

**COMMON COUNCIL
COUNCIL ROOM
JANUARY 6, 2026
2:00 P.M.**

The Common Council met in special session, Mayor Poeschel presiding. On roll call: all members present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Jerilyn St. Amand stated that people don't agree with eliminating the Clerk-Treasurer position. There is a lot to know and he does a lot behind the scenes. How much money will be saved.

Robert Johnson stated that he had read the Study. This is a new position and it should be advertised. Two of the Council Members were not even interviewed for the Study, were only certain people chosen.

Mayor Poeschel stated this has been worked on for awhile and a motion to hire internally is requested.

Council Member Gelhaus stated that the Council should hold off until the job descriptions are done, what has to be taken into account. You can't hire without a clean job description locked in.

Mayor Poeschel stated that the City never had job descriptions until just a few years ago when we started working on them.

Motion Gelhaus, second Clough, to hold off on a decision until we have a job description. Council Members Gelhaus and Clough – Aye. Council Members Neville, Petkovsek and Rochester – Nay. 2-Aye, 3-Nay. Motion does not carry.

Council Member Clough stated that as Chair of the Commission on Public Works/Utilities, he has concerns about job descriptions and the need for an organization chart. We don't know who reports to who, we have been part of the discussion, but we are not there yet. Going to a new system, an organization chart and job descriptions are needed.

Mayor Poeschel stated this would not be a new form of government we will still have a Mayor and Council system, this has been talked about for some time, when are we going to move it to the front burner.

Council Member Clough stated that he did not know about this until Council Member Petkovsek presented the survey at a Council Meeting. The Personnel Committee had discussions, a lack of job description is a concern. Is the point to fill the position internally, by combining two full-time positions into one. What if you hire someone else, would Director of Public Works Friemoth be out of a job.

Council Member Neville stated we are creating a position to share jobs, we are not creating something new, the person in the new position could create the organization chart.

Mayor Poeschel stated that he has seen drafts.

Council Member Clough stated an organization chart is needed to do a job description.

Council Member Rochester asked Friemoth how he feels about the position.

Friemoth stated he feels the City has a good team with collaboration between all departments, this would enable better communication with a center contact.

Mayor Poeschel stated the auditors' report always says the City lacks checks and balances.

Council Member Petkovsek stated we are a small organization and it would not change it, this keeps the Clerk-Treasurer and Deputy Clerk-Treasurer positions intact.

Council Member Clough stated this is nothing about Friemoth, we want him to succeed, as well as, the City to succeed. The drafted job description for Administrator/Director of Public

Works position is essentially combining two job descriptions, so if in the future if needed, they can be split out again. The City has an option if it doesn't work, how confident are we it is going to work.

Council Member Petkovsek stated this is not a decision today, to hire Friemoth. Do we want to hire internally or externally is the question.

Chief of Police Mankowski stated that this is his sixth year with the City and he had 30 years in the corporate world. Corporations are always reshuffling the deck. The first thing he did when he took the Chief of Police job here was develop job descriptions, which still have not been approved by the Common Council. The City needs a written plan of action. Personnel matters are tough, who does what if we don't have the guidance, it's not clear to staff. Human Resource education is needed, all department heads should take courses.

Council Member Petkovsek stated it is all part of the transition plan.

Chief of Police Mankowski stated if you vote to go outside of the organization what are your expectations, what is the person supposed to do, stumble along.

Council Member Gelhaus stated the study suggests a Masters degree, do you look for people with the skills already – accounting, human resources, business administration.

Council Member Rochester asked how would the City pay for it.

Mayor Poeschel stated the culture of the City goes a long way.

Council Member Neville stated you can hire and train.

Chief of Police Mankowski stated that you could hire someone just wanting to build a resume to move on, if you don't hire with the skill set you have to train.

Motion Rochester, second Neville, to move forward with an internal hiring for the Administrator/Public Works Director position. Council Members Rochester, Neville and Petkovsek – Aye. Council Members Clough and Gelhaus – Nay. 3-Aye, 2-Nay. Motion carried.

Council Member Petkovsek stated that City Clerk-Treasurer Roehl, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Grap, Assistant Clerk-Treasurer Winder and Director of Public Works Friemoth have reviewed the job descriptions and splitting of the duties. Reviewing checks and balances. In 1983 the City of Neillsville approved the Charter Ordinance creating the City Clerk-Treasurer position, under the transition plan, the Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Grap will move to the Clerk-Treasurer position and Assistant Clerk-Treasurer Winder will move to the Deputy Clerk-Treasurer position. The job descriptions as drafted may change two or three more times before finished.

Motion Rochester, second Petkovsek, to adjourn. All Aye.

Duane G. Poeschel, Mayor

Rex R. Roehl, Clerk

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