

AUGUST 10, 2015 FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

4:30 p.m., Members present: K. Brown, M. Hraban, M. Platteter. Others present: A. Christianson, K. Gorsegner, H. Helmecci, K. Julien, L. Klink, D. Parker, D. Tuma, T. Verdegan.

Call to Order:

Chair K. Brown called the meeting to order.

2016 Budget:

It was noted that department heads had just received preliminary budget information so will need a couple weeks to get their budget proposals together.

Citing a need to increase the amount of street reconstruction in the next 3-4 years, Mr. Hraban advocated that consideration be given to bonding to finance several street reconstruction projects. Among candidates mentioned in discussion that followed were the following:

*Lindoo Ave. E.

*E. 6th St. N.

*Adams Ave. from E. 9th St. east.

Later in the meeting it was mentioned that such bond issue could, perhaps, include capital equipment purchases like a newer grader.

The City's available borrowing capacity at the end of 2014 was \$4,075,803. The unassigned fund balance at the end of 2014 was \$1,591,000. It was noted that, other than very small levy increases to reflect "net new construction", that levy increases to service debt are the only increases allowed. It was mentioned that many communities try to follow up expiring debt with new debt with comparable payments so that taxpayers don't feel a change. It was then noted that Ladysmith doesn't have any debt expiring in the near future.

Some other departmental considerations mentioned during discussion included the following:

Police

LPD does not need to replace a squad car in 2016, but will need to do so in 2017. Staffing level is the only current issue.

Fire

On board water tanks on a few trucks are starting to leak and need to be replaced with poly tanks. In the next year or so LFD needs to replace its over 10 year old pagers, which are considered obsolete. Thirty new pagers with a 15-20 year useful life are expected o cost about \$13-14,000. It was also noted that the City's main pumper is over 25 years old.

Public Works

It was mentioned that WisDOT expects the City to contribute \$22,000, which is 25% of the estimated design cost, for the planned U.S. 8 resurfacing project.

Library

Insurances:

While the popular Local Government Property Insurance Fund is slated to be dissolved its management group is teaming with others to form an alternate provider. Plans are to make the transition as seamless

as possible and, although costs will definitely increase some by how much is still an unknown at this time.

Comptroller Verdegan noted that, owing to the City work group's good experience, health insurance increases haven't been bad the last couple of years. This year's projected increase is under 10%, but won't be known for certain until this fall.

Benefits:

It was noted that, while there is no change in overall costs, vacation is being allocated with greater precision against various accounts, which may result in an appearance of higher spending in some budget lines while appearing lower in others.

Quiet Zone:

Mr. Brown advised that he has received calls supporting establishment of a rail quiet zone.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, September 1st at 1:30 p.m. was tentatively identified as the date for the next budget meeting.

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.