



# City of West Allis

7525 W. Greenfield Ave.  
West Allis, WI 53214

## Meeting Minutes

### Administration & Finance Committee

*Aldersperson James W. Sengstock, Chair*

*Aldersperson Vincent Vitale, Vice-Chair*

*Alderspersons: Thomas G. Lajsic, Michael P. May, Cathleen M. Probst*

Wednesday, November 14, 2012

6:00 PM

City Hall Room 128

#### REGULAR MEETING

#### A. CALL TO ORDER

*Chair Sengstock called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.*

#### B. ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Ald. Sengstock, Ald. Vitale, Ald. Lajsic, Ald. May and Ald. Probst

Excused: 0

#### Others Attending

*Alds. Czaplewski, Reinke, Roadt, Weigel; Jane Ford, NOW; Paul M. Ziehler, City Administrative Officer; Fire Chief Steve Hook; Gary Streicher, Steve Bane, Fire Dept.; Sheryl Kuhary, Assistant City Attorney; Audrey Key, HR Manager; Jane Barwick, Principal HR Analyst; Kris Moen, Acting Finance Manager; Ted Atkinson, Director of BINS Dept.; John Stibal, Director of Development; Mike Lewis, Director of Public Works/City Engineer; Tom Harmatys, Assistant Director of Public Works; Dept. of Public Works Representatives: Dan Schwebke, David Wepking, Michael Weisnicht, Al Lemke, Don Molleson, Patrick Waystedt; HR Office: Lynn Jopek, Mary Yusefzadeh; Jeanette Wardinski, Administrative Assistant.*

#### C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**A motion was made by Ald. May, seconded by Ald. Vitale, to approve the Special Meeting minutes of October 22, 2012 and Recess Meeting minutes of November 5, 2012.. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Votes:** Aye: 5 - Ald. Sengstock, Ald. Vitale, Ald. Lajsic, Ald. May and Ald. Probst

No: 0

#### D. CLOSED SESSION

*Chair Sengstock mentioned the Closed Session meeting was unnecessary this evening. Mr. Ziehler confirmed and indicated that pursuant to Committee direction given at the last meeting, the Fire Fighters Union has presented the tentative agreement to the rank and file, and their vote to ratify will be held later this month. This process has been going on for over a year and hopefully we are nearing the end.*

#### E. NEW AND PREVIOUS MATTERS

1. [2012-0552](#) 2013 City of West Allis Mayor's Recommended Budget.

*Chair Sengstock introduced this matter, and Mr. Ziehler said four departments have been asked to appear at the meeting (HR, Fire, Development and PW/Engineering). He suggested that the Committee address these four areas first and then open discussion to the overall general budget.*

*1.) Human Resources. Ald. Lajsic said he requested discussion on the HR request to add*

*additional staffing hours to their budget. He referred to a similar request last year, which he expressed his concerns about. He feels that rather than increasing hours, they should be decreasing hours because there is less work now that there is less union work. HR Manager Audrey Key addressed Ald. Lajsic's concerns, explaining that the day-to-day needs of HR functions have increased not only because of the multitude of retirements occurring and increasing health care mandates, but also the increased workload due to Acts 10 & 32. HR will be directly affected with all the new policies and procedures to be put in place in lieu of union contracts, actually causing more work on a regular, consistent basis than the standard contractual language followed previously. She also spoke to the increase in educational training of staff to address/implement the many mandates/updates taking place and providing support to supervisory staff in this regard, and the increasing HR responsibility in all these areas. The support hours have increased because of all the changes taking place in the office and the changing environment of health care, State mandates, etc. Ms. Key passed out a document which addresses everything the HR Office is responsible for including a listing of the services currently provided by the HR Office, the prominent recent federal and Wisconsin legislative changes, a sampling of the approximate number of actions processed by HR Staff per Year, a sampling of added responsibilities since 2008, and statistical data for the number of active and retired employees serviced by HR and the industry vs. City standard of HR Professional to Employee ratio.*

*Referring to this list of services, etc., Ald. Lajsic said he respects what the department does, but when looking at what has happened over the last year or two in going from a union to new environment, he feels it's changing from one type of work to another, but it's the same level of work. Union work has been replaced by nonunion issues. By increasing the staff hours to a part-time level position, he is concerned about the benefit levels and the ongoing impact and costs of adding staffing. He questions the level of clerical staffing in the City as a whole, not just the HR office. He feels with the increase in technologies, we do not need the level of clerical staffing we have, and through attrition, we should not be filling some of these positions. He spoke to the level of clerical staffing at his company and how its diminished over time for these very same reasons. We need to start looking at reducing staff city-wide. He realizes this request is for a small increase in hours, but on principle, he is not going to support an increase in staffing level. Discussion ensued about the regular and overtime hours worked in the office.*

*Very lengthy and considerable discussion continued on this issue, and Mr. Ziehler mentioned other key points about the HR office workload that should also be noted:*

- a.) The HR Office is also responsible for workers compensation and safety activities for the City, and there has been an increase in the workload in these areas.*
- b.) All the work that has been added with the new State laws has, in a large way, superseded the amount of work performed in the union environment. There is more demand on HR on how to interpret and implement policies where before we had the union contract laid out in black and white.*
- c.) He sees Ms. Key's and Ms. Barwick's workload on a day-to-day basis and it is extreme. The stress level in HR is very high and a minimum of 2 hours increase in support staff time to help relieve this is the least we can do to address the situation.*

*Ald. Vitale commented that the City Attorney's Office does some of this work so he questions the need for more hours. Mr. Ziehler said that is not the case--HR does most of the work and the Attorney's Office provides the legal support. Ald. Sengstock mentioned that on these staffing requests, we are looking for compelling reasons for the increase in staffing levels. He referred to how private business is handling these issues, as Ald. Lajsic refers to, and that government needs to adopt as well.*

Further discussion ensued with many opinions/comments made by Committee members. Again, Ald. Lajsic stated he is not convinced with the reasoning for the increase in hours. He further addressed what we can be doing to automate operations--how can we make the process work better? Ald. May said if the person is already working the hours on a regular basis and it is more hours than currently budgeted, then the person deserves the benefits for the hours they are working. They have earned the right to the benefits. In addressing the issue City-wide, he does not think cuts should come solely from staff but that we need to address our processes and how the work is done.

Other brief discussion ensued, and the Committee thanked Ms. Key for appearing this evening.

2.) Fire. Fire Chief Hook was present to address the Committee's questions. Ald. Sengstock opened this discussion by noting that the Council only controls the purse strings for the police and fire departments because of Police & Fire Commission optional powers. The Council can provide a message on why it thinks there should be a specific amount of people or equipment in the departments, but we can only address this through the funding provided. He said a number of questions have come up on the Fire Dept. being top heavy with Chief positions. The Chief has done a good job with minimum staffing with the rank and file, but the Committee is questioning the number of Chiefs/Bureau Heads. They are interested in hearing from the Chief about possibly merging responsibilities of some of these positions, or whether he can do with one less Chief. Does he feel he needs all these top level positions to run the Dept.

Chief Hook commented on his appreciation to the Council for providing funding for the department. They have always come in with a budget pursuant to the Mayor/Council direction and they have worked to control costs. He further explained the other functions/duties beyond firefighting that the department performs. As far as the title of "Chief," it is a semantics issue. A Fire Chief is comparable to a Police Captain. He also mentioned the potential for studying the replacing of some of these levels with civilian staff at a lower pay. He feels we will eventually get to a position where the Council wants to go with streamlining these positions. Ald. Sengstock also mentioned the potential to combine duties/responsibilities of positions through attrition. Basically, the Committee is asking what can be done to reduce staffing levels of upper management. Ald. Vitale said he met with the Chief six years ago on this same topic of heavy top management and here we are again with a request for top level changes with no reductions. Chief Hook responded that we can't do away with positions/jobs that perform the work that needs to get done. He has been sensitive and responsive to the Council's budget needs over the years, and he has done a lot of things in many responsible ways to bring in a budget at or under what the directives have been. Ald. Lajsic remembers having this discussion before about the Chief positions and he is encouraged by the Chief's comments on sharing of services with other communities. Through attrition he hopes Chief Hook reviews the work and staffing levels. Ald. Lajsic said another issue he feels that can be addressed is the Chief's secretary and the possibility of sharing her services with other departments, such as the HR Office. Chief Hook said they can certainly explore the sharing of services, but he wants the Committee to understand that his secretary works for all the Fire Bureaus, not just him. Ald. Lajsic said he is talking to all departments sharing these clerical services where the help is needed. Mr. Ziehler said we are already doing these sorts of things, most recently the Assessor's staff helping out in the Clerk's Office during the peak election times.

Ald. Probst said during her campaigning, she heard from many citizens about the number of chiefs in the Fire Dept. Chief Hook again pointed out that it's due to the naming of positions over the years that creates this issue. She also wondered if the Fire Dept. is renumeralated for the training we provide to other fire departments. Chief Hook said no, but we have reciprocal agreements that provide in-kind benefits, and we save money by not having to send our people out of town for training. Lastly, Ald. Probst referred to the number of fire vehicles that respond

to a call. What about charging for all of this presence at a call that may be unwarranted. Chief Hook explained these are the false alarm charges Ald. Probst refers to, and he is reluctant to do this because of the potential for something turning into a bigger incident if we don't respond as necessary. Other brief discussion ensued, and the Committee thanked the Chief for appearing this evening.

3. PW/Engineering. Ald. Vitale asked for input on the Energy/Sustainability Coordinator position that was included in the Recommended Budget. Mr. Ziehler explained that this position was added to the budget by the Mayor, not by Mr. Lewis. The Mayor was unable to be here this evening but has provided some talking points on the issue, which Mr. Ziehler passed out. Ald. Lajsic asked if we've explored any energy saving services. Mr. Lewis said we have been doing some energy sustainability, mainly with LED lighting, and we have had contracts with Honeywell dealing with energy savings. Mr. Lewis said this is why the Mayor has included this type of position, to have a person on staff strictly dedicated to doing this work and finding these savings. He noted that the City of Milwaukee has a person on staff who does this type of grant writing. He does not have the staff or time to do this detail work.

Ald. May said he supports the idea, but he feels we need a plan in place before we hire staff. He would rather establish a Committee to prepare a plan, go after funding through grant writing, and then hire the position. You don't show up with the lumber to build a house without the plans on how to do it, and that's how he views this matter--determine the course of action before we hire for a position. He thinks this should be our target goal within the coming year. Ald. Lajsic agrees with proceeding in this manner. Mr. Lewis suggested that we retain the funding to hire a consultant to get this work started with the goal of establishing a plan within the next year or budget cycle. Ald. Sengstock asked if there was the possibility of merging responsibilities of this new position with the Asst. Director of Public Works that will be vacant at the end of the year. Mr. Lewis said we have combined some top level Public Works positions previously (e.g., the Building & Inventory Services Divisions) or have simply not filled some Superintendent positions as a cost savings measure, but he feels it is unlikely that we would not fill the Assistant Director position. Ald. Vitale wondered if the Development Dept. could lend assistance with doing this energy work. Mr. Lewis felt that to make this work we will need outside help. Ald. Lajsic asked Mr. Ziehler if there are any contingency funds available for this consultant work. Mr. Ziehler explained that fund is for unplanned emergencies. However, we have a balance sheet account, not an operating budget account, that falls into this greening/sustainability framework. The account, which contains approximately \$100,000, could be used for this purpose, and he confirmed to Ald. Lajsic that we can transfer this money to a budget account for this purpose. He further stated that we can still look for grants right away either through the Development Dept., or Mr. Ziehler or his intern doing this work.

The Committee concurred with Ald. May's suggestion that we set up a Committee, determine what we want, and then begin the work to go after what we want to accomplish. Staff confirmed that a portion of the \$100,000 could be transferred from the balance sheet account to the operating account to hire a consultant to begin this work. Once a plan is established, then we will revisit the issue of hiring a position for this energy/sustainability work. Mr. Lewis mentioned that with all his responsibilities, to add sustainability work to his job duties would be extremely difficult. He feels we need the position to do the work once a plan is laid out.

4. Development. Mr. Stibal was not present at this time (appeared late in this discussion), so Mr. Ziehler said he would answer any questions the Committee has. Ald. May said his question pertains to the City's TIFs. He wonders why we close some and not others, specifically the Quad TIF as an example. Mr. Ziehler explained that the benefit of closing a TIF is more property value on the tax roll. The reason for not closing a TIF is we use them to help out a bad one rather than the City having to pay out of its own funds; it gives risk protection to the City. He said this is purely a policy matter on how we handle the TIFs. Ald.

*May asked what the implications are if we are legally required to close a TIF. Ms. Moen answered it depends on the timing with the City's debt obligation, etc. Additional discussion ensued on how this works. Ald. May thanked staff for this clarification.*

*There being no further specific questions for these four departments, Ald. Sengstock explained, for the benefit of the new Committee members, that at this point in the budget discussion it is appropriate for any motions on amending the budget to now be made, or if there are any further general questions, to address them at this time.*

*Ald. May referred to the monies that have been added to the budget for the promotion, marketing, and branding program for the City. He said he is in favor of marketing our community, but he's not sure if we are at the point or know what we want to do to accomplish this. Mr. Ziehler commented that this was another Mayor's addition to the budget and his concept was a broader approach for building the image of the City. Mr. Ziehler said we envision using trade journals and advertising to our citizens in a broader sense about what we have to offer as a community and city government itself. We most likely will need outside help to get this program going. Ald. Probst mentioned a School District/Downtown BID joint partnership to showcase the City through a "This is West Allis" brochure to be used for new businesses and new residents in West Allis. This is another example of promoting West Allis through a print medium.*

*Mr. Ziehler then pointed out the two new revenue items included in the budget that would need to be introduced to Council for approval. The first is a new Accident Crash Fee, with \$25,000 expected in revenue. Aids. May and Reinke are sponsoring this resolution to be introduced at the 12/4/12 Council meeting. The second item is a fee increase that will generate up to \$25,000 in Overnight Parking Permit fees. Mr. Ziehler noted that the Police Dept. has recommended raising the cost of overnight parking permits. He pointed out that if this does not go through, it is not a big hole to cover this revenue reduction in the budget. Ald. Vitale expressed his concerns about the impact on Districts 1 and 2 and the ability of those residents to pay the cost increase. He suggested the Police Dept. find the money some other way in their budget, and he referred to the \$100,000 he has previously asked be cut from that budget. Mr. Ziehler pointed out the relationship between getting a ticket vs. paying the permit fee and whether this is a better way to go at some point on this. Mr. Ziehler reminded the Committee that the Council challenges Department Heads to come up with new revenue raising ideas, and the purpose is to give those ideas to the Council/Committee, like this permit increase. It is the Council/Committee's decision whether they are approved or not.*

*Ald. Sengstock then asked Mr. Ziehler to comment on the anticipated tax bill. Mr. Ziehler explained the City's tax rate is basically flat and we make up 1/3 of the tax bill. The School District levy is going down about 3% and because they are also 1/3 of the tax bill, it translates to a 1% decrease in their portion of the tax bill. So, a .7-.8% decrease in the tax bill is expected between the City and School District, which covers 2/3 of the total tax bill. The final taxing authorities, MATC, County, MMSD & State, are around a 1% increase, which translates into a total tax bill that is pretty flat or perhaps with a slight increase or decrease.*

*There being no further discussion on the recommended budget, Ald. Sengstock asked for motions on the budget.*

*Ald. May moved that the Energy/Sustainability Coordinator position be cut from the budget, seconded by Ald. Lajsic. The following vote was taken on this motion.*

**A motion was made by Ald. May, seconded by Ald. Lajsic, that this matter be Amended. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Votes:** Aye: 5 - Ald. Sengstock, Ald. Vitale, Ald. Lajsic, Ald. May and Ald. Probst  
No: 0

*motion on the HR request to add 2 hours to its budget. The following motion was then made on the budget, as amended.*

**A motion was made by Ald. Lajsic, seconded by Ald. Vitale, that this matter be Recommended for Approval as Amended. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Votes:** Aye: 5 - Ald. Sengstock, Ald. Vitale, Ald. Lajsic, Ald. May and Ald. Probst  
No: 0

2. [O-2012-0042](#) Ordinance appropriating the necessary funds for the operation and administration of the City of West Allis for calendar year 2013.

**Sponsor(s):** Administration & Finance Committee

*Mr. Ziehler mentioned that the Appropriations Ordinance should be amended to reflect the change by amending the budget by deleting the Energy/Sustainability position. The Committee concurred and the following motion was made.*

**A motion was made by Ald. Lajsic, seconded by Ald. Probst, that this matter be Amended. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Votes:** Aye: 5 - Ald. Sengstock, Ald. Vitale, Ald. Lajsic, Ald. May and Ald. Probst  
No: 0

**Sponsor(s):** Administration & Finance Committee

**A motion was made by Ald. Lajsic, seconded by Ald. Probst, that this matter be Recommended For Passage As Amended. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Votes:** Aye: 5 - Ald. Sengstock, Ald. Vitale, Ald. Lajsic, Ald. May and Ald. Probst  
No: 0

3. [2012-0479](#) Communication from Transition Team relative to Implementation of WI Act 10 (2011 Budget Repair Bill) and WI Act 32 (2011-13 Biennial Budget Bill).

*The Committee decided to hold discussion on this matter for a future meeting. Mr. Ziehler suggested that the Committee meet on its regularly scheduled meeting date of December 10 and address only this Transition Team communication. The Committee concurred.*

**Held**

## **E. NEW AND PREVIOUS MATTERS**

### **1. 2013 City of West Allis Mayor's Recommended Budget.**

*After discussing the other agenda items, Ald. Vitale asked for discussion on removing \$100,000 from the Police Dept. budget. Chair Sengstock pointed out that we have already voted on the budget. Mr. Ziehler wasn't sure the Committee was able to reconsider the budget, which it had just formally acted on. The Committee basically indicated it had no interest in this discussion, but allowed for the motion.*

*Ald. Probst moved to reconsider the budget, seconded by Ald. Lajsic. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Ald. Vitale then moved to delete \$100,000 from the Police Dept. budget. There being no second, the motion failed.*

## **F. OTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMITTEE FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION**

1. Discussion/Action on Items by Alderpersons.

*None.*

2. Discussion/Action on Items by City Administrative Officer.

*None.*

3. Other.

*None.*

**G. ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Ald. Probst, seconded by Ald. Vitale, to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m.  
The motion carried unanimously.**