

CITY OF NORWICH
JOINT MEETING of the
PUBLIC SAFETY / PUBLIC WORKS and
FINANCE/PERSONNEL COMMITTEES
June 4, 2013

Present:

Ald. Terry Bresina
Ald. Paul Laughlin
Ald. Walter Schermerhorn
Ald. Daniel Palmer

Also:

Director of Finance/City Clerk William Roberts
Fire Chief Tracy Chawgo
Police Chief Joseph Angelino
DPW Superintendent Carl Ivarson
Code Enforcement Office/Fire Marshall Jason Lawrence
Mayor Joseph Maiurano
Youth Bureau Director Robert Mason
EMO A. Jones
Deputy City Clerk Brian Drake
Shawn Magrath, Media Representative
Community Development Specialist Todd Dreyer

Absent:

Ald. Bryan McCracken
Ald. John Deierlein

Ald. Terry Bresina called the joint meeting of the Public Works/Public Safety and Finance/Personnel Committees to order at 6:04 p.m. at the Council Chambers.

Approval of Minutes

Ald. Laughlin **moved** to approve the minutes of the Joint Committee meeting of May 7, 2013. Seconded by Ald. Palmer, approved ayes all.

Correspondence

Heidees Cruise for Diabetes Police Chief Joseph Angelino reported that the American Diabetes Association is holding the 6th Annual Heidee's Cruise for Diabetes on August 3, 2013. No City facilities will be used, though a police officer may be posted to help the motorcyclists exit the area as a group.

St. Baldrick's Run/Walk Ald. Schermerhorn **moved** to recommend Council accept and approve a request from Tracy Chawgo to hold the St. Baldrick's Run/Walk on September 28, 2013, with attendant street closings and police and fire assistance. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin, approved ayes all.

Firemen's Parade Ald. Schermerhorn **moved** to recommend Council accept and approve a request from Mary Weidman to hold the Firemen's Parade on August 6, 2013, with street closings on Midland Drive from the High School to East Main Street to the fairgrounds. Seconded by Ald. Palmer, approved ayes all.

Curb Cut Request - 85 Elm Street Ald. Palmer **moved** to recommend Council accept and approve a request from Kathleen Campbell to enlarge a curb cut at 85 Elm Street, subject to approval by the Superintendent of Public Works. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin, approved ayes all. Ald. Bresina noted that he looked at the property and thought the curb cut was justified. Code Enforcement Officer Jason Lawrence noted that Ms. Campbell recently purchased the property, has a building permit for renovations, and was granted a variance by the Zoning Board of Appeals to replace the carport with a garage.

Department Head Reports

Fire Department

Memorandum of Understanding - County HAZMAT Spill Response Fire Chief Tracy Chawgo reminded the Committees that the County has approached the Fire Department to provide HAZMAT services for the County. Any HAZMAT spill calls would be billable at rates yet to be determined. The Department has received the County's proposed Memorandum of Understanding and it is being reviewed by the City Attorney.

Aerial Truck Chief Chawgo reported that a truck has been located that will fulfill the Department's needs for an aerial truck. It is a 2012 demo with a 100' ladder. The final negotiated price for the truck is \$707,504. The truck would be treated as new under warranty upon signing the purchase contract. Chief Chawgo checked with ISO to learn

if residents' insurance rates would be favorably impacted by the purchase of an aerial truck, but the ISO stated they could not make such a determination without performing studies before and after the purchase. Ald. Schermerhorn asked how often such a truck would be used. Chief Chawgo stated that it would go to any structure fire within the City and on special calls in the Town. There were approximately 400 such incidents in 2012. Director of Finance William Roberts stated that the purchase would have to be financed by a bond issue. The maximum period for a bond issue would be 20 years, the period determined by State law as the term of probable usefulness of the vehicle. Debt service for such a bond would be approximately \$50,000 a year. This would translate as a 1.8% property tax rate increase. As Chief Chawgo had stated, it is impossible to know if this would be offset by more favorable homeowner insurance rates. Ald. Schermerhorn asked about the fire district contracts. W. Roberts replied that the contracts are written for five years. He noted that if State revenue sharing had not been drastically curtailed, and if the State had adhered to its mandated 2% cap with respect to annual increases in retirement system charges, the City's property tax rate increase could be only 1.7%, and would still have allowed the City to put \$250,000 in reserves to meet future capital equipment needs. Ald. Bresina asked if the aerial truck would significantly improve safety for the City and the Department. Chief Chawgo affirmed that it would. W. Roberts noted that while the truck's price was being held for 10 days, a bond resolution would first need to be adopted by the Council, and then a 20-day estoppel notice would have to be allowed. Ald. Bresina suggested that a bond resolution be prepared, but that the full Council should discuss the matter at its next meeting.

Finance

Transfer of Grant Funds - City Band Director of Finance William Roberts reported that the City used to provide the City Band with approximately \$5,000. For many years that amount has been curtailed to \$1,500, with the Band receiving grant funds from local charitable organizations to allow for its season of summer concerts. Grants for the City Band have been received from the R.C. Smith Foundation and the Greater Norwich Foundation. A resolution will be prepared for the Council to appropriate these grant funds for the City Band. Ald. Laughlin **moved** to recommend Council approve appropriation of grant funds for the City Band. Seconded by Ald. Palmer, approved ayes all.

Community & Economic Development Projects & Funds

421-m Property Tax Exemption Program Community Development Specialist Todd Dreyer reviewed the details of the 421-m Property Tax Exemption Program for areas designated for the benefit. Property owners in designated areas will have their current assessments held for a period of 12 years, and the full assessment value of the property improvements will be phased in gradually from years 12 through 20. Property tax rate increases are applied throughout the period. The Office of Housing and Community Renewal stated that no municipalities have yet adopted the program, but Cortland is considering it. State Senator Katherine Young's office has provided sample legislation. If interested, a proposed local law can be received by the Council at its June meeting and a public hearing set for the July meeting. Mayor Maiurano added that in some instances the assessment for a property would not change after improvement, and that this program will provide important incentive for redeveloping vacant properties. T. Dreyer reviewed properties on North Broad Street and Lackawanna Avenue that would be favorably impacted by adoption of the program. Ald. Palmer stated he is not in favor of the program but would favor a public hearing.

Upcoming Grant Applications T. Dreyer reported that the State's grant package has just become available. A local couple has approached the City about certain North Broad Street properties they would like to develop. They will provide a proposal, and a Main Street grant will be applied for through the BID.

The City applied in 2012 for an EPF grant to resurface the tennis courts in Weiler Park, but was not awarded the grant. T. Dreyer has approached local charitable organizations. The Rotary Club has pledged \$10,000 toward the project if other funding is located. Application has been made to the Chobani Shepherd's Gift program to complete the funding. That award will be announced June 20. If the City does not receive the grant, it may then apply for an EPF grant.

An Appalachian Regional Commission grant for wind energy in Chenango County was considered, but the project was not deemed feasible after further study, and an application is not being pursued.

DPW

BOCES Print Contract Ald. Schermerhorn **moved** to recommend the Council authorize the Mayor to renew the print contract with BOCES. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin, approved ayes all.

Elm Street Curbs, etc. C. Iverson reported that engineering for the Elm Street rehabilitation project will total \$60,000. This will be paid for from stormwater and CHIPS funds. \$8,000 for preliminary engineering will be required this year, the rest will be required in 2014. Ald. Schermerhorn **moved** to recommend Council approve a transfer of funds of \$8,000 for engineering. Seconded by Ald. Palmer, approved ayes all.

Sharon Drive Water Main C. Iverson reported that the water main on Sharon Drive was installed in 1924 and another section in 1954. The newer section is of hazardous material which cannot be handled by in-house staff. This section needs replacement after two breaks. He will report again after an engineering study.

East Sewer Trunk Line C. Iverson reported that repairs in the East Sewer trunk line will cost from \$17,000 to \$25,000. This will be paid for from the Wastewater Fund.

Meter Replacement C. Iverson stated that new water meters will be required after new EPA requirements are met. He recommends radio meters, which can be read without a worker entering the properties, saving many man hours and allowing for monthly billing, which will help homeowners if leaks develop. Ald. Schermerhorn **moved** to approve going to bid for new water meters. Seconded by Ald. Palmer, approved ayes all.

HVAC at WWTP C. Iverson reported that the HVAC system at the wastewater treatment plant broke down before the winter. It now needs to be replaced. He will supply figures for the next meeting.

Funding Wheeler Avenue Tank C. Iverson reported that bidders for engineering services for the replacement of the Wheeler Avenue tank had not completed the USDA-RD application for funding . An additional \$16,200 will be required. Ald. Laughlin **moved** to recommend Council approve a transfer of \$16,200 for application for funding to USDA-RD. Seconded by Ald. Schermerhorn, approved ayes all.

Executive Session Ald. Schermerhorn **moved** to enter executive session at 7:03 p.m. to discuss the sale of real property where price may be affected; and to discuss the proposed employment of a particular corporation. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin, approved ayes all.

Ald. Schermerhorn **moved** to exit executive session at 7:24 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin, approved ayes all.

Ald. Schermerhorn **moved** to recommend Council approve engaging Clough, Harbor Associates to prepare an application for funding infrastructure work under the federal Transportation Enhancement Program at a cost not to exceed \$5,900. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin, approved ayes all.

Adjournment

Ald. Schermerhorn **moved** to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Palmer, approved ayes all.