

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Tuesday, August 27, 2024, at 5:15 p.m., Council Chambers

Members Present: Michael Martens (C), Gary Gisselman (VC), Becky McElhaney, Terry Kilian, Vicki Tierney

Others Present: Mayor Diny, MaryAnne Groat, Eric Lindman, Jamie Polley, John Kahon, Matt Barnes, Randy Fifrick

Noting the presence of a quorum Chairperson Martens called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Minutes of the previous meeting (08/14/2024).

Motion by Kilian, seconded by Gisselman, to approve. Motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action regarding ARPA funding requests and related budget modification for Wausau Water Works Meter Purchases.

Martens stated the unencumbered funds from ARPA was at approximately \$867,100 meaning the committee could allocate funds for the solar array project or the water meter purchase but not for both.

Kilian questioned if other funds may be available for the solar array project. It was stated the project could be funded through the Capitol Improvement Project process and other funding sources. Kilian stated the solar array project will have a change in figures that will make a difference in the overall costs.

Martens questioned if there were other projects that may need allocations from ARPA. It was stated those projects are now in the CIP process for 2025. Martens further questioned if other projects with ARPA allocation would come underbudget or unspent. It was stated that there would be a reevaluation of funds in September. It was questioned if the water meters can be purchased up till the end of the year under the city bidding process. It was stated that the orders can be made prior to the deadline to spend ARPA funds at the end of the year.

Gisselman stated the ARPA allocation for the solar array project will still be in front of the Common Council for the body to decide.

Motion by McElhaney, seconded by Tierney, to fund the \$800,000 from ARPA to purchase water meters. Motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action regarding the resolution authorizing the issuance and establishing parameters for the sale of not to exceed \$9,100,000 General Obligation Promissory Notes, Series 2023C.

Gisselman questioned if the cost for the Eau Claire Boulevard water line replacement project was unusually high. It was stated the cost was higher than usual. Gisselman further questioned if future costs would also come in higher and if these higher costs were sustainable.

Motion by Gisselman, seconded by Kilian, to authorize the issuance and establish the parameters for Promissory Notes, Series 2024C. Motion carried 5-0

Discussion and possible action Approving of a Budget Amendment Recognizing the Grant Award of \$498,482.08 for a Wisconsin DNR Urban Forestry Inflation Reduction Act Grant for City of Wausau Tree Planting and Private Ash Mitigation Project.

Kilian questioned if the grant covered the full cost of the project. It was stated this grant covers the full cost to conduct the project at 100% of the cost with no matching funds needed from the city.

Gisselman questioned if canopy replacement was part of this project and requested that canopy preservation be prioritized.

Motion by Kilian, seconded by Tierney, to accept the grant. Motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible Action Accepting a Bid from Spohn Ranch through Cooperative Purchasing Agreement for the Construction of the Oak Island Skate Park.

Motion by Kilian, seconded by Tierney, to approve the purchasing agreement. Motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action regarding budget modification for Tax Increment District 8 Tax Increment Grant.

Without objection, this item was pulled for consideration by the request of Martens.

Discussion and possible action regarding budget modification for Animal Control Fund.

Tierney questioned funding sources as it was requested to explore funding for currently hired community services officers and not new CSOs to complete animal control operations. It was stated a vast majority of CSOs work during the summer thus the budget allocated for CSOs has been depleted and additional funding would need to be allocated for a proposal to utilize CSOs and a humane officer to complete the work of animal control operations. Tierney stated a question as to if it would be worth the additional cost to have a constant person in place in addition to CSOs.

McElhaney questioned if the amount outlined was just for the remainder of the budget year and if this cost would be significantly larger in the full budget next year. It was stated the cost would be larger, but an amount was not given.

Kilian stated the reason this has been a controversial issue was because many members of the community had a strong response to eliminating the humane officer position. Kilian stated the response from constituents and in the media had been strong in support of keeping a humane officer position.

McElhaney stated no residents had been vociferously for or against the proposal.

Martens stated no residents had an opinion one way or the other on the animal control services as long as those services are conducted. Martens stated opposition to the budget modification.

Motion by Kilian, seconded by Tierney, to approve the budget modification. Motion carried 3-2, with Martens and McElhaney opposed.

Discussion and possible action on vacation of right-of-way at 700 Grand Avenue for Commonwealth Development and releasing obligation of the DOT for reimbursing city for property purchase.

McElhaney stated this was a large sum of money being given up and stated opposition to ceding those funds back to the state. It was stated the location of the development had caused concern within the community as the land was meant to be an expanded turn lane and the condensed location.

Kilian stated the loss of funds from the state as a concern and questioned if the developer would be open to moving the location of the development project. It was stated the tax credits securing the funding of the project are site specific location and moving the site would eliminate the tax credits as a funding source. Kilian questioned the property tax generated by the building of the development and if that tax base would make up for the loss of funds from the vacation. It was stated the cost would be made up in tax base but in a longer period.

Martens stated this would be an opportunity cost of building affordable housing now and recouping the funds lost from the vacation in tax base and the multiplier of people being in stable housing.

Gisselman stated concerns within the scope of the project and reconstruction work on Grand Avenue.

Motion by Gisselman, seconded by Tierney, to vacate the right-of way at 700 Grand Avenue and release obligation of the Wisconsin DOT for reimbursement. Motion carried 3-2, with Kilian and Tierney opposed.

CLOSED SESSION pursuant to Section 19.85(1)(e) of the Wisconsin State statutes for deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session related to the discussion of committee recommendations regarding upcoming negotiations of City Employee Union Contracts with Wausau Firefighters Association, Local 415 and Wausau Professional Police Association.

Motion by McElhaney, seconded by Tierney, to convene in Closed Session.

Roll Call Vote – Yes: Tierney, Kilian, Gisselman, McElhaney, Martens, No: None. Motion carried.

Committee adjourned in closed session.

For full meeting video on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acauOWct2rY>