

LABOR RELATIONS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

The Labor Relations Committee of the Willmar City Council met on Wednesday, September 2, 2015 at 4:45 p.m. in Conference Room No. 1 at the City Office Building.

Present: Steve Ahmann Chair
Audrey Nelsen Member
Denis Anderson Member
Ron Christianson Member

Others present: Interim City Administrator Kevin Halliday, Finance Director Steve Okins, Public Works Director Sean Christensen, Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Colleen Thompson, City’s Prosecuting Attorney Tom Anderson and Administrative Assistant Janell Sommers.

Item No. 1 Call to Order

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

Item No. 2 Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

Item No. 3 Consideration of Contract Extension with Anderson Law Firm (Resolution)

Staff was directed by the Council in July to proceed with renewing the contract with Anderson Law Firm. Tom Anderson, the City’s prosecuting attorney of Anderson Law Firm, was present to answer questions of the committee. Mr. Anderson addressed the Committee stating he has been the prosecuting attorney for the City since 2012 and he stated things are going well and he has a good rapport with the Police Department. Since 2012 he has implemented additional technology in his practice allowing him to have files available on a laptop during court. A current cost-savings measure which saves overtime pay to off-duty officers with communication with the defense attorneys and Police Department staff has been initiated.

Interim City Administrator Kevin Halliday informed the Committee they have the option of entering into a one-year or a three-year contract and pointed out a change in the contract from previous years is a \$500/year cost reimbursement. Following some discussion, a motion was made by Council Member Christianson to approve the three-contract with Anderson Law Firm as presented. Council Member Anderson seconded the motion, which carried.

Item No. 4 Public Works Position Requests (Motions - 3)

Interim City Administrator Kevin Halliday informed the Committee that the three positions which were previously before the Committee have now been reviewed and scored by the Compensation Study Committee and the pay grades set. Public Works Director Sean Christensen addressed the Committee stating these positions take into account items that need to be addressed and/or duties staff is currently struggling to complete along with their normal work tasks. Mr. Christensen recapped each position giving background information as to the position’s previous existence, modification of promoting current staff, or creation as a new position.

The position details of Environmental Specialist were presented by Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Colleen Thompson. This is a new position with the City which staff is proposing to fund by not filling the Safety Coordinator/Assistant Lab Tech position vacated due to retirement. This position will coordinate environmental/regulatory issues and maintain awareness of potential future environmental regulation changes that may affect operations within the City. This individual will facilitate regulatory and

permitting efforts for stormwater and help facilitate MS4 requirements along with providing support for regulatory and environmental issues at the Wastewater Treatment Facilities and make recommendations for environmental compliance.

The Committee discussed the funding for the position realizing it can be funded by allocating the unspent monies from the vacancy of the Safety Coordinator/Assistant Lab Technician. A motion was made by Council Member Anderson to approve the Environmental Specialist position and job description and authorize the filling of the position after Council ratification. Council Member Christianson seconded the motion, which carried.

The position of Building Maintenance Supervisor was addressed by Public Works Director Sean Christensen noting this would be the promotion of existing staff from Pay Grade 3 to Pay Grade 6 and filling the then vacant custodial position. This individual would organize the existing custodial staff and maintain the City buildings relieving some coordination from the Public Works Director. Mr. Christensen stated the City's facilities are currently under review and a Facility Management Plan is forthcoming which this individual can use to ensure the maintenance projects are completed. This position was filled by a staff member in the past who later withdrew from the added duties.

The Committee discussed the necessity of the Building Maintenance Supervisor position noting there is no immediate funding source to cover the additional costs. A motion was made by Council Member Anderson to refer this position to the budgetary process for consideration. Council Member Nelsen seconded the motion, which carried.

The Assistant Public Works Director position was presented by Public Works Director Sean Christensen noting that the City continues to advertise for an Assistant City Engineer and in the last 1 ½ years only three applications have been submitted. Mr. Christensen is proposing the promotion of the Senior Technician and filling an Engineering Technician position to return the department to its previous staffing level. He stated he saw no need to have two Professional Engineering licenses on staff for a community of this size. This was viewed as a short-term solution and the staffing changes would have no negative affect on the budget.

A motion was made by Council Member Nelsen to approve the Assistant Public Works Director job description to be filled by promotion and authorize the filling of the Engineering Technician position after Council ratification. Council Member Christianson seconded the motion, which carried.

Council Member Ahmann announced the meeting on September 30th at the Health and Human Services Building relating to the Vision 2040 HRA Study.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janell Sommers
Administrative Assistant