

# Minutes

Housing Committee  
Monday, January 24, 2022  
6:45 p.m.

Police Training Room  
Municipal Building, Jamestown, New York

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilwoman Carrubba, Councilman Sheldon, Councilman Brackman

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Clerk/Treasurer Jennifer Williams, Director of Development Crystal Surdyk

Councilwoman Carrubba called the meeting to order.

### **Public Comment:**

No one from the public appeared to speak in front of the Housing Committee.

### **General Discussion:**

Director of Development, Crystal Surdyk spoke to the Housing Committee regarding various updates within the Department of Development. She provided documentation to the committee outlining the department's current caseload and it broke down the cases based on what each citation was issued for. The total for each citation type was reflected on the document as well.

Councilwoman Carrubba asked Ms. Surdyk if the Department of Development had seen an increase in complaints due to the problems with garbage collection. Ms. Surdyk said that her department did see an increase in calls due to the lack of garbage collection but they weren't excessive. She noted that the BPU did try to adjust their pick-up procedures as the new rules were implemented but initially the call volume was larger than usual. The Department of Development did address the constituent concerns and also alerted the BPU about the increase calls and complaints. The BPU seems to have addressed the issues and continues to tweak their practices to help with the concerns.

Councilwoman Brackman noted that there are 863 open cases. Ms. Surdyk said that the new Code Enforcement Officers are doing quite well. This week they are off from training so they are in the office. They have class next week and will be finished mid-March. Jim has completed his training with the other two to follow in March. Councilwoman Carrubba requested that residents be patient as the department is short staffed and is responding to concerns as quickly

as possible. Once their primary formal training is complete, there are continuing education classes available to take as well throughout their employment as a Code Enforcement Officer.

Ms. Surdyk is looking at introducing some Lead training as well as other trainings that are offered throughout the year as well as some safety training. This will help keep all of our officers safe and prepared for the field. This will be situational training and ways to deescalate situations. Councilman Sheldon suggested that Ms. Surdyk contact Chautauqua County for additional online training opportunities.

Councilwoman Carrubba noted that the BPU has a safety calendar to help keep safe practices at the fore front of employee's minds as they go about the normal course of business.

Ms. Surdyk provided the committee a complete list of every open condemned property. She wanted to illustrate and provide a sense of the amount that is out there. There are more current condemned properties in the city than when Ms. Surdyk started. Once the Code Enforcement Officers have completed their training, Crystal wants to develop a strategy for how to deal with the number of condemnations. This can be accomplished by establishing different ordinances such as a vacant property ordinance to help get a handle on the number of, and reasons for the condemnations. The goal is not to condemn, its to take the signs down. Councilwoman Carrubba noted that once the buildings go into the tax auction many out of town buyers purchase them and speculate and then are left to stand vacant. Ms. Surdyk will provide a more detailed report showing all of the property information to the committee for their review.

Committee members also received a report from Ms. Surdyk detailing all of the activities that the department is involved in; demolitions, fires, etc. They are still hoping for final invoices on the Crescent Street fire to see how it will affect the total demolition budget for 2022.

Councilwoman Carrubba mentioned that on February 3, 2022 at 7:00 p.m., the Hands on Neighborhoods will be holding a recognition and award event for those who participated in the program last year. It did a lot of good for the community. She also wanted to remind residents that there are many programs to help with heating bills, rent, etc. for those in need.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Jennifer R. Williams  
City Clerk/Treasurer