



CITY OF WAUWATOSA
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COMMON COUNCIL

Special Meeting, Tuesday, November 11, 2008

PRESENT: Aids. Herzog, Jay, Maher, McBride, Meaux, Nikceovich, Organ, Purins, Stepaniak, Walsh, Birschel, Donegan, Ewerdt, Hanson (8:06 p.m.) -14

EXCUSED: Aids. Krol and Treis

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Archambo, City Administrator; Mr. Kesner, City Attorney; Mr. Braier, Finance Director; Mr. Wehrley, City Engineer; Ms. Welch, Community Development Director; Police Capt. Weiss; Fire Chief Redman; Ms. Aldana, Asst. City Atty./Human Resources Dir.; Mr. Rusch, Admin. Asst.; Ms. Ledesma, City Clerk

Mayor Didier in the Chair

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

The only item on the agenda was a public hearing concerning the proposed 2009 City of Wauwatosa budget. Proof of publication is in the file.

Mr. Archambo reviewed the goals of the budget process:

- Constrain personnel costs to less than 3% above the 2008 budget (they are at 2.35%);
- Reduce the equalized tax rate (it increased by 4.77% primarily due to a decrease in equalized value; had the value stayed constant, the increase would have been less than 3%);
- Maintain fund balances in accordance with policies (so maintained);
- Constrain levy increase to rate of inflation (the levy increases by less than 3%);
- Constrain individual property tax without sacrificing future cost containment measures (the city property tax – based on the average valued home- is estimated to increase by 1.28%)

Mr. Archambo then pointed out several significant revenue reductions totaling an estimated \$800,300, and revenue increases totaling an estimated \$555,100.

Significant expenditure increases totaling \$1,171,332 were reviewed, as were significant expenditure reductions in the amount of \$1,006,231.

It is estimated that the city tax rate will increase from \$6.52 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation in 2008, to \$6.65 in 2009. The city portion of the average home owner's property tax bill is projected to increase \$1.70 per month, or \$20.30 annually. Property taxes fund about 68% of the General Fund budget.

In briefly comparing the city's debt capacity to that of surrounding municipalities, Mr. Archambo noted that Wauwatosa has used only 12% of its total debt capacity. The city ranks fifth lowest among 20 Milwaukee County communities.

No one of the public present wished to be heard in favor of the proposed budget.

No one of the public present wished to be heard in opposition to the proposed budget.

The following members of the public present made comments concerning components of the proposed budget:

Lisa Mauer, 9216 Ridge Boulevard, a board member and secretary of the Wauwatosa Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), thanked the Council for moving forward with WEDC to perform a study to look at the future structure of economic development in the city. The study results should be available early in 2009. Mr. Balzar, president of WEDC, recently advised the Community Development Committee that WEDC's resources will be fully expended by the end of the first or second quarter of 2009, forcing the organization to 'wind down' its activities. If the study results indicate that a partnership with WEDC is desirable, it may no longer exist by that time.

Tim Casey, 8102 Jackson Park Boulevard, a former alderman, stated that he has never been a part of the WEDC Board, nor served as an aldermanic liaison. He has, however, a background in economic development work over the past 15 years. In his experience, economic development done well is done within the context of a public/private partnership. It is a template that works. Mr. Casey thanked the city for supporting the economic development study. He urged that appropriate stakeholders have input in the study. He also urged that money be set aside that the city retains control of that can be flexibly used to respond to the study findings.

Leslie Martin, 6814 W. Wells Street, a member of the Board of Health, and a faculty member at the Medical College, spoke in support of the health department. He opined that the department is undervalued and operates efficiently and effectively 'under the radar.' It provides exceptional service due to the dedication of the department staff. The department remains somewhat underfunded and if, in the future, a way can be found to increase funding, the city will see an increase in the department's value to the community.

Mary Van Derven, 2339 N. 62nd Street, stated that as a member of the 1999 strategic planning effort sponsored by the city, she was involved in critically assessing the areas of health and safety. Ms. Van Derven was the chair of the Senior Commission in 2000 and that group owed much of its success to the assistance given by Dr. Kreuser and her department. Thanks to grants obtained by the health department, assessments have been performed to determine where senior citizens' areas of needs are. The department has been instrumental in addressing health-related issues at local businesses. The city gets an amazing return from this department when weighed against the budget allocation.

Kent Ehley, 7437 Kenwood Avenue, opined that while keeping the tax levy increase to 2% sounds good, any increase is unacceptable. Most private businesses are taking steps to decrease costs. Over fifty percent of the city's expenses are for benefit costs. This figure is closer to 25-30% for most private businesses. While acknowledging the constraints of collective bargaining, Mr. Ehley stated that the city must get more in line with the level of benefits offered by businesses. Mr. Ehley also suggested that the ratio between supervisors and line employees is too high; it does not exist at a 1:2 ratio in the private sector. The city needs to look at what it does, how it does it, and needs to use

resources more efficiently. Non-value added issues should be addressed; don't perform the unimportant tasks. Focus on the important services. The budget process never questioned why staffing levels are where they are. Departments should be asked to justify what they do.

(Ald. Hanson present 8:06 p.m.) -14

The public hearing was declared closed. Ordered held to the next Common Council meeting on November 18, 2008.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

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Carla A. Ledesma, CMC, City Clerk