

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Legislative Committee was called to order by Chairman Antoine on Monday, May 16, 2022 at 8:58 P.M.

Members present: Antoine, Coenen, Moore, and Thiele.

Also present: Mayor Penterman, Ald. DeCoster, Eggleston, Kilgas, Schell, Atty. Davidson, DPW/Eng. Neumeier, Fin. Dir. Van Rossum, Planner Stephenson, Fire Chief Carrel, Police Chief Graff, and interested citizens.

1. Correspondence - None.

2. Discussion Topics.

a. Consideration to change City Attorney from elected to appointed through referendum.

The risks to the City of this role as an elected position are several. There are only four selection criteria for the City Attorney office as an elected position. 1. The individual must have a law degree. 2. The individual must live within the corporate limits of the City of Kaukauna. 3. The individual must complete and file the requisite candidacy nomination papers. 4. The candidate must receive greater than 50% of the popular vote at election. Beyond those four requirements, there is nothing further that the Council, Mayor, staff or the public can do to ensure that the candidate for the position has appropriate professional qualifications or experience. As Attorney Davidson has expressed, number 1, merely having achieved a law degree, is not a sufficient qualifier to rely upon for the chief risk management function of the City.

If the decision is to have a referendum and the referendum passes, it will have very little impact on the budget. The City Attorney position is a 0.75 Full-time employee (FTE) that has benefits as an appointed position does. If the position is moved to appointed, it is also suggested that the position go 1.0 FTE. The impact to the budget at this point is an additional 10 hours per week of salary. With the City Attorney Position just getting reelected it gives the City time to plan for the budget impacts over two budget cycles assuming the referendum passes in November 2022. The change will take effect April 16, 2024.

Motion by Thiele, seconded by Moore to add the referendum questions "Shall the City of Kaukauna, Outagamie County, Wisconsin change the City Attorney position from elected to appointed?" to the November 2022 ballot and hold 2-3 informational sessions for the public to better understand the question ahead of the election.

All members voted aye.

Motion carried.

b. Consideration to change Mayor term from 2 to 4 years.

The constituents of Kaukauna like to see some consistency at the helm when they vote on who to run the City. When a mayor is elected for the first time or even reelected this happens in the month of April. With that a mayor has one budget year that he/she will have from start to finish. The first year a new mayor takes office, they are getting the previous Mayor's budget. If an incumbent mayor isn't reelected, they only have 4 months of the budget they created for their last year of their 2-year term. There are some projects and initiatives that take much longer than 2 years to see through. Even if a project starts on the first day a mayor is in office, they are really limited to 20 months of dedicated focus on seeing that project come to fruition. Come December prior to the (re)election year (20 months later) they are likely gearing up for campaigning which takes, time, effort, and focus away from running the

City. This doesn't account for the learning curve a mayor has the first year he/she is in office. There is a lot to learn from the day-to-day administrative duties. If you think of any other job, it takes a good 2-3 years before someone is truly settled in and follows the learning curve. Two years doesn't allow enough time for a new mayor to get settled in and make a difference in the City. Kaukauna is one of the few of our size in the state with a mayor on a 2-year term. Most other Cities of our size have a mayor with a 4-year term. The mayor term is solidified by City Code 2011, § 1.04. Any change to this would have to come in the form of an ordinance change that is done at the council level. Discussion was held on the pros and cons of changing the mayor's term to 4 years.

This item will be brought back to the Legislative Committee at a future meeting for further review.

3. General Matters – None.

4. Adjourn.

Motion by Moore, seconded by Thiele to adjourn.

All members voted aye.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

Sally Kenney, Clerk