

## Citizens' Advisory Committee

**January 3, 2012**

**Present:** Chris Able, Janet Breuer, Jerry Censky, Pat Chermak, Roger Drape, Linda Hunter, June Kramer, Anthony Mack, Ed Rappe, Chuck Stangel, Gloria Wallace

**Excused:** Grace Brandl

**Guests:** Ralph Kramer, Deanne Censky, Mayor Nickels

The meeting was called to order at 4:01.

Mayor Nickels described the reorganization plan that passed the Common Council as well as giving us a handout showing how much particular departments were cut in personnel. For example, DPW was cut from 50 to 22.5. A total of 36 people were snow plowing last year, 26 this year. A total of 78.5 positions were eliminated for 2012, although 52 people were actually given pink slips—the rest retired or left. Various departments were merged such as Planning, Assessing and Building Inspection. The Finance and Clerk's office were combined. The chart can be found on the city's website.

### Questions and answers

1. The Crossing Guards will be eliminated in the next school year—cost of \$120,000. The schools are getting 6 months notice to plan alternatives.
2. Are these permanent cuts? Yes, they are, at least for this year. However, the council is looking for other ways to save money such as changing in health benefits, sharing services with Two Rivers, selling city buildings, putting buildings in cold storage (the Waldo/Fleetwood building).
3. What has happened with Citizens Park? The committee must raise \$150,000 by July which would be matched by the city.
4. One member of the committee pointed out that garbage pick fees have increased because the city is no longer paying the tipping fees. The money still comes from citizens,
5. The effect of unemployment costs? One and a half positions had to be removed to account for the cost of one position's unemployment.. Another member pointed out that the Germans weathered the recession better than any other country in Europe by using a system that allowed for unemployment benefits plus part-time work for employees, permitting trained personnel to remain ready to reassume their positions.
6. On a positive note, one member noted the clean-up of the Cement Plant area off Spring St. It is getting cleaned up by two members of the community. The steel from the building should help to offset the costs. In addition, a new restaurant is in process in the old hotel.
7. Cook's Corner owes \$69,000 in interest, but the principal has been paid off.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Hunter, Secretary