

**CITY OF STEVENS POINT
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL**

Zoom Conference Call Meeting

See Notes on Page 2 to Participate

AGENDA

**Stevens Point Police Community Room
933 Michigan Ave**

**April 22, 2020
4:00 P.M.**

1. Roll Call.

Consideration and Possible Action on the Following:

2. Discussion/Possible Action regarding the late payment of property taxes, pursuant to 2019 Wisconsin Act 185 – Relating to state government response to the COVID-19 pandemic
3. Request to hire a limited term employee (LTE) in Community Media
4. Adjournment

Any person who has special needs while attending this meeting or needing agenda materials for this meeting should contact the City Clerk as soon as possible to ensure a reasonable accommodation can be made. The City Clerk can be reached by telephone at (715) 346-1569, TDD #346-1556, or by mail at 1515 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481.

COVID-19 PUBLIC MEETING INSTRUCTIONS

CITY OF STEVENS POINT, WI



Meeting: Common Council Meeting

Date: April 22, 2020

Time: 4:00 PM

To participate via
telephone:

- 1) Dial on your phone: **(312)-626-6799**
- 2) When prompted dial the Meeting ID: **840 2883 4711#**
- 3) Press # again to be a participant in the meeting.
- 4) Hold until the meeting starts.

To participate via online zoom
platform:

- 1) Go to www.zoom.us
- 2) Click "Join a Meeting" in the upper right-hand corner.
- 3) Enter Meeting ID: **840 2883 4711**
- 4) If you haven't downloaded the Zoom program, do so now.

Please note: Participants may be muted during this time to help create an efficient meeting. Those participants will be unmuted to provide public input when called upon within the published agenda.

City of Stevens Point
1515 Strongs Avenue
Stevens Point, WI 54481-3594



Corey D. Ladick
Comptroller-Treasurer

Phone: 715-346-1574
Fax: 715-346-1683

April 21, 2020

To: City Council

Subject: Waiving Interest on the Late Payment of Property Taxes in Certain Cases

Legislation has now been passed and signed into law allowing us to waive interest on the late payment of property taxes in certain cases. I want to stress that what was passed is very much a "take it or leave it" type of option, so if we wish to proceed we need to accept the whole package as is.

- For Property Tax installments due after April 1, we would **waive interest until October 1, 2020**. Technically, the due dates are not changing, interest is just being waived.
- This **only applies to tax bills where the first installment was paid on time**. If a previous installment was already missed, the entire bill became due and payable immediately. Therefore, a taxpayer that is already delinquent would still accrue interest because the installments were due before April 1st.
- **If the bill is delinquent after October 1, 2020, interest and additional penalties would start to accrue.**
- The County Board needs to approve this first. Since the County is proposing a general finding of hardship, we will also need to make a general finding of hardship due to Covid-19, as opposed to a case-by-case determination. This means that **the policy will be uniform and will apply automatically.**
- One Final Note: If we look at this as an extension, then there will effectively be 2 installments both coming due on October 1st. Since this would be double what many taxpayers are used to paying at one time, we recommend preparing financially to pay this liability. The City Treasurer's Office will continue to accept payments, and partial payments (for example, \$200/month) are also accepted.

RESOLUTION

WAIVING INTEREST AND PENALTIES ON CERTAIN LATE PROPERTY TAX PAYMENTS DUE AND PAYABLE AFTER APRIL 1, 2020

WHEREAS, in December 2019, a novel strain of coronavirus known as COVID-19 was detected, and COVID-19 has continued to spread throughout the world, including to the United States and the State of Wisconsin ("COVID-19 Pandemic"); and

WHEREAS, the federal government, state governments, and local governments are working together to contain the further spread of the disease and treat existing cases; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services declared a Public Health Emergency, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic, on March 12, 2020 the Governor of the State of Wisconsin declared a Health Emergency in the State, and on March 19, 2020, Portage County declared a state of emergency under authority granted by Wis. Stats. Chap. 323 (in Executive Order# 2020-1); and

WHEREAS, the federal government has enacted various laws and regulations in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic including, without limitation, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act; and

WHEREAS, because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, on March 24, 2020, Secretary-designee Andrea Palm of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services issued Emergency Order # 12, Safer at Home Order ("Safer at Home Order") requiring that everyone in Wisconsin stay at their home or place of residence except in limited circumstances until April 24, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on April 16, 2020, Secretary-designee Palm extended the Safer at Home Order, with certain modifications, to May 26, 2020, pursuant to Emergency Order #28; and

WHEREAS, the federal, state, local and individual responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the uncertainty as to the effectiveness of those responses in mitigating the duration of the COVID-19 Pandemic have created economic hardship and uncertainty in Stevens Point's business community, households throughout the City and for every City property taxpayer; and

WHEREAS, prominent economists have predicted record level unemployment rates for the coming months and this prediction suggests that City of Stevens Point residents will also experience record level unemployment rates in the coming months, and an unprecedented number of businesses and employers throughout the State and in the City of Stevens Point have been required to suspend operations; and

WHEREAS, in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the various federal laws and regulations implemented as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and the various emergency orders and regulations implemented by state and local governments, on April 15, 2020, the Wisconsin Legislature enacted 2019 Wisconsin Act 185 ("Act 185"), which Governor Evers signed on April 16, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Section 105(25) of Act 185 authorizes, among other things, Portage County to adopt a resolution enabling taxation districts in the county to waive interest and penalties on 2020 property tax installment payments due and payable after April 1, 2020, until October 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS, a resolution authorizing the above referenced waiver must also establish criteria for determining hardship that would qualify a property tax payer for the waiver; and

WHEREAS, Portage County passed a resolution on April 21, 2020 enabling a taxation district to implement the above referenced waiver, contingent upon the taxation district adopting a resolution in similar form and content as to Portage County's resolution; and

WHEREAS, this Resolution is intended to (1) serve as a similar resolution to Portage County's enabling resolution for purposes of Section 105(25) of Act 185; (2) waive interest and penalties on installment payments of property taxes due and payable after April 1, 2020, in a manner consistent with Act 185; and (3) declare that all property taxpayers in the City of Stevens Point are experiencing hardship as a result of the economic conditions associated with the COVID-19 Pandemic, the various federal laws and regulations implemented as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the various emergency orders and regulations implemented by state and local governments, and Act 185; and

WHEREAS, while the plain language of Section 105(25) of Act 185 allows for either a general or a "case-by-case" finding of hardship to qualify for the above referenced waiver of interest and penalties, the City of Stevens Point intends by this Resolution to waive interest and penalties for all property taxpayers in the City of Stevens Point otherwise eligible for waiver under Section 105(25) of Act 185 on a finding of general hardship based upon the economic conditions described in this Resolution, which the Stevens Point Common Council determines has adversely affected all taxpayers in the City of Stevens Point; and

WHEREAS, this Resolution is not intended to be construed as authorizing any "case-by-case" finding of hardship; and

WHEREAS, this Resolution is intended to waive the penalty imposed by Portage County Resolution No. 169-2016-2018, Approving the Adoption of an Additional One Half of One Percent (.005) of Interest Penalty on Delinquent Taxes for property taxpayers qualifying for the waiver of interest and penalties as provided in Section 105(25) of Act 185 and this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, it appears that if all taxation districts located in Portage County were to adopt a resolution similar to this Resolution and which otherwise satisfies all conditions precedent to waiver contained in Act 185, such county-wide action would result in the broadest possible benefit to Portage County taxpayers; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to Section 105(25) of Act 185, that the City of Stevens Point Common Council hereby finds and authorizes the following:

1. Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the various federal laws and regulations implemented as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the various emergency orders and regulations implemented by state and local governments, and Act 185, all City of Stevens Point property taxpayers are experiencing hardship as that term is used in Section 105(25) of Act 185;

2. Interest and penalties are waived for property taxes payable in 2020 for an installment payment that is due and payable after April 1, 2020. Such waiver shall remain in effect until October 1, 2020. This Resolution waives interest and penalties as provided in Section 105(25) of Act 185 for all property taxpayers in the City of Stevens Point. Notwithstanding the foregoing, nothing in this Resolution waives interest and penalties for property taxes payable in 2020 for an installment payment that was due and payable prior to April 1, 2020, except as otherwise permitted under applicable law;
3. The Comptroller-Treasurer is directed to consult with the Wisconsin Department of Revenue and the City Attorney regarding the implementation of this Resolution and the procedures associated with, or contemplated by, this Resolution; and
4. Other City of Stevens Point officers and staff are authorized and directed to assist the Comptroller-Treasurer in the interpretation, application and implementation of this Resolution and Section 105(25) of Act 185.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all actions heretofore taken by the City of Stevens Point Common Council and other appropriate public officers and agents of the City with respect to the matters contemplated under this Resolution are hereby ratified, confirmed and approved.

APPROVED: _____
Mike Wiza, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Karlyn Krautkramer, City Clerk

Dated: April 21, 2020

Approved: April 22, 2020

From: John Quirk
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 4:50 PM
To: Mike Wiza
Subject: Re: Tonight's Council Zoom Meeting

Mayor Wiza,

Today I learned that our Production Specialist will be on "Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act" leave from now until July 1.

The Production Specialist is the employee who carries out the duties of the Community Media Manager (me) in the Community Media Manager's (my) absence, and it's probably a bad idea to have nobody available to do that between now and July 1. I could get sick, I could get injured, and/or I could go on vacation for a week or two *or even three* in that time frame.

None of the other employees in the Community Media department can necessarily or reasonably be expected to fill in for me while I'm out. It's not in their job description, it's not built into their hourly pay rate, it involves skills they weren't expected to have when we hired them, and it's something that generally needs to get done during weekday hours when they might not even be available.

There are several things we can consider doing to make sure someone is available to do parts of my job if I am out of the office for any length of time between now and July 1, and/or to do any other parts of the Production Specialist's job that the current Production Assistants and I can't do for any reason. One of them could be to hire a Limited Term Employee specifically to perform certain duties between now and July 1 or such time as the Production Specialist is no longer on leave.

Since hiring an LTE would require permission from the Common Council, please ask for that permission at the Council's special meeting on Wednesday so we will be able to expedite the hiring and training process IF we decide to go that route instead of some other one.

Thank you,

John Quirk
Community TV and Web Site Coordinator,
City of Stevens Point
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fax (715) 346-1582
2442 Sims Ave.
Stevens Point, WI 54481
Web Site: StevensPoint.com
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