

CITY OF VERONA
MINUTES
COMMON COUNCIL
November 21, 2016
Verona City Hall

1. Mayor Hochkammer called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll call: Alderpersons Luke Diaz, Elizabeth Doyle, Jack Linder, Mac McGilvray, Heather Reekie, Scott Stewart, Brad Stiner and Evan Touchett present. Also present: City Administrator Jeff Mikorski, Police Chief Bernie Coughlin, Sergeant Jesse Christensen, Fire Chief Joe Givers, Deputy Fire Chief Jeff Boughton, Finance Director Cindy Engelke, City Engineer Jeff Montpas, and City Clerk Ellen Clark.
4. Public Comment:
None
5. Approval of Minutes from the November 14, 2016 Common Council Meeting:
Motion by Touchett, seconded by Stewart, to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2016 Common Council meeting. Motion carried 8-0.
6. Mayor's Business:
 - Mayor Hochkammer wished a safe and happy Thanksgiving to one and all.
7. Administrator's Report:
 - City Hall will be closed for the Thanksgiving holiday on Thursday, November 24th and Friday, November 25th, 2016.
8. Engineer's Report:
 - Bike & Pedestrian Projects:
AECOM is working on the design for intersection improvements on East and West Verona Avenue for 2017 construction
 - Downtown Streetscape Project Phase II – South Shuman Street and West Park Lane:
This project is in design. Final plans, specifications and cost estimate will be delivered to the city by the end of the year.
9. Committee Reports:
 - A. Finance Committee**
 - (1) Discussion and Possible Action Re: Payment of Bills
Motion by McGilvray, seconded by Doyle, to approve the payment of bills in the amount of \$215,233.63. Motion carried 8-0.
 - (2) Discussion and Possible Action Re: PUBLIC HEARING on the 2017 City of Verona Budget. Administrator Mikorski presented an overview of the City of Verona 2017 recommended budget, which includes a property tax levy of \$13,085,920. A 13.3% increase in the city's equalized value allows a reduction in the mil rate of approximately 10% – from \$6.705/\$1,000 of assessed value for 2015, to \$6.034/\$1,000 for 2016. That equates to a decrease of about \$183 for a \$272,000 home, or \$268 for a \$400,000 home. Motion by McGilvray, seconded by Reekie, to open the Public Hearing at 6:55 p.m. Motion carried 8-0.
Mayor Hochkammer called for comments from the public.

- Michael Johnson, CEO of the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County, 1818 West Beltline Hwy, Madison, WI, spoke on behalf of the club, and requested budget support of \$50,000 from the City of Verona.
 - Cheryl Gittens, 1709 Savannah Way, Waunakee, WI, Chief Academic Officer of the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County, spoke in support of the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County.
 - Jared Biddle, 306 Wynnwood Drive, Verona, WI spoke in support of the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County.
 - Rachel Erickson, 6209 Camino Way, Madison, WI, spoke in support of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dane County.
 - Gia Gallimore, 3015 Maple Valley Dr., Apt. 201, Madison, WI, spoke in support of the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County.
 - Nathaniel Covert, 207 N. Jefferson Street, Verona, WI, spoke regarding his concerns over whether or not adding another aquatic center is in the best interest of the community, and requesting that additional consideration be given to the dredging of Silent Street Pond.
 - Deborah Biddle, 306 Wynnwood Drive, Verona, WI, spoke in support of the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County and the club's College Ready Scholars Program
- Mayor Hochkammer called three times for comments. There were no additional comments. Motion by McGilvray, seconded by Doyle, to close the public hearing at 7:16 p.m. Motion carried 8-0.

(3) Discussion and Possible Action Re: Resolution No. R-16-053 Approving the 2017 City of Verona Budget. Motion by McGilvray, seconded by Doyle, to adopt Resolution No. R-16-053 approving the 2017 City of Verona Budget. Three amendments to the budget were considered.

Amendment #1: Motion by Reekie, seconded by Doyle, to place the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County in the operating budget at \$20,000 as a line item for 2017 and beyond to contribute to provision of college readiness programming for income-eligible and students of color, decreasing the requested Assistant Fire Chief/Mechanic position by \$20,000.

Reekie thinks it would be wise to reduce the Boys and Girls Club's requested amount from \$50,000 to \$20,000, but create an ongoing place in the budget for it, rather than making a one-time contribution. It is our duty to join with Fitchburg, Madison and other communities that are supporting this program. Decreasing the Assistant Fire Chief/Mechanic position could be possible by either reducing the FTE or reducing the number of required duties, so as to reduce the required pay for that position.

Chief Givers stated it would be difficult, if not impossible, to support this position as a part-time position.

Mayor Hochkammer stated that if we want a \$20,000 cut from the city, we would need to cut more than \$20,000 from this mechanic position because of the contract that we have with the Town of Verona in which they pay a portion of the contract.

Finance Director Engelke stated that it is both the city levy and the town levy that support fire operations. If we reduce the city portion of that levy by \$20,000, we would actually reduce that position by \$23,163.

Amendment to Amendment #1: Motion by Doyle, seconded by Reekie, to amend Amendment #1 to remove the requested assistant Fire Chief/Mechanic position from the budget and increase the donation to the Boys and Girls Club to the requested \$50,000.

Doyle stated it is important that we start partnering with the school district and other programs to help students most in need. With the closing of TIF 7, we now have a good opportunity to do that.

Mayor Hochkammer strongly recommended that the council leave the Assistant Chief/Mechanic position in the budget as proposed. All of the positions being proposed for 2017 are needed positions. In his opinion, eliminating positions now that have already been through the vetting process is unacceptable.

Diaz stated he would rather keep the fire department position in at the moment. Touchett agreed with Diaz. The Boys and Girls Club should have come in three months ago. It would be nice to hear from the citizens of the city about where they would want their tax dollars to go in terms of these types of donations.

Amendment to Amendment of Amendment #1: Motion by Reekie, seconded by McGilvray to amend the Amendment to Amendment #1 to add an ongoing \$20,000 per year line item to the operating budget for the Boys and Girls Club, and leave the fire department position in the budget as requested.

McGilvray spoke specifically to the \$20,000 line item in the budget. This sounds like a great program, but we are encumbering money from taxpayers and are not in a position to distribute it to specific organizations.

Michael Johnson stated there is an economic impact when young people do not graduate from high school & attend college. The school district and Epic are supporting this program. We have to demonstrate to the Department of Education that there is a commitment to this program. We'll be putting \$1million at risk if this is voted down.

Mikorski stated you cannot encumber future councils with a contribution. The council in place each year would have to vote on this.

Mayor Hochkammer called the vote on the Amendment to the Amendment of Amendment #1. Motion failed 6-2, with Alders Doyle and Reekie voting Aye, and Alders Diaz, Linder, McGilvray, Stewart, Stiner and Touchett voting no.

Mayor Hochkammer called the vote on the Amendment to Amendment #1. Doyle stated we need to show our commitment to our children. Motion failed 6-2, with Alders Doyle and Reekie voting aye, and Alders Diaz, Linder, McGilvray, Stewart, Stiner and Touchett voting no.

Mayor Hochkammer called the vote on Amendment #1. Motion failed 6-2, with Alders Doyle and Reekie voting aye, and Alders Diaz, Linder, McGilvray, Stewart, Stiner and Touchett voting no.

Amendment #2: Motion by McGilvray, seconded by Stewart, to combine the Splashpad and Aquatics Facility line items into a single line item titled Aquatics Feature, for a total cost of \$2,600,000. McGilvray stated he has received a significant number of emails in support of the pool. Most are concerned about the limited appeal of a splash pad alone. Maybe it could be done in conjunction with a pool. Reekie stated that the splash pad and Fireman's Park beach would happen in 2017, but the pool is a project that will happen farther into the future.

McGilvray – if the money is set aside, I think we can get the project done in a timely Mayor Hochkammer stated combining these two lines may give us more time to do some investigating on this subject. We need to listen to the public, and need to get estimates on the costs. There are a lot of hoops that we need to go through, but it makes sense to have more time to study this.

Stiner stated that we should remain with the plan of the Parks, Recreation & Forestry Commission. Fireman's Park beach is used by a lot of people. A splash pad was added to this plan because of requests from the community.

Reekie stated the Parks Commission has gone over this with a fine toothed comb. Free admission and a nicer place to change & have concessions would be wonderful for the beach area. We can have both a splash pad now and a pool at a later date. The pool will happen and a survey will happen, regardless of the amendment.

Approving this amendment will make the splash pad go away.

Linder stated he sees this amendment as giving us flexibility. We can still do the splash pad, but it doesn't handcuff us.

McGilvray stated people have been talking about a pool for 20 years. The splash pad would push it off again. A school pool would be a function of the school district – it's not for just anyone to use. An outdoor pool owned by the city could be a good compliment to that, and could include a splash pad.

Mayor Hochkammer called the vote on Amendment #2. Motion carried 6-2, with Alders Diaz, Doyle, Linder, McGilvray, Stewart and Touchett voting aye, and Alders Reekie and Stiner voting no.

Amendment #3: Motion by Diaz, seconded by McGilvray, to approve Amendment #3, adding a line item of \$10,000 for an energy efficiency audit of city buildings, and reducing the Building Facilities Manager item by \$10,000.

Doyle stated this is for an energy efficiency audit of city buildings, taking a small amount of money from the Building Facilities Manager position, since the position will not be filled immediately. Public Works Director Jacobson has no objections to this amendment. It is important that we be good stewards of the environment and save energy wherever possible. It may even save the city some money.

Mayor Hochkammer stated that he is in full support of this amendment. \$10,000 would get us an energy audit of some of our buildings. The public works department could do an RFP for a company to come in to look at where we can potentially save money – thermostats, windows, lighting, etc. It may be wise to start with some of the older buildings. This amendment is budget neutral.

Touchett asked why \$10,000 was chosen. Do we know how much an audit would be?

Mayor Hochkammer stated that anyone answering the RFP would know that we have \$10,000 available. We can look at the bids and see what \$10,000 can get us. Doyle stated her support of the amendment.

Mayor Hochkammer called the vote on Amendment #3. Motion carried 8-0.

Mayor Hochkammer called the vote on the motion to approve Resolution No. R-16-053 approving the 2017 City of Verona budget, as amended by Amendment #3. Motion carried 8-0.

- (4) Discussion and Possible Action Re: Resolution No. R-16-054 Approving the Levy of Taxes for City Purposes. Motion by McGilvray, seconded by Doyle, to approve Resolution No. R-16-054 approving the levy of taxes for city purposes in the amount of \$13,085,920.

Diaz stated that he is pleased that the city is no longer borrowing 100% for the mill and overlay program, and is now able to pay half out of the capital budget and half out of the operating budget.

Mayor Hochkammer thanked the staff, the Finance Committee, and Finance Director Cindy Engelke, in particular, for all of the hard work on the budget. There are a lot of moving parts that go into a budget like this. A large part of the 10% reduction in the mil rate is due to the diffusion of the Epic TIF, but that is not the only reason. As a city, we have done very responsible budgeting for a very long time. We do what we believe is in the best interest of the City of Verona. The city benefits greatly from having Epic here, and this is just one way that we can show the benefit that city residents are getting.

McGilvray echoed the comments of Alder Diaz regarding the borrowing. He stated that the intent of previous councils was to keep the tax rates as level as possible, and borrowing at the relatively low interest rates available at that time allowed the city to absorb a considerable amount of growth in the city, and still keep our services at the same level. The borrowing allowed us to build the city that we have now, while still being financially responsible to our taxpayers. Thank you to Epic, to all the people who have worked very hard planning over the years to make this happen, and to the taxpayers for believing in the people on the council to get us where we are today. Motion carried 8-0.

B. Public Safety and Welfare Committee

- (1) Discussion and Possible Action Re: An Application for a Combination Reserve “Class B” Intoxicating Liquor and Class “B” Fermented Malt Beverages License from GRG Management, LLC, d/b/a Monk’s Bar & Grill, 1050 North Edge Trail, Verona, WI 53593, Gregory Hedrich, Agent. Motion by Stewart, seconded by Touchett, to approve the application for a Combination Reserve “Class B” Intoxicating Liquor and Class “B” Fermented Malt Beverages License from GRG Management, LLC, d/b/a Monk’s Bar & Grill, 1050 North Edge Trail, Verona, WI 53593, Gregory Hedrich, Agent, contingent upon completion of satisfactory building and fire inspections by city staff. This license will allow GRG Management, LLC, to serve wine, beer and liquor at their business, which is planned to open in mid-December. The remodel at

1050 North Edge Trail is not yet ready for building and fire inspection. Staff estimates that the building will be ready for inspection in two to three weeks. Therefore, approval of this license will be contingent upon completion of satisfactory building and fire inspections. The owners of the business are aware of and agree to this contingency. The Council is being asked to approve the license with this contingency to allow the business to open on the earliest possible date. Motion carried 8-0.

10. New Business

A. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Approval of Operator Licenses.

No operator licenses were submitted for approval.

11. Announcements:

- Alder Stiner asked citizens of the city to watch for young people as they walk to and from school in winter clothing that may block their vision.
- Mayor Hochkammer announced that there will be no Common Council meeting next Monday, November 28th. There will be only one meeting in December on Monday, December 12th. The Verona Area Community Theater will be presenting the play "It's a Wonderful Life" on December 1, 2, 3 and 4.

12. Adjournment:

Motion by Touchett, seconded by Reekie, to adjourn at 8:21 p.m. Motion carried 8-0.

Ellen Clark
City Clerk