



Minutes
Committee of the Whole

The Committee of the Whole met on **Monday, August 5, 2013** at **5:30 pm** at **City Hall, Council Chambers, 30 West Central Street, Chippewa Falls, WI.**

Council Members present: Mike Hanke, Rob Kiefer, Amy Mason, Chuck Hull, Jane Lardahl, Bill Hicks, and George Adrian.

Others Present: Mayor Greg Hoffman, Finance Manager/Treasurer Lynne Bauer, Director of Public Works/City Engineer/Utilities Manager Rick Rubenzer, Street & Utility Maintenance Manager Rick Ruf, Utilities Office Manager Connie Freagon, Water Supervisor Rory Olson, Assistant City Engineer Matt Decur, Wastewater Supervisor George Hobbs, City Clerk Bridget Givens, Dennis Tweedale of LWMMI, and Darryl Zaleski of Spectrum Insurance.

The Committee began by eating dinner at 5:30 pm. Council President Hicks called to address business listed on the agenda at 6:00 pm.

Item #1: Presentation from the City's liability insurance carrier.

With the recent addition of new Council members, Dennis Tweedale from the League of Wisconsin Municipalities Mutual Insurance (LWMMI) gave an overview of the City's liability insurance. Mr. Tweedale provided a folder of handouts to the Committee and began by reviewing the documents therein including statutory protections. The Committee then watched a video entitled: In the Scope of Your Authority: Preventing Public Officials' Liability.

Item #2: Discussion regarding the cable franchise fee with possible referral to Committee or recommendation(s) to Council.

Finance Manager Lynne Bauer and Utilities Office Manager Connie Freagon met with representatives of Chippewa Valley Community Television (CVCTV) to discuss the possibility of utilizing their services to have the Council meetings that are recorded with CESA10, broadcast on Charter Cable. CVCTV estimated it could cost roughly \$20,000-\$25,000 for their time and effort to edit the files and upgrade certain equipment.

Bauer advised that the Committee would need to decide if we wanted to continue to collect the 2% franchise fee and how it should be handled. Following further discussion, Mayor Hoffman reminded the Committee that the decision has been made to proceed with CESA10, but the Committee would need to decide if \$20,000-\$25,000 is a reasonable cost to broadcast the meetings on Charter Cable.

Councilor Hanke expressed he did not feel it was necessary to spend the money to have the meetings broadcast as there are typically two newspapers represented at every Council Meeting, and the CESA10 video would be available on our website and the Public Library. He further advised that he thought the franchise fee should no longer be charged to the Charter Cable subscribers. Councilor Hicks stated that if we return the 2% franchise fee, we would still have to find funds to pay for CESA10. The question is if we could utilize the franchise fee to pay for both options.

Councilor Hull said the decision had been made to go with CESA10 so we could record and upload Committee meetings in addition to Council Meetings. Hull questioned what the requirements are for

Charter Cable to air public meetings as he believes there is a certain number of hours of public television that Charter is required to broadcast.

Bauer thought that between what would be paid to CVCTV for the services provided for the year and what would be paid to institute the CESA10 program, we would expend the 2% franchise fee for the year. Currently, the City collects a franchise fee of 5%, with 3% going to the general fund and the remaining 2% being used to fund CVCTV services. Hicks indicated if we want to broadcast the meetings, there has to be a way to pay for it and suggested that the City continue to collect the franchise fee through the end of the year and make the franchise fee part of upcoming budget discussions to be had by Committee #1.

No action taken.

Item #3: Discussion regarding the Street Department workload with possible referral to Committee or recommendation(s) to Council.

Hicks advised that this item stemmed from a request by Rick Rubenzer for guidance in how to handle requests for Street Department staff time from organizations holding events. This was further predicated upon the City Council's decision that work could be done with zero-cost realized on the part of the City for the Northern Wisconsin State Fair. Lardahl stated the reason there was such an issue with what was being done at the fair was the use of heavy equipment and the amount of time that would have to be expended.

Hicks shared that currently, there is no charge to organizations requesting Sidewalk or Street Use permits. It was agreed that the events in the community are important, but the public must realize there is a cost associated with the event; whether it be the Street Department setting up barricades or the Police Department directing traffic.

It was discussed that these requests should be brought before Committee for discussion. The Mayor advised that events like the Bridge to Wonderland or Pure Water Days parades cost roughly \$2,500-\$3,000 and that most of the organizations operate on a limited budget. If we make changes in the services we provide, we will see a lot of changes to the community. Councilor Mason pointed out that the Police Department is already over-budget in regards to overtime so the merits of each request would need to be considered. Hicks advised that the Council needs to be made aware of the requests and the costs associated in order to set priorities. Notice will have to be given to organizations so they understand that adequate application time will be required and they may have to come to a Committee meeting to support their request.

Hicks advised that Attorney Ferg should review the ordinance(s) and establish a process for these types of requests with the ordinance(s) coming back before Committee for review.

No action taken.

Item #4: Discussion regarding an appraisal of the water building and the potential of combining the water and street department buildings with possible referral to Committee or recommendation(s) to Council.

Rubenzer advised that a study was done last November by an architectural firm regarding the possibility of selling the existing Water Department building and moving operations to the Street Department facility. Hicks advised that Rubenzer should forward the study to members of the Council. Councilor Adrian questioned the appraisal amount of the Water Department and the cost of the study that was done. It was decided that the appraisal amount should be discussed in closed session as part of negotiations. Ultimately, Council should be making the decision on whether or not it would be in the City's best interest to combine the Water and Street Departments at one location. The information will be forwarded to Council and addressed at a future Council or Committee Meeting.

No action taken.

Motion by Mason/Lardahl to adjourn at 7:52 pm. All present voting aye, motion carried.

**Minutes submitted by:
Bill Hicks, Council President**