



FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, AUGUST 26, 2024, AT 5:30 PM

MUNICIPAL BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 106 JONES STREET, WATERTOWN, WI 53094

Finance Committee members present: Mayor McFarland, Alderpersons Bartz, Davis, Lampe, and Moldenhauer

Others present: Finance Director Stevens, Attorney Chesebro, Public Works Director Beyer, Fire Chief Reynen, Police Chief Brower, Water Systems Manager Hartz, Andrea Peters, Lisa Schwartz, Maureen McBroom, Ald. Board, Ald. Wetzel

1. Call to order. Mayor McFarland called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.
2. Ald. Davis, seconded by Ald. Bartz, approved the **minutes from the August 12 Finance Committee meeting**. Unanimously approved.
3. The Fire Department presented a list of recommended **write-offs for EMS billing**, having exhausted all collections efforts. Ald. Moldenhauer motioned to approve the write-off, seconded by Ald. Lampe. Unanimously approved.
4. Mr. Beyer recommended that the City enter into a **State Municipal Financial Agreement** with WisDOT to receive \$923,776 from the **Surface Transportation Program (STP) Urban Grant**. The project is currently scheduled in State Fiscal Year 2028. A motion was offered by Ald. Lampe, supported by Ald. Moldenhauer. Unanimously approved.
5. The position of assistant city engineer has been vacant since January. To address this gap, the Public Works Department recommends **entering into an agreement with Graef-USA** for municipal engineering services on an hourly rate basis September through December, 2024 with a maximum of \$80,000 to be funded with unused wages due to the vacancy. Ald. Davis made a motion, seconded by Ald. Bartz, to agree to this arrangement. Unanimously approved.
6. Mr. Hartz recommended approval for **Jake Nehls to move from H2 [\$24.50/hr] to H4 [\$25.86/hr]** due to his successful completion of two certifications. Ald. Bartz motioned, seconded by Ald. Davis, to approve. Unanimously approved.
7. A wage review was completed by the HR consultant for the **dispatch personnel**. Based upon the response, the police department administration is requesting an increase in the dispatch supervisor from grade J to K and dispatch staff from grade H to I. Ald. Lampe moved, supported by Ald. Moldenhauer, to make the increases in accordance with handbook procedures for step increases. Unanimously approved.
8. Mr. Stevens provided a memo to update the committee on the process the **health insurance** broker took to market our group to insurance carriers. Two companies provided pricing; Dean Health was the better pricing for a HMO plan design similar to the current WI ETF program.

An information presentation that was shared with approximately 80 employees in in-person meetings and then via email to all employees was included in tonight's packet. There are hesitations in the departure from ETF due to the potentially high cost of re-entry. Also of concern is the loss of insurance for the 26 retirees that continue to pay for coverage either through pension withdrawals or direct payment. Nine are less than 65. More work will continue to take place to determine options for this group.

Based on not-to-exceed maximums offered by Dean for the second and third years, the calculations indicate the Dean premium rates will be less than the WI ETF rate projections through 2027. Almost half of our employees that are currently insured through Dean would see their shared premiums cut in half (\$539.98/mo down to \$261.63/mo). Employees currently insured by Mercy (approx. 45% of group) will experience an increase of \$49.85 more than what the 2025 Mercy rate would be (\$211.78/mo vs. \$261.63/mo).

Ald. Davis recommended the **pursuit of the Dean HMO group health plan for 2025**, seconded by Ald. Moldenhauer. Approved 4:1. A resolution will have to be approved by the Council in order to depart the WI ETF plan.

9. Attorney Chesebro presented requested **updates** to Watertown Ordinance 136-11 (**Responsibilities of the City Attorney**) in the areas of:

- a. Informed consent
- b. Addressing public nuisance lawsuits
- c. Process for settling claims
- d. Notification to Common Council and Mayor regarding legal matters
- e. Requests for assistance to and from other Wisconsin communities

A motion was made by Ald. Davis, seconded by Ald. Lampe to approve changes. Unanimously approved.

10. Mayor McFarland requested permission for the City to both **apply for and accept any donations or grants for the inclusive park** that don't require any financial match. These would follow the purchasing policy expectation of review by the Finance Director. A motion was made by Ald. Davis, supported by Ald. Bartz, to apply and accept these grants. Unanimously approved. All donations will be recorded in a new account created for this purpose.
11. The WI Dept of Health Services was awarded federal ARPA funds to allocate to local health departments. An amount up to \$354,256 was awarded to City of Watertown. The Public Health Department is in the process to submit for approved eligible expenses totaling \$117,951 to date; therefore, a **budget modification is requested for Fund 15**. A motion was made by Ald. Lampe, seconded by Ald. Bartz, to recommend this budget change to Council. Unanimously approved.
12. The **General Fund income statement through July** was provided.
13. Ald. Moldenhauer moved, supported by Ald. Bartz, to convene into **closed session** per Wis Stat. Sec. 19.85(1)(c) to consider employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility (**Watertown Professional Firefighters IAFF Local 877**). Approved unanimously by roll call vote.
14. The committee reconvened into open session.
15. Ald. Moldenhauer moved, supported by Ald. Lampe, to convene into **closed session** per Wis Stat. Sec. 19.85(1)(g) to confer with legal counsel for the governmental 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 (**Claim of J.B.**). Approved unanimously by roll call vote.
16. The committee reconvened into open session.
17. **Finance Committee adjournment.** Ald. Bartz moved, seconded by Ald. Moldenhauer, to adjourn the Finance Committee at 7:19 p.m., and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Stevens, Finance Director

Note: These minutes are uncorrected, and any corrections made thereto will be noted in the proceedings at which these minutes are approved.