

**FINANCE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 3, 2023**

Finance Commission members in attendance: Vice Chair Roger Humphrey, Commission members Heather LaValle-Tumbleson, Harry Melander, Kelly McShane, and Bob Pocrnich. In addition, City Council Liaison Luke Schlegel, City Administrator Scott Neilson, Finance Director Scott Schaefer, Fire Chief Terry Fischer, Account Clerk Amy La Belle, and Account Clerk Melissa Bohdan. Also in attendance: Consultant: Jerry Streich. Absent with prior notice: Finance Commission Chair Mike Bromelkamp

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Finance Commission member Melander moved, and Finance Commission member LaValle-Tumbleson seconded, the motion to approve the agenda. The motion was unanimously approved.

APPOINT CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF THE FINANCE COMMISSION

Finance Commission member Humphrey nominated Finance Commission member Bromelkamp to be the 2023 Finance Commission Chair. Finance Commission member LaValle-Tumbleson moved, and Finance Commission member Pocrnich seconded, the motion to approve the appointment. The motion was unanimously approved.

Finance Commission member Melander nominated Finance Commission member Humphrey to be the 2023 Finance Commission Vice Chair. Finance Commission member LaValle-Tumbleson moved, and Finance Commission member Pocrnich seconded, the motion to approve the appointment. The motion was unanimously approved.

**APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 18, 2022 JOINT CITY COUNCIL/FINANCE
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

Finance Commission member Melander moved, and Finance Commission member LaValle-Tumbleson seconded, the motion to approve the October 18, 2022 Finance Commission meeting minutes as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

REVIEW OF FIRE AND AMBULANCE STAFFING

City Administrator Neilson gave an overview of the proposed staffing model changes for the Mahtomedi Fire Department, and the research on those changes that has been completed to date. He presented the commission with the resulting staffing plan options and the overall impact of each plan.

Fire Chief Fischer brought the commission up to date on the current staffing challenges, as well as the hiring challenges that he has been facing. He stated that there has been a need for the fire department to receive ambulance support from surrounding communities as their staffing coverage wasn't adequate to respond to multiple calls at once.

Commission member Pocrnich asked about the potential revenue impact of the new ambulance billing service, and whether that revenue would offset the some of the additional expenditure of the new staffing plans.

Finance Director Schaefer provided revenue figures for the ambulance service and the fire service. Chief Fischer gave information on the levels of ambulance services, how the fee structure works, and the types of calls for which the Fire Department receives no revenue. It was the consensus of the commission that staff research and potentially add additional service call fees to the City's Fee Schedule for the unpaid calls.

Finance Director Schaefer gave an overview of the organizational structures for the staffing options, as well as the effect of each plan to the City's tax rate. He also reviewed the impact of constructing a new City Hall/Fire Department facility to accommodate the housing needs of the staffing proposals.

Much discussion was had regarding the similarities and differences in the two staffing proposals, including housing needs, shift coverage, call coverage, tax rate impacts, and the construction timeline for new facilities.

Consultant Jerry Streich gave an overview of the history of volunteer fire departments in the surrounding area and the need for transitioning to a full time department. He also stated that the City has the option to charge fees for any services that the Fire Department provides, such as 'lift calls' and MVA calls.

Commission member McShane asked how the City measures it's success after changes such as these are made. City Administrator Neilson explained the City's process of having an outside company perform a city wide survey every three years, which includes questions regarding the Fire Department and ambulance service.

Additional questions were raised regarding the housing needs for potential full time staff and how those needs might be met while a new facility project is being conducted. Finance Director Schaefer presented the current time line for anticipated construction without the staffing changes. He stated that the original intention was to coordinate the financing of a new building to begin after the debt associated with the Public Works facility has been satisfied. He then gave amended figures for the impact to the tax rate and construction time line, if direction was given to expedite the new facilities project.

Vice Chair Humphrey, and Commission members Pocrnich and Melander discussed the potential construction time line, the fiscal impacts of adjusting the time line, and the effect the economy may have on the costs associated with the project. Council Liaison Schlegel clarified the property tax impact on the median home value for each of the various construction time line adjustments, including overlapping the older debt of the Public Works building and the new debt of the combined City Hall/Fire Department facility.

In conclusion, the Finance Commission supports a phased in approach to transitioning the staffing needs for the Fire Department and ambulance service from the current approach to a full time staffing model, as well as starting the exploration process of constructing a new facility with housing amenities.

NEXT COMMISSION MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Commission will be a joint meeting with the City Council on Tuesday, August 29, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. This meeting will be to discuss the Proposed 2024 General Fund, Utility Funds, Park Fund, and Equipment & Building Replacement Fund.

ADJOURNMENT

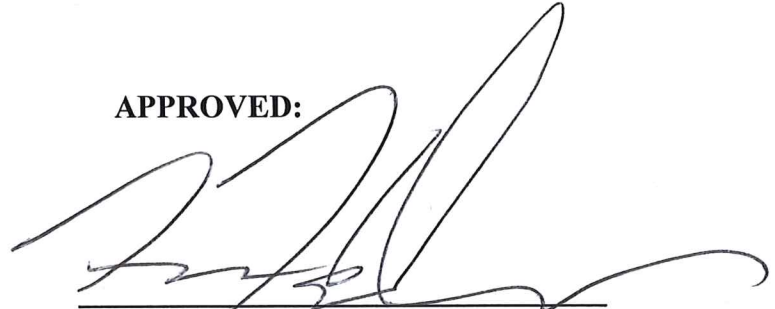
Upon motion by Finance Commission member Pocrnich, second by Finance Commission Vice Chair Humphrey, all members voting in favor, the August 3, 2022 Finance Commission meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

ATTESTED:



AMY LABELLE, ACCOUNT CLERK

APPROVED:



ROGER HUMPHREY, VICE CHAIR