

**FINANCE COMMITTEE  
DECEMBER 12, 2011 AT 6:09 P.M.  
LINCOLN CENTER – 1519 WATER STREET**

PRESENT: Alderpersons Moore, Molski, Stroik, Brooks and Suomi

ALSO

PRESENT: C/T Schlice; Mayor Halverson; Clerk Moe; Ald. Wiza, Slowinski, O'Meara, M. Stroik, Beveridge; Directors Lemke, Halverson, Schrader, Ostrowski, McGinty; Assessor Siebers; Human Resource Manager Jakusz; Fire Chief Kujawa; Police Chief Ruder; Deputy C/T Freeberg; Asst. to the Mayor Pazdernik; Matthew Brown; Brian Kowalski; Mary Ann Laszewski; Barb Jacobs; Carl Rasmussen; Bruce Gerland; Cathy Dugan; Greg Diemer; Bernie Patterson; Cindy Nebel; Justin Sonnenteg; Bob Fisch; Jason Herheim

**ITEM #1 – PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ON ANY FINANCE COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEM FOR UP TO 3 MINUTES.**

Mildred Neville, 1709 Jefferson Street, stated she thinks it is unfair to only be able to speak for 3 minutes at the beginning of the meeting rather than being able to speak when the topic is being discussed. She stated that is an ineffective way to have citizens input be effective. When there are numerous items on the agenda, 3 minutes may not be enough time to voice their comments and she is asking that the Alderpersons reconsider this.

Mary Ann Laszewski, 1209 Wisconsin Street, stated she feels the 3 minutes limit at the beginning of the meeting is ineffective and diminishes the effectiveness of public speaking and does not provide a coherent flow of the topic. She would like to know what the harm is in hearing public comment at the time an item is being presented. She feels it gives an unfair advantage to the person or developer on the agenda because they are able to promote their item unchallenged.

Ald. Beveridge agreed with the comments and wants to know what the motivation was behind the change. He understands meetings can be long but feels public input is important and does not support the change.

Cathy Dugan, 615 Sommers, also opposes the new rule. She stated that at the Parks Commission meeting this was also discussed and the Commission decided to allow speakers to speak on all items as they are being discussed. She would like to see that happen here also.

Ald. Slowinski stated he is disappointed in the change and would like an explanation on why it was changed as he feels it was fine that way it was before.

Ald. Stroik stated he recalls after being elected there was a training session done by City Attorney Molepske and one of the things that was discussed is that Committee meetings were meant to be the discussion groups and the Council was more the stamp of approval. He agrees with having more structure at the Council, but does not agree with that being taken to the Committee level. He feels that the Committee level is where the dialog needs to be in order to build consensus. He stated that at a minimum we should do as we do at the Council meetings, that they register for an item number and then allow them to speak at the time of the agenda item. He is very strongly opposed to this change.

Ald. Molski stated she is also opposed and stated we are here to represent the people and if we do not allow them to speak except in the beginning of the meetings and not on individual items, we are doing them a disservice.

Ald. O'Meara stated he feels people should be allowed to express their concerns and opinions but feels the 3 minutes is not a bad deal. The House of Representatives has that rule and it works fine. We can bend the rules if needed and allow more time. He supports speaking before an agenda item but would like it limited to 3 minutes per item.

Ald. Wiza stated that when they vote on the minutes and actions, we assume that each of those items have been thoroughly discussed at Committee level and then presented at Council with questions already answered. By having a limited amount of time for the public to provide input, it raises a concern as to whether or not everything was thoroughly discussed. He stated he will have a difficult time approving minutes and actions of a Committee that had this sort of rule. He also reminded the Chairpersons of the meetings that they have the authority to grant additional time or to change the agendas.

Ald. Suomi stated she thought two agendas this would be helpful on would be Police and Fire Commission and Parks. She opposes not letting people speak as it is healthy and feels they may have an insight that she may not have thought about. She would like clarification as to why this came forward.

Ald. Moore replied that the C/T and himself discussed this when we were going through the Special Finance Committee meetings for the budget. We implemented this rule at that time because it was a very serious subject and we needed input from the members of the Committee. For a long time, we have had a lot of public input and no input from the Committee members, the people who are suppose to make these decisions and ask questions. We wanted the Committee members input for the budget so we could make decisions and work it out. It worked out very well, we got the input from the Committee that we needed and public got to speak their 3 minutes to put in their opinions.

Ald. Suomi stated it worked well, for the budget, but not for regular agendas that have different types of items. She stated it is more effective when agenda items are discussed at the time of their presence.

Ald. Brooks stated back in 2008, it was contemplated to put a time limit on agenda items and he was against it then and he still is. He does understand and agree that having a limit of 3 minutes could be of benefit. He would support 3 minutes for each agenda item at the time they are brought up, not just at the beginning.

Motion made by Ald. Brooks, seconded by Ald. Molski to amend the agenda to be allowed to speak for up to 3 minutes on each agenda item.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Motion carried.

## **ITEM #2 – CAR SEAT GRANT.**

C/T Schlice stated we would advance the money and we would be reimbursed. We need permission to apply for the grant.

Motion made by Ald. Stroik, seconded by Ald. Molski to approve the car seat grant.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Motion carried.

**ITEM #3 – APPROVE COMMITMENT AND ASSIGNMENT OF FUND BALANCES.**

Motion made by Ald. Molski, seconded by Ald. Brooks to approve the commitment and assignment of fund balances.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Motion carried.

**ITEM #4 – CONSIDERATION OF 2012 CROSSING GUARD CONTRACT – CLEAN POWER.**

Ald. Stroik questioned if other municipalities have used this and if there are good recommendations.

Police Chief Ruder replied that as far as privatization of crossing guards, the City of Wausau just did it with a company out of California. Clean Power went to the Superintendent and himself to talk about their offer. They already have a partnership with the school district and are willing to take it on and utilize and take over the crossing guards. As an added benefit they will be doing all the fringes that are required for this program, all the hiring, firing, scheduling and will pay up to \$60 an hour when a police officer has to cover a crossing.

Ald. Stroik stated it looks great, but would like to see references or resume. He would like to know more about their background.

Police Chief Ruder stated they came with assurances and recommendations from the Superintendent with no concerns.

Ald. Stroik questioned how long Clean Power has been in business.

Jason Herheim, 240 Georgia Street North, stated the company started in 1969 out of Milwaukee and this branch started in 2000 with the Sentry Insurance contract. They started with the Stevens Point School District in 2004.

Ald. Stroik questioned what they do at the school district.

Jason Herheim replied they provide custodial services for them.

Ald. Stroik questioned what their experience is in crossing guards and traffic.

Jason Herheim replied they have never done it before but brought it forward as an option through the school district.

Police Chief Ruder stated they are not abandoning the crossing guard program, they are going to continue the relationship with their department doing the training and providing any resources they need to make sure the crossing guards are well up-to-date on what they need to do. He is asking that the contract include a way to file grievances if there are any issues or complaints on the crossing guards or any other issues and then also add that the contract be reviewed in a year.

Ald. Stroik questioned what is needed now.

C/T Schlice stated approval is needed to start the contract with Clean Power on January 1, 2012.

Ald. Stroik replied he is not comfortable based on the information provided. He feels he does not have enough information to approve this at this time.

Police Chief Ruder stated they are keeping the same crossing guards as we have now. He stated he was working with very little money and had to look at every option to retain our crossing guards at our corners and Clean Power came forward. The Police Department will still be involved with the hiring process and will still do background checks, so the only change is that they are taking over the administrative part of it.

Ald. Moore commented that basically they are taking over the scheduling, making sure there are replacements for sick, etc. employees and all the day-to-day operations.

Ald. Stroik questioned if we could postpone this for 30 days and come back with a plan of what we are going to turn over to them, what the expectations of them will be, etc. He agrees this is a great idea and opportunity but he does not feel comfortable without more information.

Police Chief Ruder stated if it is postponed for 30 days then we will have to go to Plan B because the funding will not be there. We have a \$16,000 reduction from the prior year so we would have to reduce some crossings.

Mayor Halverson commented that it is on a positive note that we are working with a company that already has a track record with the school district. The two items he stated he was interested in were that we were preserving all the crossings with the current crossing guards with well over \$12,000 in savings and that Clean Power will pay up to \$60 should an officer have to man a corner. He also stated that having the Police Department training the crossing guards and working with Clean Power is a plus. He stated he believes it is great blending of the priorities that we always wanted and fully supports it.

Ald. Suomi agrees that child safety is important while still trying to save money, however she would like more information about the company. She also questioned if we have the data as to when the crossing guards are not at their crossings as it is an extra \$180 that can add up. She is concerned if the cost goes over \$30,000.

Police Chief Ruder replied that the \$180 that was mentioned would be paid to the Police Department as they would pay the Police Department to man those corners. He stressed again that they are not going to let it fail. They will have a partnership to work with them and help out when and where needed.

Ald. Brooks stated he likes the item that the same crossing guards are being utilized as well as the same crossings. He supports the idea of someone else is in charge of the administration part of it, with a savings of \$12,000. It is only "behind the scenes" that is being changed.

Motion made by Ald. Brooks, seconded by Ald. Molski to approve the consideration of the 2012 crossing guard contract with Clean Power.

Ald. Stroik stated Chief Ruder has impeccable character and he trusts his judgment as the Chief of Police, but he does not know enough about Clean Power and this is not a contract that tells us what they will be responsible for. If there is not a crossing guard at Division and Jefferson Streets, how would the Police Department know about it and how would they address it. He



Ald. Brooks questioned if we were giving them money for this position.

C/T Schlice replied no, there is no cash involved. On the levy worksheet there is a transfer of responsibilities from one jurisdiction to another.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Adjournment at 6:57 P.M.