

## 2021 LWVLA Observer Corps Report Form

Thank you for participating as a member of the Observer Corps for the League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area. Our goal is to educate LWVLA members on local government activities with the potential to refer topics for further study and advocacy.

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**Your Name:** Chris Haskell

**Name of Governmental Body (City/County/Town) Board or Committee:** Board of Estimates

**Time and Date of Meeting:** 1:00 – 1:55 PM, 10/11/2021

**Members of the Governmental Body (If available, note attendance.):**

**Members of the Governmental Body (If available, note attendance.):** Douglas Happel, Andrea Richmond, Barb Janssen, Chris Kahlow, Valerie Fenske, Larry Slezniow, Mitch Reynolds, Rebecca Schwarz, Mark Neumann, Mac Kiel

Absent: Chris Kahlow

**Link to the public posting of meeting information:** <https://www.cityoflacrosse.org>

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### Meeting Purpose and Content

Please provide a brief statement of the meeting's purpose and a concise overview of its content in the form of a bulleted list:

- The purpose of the meeting was to review the changes made in the 2022 Operating Budget as recommended at the last meeting
- Finance Director Fenske walked through the changes, which can be seen in the documents attached to the meeting notice
- In addition to some questions about the changes made, much discussion revolved around opting out of the Expenditure Restraint Program for 2023
- The ERP is a state program which would give the city \$1.1 back if the budget does not exceed a 3.7% increase over the previous year
- The 3.7% increase must include money spent from the ARPA, land sales and grants
- A motion by Councilman Happel to accept the budget as presented with an option to opt out of the ERP passed unanimously
- The advantages of this opt out are that the city can spend the considerable revenue that they have and raise their ERP for future budgets

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**Identify issues that the League may want to follow for further study or advocacy:**

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**Note any additional comments or feedback regarding this meeting:**

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The stream was, again, not running at the beginning of the meeting. The members, especially the mayor, did a better job of addressing people by name, so it was clear who was speaking, but this is still a challenge.

Items in this section of the form are provided for the observers' benefit. They do not need to be a part of the report, but they provide a checklist of WI Open Meetings Law requirements and good practice for public meeting accessibility. Notable observations about these practices could be included in your feedback comments.

### **WI Open Meetings Law Checklist**

- ☒ Public notice (time/date/location/content) was readily available no later than 2 hours prior to the meeting.
- ☒ The meeting was held in a location that was open to the public and readily accessible to members of the public who wished to attend.
- ☒ The agenda provided enough specific detail to inform interested members of the public about the content of the meeting.
- ☒ A quorum was present to conduct business.
- ☒ Meeting content was limited to only noticed agenda items, including business discussed in closed session.
- ☐ A record of motions, seconds, and roll-call votes from the meeting will be (was?) created and preserved.

### **Good Practice for Public Accessibility Checklist**

- ☒ The meeting was available to view or listen to on-line.
- ☒ Copies of the agenda and handouts were available to the public. Important information was available for viewing via handouts, web links, or projector.
- ☐ Roll call was conducted, and the public could identify members who were present or absent
- ☐ Speakers were identified and could be easily heard.
- ☐ The public was given an opportunity to speak at the meeting.
- ☒ Minutes and/or a recording of the meeting will be made available to the public.

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Thank you for participating in the LWVLA Observer Corps. Your responses will help us ensure transparency in local government and assess the need for future LWVLA actions!