

COMMON COUNCIL

December 15, 2020

Mayor Shawn Sastri presided at a meeting of the Common Council held at 6:30 PM on December 15, 2020, in the Common Council Chambers at One Court Plaza.

Present:

Mayor Shawn Sastri
Ald. Matthew Caldwell
Ald. Brian Doliver
Ald. Nancy Allaire
Ald. Linda Kays-Biviano
Ald. David Zieno
Ald. Robert D. Jeffrey

Also:

Director of Finance/City Clerk Dee DuFour
Director of Human Resources Lynn Murray
DPW Superintendent Edward Pepe
Youth Bureau Director Robert Mason
Fire Chief Jan Papelino
Police Chief Rodney Marsh
City Attorney Steve Natoli
Deputy City Clerk Agnes Eaton

Supervisor Robert M. Jeffrey

Media Representative: none

Absent

Supervisor James McNeil

Call to Order

The meeting of the Common Council was called to order by Mayor Sastri at 6:32 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Ald. Zieno **moved** to approve the minutes of the special meeting of November 4 and the regular meeting of November 17, 2020. Seconded by Ald. Caldwell and duly approved ayes all.

Proclamations

Mayor Sastri and Ald. Caldwell presented the following Proclamation:

WHEREAS, the City of Norwich, as many small and rural Central New York communities, has been impacted by economic downturns over the past several years; and

WHEREAS, the City's economic challenges have resulted in the long-term vacancy and decay of historic and useful buildings and properties within the City of Norwich; and

WHEREAS, Mike O'Reilly and Dan O'Reilly have strategically identified and repurposed tired, historic buildings into useful spaces with modern amenities; and

WHEREAS, their ambitious efforts have resulted in substantial financial investments to preserve, beautify, and utilize otherwise abandoned properties into new best-uses; and

WHEREAS, their rehabilitation projects have attracted new residents and invited established businesses to relocate into the City of Norwich to occupy their properties, including their own business – Principle Engineering and Design; and

WHEREAS, Mike O'Reilly and Dan O'Reilly continue to pursue new projects to improve the utilization, attraction and appeal for residents, businesses, and visitors to the City of Norwich,

NOW, THEREFORE, as Mayor of the City of Norwich, New York, along with the Common Council, do hereby deem it an honor and pleasure to extend this proclamation to MIKE O'REILLY and DAN O'REILLY on the occasion of their dedication and commitment to improving the City of Norwich.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I do hereby set my hand, and cause the seal of the City of Norwich to be affixed this Fifteenth Day of December, Two Thousand Twenty.

Presentation by Design Connects for Kurt Beyer Park Redesign

Design Connects presented their final redesign of Kurt Beyer Park via Zoom. Their initial draft was presented at the November 4, 2020 Joint Committee meeting. A grant was awarded to the City through Cornell University to utilize students earning their Graduate Degree or higher for the park redesign. The DPW Superintendent, the Parks Commission and SUNY Morrisville Human Relations students were all part of the final redesign. Their plan for the project was broken down into phases so that when money became available it could be done in those phases.

Ald. Caldwell expressed concern regarding the downtown businesses during COVID, saying they are our livelihood. We wondered if grant funds were being looked for to help them stay afloat such as Main Street or Block Grants. L. Keckeisen explained that grants are always being searched for, however State funding is currently frozen. She remains in contact with Shane Butler at the County. D. DuFour added that most of the small business programs go thru the Chamber of Commerce. L. Keckeisen participated in an event with the Artists Palette and SCORE to help small businesses with their business plans. Mayor Sastri stated that small business owners are individually looking for grants and thought we could reach out and give them assistance. Keckeisen also stated that most of the time grants are awarded to non-profits organizations such as Commerce Chenango, the Small Business Association, and SCORE, therefore those organizations are the best contact for small businesses. Mayor Sastri said he is meeting with some small business owners tomorrow night and will pass along pertinent information to Keckeisen. Keckeisen reported she had done a series of workshops in conjunction with the Otsego Chamber of Commerce and various business organizations and suggested they may be helpful for businesses.

Mayor's Remarks

Mayor Sastri stated that at a previous meeting, Ald. Caldwell had brought before the Council an Overtime Policy. He questioned what would happen when (the Fire Department) is fully staffed, where the money for overtime would come from (if not Personal Services). He felt a Policy would be proactive and thinks it is something to consider. Ald. Zieno stated there are different reasons for overtime, such as training, that Department Heads budget for. It is the understaffing which causes the majority, but those funds are taken from Personal Services to cover the expense.

Correspondence

Chenango Blues Fest 2021 - Ald. Zieno **moved** to approve a request from the Chenango Blues Association for special event designation for the free Concert Series every Thursday in July and August 2021 with the road closure of East Park Place during the event is also requested. In addition, they are asking for special event designation for Saturday, September 18, 2021 for an event in cooperation with BID and the first Saturday in the Park farmers market day. Seconded by Ald. Kays-Biviano, approved ayes all.

Department, Board and Commission Reports

- ◆ Finance Department Report – October and November
- ◆ Community Advisory Board Minutes – November 4, 11, 18 and 25

Ald. Caldwell **moved** to receive and file the department, board, and commission reports. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Ward Reports

Ward 1

Ald. Caldwell reported no communications.

Ward 2

Ald. Doliver reported no communications.

Ward 3

Ald. Allaire reported one communication which has been forwarded to the Traffic Commission.

Ward 4

Ald. Kays-Biviano reported one communication regarding the railroad tracks on Mitchell St. E. Pepe reported that the railroad has been in contact with him to see what can be done.

Ward 5

Ald. Zieno reported receiving feedback from citizens to relay to the CAB members. He plans on contacting Chief Marsh to discuss also.

Ward 6

Ald. Jeffrey reported a complaint regarding parking at 26 Griffin St. has been forwarded to the Traffic Commission. He received communication regarding the usage of the vacant Rite Aid building.

Ald. Caldwell **moved** to receive and file the ward reports. Seconded by Ald. Doliver, approved ayes all.

Motions

- ◆ Set Public Hearing – Ald. Caldwell **moved** to set a Public Hearing for January 26, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. to hear public comment in relation to Police Reform. Seconded by Ald. Jeffrey, approved ayes all. Mayor Sastri and A. Eaton stated that, because of COVID and the potential to have many people in attendance, it will be necessary to have those who wish to speak at the Public Hearing call ahead of time – those wishing to only hear what is said will strongly be encouraged to listen via Facebook. Depending on the numbers of persons interested in speaking will depend on the format of the meeting ie: virtual vs. in person. The CAB for Police Reform will be speaking at the January 19, 2021 Common Council meeting. Copies of the preliminary report will be available to the public prior to the Public Hearing on January 26th.
- ◆ Vacant Lot Development Proposal – Ald. Doliver explained the program. Development of vacant lots with residential structures would remain at the vacant lot assessed rate up to 18 months during construction or a Certificate of Occupancy is issued. After the assessment on the completed project, the percent of assessment value would increase from the lot assessment over the next five years until fully assessed. He stated there are 70 vacant parcels in the City and this program is meant to assist in developing them which would be of benefit to the City. There was discussion of when the 18 months begins and how long the program should run for. This will appear on the January Common Council for a vote.

Resolutions

RESOLUTION #95 - 2020

AUTHORIZING CITY/COUNTY TAX LEVY FOR 2021

Ald. Caldwell introduced the following and **moved** its adoption:

WHEREAS, the taxes to be levied by Chenango County for collection by the City of Norwich during 2021 total \$2,627,654.54; and

WHEREAS, the budget of the City of Norwich for the year 2021 has been duly adopted and the amount to be raised by taxes is \$3,373,971 and the amount of special assessments and other items total \$51,890.23, for a total City levy of \$3,425,861.23, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that said taxes totaling \$6,053,515.77 are hereby levied against the real property of the City of Norwich. The Director of Finance is hereby directed to extend said tax against the property listed in the assessment roll of the City of Norwich. The Mayor is hereby authorized to execute and issue to the Director of Finance the tax warrant for the collection of the above-mentioned taxes.

Seconded by Ald. Allaire and duly adopted, 6 - 0, on a roll call vote.

RESOLUTION #96 - 2020**CHANGE IN WINTER NO PARKING**

Ald. Kays-Biviano introduced the following and **moved** its adoption:

WHEREAS, the Traffic Commission had recommended a change in time for winter overnight parking; and

WHEREAS, the change was adopted on August 18, 2020 by the Common Council; and

WHEREAS, the Traffic Commission has recommended a clarification in the wording; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Committees have made certain recommendations; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the City Clerk update the City Code Chapter 525-54 of the Vehicle and Traffic code as follows:

Section 525-54. No Parking.

- A. No parking on any city street from 12:00 a.m. to 6 a.m. effective December 1 to April 1. (8/18/20)
- B. No parking on any city street from 12:00 a.m. to 6 a.m. effective April 2 to November 30 when 2 inches or more of snow or any ice accumulation is predicted by the Binghamton National Weather Service. (10/18/16) (8/18/20)
- C. No parking within thirty (30) feet of a stop sign.
- D. No parking within fifteen (15) feet of a fire hydrant.
- E. No parking for a distance of fifty (50) feet from all street intersections within the City of Norwich.
- F. Specific streets:

Seconded by Ald. Zieno, and duly adopted, 6 - 0, on a roll call vote.

RESOLUTION #97 - 2020**AUTHORIZING TRANSFER OF FUNDS FOR RBC REPAIRS**

Ald. Kays-Biviano introduced the following and **moved** its adoption:

WHEREAS, RBC 1 needs repairs to the drive shaft and bearing costing \$24,000; and

WHEREAS, RBC 13 needs repairs to the bearing costing \$11,500; and

WHEREAS, a transfer from Capital Reserves is required to pay for the repairs totaling \$35,500; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Committees have made certain recommendations; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Director of Finance be and hereby is authorized to make the following transfer of funds in the 2020 General Fund budget:

From:

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>
HR42	Sewer Reserves – Equipment	\$35,500

To:

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>
G8130.4040	Wastewater Treatment - Repairs and Maintenance	\$35,500

Seconded by Ald. Jeffrey, and duly adopted, 6 - 0, on a roll call vote.

Payment of December 2020 Bills

Ald. Kays-Biviano **moved** to pay the December 2020 bills after proper audit and certification.

	<u>Prepaid</u>	<u>12/15/2020</u>	<u>Grand Total</u>
General Fund	\$128,257.86	\$441,220.19	\$569,478.05
Sewer Fund	35,342.89	7,094.33	42,437.22
Water Fund	12,443.98	5,498.34	17,942.32
Trust	29,938.07	-	29,938.07
Capital Projects	62,850.00	-	62,850.00
TOTALS	\$268,832.80	\$453,812.86	\$722,645.66

Seconded by Ald. Jeffrey and duly adopted 6 - 0.

Adjournment

Ald. Caldwell **moved** to adjourn at 7:55 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Doliver, approved ayes all.