



CITY COUNCIL

January 12, 2017

A special meeting of the City of Petoskey City Council was held in the City Hall Council Chambers, Petoskey, Michigan, on Thursday, January 12, 2017. This meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M.; then, after a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, a roll call then determined that the following were

Present: John Murphy, Mayor
Kate Marshall, City Councilmember
Izzy Lyman, City Councilmember
Grant Dittmar, City Councilmember
Jeremy Wills, City Councilmember

Absent: None

Also in attendance were City Manager Robert Straebel and Clerk-Treasurer Alan Terry.

Hear Labor Attorney Presentations

Attorney appointment.

The City Manager reviewed that representatives from Dinon Law, PLLC and Danielson Group, P.C. will give brief presentations on their firms for possible City Labor

Kenneth Gonko, The Danielson Group, P.C., Chesterfield, gave a brief history of firm including three members practicing labor and employment law; reviewed possible labor type issues they work with such as collective bargaining agreements, grievances, etc.; that they have arbitrated Public Safety contracts; that there is primarily one lawyer involved with a City; and reviewed dates and unions worked with from 1979 to present-day.

City Councilmembers commented that there are unique challenges facing City's and how their firm is handling these issues; inquired on their overall opinion of City contracts; what they could offer for upcoming Public Safety contract to move towards same level of Teamsters agreement with pensions from a B-3 to Defined Contribution; if their firm works with both large and small municipalities; inquired if work would be farmed out; if work is completed in Petoskey or Detroit; and if billing would be done through Plunkett and Cooney or separate.

Mr. Gonko responded to comments and that the State helped with limits on health care and reviewed that the City is going in a good direction with agreements, healthcare and pensions; that he would try and do better with Public Safety contract going to a Defined Contribution plan and eliminate Defined Benefit option; that the firm deals with large and small cities, but typically large to middle-sized; that secretarial support is only other source, no paralegals; that bargaining will be done in Petoskey and will try to do consecutive days and the remainder in office; and that billing is flexible.

Dick Dinon, Dinon Law PLLC, Petoskey, reviewed that he has been doing work for the City for several years and would like to continue; that he has accomplished goals as directed by the City; that he does not set objectives, but rather the client; that he traditionally takes direction from head of organization; and that it is far better to reach a negotiated settled agreement vs arbitration where a third party is involved and decides outcome.

City Councilmembers inquired on the unique challenges facing municipalities; differences between a Defined Contribution and Defined Benefit pension plan; asked Mr. Dinon to review practice; how billing would be handled; how a firm of one employee provides necessary services; what his overall impression was of City agreements; and inquired on future agreements with Teamsters vs Public Safety negotiations.

Mr. Dinon responded to comments and that pensions and healthcare are the number one issues facing municipalities; reviewed differences between a Defined Contribution and Defined Benefit pension plan; reviewed practice; that billing could be done through Plunkett and Cooney if City preferred; that there are no issues with him being the only employee and that work is done timely; that City has done a favorable job with current contracts; and reviewed differences between the Teamster contract and Public Safety contracts.

Mayor Murphy asked for public comments and there were no comments.

There being no further business to come before the City Council, this January 12, 2017, meeting of the City Council adjourned at 6:55 P.M.

John Murphy, Mayor

Alan Terry, City Clerk-Treasurer