



City of West Allis

7525 W. Greenfield Ave.
West Allis, WI 53214

Meeting Minutes

Administration & Finance Committee

Aldersperson Kurt E. Kopplin, Chair

Aldersperson Vincent Vitale, Vice-Chair

Alderspersons: Thomas G. Lajsic, Richard F. Narlock, Rosalie L. Reinke

Monday, August 10, 2009

6:00 PM

West Allis City Hall Room 128

REGULAR MEETING

A. CALL TO ORDER

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

B. ROLL CALL

Present: 4 - Ald. Kopplin, Ald. Vitale, Ald. Lajsic and Ald. Reinke

Excused: 1 - Ald. Narlock

Others Attending

Mayor Devine; Alderspersons Barczak and Czaplewski; Tom Karman, Schenck Government & Not-for-Profit Solutions; Paul M. Ziehler, City Administrative Officer; Mike Pertmer, Director of Public Works; Mike Lewis, City Engineer; Gary Schmid, Manager of Finance; Audrey Key, HR Manager; Jane Barwick, Principal HR Analyst; Dave Wepking, Safety & Training Coordinator; Brenda Schmid, Principal Secretary

D. CLOSED SESSION

At 6:00 p.m., Chairperson Kopplin stated it was the intention of the Committee to vote on a motion to convene in closed session to confer with the Mayor on Department Head performance reviews and allowance recommendations, to discuss collective bargaining matters for all City Unions, and to take such further action as may be necessary and appropriate with respect to such matters.

A closed session for the above purposes is authorized pursuant to the provisions of Wis. Stats. Section 19.85(1)(c), (e), and (g), which authorizes a governmental body, upon motion duly made and carried, to meet in closed session to consider employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility; to deliberate or negotiate the purchase of public properties and the investment of public funds, or conduct other specified public business whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session; and to confer with legal counsel for the governing body who is rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved.

A motion was made by Ald. Lajsic, seconded by Ald. Reinke, to convene in closed session at 6:00 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: Aye: 4 - Ald. Kopplin, Ald. Vitale, Ald. Lajsic and Ald. Reinke

No: 0

Mayor Devine discussed 2008 performance reviews for Department Heads and his performance allowance recommendations. Committee consensus was indicated in this regard.

Next, Mr. Ziehler mentioned that at a meeting on July 30 attended by the unions for Local 80 (Public Works and Clerical Units), Fire, Engineering, and Nurses (Police not present), there was discussion about a negotiated settlement. The unions should be voting on the negotiated

settlement by the end of the month, and the September 1 Council meeting should have the settlement on the agenda. Discussion ensued with questions and comments from the Committee, which staff responded to. The Committee concurred with the direction taken on these discussions.

Upon conclusion of the closed session, at approximately 6:25 p.m., the Administration & Finance Committee reconvened in open session at said time and place to consider its public agenda.

C. NOTICE OF JOINT MEETING WITH THE ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS TO DISCUSS:

1. [2009-0509](#)

Communication from Mike Pertmer, Director of Public Works, announcing his retirement in October.

Mr. Ziehler stated there was not a quorum of Board of Public Works members, and he complimented Mr. Pertmer on his letter. Mr. Ziehler began by stating the issues for discussion. The first issue is whether to keep the organizational structure as is with two separate departments (Public Works and Engineering) or to combine the two departments, similar to the organizational structure in 1989. The second issue is to decide job descriptions, salary levels, residency/perimeter requirement, and recruitment as they pertain to the decision made about the organizational structure.

Most discussion about the first issue of organizational structure involved talk about making Mike Lewis, City Engineer, the head over both Engineering and Public Works and creating an Assistant Director of Public Works position. Ald. Lajsic commented about a previous organizational structure that didn't last long (it was clarified that this was from 1980 when development and operations were four departments combined) and questioned what would be gained by changing to the structure just discussed. Mr. Ziehler added that two of the departments (Public Works and Engineering) stayed combined from 1980-1989, and Building Inspections and Planning (the other two departments) were separate.

Mr. Lewis' memo to the alderpersons outlined several points regarding combining Public Works and Engineering, including that much of the work of the two departments is blended under most circumstances and many communities do have combined City Engineer and Public Works Director positions. He, in fact, has worked as a City Engineer/Public Works Director and as City Engineer/Public Works Director/City Manager in previous positions with other communities. He added, however, that there are also an almost equal number of cities that have separate departments.

Ald. Lajsic stated that layers of management should be eliminated and additional responsibilities given out. He wants concrete evidence that this will produce significant savings. In regards to savings, Mr. Ziehler said he looked back to 1989 when there was a department head with two assistant directors for Public Works and Engineering. Changing to a structure similar to 1989 would not produce immediate financial savings. Mr. Lewis agreed and said that operational efficiencies might be realized long-term down the line.

Ald. Vitale questioned why an assistant director position was needed at Public Works. Mr. Ziehler responded that adequate supervision and functionality would be lost if there wasn't an assistant on site. Ald. Vitale thought that technology should enable the lines of communication. Mr. Ziehler added that Mr. Lewis could place an Assistant Director at Public Works and look at reorganizing the division heads down the line in the future for later savings.

Ald. Lajsic again emphasized that he would like to know what the concrete benefits are to making this change. There was discussion about the current level of cooperation between the two department heads and how this would be in the future. Mr. Ziehler also pointed out that

there would need to be a temporary appointment to Mr. Pertmer's position until a decision is made on how to proceed.

Mr. Pertmer clarified the structure as it was in 1989 that Mr. Ziehler referred to previously. Mr. Ziehler stated that economic savings were not going to be immediate but would be possible long-term. Ald. Lajsic said he wanted a report on whether to combine the two departments with long-term goals stated. There was discussion about not guaranteeing savings but just stating long-term goals and the advantages/disadvantages of combining the departments.

Ald. Barczak offered several comments: the proposed restructuring won't cost more than the current structure, so that by itself should be considered a positive; it is necessary to have someone in charge at Public Works and someone in charge in Engineering; it might be easier to hire down the line as separate positions (City Engineer and Public Works Director). Ald. Lajsic asked why divisions can't be combined at Public Works and make one of the division heads an Assistant Director to run the show.

Ald. Reinke stated she thought Mr. Pertmer was knowledgeable about his department and his expertise should be utilized to decide the feasibility of combining the two departments. To her, the workload seems overwhelming if it's combined. Ald. Reinke stated that their job is to look for savings, but the outcome also has to make the City better for an operational and service delivery standpoint.

Mr. Pertmer spoke about span of control in an organizational structure (the number of people a supervisor can manage effectively). He stated that since 1981 or 1982, ten supervisor positions in Public Works have been eliminated. Now the superintendents are specialized by division so the forestry superintendent isn't expected to know how to wire street lights. They all used to have assistants under them, but now they are without assistants, they are division managers, and they are field supervisors. Lastly, there may be some immediate savings realized with reorganizing the administrative office.

There was more discussion about looking at all aspects for savings. Ald. Czaplewski stated that when money gets tight, layers of middle management are the first to go, and here it is being proposed to add another management position.

Mr. Ziehler stated that the next Council meeting is Tuesday, September 1. Staff will try for early or mid September to have a report prepared, as requested, to show the advantages and disadvantages and any savings in combining the two departments. The Committee concurred with this approach/timeframe and noted this matter will be held pending the staff report.

Held

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Ald. Lajsic, seconded by Ald. Reinke, to approve the Special Meeting Minutes of May 26, 2009 and July 27, 2009; the Recess Meeting Minutes of June 2, 2009, June 16, 2009, July 7, 2009, and August 4, 2009; and the Recess Meeting Closed Session Minutes of June 16, 2009. The motion carried unanimously.

F. APPEARANCE BEFORE COMMITTEE**1. Appearance by Tom Karman, CPA, of Schenck Government & Not-for-Profit Solutions.**[2009-0508](#)

Comptroller/Manager of Finance submitting the City of West Allis Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the year ended December 31, 2008 for review and approval.

Mr. Tom Karman of Schenck Government & Not-for-Profit Solutions stated the City of West Allis has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for 2008 after meeting a checklist of criteria. Out of the many cities, towns, villages, and school districts that apply for the Certificate, only 45 receive it. Receipt of this Certificate is looked on favorably and is an achievement. The City of West Allis has received this Certificate since 1992.

Mr. Karman discussed the independent auditor's report which pointed out no issues or internal control findings and shows the City received a clean audit. One recommendation given pertained to Health Department federal and state grants. The cash is drawn and held in a deferred revenue account until there's a purpose to spend the money. This money should be spent before general tax dollars are used. Overall, the audit went well with no compliance issues.

Ald. Vitale asked about the comment regarding an overflow in inventory that was received with Mr. Karman's report last year. Mr. Schmid responded that as a result of last year's comment, it is constantly being re-evaluated and now the dollar amount did drop. Ald. Reinke asked if TIF districts affect the rating. Mr. Karman responded that TIFs are part of it. Mr. Schmid added that Mr. Stibal, Director of Development, is very conservative when he prepares information for the TIF districts. Informing regarding TIF districts is available on the City's web site.

Ald. Reinke feels staff should be given credit for the good job they are doing as is evidenced by the audit.

The Committee thanked Mr. Karman for appearing tonight. Action was then taken on the report before the Committee.

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

Votes: Aye: 4 - Ald. Kopplin, Ald. Vitale, Ald. Lajsic and Ald. Reinke
No: 0

G. NEW AND PREVIOUS MATTERS**1. [2009-0524](#)**

Communication from City Administrative Officer relative to the 2010-2019 Ten Year Capital Improvement Program.

Mr. Ziehler stated the Program shows the long-term needs of the City and doesn't commit any City funds. Funds still have to be budgeted through the proper methods.

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

Votes: Aye: 4 - Ald. Kopplin, Ald. Vitale, Ald. Lajsic and Ald. Reinke
No: 0

H. 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.**a. CVMIC Self-Insured Retention Levels.**

Mr. Ziehler stated that CVMIC has asked the City to extend its commitment for another two years. One possible change would be to increase the self-insured retention (SIR) from \$150,000 to \$175,000. Mr. Ziehler would like the Committee to decide if the City should take a little more risk for the savings realized in the premium difference of about \$18,000 per year. With experience showing that every six years the City has a big claim, it is about a break even situation. However, if there was more claims or shorter time frame, the City would pay more under the \$175,000 option. On balance, staff recommends keeping the \$150,000 SIR.

The Committee concurred to stay with the current SIR option of \$150,000.

3. Other.

None.

I. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ald. Lajsic, seconded by Ald. Reinke, to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.