

**LABOR RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

The Labor Relations Committee of the Willmar City Council met on Wednesday, August 21, 2013, in Conference Room #1 at the City Office Building.

Present:	Steve Ahmann	.....	Chair
	Jim Dokken	.....	Member
	Denis Anderson	.....	Member
	Ron Christianson	.....	Member
	Charlene Stevens	.....	City Administrator

Others present included Mayor Frank Yanish, Council Members DeBlieck, Nelsen and Johnson, Fire Chief Gary Hendrickson, David Little of the West Central Tribune and Labor Attorney Frank Madden via conference call.

Item No. 1      Call to Order

The meeting was called to order Council Member Ahmann at 4:45 p.m.

Item No. 2      Public Comment

There were no public comments offered at the meeting.

Item No. 3      Closed Session Pursuant to Minn. Stat. §13D.03 to Discuss Labor Negotiation Strategies.

Council Member Christianson made a motion, seconded by Council Member Anderson, to go into closed session pursuant to Minn. Stat. §13D.03 to Discuss Labor Negotiation Strategies. The motion carried and the meeting was closed at 4:48 p.m. Council Members DeBlieck and Nelsen left the meeting, as did Mayor Yanish and David Little. Fire Chief Hendrickson was not yet present.

Item No. 4      Reopen Meeting

The meeting was reopened at 5:31 p.m. upon motion by Council Member Christianson, seconded by Council Member Anderson, and carried. Council Member Johnson left the meeting, as did Mayor Yanish. Council Members Nelsen and DeBlieck rejoined the meeting as did Fire Chief Hendrickson.

Item No. 5      Consideration of Request to Increase Number of Paid On-Call Firefighters.

Fire Chief Hendrickson presented the Committee with information regarding the current staffing of the Fire Department, as well as the total calls and response time. Chief Hendrickson discussed the challenges of staffing a volunteer department as well as potential retirements in the next two to three years. Chief Hendrickson proposed increasing the allowed roster from the current 35 to 40 firefighters.

Following discussion, Council Member Christianson made a motion, seconded by Council Member Anderson to approve the recommendation of the Committee to increase the number of paid, On-call Firefighters from 35 to 40. The motion carried.

Item No. 6      Consideration of Request to Fill Vacancy – Operator

Ms. Stevens presented a request to fill a vacancy created by a promotion in the Public Works Department. Ms. Stevens stated that two internal promotions had occurred for Public Works Superintendent, as well as Working Foreman, resulting in a vacancy for an operator. Ms. Stevens recommended the position be filled in order to fully staff the department.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Council Member Christianson and seconded by Council Member Anderson to fill the vacancy of Operator in Public Works.

Item No 7      Organizational Study from Council Special Session

Chair Ahmann inquired about advertising for the positions approved by Council at the recent special session. Ms. Stevens responded that the advertisements for Public Works Director/City Engineer and Engineering Technician/Surveyor were ready to go and the position of Assistant Engineer would wait until the filling of the Director position.

Chair Ahmann also inquired as to the status of planning a retreat. Ms. Stevens stated that the Council needed to better define the purpose and goals of a retreat before one could be scheduled or a facilitator considered. The Committee agreed to have further discussion on the purpose and goals of a retreat. This matter was for information only.

Item No. 8      Discussion of Preparation of Council and Committee Agendas

Chair Ahmann raised questions regarding the timeframe for preparation of agendas and supporting materials and placing items on the agenda. It was suggested that perhaps to test sending out agenda materials for committees earlier as part of the electronic agenda pilot and determine if that provides more opportunity for review in advance of meetings. This matter was for information only.

Item No. 9      Future Agenda Items:

Chair Ahmann requested that the contract with the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Director be reviewed at a future meeting.

Council Member Anderson asked that the Committee consider a policy to address individuals serving on boards and commissions.

Council Member Christianson stated that the goals and objectives for the City Administrator need to be finalized.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m. on a motion by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Christianson, and carried

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Stevens,  
City Administrator