

CITY OF WAUWATOSA  
MEMORIAL CIVIC CENTER  
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**COMMON COUNCIL**

Special Meeting, Tuesday, November 12, 2002

PRESENT: Alds. Stepaniak, Subotich, Sullivan, Treis, Bruderle-Baran, Becker, Casey, Ecks, Grimm, Heins, Herzog, Jenkins, Kopischke, Krol, Matthews -- 15

EXCUSED: Ald. McCarthy

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Wontorek, City Administrator; Mr. Braier, Finance Director; Mr. Kesner; City Attorney; Mr. Kappel, Dir. of Public Works; Ms. Welch, Community Development Director; Police Chief Weber; Fire Chief Redman; Mr. Brown, Personnel Dir.; Ms. Mulroy, Library Dir.; Police Capt. Bozicevich; Ledesma, City Clerk

Mayor Estness in the Chair

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 8:17 p.m.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

The only item on the agenda was a public hearing concerning the proposed 2003 City of Wauwatosa budget.

Proof of publication is in the file. The public hearing was declared open.

Mr. Wontorek gave a brief overview, stating that the proposed 2003 General Fund budget totals \$43,131,000. The Library, supported in large measure by property taxes, contributes another proposed \$1.7 million, for a total proposed operating budget of \$44,886,000. The property tax levy currently stands at \$10.31 per one thousand dollars of assessed valuation; because of the 2002 revaluation, the rate for 2003 will be \$7.77 per one thousand dollars of assessed valuation. The 2002 budget is supported by a property tax levy of over \$28 million dollars. By contrast, the proposed 2003 property tax levy for the General Fund is just under \$29 million dollars, with \$1.3 million for the Library. The tax levy increase is just over 8%. More money from the surplus fund will be used to balance the budget and offset increases in health insurance.

Mr. Wontorek added that anticipated savings of \$850,000 are projected for 2003. Three departments – Police, Fire, and Public Works – are being directed to reduce their budgets by 2% each. All remaining departments together are expected to effect operational efficiencies to generate savings totaling another 2%. A hiring freeze may be enacted. These recommendations will shortly be considered by the Committee on Budget and Finance. If service level reductions are contemplated, a process will be in place for the Council to approve these reductions before implementation. If substantial savings have not been realized by mid-2003, the city may be forced to take further action. The 2003 budget will be a fluid document.

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 Mayor inquired if anyone of the public present had any questions or wished to make any comments about the proposed budget.

Mary Van Derven, 2339 N. 62nd Street, expressed concern about potential cuts in personnel and in services without knowing specifically what those reductions might be, or what areas they might affect. The public can't respond to non-specific percentage reductions. She expressed hope that quality programs currently supported by the city will continue.

Linda Burg, 7015 Maple Terrace, expressed worry for the future of the excellent services now offered. Can positions be cut through attrition? What will happen if expected retirements don't occur? Department have not yet identified potential cuts. A cut of 2% can mean hundreds or thousands of dollars to some departments. How can the Council be prepared to vote next week to pass the 2003 budget when so much is unknown?

Dan McCann, President of Local 1923, voiced concern about the proposed cuts for the fire and police departments. These departments are vital links to homeland security efforts underway nationwide. Operational cuts can only go so far before personnel are affected and service compromised. He urged the Council to eliminate the 2% reductions proposed for the fire and police departments. The 2% figure represents a reduction of \$240,000 for the fire department, and most likely means a reduction in manpower.

The public hearing was declared closed. Ordered held to the Common Council meeting on November 19, 2002.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

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Carla A. Ledesma, CMC, City Clerk