

Meeting Minutes

Finance Committee

November 1, 2005, 6:30 P.M.

City Water Department, 300 Bliss Ave.

PRESENT: Chairman Barr, Ald. Molski, Walther, Moore, Stroik

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Wescott; C/T Schlice; City Clerk Moe; Ald. Sevenich, Robinson, Hanson, Trzebiatowski; Chief Morris; Chief Barnes; Directors Euclide, Gardner, Schrader; City Assessor Kuehn; Transit Manager Lemke; Heather Clark (Stevens Point Journal); Gene Kemmeter (Portage County Gazette); Jo Sieser

1 - REVIEW OF 2006 PROPOSED BUDGET

Chairman Barr called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and turned the presentation of the budget over to Mayor Wescott and C/T Schlice. Mayor Wescott reviewed portions of the PowerPoint presentation (attached to minutes) relating to the levy limits, obstacles the City faced in meeting the levy limits, wage and fringe impacts on the levy, the additional revenues and numerous operational reductions.

It was indicated that 2.5 positions were eliminated from funding for the 2006 budget including ½ time Mayors Assistant position, Budget/Crime Analyst/Accreditation position and an unfilled public works position. Non-represented employee salaries were frozen at a zero increase with the exception of four positions that were scheduled to move to mid-point during the year. There has been a zero increase budgeted for wages of the represented positions for 2006. C/T Schlice indicated that if any contract settlement packages come in over zero we will be required to cut hours, positions or programs as there are no funds squirreled away to fund any increase. The reduction must either come from wages or savings in other areas of the department's budget. Mayor Wescott stated that we are studying a number of solutions to give to the Finance and Personnel Committees to consider for implementation.

Mayor Wescott talked about the positive services that will continue in the 2006 fiscal year. C/T Schlice reviewed the levy calculations and the tax rate impacts from both an equalized value and an assessed value methodology. We are recommending an assessed tax rate increase of 20 cents per \$1,000 assessed valuation. C/T Schlice stated that increasing the tax rate every year in the past would not have solved the problem we currently face because we are restricted by cost controls within the Expenditure Restraint Program. We also need to be sensitive to the ability of those on fixed incomes and their ability to pay their taxes, especially this year with the escalating heating costs and gasoline increases. By having a stable tax rate, it helps attract business investment in the Community.

The Mayor and C/T indicated that the 2006 budget will be continually reviewed and that they would be looking for savings in areas such as: fuel and electrical consumption, health insurance costs through the Employee Health Insurance Committee, overtime costs and street lighting to identify areas that could be shut down but not endanger safety. We received many good suggestions from employees, some ideas have been implemented and others are being studied.

Ald. Molski questioned why the City Attorney received full health insurance coverage since he was a part time employee. She also questioned why we paid an office subsidy when he had an office in the building complete with phone. C/T Schlice indicated that the office subsidy has been cut \$1,000 for 2006. Mayor Wescott asked the Committee if they wanted the City Clerk to investigate the details relating to the Medical Insurance coverage. Chairman Barr stated that would be a good idea. Ald. Molski concurred.

Ald. Robinson questioned if the reduction in election staffing would increase the time it takes to vote. City Clerk Moe stated that the February election would have three workers staffing at each poll and the other three elections would have five workers at each polling place.

Ald. Stroik asked about the impact on the revenues with the TIF District closing. C/T Schlice stated that under the old law the taxpayers up-fronted most of the costs for establishing a TIF district and in the last several budgets we returned the recovery of those funds back to the tax roll so that we could keep a stable levy. With the new TIF law and the way we are structuring the financing in the new TIF districts, it will have a neutral impact on the levy.

Other questions were answered and C/T Schlice stated that if there were any other questions prior to the adoption of the 2006 budget to give him a call.

Motion made by Ald. Molski, seconded by Ald. Walther, to recommend to the Common Council a 2006 levy in the amount of \$10,980,608 with an assessed tax rate of \$8.82 per \$1,000 assessed valuation.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

The meeting minutes reproduced on this website are derived from the computer files used to produce the official minutes for the City of Stevens Point, but are unofficial. The minutes on this web site cannot be certified under s. 889.08, Wis. Stats., and cannot be considered prima facie evidence under s. 889.04, Wis. Stats. Certain tables, maps, and other documents that are a part of the official minutes are not included in the files reproduced on this website. Please consult the printed minutes, available in the City Clerk's Office, for the official text. The decisions made by City of Stevens Point boards, committees, and commissions (other than the Police & Fire Commission) are advisory only and are not binding on the City until affirmed at a meeting of the Common Council. Some of the minutes on this web site might not be approved by the Common Council as of today.

Bottom of Form