

Meeting Minutes

Regular City Council Meeting

December 18, 2006, 7:00 P.M.

Council Chambers, County-City Building

Mayor Gary W. Wescott, presiding

Roll Call: Ald. Sevenich, Walther, Hanson, Wiza, Robinson, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik, Barber, Moore

Also Present: City Attorney Molepske, City Clerk Moe, Comptroller/Treasurer Schlice, Directors Gardner, Schrader, Euclide, Halverson; Police Chief Morris, Fire Chief Barnes, Assessor Kuehn, Personnel Specialist Jakusz, Fleet Maintenance Supervisor Laidlaw, Alex Saunders, Kari Yenter, Gene Kemmeter (Portage County Gazette)

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4. Persons who wish to address the Mayor and Council on specific agenda items other than a "Public Hearing" must register their request at this time. Those who wish to address the Common Council during a "Public Hearing" are not required to identify themselves until the "Public Hearing" is declared open by the Mayor.
5. Persons who wish to address the Mayor and Council for up to three (3) minutes on a non-agenda item.
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18. Mayor's appointments: Director of Community Development; Director of Parks and Recreation Services; Director of Public Works; Director of Water and Sewage Treatment
19. Election of Assessor.
20. Appointment of Election Officials.
21. Adjournment.

2. Salute to the Flag and Mayor's opening remarks.

Mayor Wescott noted no action will be taken at tonight's meeting on the Skate Board Park. This matter is tentatively schedule for the February Plan Commission meeting.

Mayor Wescott announced that item #11 of tonight's agenda is being directed to Finance Committee in January, 2007. The Mayor had received numerous calls in regards to the salary so he would like another opportunity to review it. The Council has until the February Council meeting to act on the Mayor's salary.

Mayor Wescott noted another change to the Council agenda is the Persons who wish to address the Mayor and Council has been moved from the end of the agenda to early in the agenda.

Mayor Wescott said the next year will be a year of change and transition. If all six candidates who registered for Mayor qualify for the ballot, Mayor Wescott will call for a Special Common Council meeting on January 4, 2007. The Mayor thanked the Council members and city staff for their professionalism and hard work. He also thanked the citizens of Stevens Point who volunteered their time to serve this community.

3. Approval of the minutes of the Regular Common Council meeting of November 20, 2006.

Ald. Moore moved, Ald. Hanson seconded, for approval of the regular Common Council minutes of November 20, 2006.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none. Motion carried.

4. Persons who wish to address the Mayor and Council on specific agenda items other than a "Public Hearing" must register their request at this time. Those who wish to address the Common Council during a "Public Hearing" are not required to identify themselves until the "Public Hearing" is declared open by the Mayor.

Andrew Halverson Item #5 - Persons who wish to address Mayor and Council
6723 Oak Tree Road
Stevens Point, WI 54481

Reid Rocheleau Item #5 - Persons who wish to address Mayor and Council
408 Cedar Street Item #10 - Personnel Committee meeting of December 11, 2006
Whiting, WI Item #18 - Mayor's appointments

Mary Ann Laszewski Item #5 - Persons who wish to address Mayor and Council
1209 Wisconsin Street
Stevens Point, WI 54481

Ald. C. J. Robinson Item #5 - Persons who wish to address Mayor and Council
1600 Fremont Street

Stevens Point, WI 54481

5. Persons who wish to address the Mayor and Council for up to three (3) minutes on a non-agenda item.

Andrew Halverson, 6723 Oak Tree Road, is a candidate for Mayor and a business owner in the city. He will also become a city resident in about a month. He suggested considering a primary election if the numerous candidates move forward with the submission of their nomination papers.

Reid Rocheleau, 408 Cedar Street, noted it is not in the standing rules that the Mayor change the Council agenda. The agenda must be set 48 hours before the meeting. The Mayor's duty is to set the agenda, not to change it. Mr. Rocheleau discussed his concerns about a newspaper article on the Judge's ruling for the Village of Whiting's plant.

Mary Ann Laszewski, 1209 Wisconsin Street, said only the Council has the authority to change agenda items. Ms. Laszewski recommended the Council consider keeping the Mayor's salary on tonight's agenda. She discussed her concerns with setting the Mayor's salary so late. The deadline for filing papers for Mayor is only two weeks away. She noted some have even suggested lowering the salary to keep the taxes down. The City will get what they pay for. A qualified Mayor will return his salary in growth and jobs. She noted that many of the Directors and Police Captains are making more money than the Mayor.

Ald. C. J. Robinson, 1600 Fremont Street, announced the Skate Board Park neighborhood meeting will be held at the Park and Recreation Building on December 19, 2006, at 6:30 p.m. Ald. Robinson will not seek re-election as the Fifth District alderperson. Anyone interested in running for Fifth District alderperson should contact the City Clerk or Ald. Robinson.

6. Plan Commission meeting of December 4, 2006.

Ald. Moore moved, Ald. Wiza seconded, for approval of the Plan Commission minutes of December 4, 2006.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none. Motion carried.

7. Public hearing - request to operate a Group Home at 1034 Francis Street as a conditional use, was declared open by the Mayor.

As no one wished to speak, the Mayor declared the public hearing closed.

8. Resolution on the above.

Ald. Moore moved, Ald. Barber seconded, for approval of the resolution as presented.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Moore, Barber, Stroik, Molski, Trzebiatowski, Slowinski, Robinson, Wiza, Hanson, Walther, Sevenich.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

9. Public Protection Committee meeting of December 11, 2006.

Ald. Slowinski moved, Ald. Walther seconded, for approval of the Public Protection Committee minutes of December 11, 2006.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none. Motion carried.

10. Personnel Committee meeting of December 11, 2006.

The Chair requested to refer the item on the Mayor's salary to the Finance Committee in January.

Ald. Molski moved, Ald. Trzebiatowski seconded, to table action on item #2 of the Personnel Committee minutes of December 11, 2006 and sending it to the Finance Committee.

Ald. Wiza asked for an opinion from the City Attorney in regards to this issue.

City Attorney Molepske said the Chair had requested that this matter be sent to the Finance Committee unless there is an objection on the floor. The City Attorney discussed tabling action.

Mayor Wescott said there is a difference between postponing and tabling action.

Ald. Molski asked what is the difference.

City Attorney Molepske said a postponement is debatable and sends it back to a day certain to another committee. To table, there is no debate. It is laid on the table for later on so it would go to the end of the meeting. If no alderperson takes it from the table, it dies.

AMENDED MOTION:

Ald. Molski moved, Ald. Trzebiatowski seconded, to amend the motion to postpone it until the next Finance Committee meeting in January, 2007.

Ald. Molski noted some information was provided to them this evening and it needs to be further discussed.

Ald. Wiza's opinion on the salary has changed based on the additional information he has received. He feels it is important for anyone who has comments to make regarding the salary be allowed to speak.

Mayor Wescott would like a fresh start. There will be ample opportunity for public input at two public meetings in January. The Mayor recommends sending this issue to the Finance Committee in January. He is no longer confident in the data provided in the memo that was supplied to the Personnel Committee.

Ald. Robinson is not sure there is a lot more to discuss. The alderman is disappointed the data and homework were not completed prior to the

Personnel Committee meeting.

Mayor Wescott said the memo was based on the alderpersons' input.

Ald. Stroik encouraged any citizen interested in running for Mayor to not let this issue deter them from taking out nomination papers. The Council will do what is best for the community.

Reid Rocheleau is discouraged that the Mayor is discussing alderpersons' private input. The salary should have been set before papers were taken out for this office.

Mayor Wescott stated in 1998, Mr. Rocheleau was opposed to the procedure of the alderpersons setting the Mayor's salary. The Mayor is confident that the candidates seeking office are not doing it for the paycheck. They are seeking office because they care about this community.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Sevenich, Walther, Hanson, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik, Moore.

Nays: Ald. Wiza, Robinson, Barber.

Ayes - 8. Nays - 3. Motion carried.

Ald. Moore moved, Ald. Molski seconded, to approve the remainder of the Personnel Committee minutes of December 11, 2006.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none. Motion carried.

11. Ordinance - Mayor's salary.

This item was removed from the agenda and sent to the Finance Committee in January, 2007.

12. Board of Public Works meeting of December 11, 2006.

Ald. Wiza moved, Ald. Slowinski seconded, for approval of the Board of Public Works minutes of December 11, 2006.

Ald. Trzebiatowski noted his name was misspelled in the minutes.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Moore, Barber, Stroik, Molski, Trzebiatowski, Slowinski, Robinson, Wiza, Hanson, Walther, Sevenich.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

13. Finance Committee meeting of December 11, 2006.

Ald. Molski moved, Ald. Stroik seconded, for approval of the Finance Committee minutes of December 11, 2006.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Sevenich, Walther, Hanson, Wiza, Robinson, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik, Barber, Moore.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

14. Board of Park Commissioners meeting of December 6, 2006.

Ald. Sevenich moved, Ald. Walther seconded, for approval of the Board of Park Commissioners minutes of December 6, 2006.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none. Motion carried.

15. Board of Water and Sewage Commissioners meeting of December 11, 2006.

Ald. Stroik moved, Ald. Wiza seconded, for approval of the Board of Water and Sewage Commissioners minutes of December 11, 2006.

Ald. Wiza pointed out the compliments from the Department of Natural Resources regarding the Department of Sewer and Water.

Mayor Wescott noted the resignation from David Eckholm and thanked him for his service.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none. Motion carried.

16. Reports:

Police and Fire Commission meetings of November 27, 2006 and December 12, 2006.

Statutory monthly financial report of the Comptroller-Treasurer.

Transportation Commission meeting of December 5, 2006.

Smongeski Health Fund meetings of October 30, 2006 and December 13, 2006.

Ald. Walther moved, Ald. Trzebiatowski seconded, to approve the reports and place them on file.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none.

17. Ambulance Service Agreement extension between the City of Stevens Point and Portage County.

Mayor Wescott stated the agreement will extend the current contract for an additional six months.

Ald. Moore moved, Ald. Sevenich seconded, approval of the six month extension.

Ald. Moore would like clarification on the comments made by the County Executive regarding the City failing some the contractual obligations specifically relating to accreditation.

Mayor Wescott said he has never heard concerns of noncompliance from the County. Both the City and County mutually agreed to suspend any exploration of accreditation because of cost and time commitment.

Ald. Moore said the current system works great. He commended the EMTs and Fire Department for a wonderful job.

Ald. Molski attended the meetings and this is the first she had heard about the accreditation issue.

Ald. Walther stated we do have an outstanding EMS system.

Ald. Wiza said the County Executive has never mentioned the accreditation to him. The alderman would like to see the Rapid Response unit semi-permanently placed perhaps in Amherst.

Fire Chief Barnes said more permanent placement of the unit has been addressed. We have an outstanding system.

Ald. Stroik questions the County's agenda on this issue.

Mayor Wescott said the County has said they want to improve response time to the outlying areas. There is still a lot of work ahead. The goal is to continue to preserve the quality system.

Ald. Stroik said if a separation of services between the City and County would occur, the citizens of Stevens Point will continue with the top rate EMS service. Unfortunately, as a city resident and county tax payer, if the separation would occur the city resident would pay for both services.

Mayor Wescott replied that is correct but the goal is to negotiate a long term commitment that continues to provide everyone with paramedic level coverage.

Ald. Trzebiatowski encouraged everyone to look at the EMS study.

Ald. Moore asked how much it will cost the County to provide this service.

Mayor Wescott said the City never received an answer to that question from the County.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Moore, Barber, Stroik, Molski, Trzebiatowski, Slowinski, Robinson, Wiza, Hanson, Walter, Sevenich.
Nays: None. Motion carried.

18. Mayor's appointments:

Director of Community Development

Director of Parks and Recreation Services

Director of Public Works

Director of Water and Sewage Treatment

Reid Rocheleau said the timing of these appointments does not make sense. The ordinance should be changed so the appointments are made in May. Mr. Rocheleau asked what would happen if the Council would postpone action on the appointments.

Ald. Robinson moved, Ald. Trzebiatowski seconded, for approval of the Mayor's appointments for the Director of Community Development, Director of Parks and Recreation Services, Director of Public Works and Director of Water and Sewage Treatment.

Ald. Robinson commended the Directors for a fine job.

Ald. Wiza asked if no action is taken on the appointments of the Directors what will happen.

City Attorney Molepske said their term ends on the last day of the year so if they are not appointed then we would no longer have any Directors. If a new Mayor is elected and decides he does not like the job performance of one of the Directors, it is his choice in two years not to reappoint that Director.

Ald. Wiza said there is a potential situation where if a certain candidate is elected, he will be an immediate family member of one of the Directors.

City Attorney Molepske said there is an administrative policy relating to this situation. It provides that no person who is related can hire that individual if they are the immediate supervisor. There is a provision that provides that such provision may be waived in the event the Council permits the same.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Sevenich, Walther, Hanson, Wiza, Robinson, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik, Barber, Moore.
Nays: None. Motion carried.

19. Election of Assessor.

Ald. Molski moved, Ald. Robinson seconded, to elect Carol Kuehn as the Assessor of Stevens Point for a two year term.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none. Motion carried.

20. Appointment of Election Officials.

Ald. Moore moved, Ald. Robinson seconded, for confirmation of the appointments of the Election Officials for 2005-2006.

Ald. Robinson noticed in certain districts, there is a need for Election Officials. Anyone interested in serving as a pollworker should contact the City Clerk's office.

Ald. Trzebiatowski said the lists are generated by the various political parties.

Roll Call: Ayes all.
Nays none. Motion carried.

21. Adjournment - 8:15 P.M.

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