



Office of the City Administrator

To: Mayor Welch, Common Council Members
From: Al Hulick, City Administrator
Date: June 4, 2019
Subject: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Items Necessary for the City of Milton to Contract Commercial Building Inspections with General Engineering Company

Summary

The City of Milton has been incredibly fortunate to have an experienced building inspector on staff for the past several decades. This asset has allowed the City to have a more hands on approach towards building inspections.

However, as development continues to increase in the City of Milton, staff's ability to respond to inspection requests in an effective and efficient manner continues to be strained. What once was a benefit to our community is now being taxed at an unsustainable level and may become a detriment in the future.

Therefore, over the past several months, staff has evaluated the option of contracting out commercial building inspections. The approach of contracting out building inspections is incredibly common, especially amongst communities that are of a transitional size, such as the City of Milton. However, because of the City's fortunate situation of having a licensed building inspector on staff, we have been able to avoid this inevitability for some time. However, the time has come to move in this direction.

Analysis

In order to "contract out" building inspection services, the City needs to undertake a multi-stepped process involving changes to our Ordinances, State Approval, and the actual contracting of a firm to provide those services. On the agenda this evening are five items related to the action of "contracting out" commercial building inspections. In sequential order, those items are as follows:

1. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Ordinance #464 Regulating Building Construction
2. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Ordinance #462 Regulating Commercial Building Inspections in the City of Milton
3. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding a Contract with General Engineering to Perform Commercial Building Inspections in the City of Milton



4. Discussion and Possible Action Authorizing the Submittal of an Application for Delegated Municipality Authority with the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services
5. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Resolution 2019-15 Establishing A New Fee Schedule for Building Permits

This memo will address each of the above five items under separate headings.

Ordinance #464 Regulating Building Construction

Ordinance #464 is only tangentially related to the actual contracting out of building inspections. Over time, the State of Wisconsin amends and changes their code references or section numerations. Although the City's Code of General Ordinances accounts for these changes, Staff felt it was in the City's best interest to update the General Code of Ordinances with the most up to date State Code references and numerations. This will assist future architects and building inspectors in interpreting the City's Code by utilizing a commonly accepted nomenclature. Therefore, Ordinance #464 updates the City's Code with the current State Code references for state electrical and plumbing codes.

Staff recommends the Council adopt Ordinance #464.

Ordinance #462 Regulating Commercial Building Inspections in the City of Milton

Similar to Ordinance #464, Ordinance #462 updates provisions within the City's General Code of Ordinances by adopting the uniform commercial code in order to create greater consistency within the City's Codes. Pursuant to State Statute and State Administrative Code provisions, local municipalities are authorized to adopt ordinances providing them with the authority to regulate and inspect the construction of commercial buildings within their jurisdiction, provided that said ordinances are reviewed and approved by the State of Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS). Therefore, Ordinance #464, has been provided to the DPS to notify the department that the city intends to exercise commercial building code jurisdiction, as required by Wisconsin Administrative Code ss. SPS 320.06 (1) (b) and SPS 361.60 (2) (a). Without this designating this authority, the City would not be able to then delegate that authority to another entity.

Staff recommends the Council adopt Ordinance #462

A Contract with General Engineering to Perform Commercial Building Inspections in the City of Milton

Staff has reached out to General Engineering Company (GEC) who currently provides a number of other inspection services for the Utility Departments within the City of Milton, to gauge their interest/ability to take on building inspections as part of their service provisions within the community. In addition to the services GEC provides for the City of Milton, GEC also provides



professional engineering and architectural services for many municipal, industrial, commercial, institutional, and private organizations. They are one of the longest tenured and regularly used firms for this type of municipal service.

The proposed contract with General Engineering Company provides for commercial building inspections within the City of Milton. The City will still perform small scale commercial site plan reviews as well as residential building inspections. The Contract also outlines a fee schedule that the Common Council will adopt in a later agenda item. This fee schedule allows GEC to be paid for the work they perform, while still allowing the City to retain a small portion of the overall permit fee for administration of the contract and other ancillary administrative services the City will perform and retain. This is not a flat fee or retainer based contract. Therefore, GEC only gets paid for the work they perform.

Staff recommends the Council authorize the City Administration to enter into a contract with General Engineering Company to perform commercial inspections work in the City of Milton.

Submittal of an Application for Delegated Municipality Authority with the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services

If a community chooses to contract out their inspection services, they must submit an “Application for Delegated Municipality Authority” with the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS). This application outlines several options in which a municipality may delegate their authority to perform certain services as covered within State Statutes.

The City of Milton’s application is to request the delegation of authority of commercial building inspections only (Commercial Building – Box #3). The application also names the individual(s) who will be responsible for the enforcement/inspections. In the case of the City of Milton’s application, the City will be designating Steve Gothard and Mark Jankowski from General Engineering Company to perform said work.

Staff recommends the Council authorize the submittal of an application for delegated municipal authority with the Department of Safety and Professional Services.

Resolution 2019-15 Establishing A New Fee Schedule for Building Permits

As noted above, the contract with GEC provides a new permit fee schedule for commercial building permits. Resolution 2019-15 reflects those changes in permit fees. Additionally, the City of Milton has not changed any other permit fee amounts in over a decade. Therefore, as a matter of uniformity and cost adjustments, Resolution 2019-15 also reflects an increase to several other building permit fees. These fees still remain lower than many of our neighboring communities, but more accurately reflect the true cost of service provisions in 2019.



Staff recommends approval of Resolution 2019-15 establishing a new permit fee schedule for the City of Milton.