

City of Sheboygan
2016-08-22

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CITY OF SHEBOYGAN

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

AUGUST 22, 2016

Chair Joe Heidemann called the meeting to order at 6: 00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

ALDERPERSONS PRESENT:

Chair Joe Heidemann, Alderpersons: John Belanger, Bryan Bitters, Michael Damrow, Mary Lynne Donohue, Roman Draughon, Mark Hermann, Job Hou-Seye, Susan Lessard, Scott Lewandoske, Tammy Rabe, Andrew Schneider, Bill Thiel, Rosemarie Trester and Todd Wolf

ALDERPERSONS EXCUSED: Alderperson Jim Bohren

STAFF/OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Mayor Michael Vandersteen, City Administrator Darrell Hofland, City Attorney Charles Adams, Finance Director Nancy Buss, Fire Chief Michael Romas,

Police Chief Christopher Domagalski, Information Technology Director Dave Augustin, Fire and Police Commissioners Bob Lettre and Larry Samet, President of Sheboygan Firefighters' Local 483 /Fire Lieutenant Chase Longmiller and Firefighter/Paramedic Brendan (Cal) Hughes

MINUTES Motion by Alderperson Wolf, seconded by Alderperson Thiel to approve of the minutes of July 25, 2016. Motion carried.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION TO THE COMMON COUNCIL

2.1 R.C. No. 131 - 16 - 17 By Law and Licensing. Charter Ord. No. 1 - 16 - 17 by Alderpersons Lewandoske, Hermann and Rabe (being subject to the home rule provisions of sec. 66.0101 of the Wisconsin Statutes) to maintain the number of alderpersons in the City of Sheboygan at

16.

Motion by Alderperson Trester, seconded by Alderperson Hou-Seye to send to Council with favorable recommendation to maintain the number of alderpersons in the City of Sheboygan at

16. Motion carried 8 - 7. Ayes: Alderpersons Heidemann, Hermann, Hou-Seye, Lessard, Lewandoske, Rabe, Schneider, and Trester. Nays: Alderpersons Belanger, Bitters, Damrow, Donohue, Draughon, Thiel, and Wolf

Several alderpersons who had voted in favor of the previous Charter Ordinance to reduce the size of the Council now felt that the number should remain at 16. Alderpersons voting in favor felt their constituents were better represented and having more committee members at meetings to have a voice in making decisions was also important.

There could be legal ramifications and timing issues. City Attorney Charles Adams was asked to explain. City Attorney Adams explained that there is a timing issue. It is the recommendation of the City Attorney's Office to not pass this Charter Ordinance. Significant problems may arise in doing so. Two things basically; any Charter Ordinance must go through a 60 -day waiting period before it goes into effect to give the public the opportunity to object. That 60 -day period, if this is approved at the September Council meeting, would go into November. Potentially during that time, someone could take out papers to run for alderperson. If they're taking out papers to run for alderperson, it will be for a one-year term because the current Charter Ordinance that is in effect indicates that those running for alderman would be for a one-year term.

If this change is made, it would turn it into a two-year term. Even more seriously, if there is an objection during the 60 -day period and petitions are filed, next it could go on the ballot and up for referendum. The problem with that is, it would be on the April ballot and there will already be people running for a one-year term and there will also be on the ballot a Charter Ordinance to go back to what there was before to increase the aldermanic term from one-year to a two-year term.

Per Atty. Adams, if you wish to go back to 16 alderpersons the proper way would be not to approve this Charter Ordinance, but to put together a Charter Ordinance after the next aldermanic election or at least have it go into effect after the next aldermanic election.

Vote as noted above was taken after the discussion.

2.2 R.C. No. 122 - 16 - 17 By Public Protection and Safety. Your Committee to whom was referred R.O. No. 79 - 16 - 17 by the Fire Chief submitting the following: Letter from Chase Longmiller, President of Sheboygan Firefighters' Local 483 ; Letter from the International Association of Firefighters; The Economic Impact of Successful Commercial Fire Interventions for the Phoenix Fire Department June-August, 2012 ; Geographic Information System Emergency Services Response Capabilities Analysis Final Report for Sheboygan Fire Department dated June 2016.

President of Sheboygan Firefighters Local 483 Chase Longmiller and Executive Board Member Brendan(Cal) Hughes gave a PowerPoint presentation on Sheboygan Fire Department Staffing and Response Capability concerns. This was to help summarize the study findings of the International Association of Fire Fighters(IAFFF). The IAFF was engaged by the Sheboygan Fire Department, IAFF Local 483, to provide information and resources to decision makers of the City of Sheboygan regarding the impact of the reduction in staffing levels and proposed station consolidation on Fire Department capabilities. Currently, the Sheboygan Fire Department maintains five fire stations housing apparatus which according to the IAFF,

are not staffed appropriately to provide for effective, efficient, and safe staffing levels required by industry standards.

The Sheboygan Fire Department has lost nine positions since 2010, including three firefighter positions at the beginning of 2016. The current Battalion Chief schedule requires a member from line firefighting personnel to act in a chiefs position causing a reduction of line personnel by one almost half of the year. Ladder 4 and Ladder 5 are staffed a majority of the time with only two personnel.

The study found that the Sheboygan Fire Departments current staffing levels are out of compliance with industry standard performance objectives. Stations 2, 3, and 3 typically supplements on-scene total staffing with firefighter/paramedic assigned to the same station. The department is not in compliance with industry standards by splitting crews, and should appoint permanently assigned personnel. Furthermore, Stations 4 and 5, presently utilize quint apparatus. A quint, is a fire truck apparatus, that serves the dual purpose of an engine and a ladder truck. Normally these quint trucks take on ladder truck operations when arriving on scene. Although when these quints are first due, they may start engine responsibilities. Delays then may ensue when these roles are shifted to truck as a designated engine truck arrives on scene.

According to the study, both current and proposed staffing levels place the Sheboygan Fire Department out of compliance with industry standard performance objectives. Under-staffed units will increase risk to the firefighters, citizens and visitors of Sheboygan. Additional staffing and resources will improve the ability to provide for the arrival of an effective firefighting force within eight minutes in Sheboygan. Furthermore, additional staffing and resources will improve the ability to respond to medical or fire emergencies in the event that some Department resources are already in service, responding to other calls.

Recommendations:

Immediate actions: Staff Ladder 4 and Ladder 5 with three personnel daily
Minimum daily staffing of 18 Return Battalion Chiefs to a 24 -hour shift
Upcoming years: Create an operational plan that works to increase daily minimum staffing of three personnel on all fire apparatus

NEXT MEETING DATE:

ADJOURN Motion by Alderperson Wolf, seconded by Alderperson Thiel to adjourn at 7: 52 p.m. Motion carried.