

Village of Fall Creek

Minutes of Finance, Personnel & Economic Development Committee Meeting

October 6, 2021

1. **Call to Order:** 7:00 p.m., Village Hall Meeting Room, 122 E. Lincoln Ave., Fall Creek
2. **Roll Call:** Members Present: Village President Tim Raap, Trustees Ben Burch, Karen Herbison, Karen Hurd, Sheena Kaatz. Members Absent: None. Staff Present: Village Administrator/Public Works Director Jared McKee, Clerk/Treasurer Renee Roemhild.
3. **Certify Open Meeting Law Requirements Have Been Met:** A notice of the meeting and an agenda was posted at the three public places and local newspapers were notified.
4. **Adopt Agenda:**
 - **MOTION** (Kaatz/Hurd) to adopt the agenda. **PASSED**, without negative vote.
5. **Old Business**

A. Work on 2022 Budget

- 1) **Work in Open Session:** President Tim Raap talked about the importance of having an accurate comparison when discussing the cost of living for municipal services. When comparing between municipalities, it's important that your comparison includes all general municipal services, because municipalities vary in the way they code their expenses. For example:
 - a) Some municipalities have the PSC (Public Service Commission) required Public Fire Protection charge expensed to a General Fund account which then affects *property taxes*,
 - b) some have it expensed solely to the Water Fund which affects *water rates*, and
 - c) some split the charge between *both* General and Water Funds.

That's why it's important to look at general municipal charges as a whole, rather than focus on only one type of charge.

Administrator/Public Works Director Jared McKee presented a recent survey of area municipalities regarding municipal services. The survey included the neighboring communities, as well as most of the comparable sized communities (population 1000 – 3000) in Eau Claire County and the surrounding counties. This survey factored in *utility* costs for a consumer of average water use, as well as the cost of the municipal share of the *property tax* bill for an average-valued home. If the consumer were to only consider the utility rates when comparing the cost to live in a community, Fall Creek would not seem as favorable. But because Fall Creek has done a good job of keeping the Village's portion of *property taxes* down, when the consumer factors in that as well, Fall Creek ranks as the 6th most affordable place to live out of 21 municipalities.

McKee stated when comparing municipal *utility* rates, there are a couple important factors to recognize that Fall Creek has to deal with. Federal funding agencies use a metric that considers median household income when determining funding levels, usually giving their funds to communities that are more financially pressed. (Median household income for the community is determined by federal agencies from responses to the census and personal tax forms, etc. You can see these results at <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/aid/documents/EIF/Guide/Hardmhi.html>) The latest data puts Fall Creek residents as having the highest median household income of the 21 municipalities in our survey. This means we are the least likely to receive government aid, which means more of the capital costs (for such things as a wastewater treatment plant, wells, water tower) fall onto the consumer. Second, having a smaller population means there are less households to share in those capital costs. For those reasons, Fall

Creek's utility rates will always be higher than Eau Claire's. However, our utility rates *are* comparable to other municipalities our size. Out of 21 *like-sized* municipalities (population size 1000 – 3000) surveyed, the yearly cost for an average consumer is within \$100 of 8 of other municipalities, showing we are very comparable.

Work continued on the budgets, with McKee reviewing each account in the General Fund in detail. The Board worked through necessary decisions item by item.

2) Move to Convene in Closed Session Per Wis. Stat. 19.85(1)(c) Considering Employment, Promotion, Compensation or Performance Evaluation Data of Any Public Employee Over Which the Governmental Body has Jurisdiction or Exercises Responsibility, namely, Discuss Individual Employee Performance. At the End of the Closed Session, the Board Will Be Going into Open Session to Conduct Further Business. Roll Call Vote on Motion to Convene into Closed Session.:

- MOTION (Raap/Kaatz) @ 8:37 p.m. PASSED, roll call vote: Burch-yes, Herbison-yes, Hurd-yes, Kaatz-yes, Raap-yes.

Trustee Sheena Kaatz took over the position of recording secretary as Clerk-Treasurer Roemhild left the meeting.

3) Move to Return to Open Session and Action, if Any, on Matters Discussed in Closed Session.:

- MOTION (Raap/Kaatz) @ 9:40 p.m. PASSED, roll call vote: Herbison-yes, Hurd-yes, Kaatz-yes, Raap-yes, Burch-yes.

6. New Business:

- MOTION (Raap/Hurd) to table the last three items. PASSED, without negative vote.

A. Recommendation re: Possible Employee Reception

B. Recommendation re: Business Recruitment

C. Recommendation re: Revising Ordinance Chapter 268 Zoning

7. Adjourn: @ 9:42 p.m.

Renee Roemhild, Clerk/Treasurer and Sheena Kaatz, Recording Secretary