if he felt we have met and reviewed all the requirements from the Department of Agriculture.

Director Schrader replied there is an office in the Annex Building that deals with federal grants that is handling all of that.

Motion made by Ald. Stroik, seconded by Ald. Molski to approve the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program Application.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

3. REPORT ON THE ANR PIPELINE LAWSUIT SETTLEMENT.

City Attorney Molepske stated that an agreement was reached between ANR Pipeline, the residents and the City. The basic agreement is that 10

feet on either side of the pipeline will be clear cut and the remaining 15 feet on either side of the pipeline will be maintained so that there are no plantings that exceed 5 feet in height. The City will do the first trimming and after that the property owners will be responsible.

Motion made by Ald. Molski, seconded by Ald. Moore to settle the lawsuit with ANR Pipeline.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

4. OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER DESIGNATION.

C/T Schlice stated that only one proposal was submitted and per State Statute, the Portage County Gazette will be the official newspaper for the next year.

Motion made by Ald. Molski, seconded by Ald. Moore to accept the report and place it on file.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

5. ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR 2007A SHORT TERM BORROWING. A. REPAIR FIRE TRUCK \$42,000 B. COST SHARE FOR PORTAGE COUNTY SHERIFFS DEPT. FIRING RANGE \$20,000 C. REPAIRS TO FIRE STATION 2 - COST UNKNOWN D. POLICE "IN SQUAD" VIDEO CAMERA SYSTEM \$58,000

C/T Schlice stated previously the Finance Committee and Common Council approved a short term borrowing for \$1,000,000 for road maintenance projects. He has held off the actual borrowing so that we could include any additional expenditures required for Fire Station 2. As previously reported there would also be a couple of additional items added to the borrowing. The options for the Fire Station repair/upgrade will be presented at the June hearings. It is more cost effective to combine all the items into a single borrowing rather than have separate issues. There is a mention in the Chief's memo a request for a vehicle storage building. This has not been included in this borrowing as it is being studied along with needs of other departments and a recommendation will be forwarded to the Committee at a later date. He will be holding off the borrowing until about July so that we can include Fire Station 2 repairs.

Ald. Molski asked Police Chief Morris to explain the Police "in squad" video camera system.

Police Chief Morris stated these are similar to the "Cop" shows on TV in which they are installed in the car and can record traffic stops, etc. It is becoming very common in squad cars especially helpful in one person cars where your credibility is out there. You can establish probable cause when you are videotaping that driver's actions, and it also has an inboard camera with audio and video. This is a good system from a liability standpoint.

Ald. Trzebiatowski asked how many squad cars will have these systems.

Police Chief Morris replied that all of our marked squads will have them.

Ald. Moore questioned that Portage County has realized an insurance savings on this, has it been looked at as to what it will do for us.

C/T Schlice stated it would be included in our renewal and it may make a difference.

Ald. Stroik questioned the fire truck repair and whether or not there is an advantage to repairing that old of a piece of equipment or when it is scheduled to be replaced.

Fire Chief Barnes replied that is not the oldest truck, it is 16 years old, but that is life in Wisconsin, the water tank has rusted through. It is actually a water tank within the fire engine that carries about 500 gallons. The other truck they have is 23 years old. He stated it is the call of the Council to either replace or repair.

Ald. Stroik asked when it normally comes up for replacement. He stated that 16 years old is old technology, do we want to be sticking that kind of money into something that old.

Fire Chief Barnes stated it is not the next one to be replaced, that is the 23 year old engine.

Director Euclide stated that it is already out for repair, we have to repair it because even if it was decided tonight to replace it, it would take almost a year to get a new one and he does not think we can be without one for that long. He also stated that it does need to be replaced as some other equipment.

Ald. Molski questioned if the vehicle replacement plan for the City vehicles been looked at recently.

Director Euclide replied that it is done every year.

C/T Schlice stated that the problem we have with the cost of a fire truck virtually eliminates replacing any other vehicles for a couple of years.

Ald. Trzebiatowski questioned the Fire Chief on whether the corrosion is internal or external.

Fire Chief Barnes stated that it is external and in the area of the wheel wells.

Motion made by Ald. Stroik, seconded by Ald. Hanson to approve the short term borrowing for 2007A.

Ald. Stroik commented that if we have a 16 and a 23 year old apparatus and the City continues to grow, he would like to make sure that is looked at that and review it this year, prior to budget so that we do not end up with a major problem and not have good equipment to protect our citizens.

Mayor Halverson stated that is already being done in his office. They are starting to engage dialog in interesting ways, especially when it comes to fire equipment, perhaps cooperative measures with other municipalities in the area, specifically perhaps replacing the ladder truck, which is the oldest and it is probably the most important for the City's ISO rating from an insurance perspective. We understand, very clearly, the need that department has right now, the only problem is we are not talking about a \$30,000 pickup, we are talking about a \$750,000 to a \$1,000,000 dollar

vehicle, so the ways in which we go about that will be intricate, but the message is loud and clear and it will be a priority.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

6. ANNUAL TIF REPORT.

C/T Schlice stated this is just for information as we have only had one year into the TIF, so there is not a lot of activity. The set up costs are in there and some of the tax increments. In the past, basically how we informed the other taxing jurisdictions that are part of the TIF districts, the schools, the technical college, etc. is giving them a page out of our annual audit and now the standards have changed slightly and we issue them a more formal report. He figures that it is best if the Council members be informed of that as well so that they can keep track of what is happening in the TIF districts each year by types of expenditures going out, revenues coming in and it makes it easier to understand when we come in for different requests for the committees. By next year a lot more activity will show up, this was a start up year, so those are very slow and small.

Motion made by Ald. Molski, seconded by Ald. Hanson to accept the annual TIF report and place it on file.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

7. PURCHASE OF LAND FROM TONY'S LANDSCAPING. (END OF MASON ST.)

C/T Schlice stated after many months of negotiations back and forth and trying to determine where the landfill area was, we have been able to establish a line where the actual landfill is and that has been indicated on the map that is in the packet. We came into an agreement on two basic parts, the smaller square would be an area where Tony would be allowed to back in and maneuver his trucks and the other section would be fenced off and not used for anything. That section is over the landfill, so it would be protected. The price that has been agreed to is \$23,000. The City Attorney and Tony's attorney have not been able to complete the agreement due to schedule conflicts, that agreement with all the conditions would be sent to the Council next Monday, along with the conditional use, which was approved by the Plan Commission a couple of months ago.

Ald. Hanson asked if the City was providing the maintenance and road material in the area where Tony will be backing up trucks, or if that was Tony's responsibility.

City Attorney Molepske replied that Tony will be responsible for the material, but there is a lot there already that has been compacted down.

Ald. Stroik questioned if by leaving the responsibility to Tony if that still leaves the City at risk if the garbage gets disturbed. He believes that we should eliminate any risks to the City.

Director Euclide replied there is already 2 - 3 feet of fill over the garbage now.

Ald. Molski questioned if it would be possible to add that Tony needs to maintain the fill in an acceptable condition.

City Attorney replied this area has been driven on for a long time, so it should not be a problem. There is a lot of fill there already and it is compacted down.

Ald. Moore questioned if this area is actually part of the main landfill or is it on the very edge.

Director Euclide stated that he does not think it was part of the landfill.

Ald. Trzebiatowski questioned if it was capped by today's standards.

Director Euclide stated it was not.

Mary Ann Laszewski, 1209 Wisconsin Street, expressed her desire for the City to purchase the entire lot. She also questioned if side access is being allowed.

Mayor Halverson commended Mary Ann Laszewski for her research and appreciates her hard work but does disagree with her. He stated that he is opposed to purchasing the whole lot. He feels that it is an appropriate use of the land, between a wastewater treatment plant, an asphalt plant and next to the old landfill, that is the reality of the situation. The realities that face us are that it is an appropriate use and there were grave environmental concerns that we are working on by purchasing a portion of this property. He would be completely opposed to any thought of purchasing all of it. Mr. Karner came through with an idea for a use that is certainly allowed and appropriate for that particular site and we have an opportunity to take all the environmental concerns out of the equation by purchasing a fencing off the area and he certainly would suggest approving the \$23,000 purchase of that portion.

Motion made by Ald. Moore, seconded by Ald. Walther to purchase the land from Tony's Landscaping for \$23,000.

Ald. Stroik questioned the side access or secondary access.

Ald. Moore stated that the City Attorney had the authority to negotiate the agreement and if that was part of the negotiations, he had the right to do it.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

8. SALE OF LAND BEHIND 1000 MAIN STREET.

C/T Schlice stated that we advertised the property as directed after the last Council meeting and we had two people take out proposals and one submitted. The bid was from Mr. Schertz for \$9,000, which is slightly higher than what was submitted last month, with the agreement of all terms and conditions. He has received a check for payment in full and if the Council approves, it is already paid for. The only question that Mr. Schertz has is that all his crews and the mobilization costs are paid for and unless there is an objection tonight from any of the Alderman, he would like to start tomorrow and get working on it. He understands there is a gamble on getting approval before Council, but he would like to get started right away so he doesn't have to continue to pay for mobilization costs.

Ald. Stroik stated that it would cost us \$6,800 roughly, per Director Euclide's memo, to bring that up to speed and add the extra parking spots on our own, which then we could lease and still we would have ownership of that land, should we have to redevelop the Centerpoint Mall or the downtown. He questioned if that has been brought up to Mr. Schertz and what we are going to have to pay if we need that back. He is afraid that we will be paying a lot more to get it back.

C/T Schlice replied that is part of the agreement is that the City would have right of first refusal on the property. By itself, it would not be worth much. He stated that the Department of Public Works is not crazy about this spot from a maintenance standpoint.

Director Gardner stated that area will likely continue to be used as a loading area.

Ald. Stroik asked what the current revenue is from generated parking because those are all leased as of today by Mr. Schertz for his tenants.

Director Gardner replied about \$20-\$25 per month.

C/T Schlice stated about \$1300 per year.

Director Gardner stated that Public Works is responsible for snow removal now, but will not be if it is sold.

Director Euclide stated that at \$25 per month, it is not a money maker when you look at maintenance aspect of it.

Director Gardner encouraged the selling of the property. Mr. Schertz does a good job at developing the downtown.

C/T Schlice stated that the redevelopment increases the values of the buildings so taxes go up on those properties.

Ald. Heart questioned if there was a timetable on the project.

C/T Schlice replied he is pouring sidewalks and as soon as he finishes on the sidewalk and concrete work he would like to move the crew over and do it now. So within the next couple of months he should have it done.

Ald. Heart would still like a timetable set.

C/T Schlice replied that he stated he would start and finish it this week and then he would do the landscaping following that.

Motion made by Ald. Stroik, seconded by Ald. Molski to sell the land behind 1000 Main Street to Tim Schertz for \$9,000 and all work needs to be completed by September 1, 2007.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

C/T Schlice questioned if there was any objection to him starting on that tomorrow.

Ald. Moore stated he did not think that was an appropriate question because you are asking us to form a quorum on a decision that has not been made yet.

9. FUNDING FOR AN ATM MACHINE.

C/T Schlice stated many requests have been made for an ATM to our office and the Clerk of Courts. Due to the fees and restrictions associated with them, we cannot take VISA and Mastercard over the counter. Normally in retail businesses, they will take your VISA or Mastercard and the merchant pays the discounted fee and that is how they make their money, but in government, we do not have the authority to absorb the fees so we have to charge on top and when you put the fee on top, Mastercard and VISA will not let you take it over the counter. It can be done over the phone or over the internet as we do for our tax payments. The Clerk of Courts office has many requests for ATMs for a variety of reasons. This is something you see in a lot of businesses. The cost of the machine should be able to be recouped in a two year period with a minimum amount of transactions per week. The City Treasurer's Office would maintain it and this would be a customer service that we add for our customers at no cost in the long run. We are asking for authorization to fund the ATM, maintain it and provide another customer service.

Ald. Stroik questioned if there is routine payments that come in monthly where \$20 or \$100 of cash withdraws would pay their bill because he does not envision people coming in to take out enough to pay their taxes or even supplying enough money in the machine to do that.

C/T Schlice replied that we get the requests more for the bartenders licenses, pet licenses and people that need Clerk of Courts transactions. Nobody is going to come in to take out \$1600 because we will have a cap on it.

Ald. Hanson questioned how it will be funded, whether it be petty cash or whatever and also about the security issues. It is going to have to be filled on a daily or weekly basis and you do have checks and balances already set up so that two people are going to be there putting the money in, etc., but what do you have for safe and security.

C/T Schlice stated this will be funded in the same manner as our cash registers. There is a courier service that picks up our cash each day for the bank, which is done at no charge. As we need additional funds, we would order it from the bank, the bank would deliver it back and the money would be returned back into our account within 24 hours on any withdrawals and the two dollar fee for each transaction would be returned to us on a monthly basis. We would see what we are going to need for money on hand after having it for a few weeks. We are not going to have \$20,000 - \$30,000 cash on hand, we would work it more through the courier service.

Ald. Molski questioned whether or not the machine will be put on the City side of the building. She stated that if the County would not fund the machine, we are certainly not going to put it on the County side.

C/T Schlice stated that we would have to look at see where the most revenue generated.

Ald. Molski replied that if they need the ATM, they will walk across the hall.

C/T Schlice stated that we are talking about putting it on the City side and we would put signs around the building saying where the ATM is

located.

Ald. Stroik asked why the Portage County Finance Committee rejected that proposal.

C/T Schlice stated he was not at that meeting, so he did not know.

Motion made by Ald. Molski, seconded by Ald. Moore to approve the funding of the ATM, with location to be on the City side of the building.

Ald. Moore stated there has been a lot of discussion on this which seems kind of silly because it is a good service to have and will provide a little bit of income too.

Ald. Walther stated that he is disappointed in Portage County. He supports the funding and stated that we owe this to our citizens.

C/T Schlice stated we are not talking about a lot of money, the machine is under \$4,000.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

10. AUTHORIZATION TO NEGOTIATE THE PURCHASE OF 172 W CLARK ST.

Ald. Molski stated that Ald. Stroik has submitted a memo that he was approached by the property owner that he is interested in selling to the City.

C/T Schlice stated the request is to authorize the Mayor and Comptroller to negotiate with Mr. Newby and come back with total cost next month.

Motion made by Ald. Stroik, seconded by Ald. Hanson to authorize the Mayor and Comptroller to negotiate the purchase of 172 W. Clark Street.

Ald. Stroik commented those who have been around the KASH playground around 3 p.m., know that even without the grand opening yet, the traffic is so high in that area, it is hard to get around. He believes this was a good addition to Stevens Point and that he thinks we need to take the next step here to provide service to the taxpayers and alleviate some of the congestion that is happening on W. Whitney Street.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

11. ANIMAL LICENSE/ORDINANCE.

C/T Schlice stated this is to bring our ordinance up to par with what we are charging as per the agreement with Portage County for animal control and services last year and the year before. We had a citizen that looked at the website and spotted that the amounts for the dog licenses did not match the ordinance with what we were charging, so this would fix that problem.

Motion made by Ald. Molski, seconded by Ald. Stroik to approve the animal license/ordinance.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

12. AUTHORIZATION TO HIRE OUTSIDE ASSESSMENT FIRM.

C/T Schlice stated an offer went out to hire a new Assessor and there has been a little time lag on not having a full-time Assessor in the office and we are looking for authorization for the new Assessor to spend up to \$10,000 with an outside firm if the new Assessor so deems it necessary to help complete the assessment records and forms that need to be filed with the State. We already have \$5,000 in the budget for reassessment services so we are looking for the authorization for another \$5,000 and the new Assessor can report back as to whether they needed the funds or not. We would like to give him the tools so that when he comes into employment so that he can get the job done so that he can start on next years assessments as soon possible.

Motion made by Ald. Moore, seconded by Ald. Hanson to approve the authorization to hire the outside assessment firm.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

13. APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF CLAIMS.

The claims were discussed.

Motion made by Ald. Walther, seconded by Ald. Molski to approve the payment of claims in the amount of \$747,344.57.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

Adjournment at 8:15 p.m.

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