

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

A meeting of the Committee of the Whole was called to order by Chair Penterman on Monday, November 11, 2024 at 6:00 P.M.

Members present: Antoine, Coenen, DeCoster, Eggleston, Kilgas, Moore, Schell, and Thiele.

Absent & Excused: None.

Also present: Mayor Penterman, Attorney Greenwood, DPW/Eng. Neumeier, Finance Dir. Van Rossum, Senior Accountant Roehl, Planning Dir. Kittel, Library Dir. Thiem-Manning, Fire Chief Carrel, Police Chief Graff, HR Dir. Hodge, Com. Enrich. Services Dir. Vosters, Marketing & Comm. Manager Fencl, Street Superintendent VanGompel, and interested citizens.

1. Correspondence – none.

2. Discussion Topics.

a. 2025 Budget presentation.

Mayor Penterman read his letter dated November 11, 2024. The proposed 2025 budget reflects a tax increase of \$0.09 per thousand of assessed value, which is a 0.96% increase in the assessed tax rate. The City's tax levy increased \$220,276 or 1.70%. Under state law, the levy is allowed to increase 1.70% plus increased debt service requirements. This levy increase is less than the maximum permitted under state law. Budgeted general fund expenditures for 2025 are \$19,756,868. An increase of 4.9%. This will allow the City to continue to qualify for the State Expenditure Restraint Program Aid. The general fund balance is projected to be \$6,937,299 on December 31, 2024. This fund balance exceeds the Council's objective of \$2,963,530 at year end, which will allow the City to continue to receive an excellent bond rating resulting in low interest rates when issuing future debt.

Motion by Coenen, seconded by Thiele to receive and place on file the Mayor's 2025 Budget Letter to the Common Council.

All members voted aye.

Motion carried.

Mayor Penterman presented his 2024-2025 Goals and Objectives.

Motion by Schell, seconded by Coenen to receive and place on file the Mayor's 2024-2025 Goals and Objectives.

All members voted aye.

Motion carried.

Finance Dir. VanRossum presented highlights for the 2025 budget. The impact on the City with Act 12 was discussed including repealed personal property taxes starting in 2024. Various schedules were presented showing a 2024 levy for city purposes of \$13,204,816.06 with an assessed tax rate of \$9.99. He reviewed the levy limit calculation for 2024, the expenditure restraint calculation and the city's debt service. Revenues and expenses were discussed, and with a balanced budget, both are increasing by 5%. The assessment to equalized ratio was discussed with all major categories out of compliance and the overall ratio at 76%. Finance Dir. explained that a revaluation will need to happen in 2027. The Storm and Sanitary Utility Funds were also highlighted with the overall net position for both improving. The stormwater rate is proposed to increase \$0.50 per ERU at \$132/ERU/year. The sanitary rate is anticipated to stay the same at \$8.75/100 Cubic Feet. It was also noted that with the school referendum passing, the school district's portion of the tax bill will increase by 20.68%.

b. 2025 Budget Deliberations.

Alderspersons asked several questions of staff during the deliberation process. Discussion items included the school district referendum and bonding this year, and merit incentives for city employees.

Mayor Penterman reiterated that we have 126 people working for the City and it takes the collaborative effort of each and every person to run the City.

3. Position Classifications and Wage Scale Pertaining to the 2025 Budget.

a. Memo and Pay Grade Scale.

Finance Dir. VanRossum presented the wage scale and position classification for the non-represented employees of the city, covering both exempt/nonexempt positions and the Street Department. This scale aligns with the 3% increase that is included in the budget for the 2025 fiscal year. The scale also reflects the market conditions and cost-of-living adjustments for employees. Discussion was held and questions were answered including questions regarding step increases and merit incentives.

4. Tax Bill Breakdown Widget.

a. Overview of the website – <https://kaukauna.gov/departments/finance/tax-boll-breakdown/>.

Finance Dir. VanRossum reviewed the Tax Bill Breakdown Widget available on the city website. The widget was created to help give property owners a visual tool to gain a better understanding of what their tax dollars are used for. The widget allows users to input any address or parcel number within the City of Kaukauna to access a comprehensive breakdown of their tax bill by taxing jurisdiction, as well as a detailed overview of how the city's share of the tax dollar is allocated across various areas.

Alderspersons had favorable comments regarding the Tax Bill Breakdown Widget.

5. Adjourn.

Motion made by Antoine, seconded by Schell to adjourn.

All members voted aye.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Christina Nelson, Deputy Clerk