

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE WAUSAU COMMON COUNCIL
held on Tuesday, November 21, 2023, in Council Chambers, beginning at 6:30 P.M.,
Mayor Katie Rosenberg presiding.

Roll Call

11/21/2023

Roll Call indicated 11 members present.

<u>District</u>	<u>Aldersperson</u>	<u>Vote</u>
1	Lukens, Carol	YES
2	Martens, Michael	YES
3	Kilian, Tom	YES
4	Diny, Doug	YES
5	Gisselman, Gary	YES
6	McElhaney, Becky	YES
7	Rasmussen, Lisa	YES
8	Watson, Sarah	YES
9	Herbst, Dawn	YES
10	Larson, Lou	YES
11	Henke, Chad	YES

Consent Agenda

11/21/2023

Motion by Watson, second by Lukens, to adopt all the items on the Consent Agenda as follows:

23-1101 from the Common Council Approving the minutes of a previous meeting (11/07/2023).

22-1110 Resolution from the Finance Committee Levying Special Assessments for the 2023 Street Construction Project of North 17th Avenue from Stewart Avenue to Elm Street.

23-1108 Resolution from the Human Resources Committee Approving change to minimum education/training requirement for law enforcement officers.

23-1120 Resolution from the Capital Improvement and Street Maintenance Committee and the Plan Commission Approving Vistas at Greenwood Hills First Addition Preliminary Plat.

Yes Votes: 11

No Votes: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Voting: 0

Result: PASSED

23-1121 Amendment

11/21/2023

Motion by Kilian, seconded by Larson, to amend the tax equivalent to \$0 on the Resolution from the Finance Committee Establishing the 2024 Property Tax Equivalent for Wausau Water Works Wausau Wisconsin.

Rasmussen stated that this amendment would throw the budget into chaos in the eleventh-hour of the process and would not result in a usage rate decrease as a rate case has not been conducted.

Diny stated that a more reasonable deduction could be considered based on a 15-year timeframe.

Kilian stated that this proposal was raised several months ago and was based on solid facts and rhetoric. It was stated that regardless of if this would bring immediate usage rate relief, the amendment should be supported to begin to reduce the rates in the long term.

<u>District</u>	<u>Aldersperson</u>	<u>Vote</u>
1	Lukens, Carol	NO
2	Martens, Michael	NO
3	Kilian, Tom	YES
4	Diny, Doug	YES
5	Gisselman, Gary	NO
6	McElhaney, Becky	NO
7	Rasmussen, Lisa	NO
8	Watson, Sarah	NO
9	Herbst, Dawn	NO
10	Larson, Lou	YES
11	Henke, Chad	NO

Yes Votes: 3

No Votes: 8

Abstain: 0

Not Voting: 0

Result: FAILED

23-1121 Amendment

11/21/2023

Motion by Diny, seconded by Kilian, to amend the tax equivalent to \$1.49 million on the Resolution from the Finance Committee Establishing the 2024 Property Tax Equivalent for Wausau Water Works Wausau Wisconsin.

Diny stated that this amendment would be a step in the right direction in reducing the tax equivalent in a gradual manner to not disrupt the budget process. It was stated that this would mean that the equal amount would have to be reduced in the next agenda item referring to the city budget.

Rasmussen stated that the Finance Committee has committed to looking at this issue and that a reduction in the tax equivalent needs to be studied first to come up with a defined approach as opposed to a dartboard approach of arbitrarily choosing a reduced amount.

Kilian stated support of eliminating supplemental budget request for positions in the next agenda item referring to the city budget to offset the reduction in revenue to support this amendment.

<u>District</u>	<u>Aldersperson</u>	<u>Vote</u>
1	Lukens, Carol	NO
2	Martens, Michael	NO
3	Kilian, Tom	YES
4	Diny, Doug	YES
5	Gisselman, Gary	NO
6	McElhaney, Becky	NO
7	Rasmussen, Lisa	NO
8	Watson, Sarah	NO
9	Herbst, Dawn	NO
10	Larson, Lou	YES
11	Henke, Chad	NO

Yes Votes: 3

No Votes: 8

Abstain: 0

Not Voting: 0

Result: FAILED

23-1121 Amendment

11/21/2023

Motion by Gisselman, seconded by Kilian, to amend to direct the Finance Committee and the Wausau Water Works Commission to report back to the Common Council in August 2024 on the results of the impact of the tax equivalent on the Resolution from the Finance Committee Establishing the 2024 Property Tax Equivalent for Wausau Water Works Wausau Wisconsin.

Yes Votes: 11

No Votes: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Voting: 0

Result: PASSED

23-1121

11/21/2023

Motion by Lukens, seconded by Watson, to adopt the Resolution from the Finance Committee Establishing the 2024 Property Tax Equivalent for Wausau Water Works Wausau Wisconsin.

Brian Roemer, Senior Municipal Advisor with Ehlers, provided information on this matter. Questions were asked and answered.

Kilian questioned the amount to which water and sewer usage rates would decrease by reducing the tax equivalent amount. It was stated that changing usage rates would require a rate study by the Public Service Commission to determine how much the utility would need to charge to recover cost to operate. It was stated that removing the tax equivalent would equal a 17% decrease in the cost to operate. Kilian further questioned if the same outcome could be achieved by decreasing spending in the city budget. It was stated that this was possible and other communities have gone through the budget process to reduce the tax equivalent gradually. Kilian stated support for gradually reducing the tax equivalent amount and reducing expenses to drive down the usage rates based on the discussion.

Diny suggested moving this to the levy to provide transparency for the services provided.

Rasmussen stated that moving this to the levy would give many tax-exempt entities a free pass on paying usage rates as property taxpayers and non-property taxpayers pay usage rates equally. It was stated that reducing expenses would mean a cut to popular city services and that reducing the tax equivalent may not reduce the usage rate based on a newly conducted rate study.

<u>District</u>	<u>Aldersperson</u>	<u>Vote</u>
1	Lukens, Carol	YES

2	Martens, Michael	YES
3	Kilian, Tom	NO
4	Diny, Doug	NO
5	Gisselman, Gary	YES
6	McElhaney, Becky	YES
7	Rasmussen, Lisa	YES
8	Watson, Sarah	YES
9	Herbst, Dawn	YES
10	Larson, Lou	NO
11	Henke, Chad	YES

Yes Votes: 8 No Votes: 3 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

23-1109 Amendment **11/21/2023**

Motion by Larson, seconded by Kilian, to amend to remove the funding for two positions from the supplemental budget requests on the Resolution from Finance Committee Adopting the 2024 City of Wausau Budget and General Property Tax to Support Same.

Larson stated that this amendment was due to the positions not being reviewed by the Human Resources Committee in due process.

Rasmussen stated that what is in the budget is placeholder funding allocated for the positions to begin in April of 2024 which gives the Human Resources Committee time to develop these positions. It was stated that items are included in the budget to mitigate introducing a budget modification half-way through the fiscal year and stated the need for the new positions. Rasmussen stated that this is the same process in creating new positions in the budget that has always been followed. It was stated that while these are new positions in the budget, they are position classifications that already exist which does not require Human Resources to come up with the details of the positions.

McElhaney stated that these new positions are in classifications which do not mesh with existing classifications for position qualifications as other similarly classified positions. It was stated that the Human Resources Director was missed out in this process. McElhaney stated support for the amendment because the positions were created in a process that bypassed the Human Resources Department.

Diny stated that it appears that this is the process as it currently stands but that does not make it the correct process as many are confused as to how these positions came forward. Diny supported taking a step back to get the process right as opposed to fixing this on the fly.

Martens stated that there is a genuine need for these positions in the respective departments and cautioned approving this amendment because of a disagreement in process. It was requested by Martens that the head of the departments making the supplemental request speak to the importance of these position request.

Larson stated that this amendment would not eliminate these positions because the positions do not currently exist.

McElhaney stated that the Human Resources Director is working on finalizing these positions to bring back to the Human Resources Committee to review. It was stated that these positions are not being denied but that there was a desire to give the Director more time to work on the finalization of the positions.

Kilian stated that the need for clarification is very important for staff to have a roadmap for the process of creating new positions and supports the amendment to adhere to a process.

Diny stated that a city administrator position could be created using a process that involves the Human Resources Director to also ensure an established process is followed.

Rasmussen stated that the city administrator discussion needs to be determined by the voters in a referendum and not in the discussion of the budget process as it pertains to giving direction to the Human Resources Department. *Point of Order raised* by Larson on the germaness of the discussion. *Point of order was well taken by the chair* and Rasmussen was directed to continue discussing the amendment. Rasmussen stated that taking away the funding would delay the ability to post and hire the job in a timely manner all while the Human Resources Department can work on the details.

Lukens stated agreement with Rasmussen’s comments on the inappropriateness of the city administrator discussion and asked Diny to stop bringing the discussion up. *Point of order raised* by Kilian to ask the chair to remind members of the Common Council to direct comments to the chair. *Point of order was well taken by the chair* and Lukens later apologized.

Martens stated that these positions are needed in the Police and Fire Department to handle many open records request and alleviate staffing shortages, and that the Community Development Department needed support staff to be readily available during business hours and support listening sessions which were also allocated in the budget. It was stated that this amendment must fail as to not hinder the city's ability to provide customer service to residents.

Lukens stated agreement for the need for these positions. It was stated that there is a great amount of pressure on the Community Development Department to provide transparency for development prompting the need for their position and stated opposition to this amendment.

<u>District</u>	<u>Aldersperson</u>	<u>Vote</u>
1	Lukens, Carol	NO
2	Martens, Michael	NO
3	Kilian, Tom	YES
4	Diny, Doug	YES
5	Gisselman, Gary	YES
6	McElhaney, Becky	NO
7	Rasmussen, Lisa	NO
8	Watson, Sarah	NO
9	Herbst, Dawn	YES
10	Larson, Lou	YES
11	Henke, Chad	NO

Yes Votes: 5 No Votes: 6 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: FAILED

23-1109 **11/21/2023**

Motion by Rasmussen, seconded by Lukens, to adopt the Resolution from Finance Committee Adopting the 2024 City of Wausau Budget and General Property Tax to Support Same.

Rasmussen stated that the budget had been vetted by the Finance Committee and outlined that it increases the budget for street and road repair and moves forward prioritized capital improvements, retains city staff, and ensures services and facilities continue to operate which residents expect. Rasmussen stated support for the budget based on these comments.

Diny stated the discussion of a city administrator is germane as it could be a way to resolve issues which arose tonight. *Point of order raised* by Lukens on the germaness of this discussion of the city administrator. *Point of order was well taken by the chair.*

<u>District</u>	<u>Aldersperson</u>	<u>Vote</u>
1	Lukens, Carol	YES
2	Martens, Michael	YES
3	Kilian, Tom	NO
4	Diny, Doug	NO
5	Gisselman, Gary	YES
6	McElhaney, Becky	YES
7	Rasmussen, Lisa	YES
8	Watson, Sarah	YES
9	Herbst, Dawn	YES
10	Larson, Lou	NO
11	Henke, Chad	YES

Yes Votes: 8 No Votes: 3 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

23-1110 **11/21/2023**

Motion by Watson, seconded by Henke, to adopt the Preliminary Resolution from the Capital Improvement and Street Maintenance Committee Levying Special Assessments for 2024 Street Construction Projects.

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

Suspend the Rules **11/21/2023**

Motion by Watson, second by Rasmussen, to suspend Rule 6(B) Filing and 12(A) Referral of Resolutions. *(2/3 majority required)*

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

22-0105**11/21/2023**

Motion by Watson, second by Herbst, to adopt the Resolution from the Economic Development Committee Approving the First Amendment to SCS Wausau AKA S.C. Swiderski Riverlife Development Agreement.

<u>District</u>	<u>Aldersperson</u>	<u>Vote</u>
1	Lukens, Carol	YES
2	Martens, Michael	YES
3	Kilian, Tom	NO
4	Diny, Doug	YES
5	Gisselman, Gary	NO
6	McElhaney, Becky	YES
7	Rasmussen, Lisa	YES
8	Watson, Sarah	YES
9	Herbst, Dawn	YES
10	Larson, Lou	NO
11	Henke, Chad	YES

Yes Votes: 8 No Votes: 3 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

23-1111**11/21/2023**

Motion by Watson, seconded by Lukens, to adopt the Resolution from the Finance Committee Approving Nominal Payment Parcel for a Temporary Limited Easement, New Highway Right-of-Way Fee, and Landscaping at 7255 Stewart Avenue, Parcel 1, Transportation Project Plat 6999-09-02.

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

23-1112**11/21/2023**

Motion by Watson, seconded by Lukens, to adopt the Resolution from the Finance Committee Approving Nominal Payment Parcel for a Temporary Limited Easement at 7019 Stewart Avenue, Parcel 12, Transportation Project Plat 6999-09-02.

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

23-1113**11/21/2023**

Motion by Watson, seconded by Herbst, to adopt the Resolution from the Finance Committee Approving Nominal Payment Parcel for a Temporary Limited Easement at 5450 Stewart Avenue, Parcel 41, Transportation Project Plat 6999-09-02.

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

23-1114**11/21/2023**

Motion by Watson, seconded by Herbst, to adopt the Resolution from the Finance Committee Approving Nominal Payment Parcel for a Temporary Limited Easement at 5400 Stewart Avenue, Parcel 42, Transportation Project Plat 6999-09-02.

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

23-1115**11/21/2023**

Motion by Lukens, seconded by Watson, to adopt the Resolution from the Finance Committee Approving Nominal Payment Parcel for a Temporary Limited Easement at 5300 Stewart Avenue, Parcel 43, Transportation Project Plat 6999-09-02.

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

23-1116**11/21/2023**

Motion by Watson, seconded by Herbst, to adopt the Resolution from the Finance Committee Approving Nominal Payment Parcel for a Temporary Limited Easement and New Highway Right-of-Way Fee at 5050 Stewart Avenue, Parcel 44, Transportation Project Plat 6999-09-02.

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

23-1117

11/21/2023

Motion by Watson, seconded by Lukens, to adopt the Resolution Approving Nominal Payment Parcel for a Temporary Limited Easement and New Highway Right-of-Way Fee at 5000 Stewart Avenue, Parcel 47, Transportation Project Plat 6999-09-02.

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

23-1118

11/21/2023

Motion by Lukens, seconded by Herbst, to adopt the Resolution from the Finance Committee Approving Nominal Payment Parcel for a Temporary Limited Easement and New Highway Right-of-Way Fee at 4900 Stewart Avenue, Parcel 48, Transportation Project Plat 6999-09-02.

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

23-1119

11/21/2023

Motion by Diny, seconded by Lukens, to adopt the Resolution from the Common Council Approving Agreement with FAA for Transfer of Entitlements apportioned to Wausau Downtown Airport.

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: PASSED

Adjourn

11/21/2023

Motion by Watson, second by Henke, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:19 P.M.

Katie Rosenberg, Mayor
Kody Hart, Deputy City Clerk