

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE WAUSAU COMMON COUNCIL
held on Tuesday, August 23, 2016, at 5:00 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall.
Mayor Mielke presiding.

Roll Call

8/23/2016 5:00:13PM

Roll call indicated 11 members present.

<u>District</u>	<u>Aldersperson</u>	<u>Present</u>
1	Peckham, Patrick	YES
2	Wagner, Romey	YES
3	Nutting, David E.	YES
4	Neal, Tom	YES
5	Gisselman, Gary	YES
6	McElhaney, Becky	YES
7	Rasmussen, Lisa	YES
8	Kellbach, Karen	YES
9	Gehin, Joe	YES
10	Abitz, Sherry	YES
11	Smith, Dennis	YES

Mayoral Comments

Mayor Mielke stated he has always supported the right for the residents and taxpayers of Wausau to have a say on issues involving expenditures by having a referendum process stay in place. It was important for them to learn the facts as to why the proposition of a wheel tax is being introduced. There will be public hearings at city hall and he and staff will be available for neighborhood meetings or other public venues for educational purposes to give the proposal an honest chance at passing. We are facing a serious budget shortfall and we owe it to our citizens to maintain our infrastructure. He explained a \$20 wheel tax would generate an estimated \$650,000, with \$600,000 being allocated for only road projects by DPW and \$50,000 for the Wausau Area Transit System. He reiterated he did not want to repeal the ordinance requiring citizen authorization before a tax is imposed that would affect more than 10% of our residents.

Mayor Mielke proposed the city wheel tax to begin January 1, 2018 when the county is supposed to be done with their wheel tax. The county stated their fee would be in effect for one year, so this will prevent the city residents from being double taxed by both city and county. He indicated he asked the county for the city's fair share of \$650,000 because the City of Wausau already has or will be paying into those state and county revenues. It is our money that we need for our own projects. He respectfully requested the City Council to pass one of these two proposals tonight should the repeal fail.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Pre-registered citizens for matters appearing on the agenda and other public comment.

- 1) Marie Schmidt, 1205 Parcher St, spoke in opposition to repealing Chapter 3.10 and against the wheel tax.
- 2) Matt Kaiser, 2903 Glendale, asked Council to vote against the wheel tax as well as against the repeal of the direct legislation ordinance. He noted the Governor was in town today stating any wheel tax was premature and that there is a plan to direct more state aid to counties, cities, and towns for 2017 and future years.
- 3) Kim Trueblood, 902 Stewart Ave, urged Council not to repeal or amend the direct legislation ordinance. She was in favor of holding a referendum and believed the process works.
- 4) Donna Mae Normand, 2220 N 13th St, spoke in opposition to the wheel tax and believed it was driving businesses and people out of Wausau. She stated we need a referendum.
- 5) Kim Schoenberger, 702 S 21st St, urged them to educate the residents on where the money goes and show why we need a wheel tax. She felt they needed to bring back trust and transparency to local government.
- 6) Deb Ryan, 702 Elm St, opposed the repeal of the direct legislation ordinance.
- 7) Paul Henning, 1906 E Hamilton St, encouraged good education and reasoning to convince citizens of the need for the wheel tax.
- 8) Dale Burgess, email read into the record by the Mayor in support of a referendum and suggesting they put a sunset on the wheel tax to offset our road problems.

16-0810

8/23/2016 5:41:43 PM

Motion by Rasmussen, second by Nutting to adopt an ordinance of the Finance Committee creating Sections 2.60.270 and 3.25.035 Room Tax Commission and Amending Section 2.60.010 Boards and Commissions enumerated.

Wagner questioned if the commission would be our own or would we be joining with a group. Jacobson explained it is not a zone commission; it is our own stand-alone commission which would contract with the CVB.

Rasmussen summarized the city has been a good steward and has used room tax for its intended purpose. Creating our own commission and allowing the CVB to manage those funds as a contractor protects our ability to award and allocate that money with a means of local control.

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Result: PASS

06-1016

8/23/2016 6:25:26 PM

Motion by Nutting, second by Gehin to adopt an ordinance of the Finance Committee Repealing Chapter 3.10 Fees for Municipal Services.

Rasmussen commented public opinion is very much against the repeal of this ordinance and felt it should remain. She pointed out when the county collects their wheel tax, none of that money gets used on the city streets they travel on every day. Wausau residents may not know that they will contribute \$650,000 to fix rural roads even though we maintain 8 miles of county roads within our borders; and when the county plow truck gets to the city limits they raise the plow and shut off the salt. She stated going to a referendum is a way to educate people about these things and get the message out. (*Lengthy discussion followed and can be accessed online via Council video.*)

Yes Votes: 2 No Votes: 9 Abstain: 0 Not Voting: 0 Result: FAIL

<u>District</u>	<u>Aldersperson</u>	<u>Vote</u>
1	Peckham, Patrick	NO
2	Wagner, Romey	YES
3	Nutting, David E.	YES
4	Neal, Tom	NO
5	Gisselman, Gary	NO
6	McElhaney, Becky	NO
7	Rasmussen, Lisa	NO
8	Kellbach, Karen	NO
9	Gehin, Joe	NO
10	Abitz, Sherry	NO
11	Smith, Dennis	NO

16-0811 - Ordinance Creating Section 10.01.013 Vehicle registration fee (wheel tax)

No action necessary – withdrawn.

13-0309 - Resolution Authorizing the addition of fees to the City of Wausau Fees and Licenses Schedule adopted pursuant to Section 3.40.010(a) for Section 10.01.013 Vehicle registration fee (wheel tax)

No action necessary – withdrawn.

Suspend Rule

8/23/2016 6:27:15 PM

Motion by Rasmussen, second by Nutting to suspend Rule 11A, if necessary, to consider and take action on possible alternatives if repeal of Chapter 3.10 fails.

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Result: PASS

16-0812

8/23/2016 6:55:59 PM

Motion by Rasmussen, second by Neal to approve a referendum at November 8, 2016 stating “May the City of Wausau implement a \$20 wheel tax to take effect on January 1, 2018, for a period not more than three years, for use specifically on local infrastructure maintenance when the single year wheel tax created by Marathon County for 2017 expires, to potentially avoid double impacts to Wausau residents.”

Council engaged in discussion on the wording for the referendum question as well as on which election to have the referendum.

Yes Votes: 11 No Votes: 0 Result: PASS

Adjourn

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:56 p.m.