

Item 24-0972: Resolution #8-R-24 to Require a Super Majority Vote on Wheel Tax or Wheel Tax Related Fee Increases

Finance Committee

Mon, Aug 12, 2024 5:30PM

Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 00:58

We have no public hearings or appearances tonight, so we will move on to 24-0972, Resolution 8-R-24 to require a super majority vote on wheel tax or wheel tax related fee increases.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 01:13

Move for approval.

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 01:15

Second.

Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 01:15

All right, we have a motion and a second. So, Alder Croatt.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 01:17

Waiting for Chris, sorry.

Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 01:18

So, Alder Croatt with this being your resolution, I'd like to turn this over to you first. Make any remarks that you wish.

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 01:24

Yeah. Thank you very much. And I know we held this at the last meeting with the hope of maybe having all members present, but that's okay. We'll take it up tonight. Actually, pretty simple. If you read the resolution, there are a few whereas clauses, but mainly this is just asking for a higher than a simple majority vote on an important action item like change to the wheel tax which has the potential to impact citizens of Appleton and much like other budgetary votes that we take that require a higher than simple majority vote. I just feel like there should be a higher threshold for the wheel tax vote because of the direct impact that it can have on citizens and also the impact that it can have on the city of Appleton departmental budgets. Thank you.

Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 02:13

All right. I have a couple of questions for Attorney Behrens if we can get you a microphone, please. Just really— just process questions here, just for my understanding and hopefully the committee. Which microphone did you get? Director three or three? Director three, sorry.

Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 02:29

All right, so this is looking to change a vote threshold, but to pass this would require just a simple majority from the council. Is that correct?

Attorney Christopher Behrens 02:39

Correct.

Alderman Brad Firkus (District 3) 02:40

Okay, and say, some future Council a year from now, 20 years from now, decides they want to change their mind. Would that also be a simple majority vote to revert this or is there a higher threshold if—like, once you've set a high threshold, you need that much threshold to overturn a thing?

Attorney Christopher Behrens 02:58

No, it would be simple majority, because it's an amendment, essentially what this is proposing, and it's an amendment to the wheel tax ordinance.

Alderman Brad Firkus (District 3) 03:07

Okay.

Attorney Christopher Behrens 03:07

That amendment would be to impose a requirement which I understand it to be a two thirds threshold to change the amount of the wheel tax moving forward. But a subsequent amendment to that ordinance would be just require a simple majority as any other amendment to ordinances would require.

Alderman Brad Firkus (District 3) 03:27

All right. That's all I got. Thank you. Anyone else? Alder Fenton.

Alderman Denise Fenton (District 6) 03:33

Thank you, Chair. I see no problem with this. We have different thresholds of majorities for budget amendments, and I think we even have a three fourths majority required for things involving salaries and such. So, honestly, I don't see any issue with having this meet the same requirements as we have for other financial issues.

Alderman Brad Firkus (District 3) 04:03

Thank you. Anyone else? Alder Hartzheim.

Alderman Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 04:06

Thank you, Chair. I would concur. I feel that if this big a change can't meet the thresh—threshold of two thirds of 15 people, then it really shouldn't happen. And that's, that's just the gist of the entire thing. So, I'm all in favor of it. Thank you.

Alderman Brad Firkus (District 3) 04:26

All right. Is there anyone else? Seeing none, we'll go ahead and vote. All those in favor?

Aldermen Fenton, Hartzheim, and Croatt 04:32

Aye.

Alderman Brad Firkus (District 3) 04:32

Opposed? Nay. And no abstentions. So that passes three to one.