

**City Council Work Session
May 9, 2016**

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Otis, Remillard, Gentili, Morgan Allain, Higbee, Nelson, and Theberge. Councilor Rozek was absent.

Others present included City Manager James Wheeler, Health & Welfare Director Angela Martin Giroux, Finance Director Patty Chase, School Business Administrator Bryan Lamirande, Superintendent of Schools Corinne Cascadden and Barbara Tetreault from the Berlin Daily Sun.

Health Department Consultant Proposal

Mr. Wheeler explained that he is proposing to put out a request for qualifications (RFQ) for a consultant who has expertise in home health agencies to give the City the feedback needed to go forward. The question became how to fund the project? He and Ms. Martin Giroux met with the Rumney Trust which is a fund that exists for the benefit of the Health Department. The trustees agreed to fund the project.

Mr. Wheeler indicated that an RFQ is sent and the City interviews and selects a firm. From there, a scope of work is detailed. Councilor Remillard asked if cost is a factor and Mr. Wheeler noted that in hiring for professional services, the price is worked out in the end. He stated that it is difficult to operate in today's health care environment and though we have a fantastic group of nurses and staff, home health is not a core function of a municipality. The consultant will look at staffing, billing, physical space, technology and everything else that keeps a business going. Ms. Martin Giroux added that the consultant will tell us what we need to know if the business were to grow. In response to Councilor Theberge's question, Ms. Martin Giroux stated that she obtained a list of consultants from the Home Health Care Association.

Councilor Theberge moved to authorize putting out a Request for Qualifications for a consultant to review the operations of the City's Health and Nursing services; Councilor Morgan Allain seconded and the motion carried.

Publication of 2017 Budget

Mr. Wheeler went over the proposed changes in revenues.

Proposed changes in the expenses include:

<u>Description</u>	<u>City Manager Budget</u>	<u>Proposed Council Budget</u>	<u>Change</u>
Health Insurance	\$176,495.00	\$162,526.00	-\$13,969.00
County Tax	\$1,603,959.00	\$1,553,959.00	-\$50,000.00
North Country Council	\$7,171.07	\$5,989.72	-\$1,181.35
Transfer to Airport	\$39,369.31	\$14,369.31	-\$25,000.00
Ambulance Subsidy	\$322,999.92	\$328,999.92	\$6,000.00
Housing	\$100,634.56	\$43,100.00	-\$57,534.56
Health Dept Insurance	\$573,851.11	\$571,756.11	-\$2,095.00
Welfare Insurance	\$112,622.77	\$112,206.77	-\$416.00
School	\$18,437,219.79	\$17,984,342.79	-\$452,877.00
School Capital	\$385,000.00	\$121,000.00	-\$264,000.00
Capital Improvements	\$959,185.00	\$470,342.00	-\$488,843.00

Special Funds	\$192,866.00	\$242,866.00	\$50,000.00
Project AWARE	\$439,023.00	\$678,290.00	\$239,267.00
Airport Capital	\$30,000.00	\$0.00	-\$30,000.00

As proposed there would be an increase of .82 and we are using \$700,000 ufb which leaves \$1.5 million.

Councilor Nelson asked about Discounts & Abatements which is budgeted at zero. Mr. Wheeler stated that the amount comes from overlay.

Councilor Nelson moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to accept the changes as proposed by the City Manager and to present a total budget of \$39,510,842 at the public hearing on May 25, 2016 proposing an increase of .82 on the tax rate. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Other

Mr. Wheeler announced that Badger Realty invited the Council to a ribbon cutting ceremony on Thursday May 12 at 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Wheeler also stated that the City received an approval letter from the bond bank contingent upon there being no major changes in the City's financial situation. Proposals for private financing are due on May 12th.

There were some questions about when Hutchins Street would start and Mr. Wheeler indicated he would send out an e-mail when he gets the information.

There being no further business, Councilor Nelson moved to adjourn; Councilor Morgan Allain seconded and the motion carried. The meeting ended at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Susan Tremblay

Administrative Assistant