

CITY OF NORWICH
JOINT MEETING of the
PUBLIC SAFETY / PUBLIC WORKS and
FINANCE/PERSONNEL COMMITTEES

January 5, 2021
Via Zoom

Present:

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

Supervisor Robert M. 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
EMO A Jones
City Attorney Steve Natoli
Deputy City Clerk Agnes Eaton

Media Representative: none

Absent

Supervisor James McNeil

Ald. Jeffrey called the joint meeting of the Public Works/Public Safety and Finance/Personnel Committees to order at 6:51 p.m. at the Council Chambers.

Approval of Minutes – Ald. Kays-Biviano **moved** to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2020 meeting. Seconded by Ald. Caldwell, approved ayes all.

Livingston Group Presentation – Samantha Hawkins, Steve Coons and Amanda Leonard of the Livingston Group spoke to the Council in regards to the installation of Electric Vehicle chargers on City property. They offered a different option than what was presented at the December 1, 2020 Joint Committee meeting when the Committee voiced doubts about the City's risk versus the lack of any reward. They presented an option where the City can purchase, own, and operate the EV charging stations and receive the revenue from them. With this option, there would be an annual software charge of \$305 per plug which can be recouped by charging two to three times the cost of the energy used and generate a positive income stream within 2 – 3 years. All paperwork, installation and permitting would still be handled by them. NYS is very aggressive and has one of the best programs, second only to California. Massachusetts has banned the sale of new gasoline powered vehicles by year 2035. The need for EV chargers is growing. National Grid will pay for the installation, NYSEDA will pay for equipment – the City's cost is the annual \$305 per plug software charge. Although it is not expected to not bring in a great deal of revenue, it will be a great green option to keep people downtown. There was discussion of updating as technology changes, maintenance, price structures and options after the required 5-year term. Mayor Sastri reported that the cost of additional insurance for 5 units with 2 ports would be less than \$100. An agreement in writing will be sent to the City Attorney to review within the next few days.

Department Head Reports

Human Resources

- ◆ **Continuity of Operations/Government Plan for Covid-19 Policy and Infectious Disease Control Policy** – L. Murray stated these policies were revised to include the following:

- Individuals are required to wear face coverings whenever they are not at their individual assigned workstation. This applies to any individual who is in a conference room, hallway, break area, restroom, or any location other than the individuals' workstation. Further, in accordance with

Paragraph 7 above, if two or more individuals are at a workstation and are not more than 6 feet distant, then all individuals within the 6-foot radius of another individual are required to wear face coverings unless there is some other barrier, i.e., wall, door, window, etc.

- Whenever an individual is required to wear a face covering as outlined herein, the individual must properly wear a face covering that covers the individual's nose and mouth.
- Failure to abide by these rules may result in disciplinary action including termination.

Ald. Caldwell **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the policies. Seconded by Ald. Zieno, approved ayes all.

DPW

- ◆ **2021 Street Replacement Project** – E. Pepe referenced an email sent including 2 options for the 2021 Street Paving Project. His recommendation is to go with option B which would include Waite, West Main, Auburn, King, River and Lee with alternates of Berry and Jones. Option A include Hubbard, Virginia and City Court. Hubbard has old mains that need replacing before paving could be done. Also, the southern part of Hubbard Ave. has never been declared an official street and that must be done so that CHIPS money can pay for part of that. Complicating the matter is that part of the area is owned by the railroad. Ald. Caldwell **moved** to approve going to bid for the 2021 Street Paving and Rehabilitation Project. Seconded by Ald. Kay-Biviano, approved ayes all. Discussion before the vote ensued regarding waiting on the State Budget, getting bids and clarifying the timing necessary and exactly what the motion should be.
- ◆ **New Trucks for DPW** – E. Pepe reported that Truck #14, a 2009 F550 dump truck with wing plow is off-road with a blown engine. The cost of repair is \$20,000 and not feasible. Truck #11, a 19-year old F550 dump truck with wing plow is in very poor condition and is beyond its useful life. Replace of the vehicles has already been discussed in the Capital plan as the next highest need. He will begin to look at State bid at an estimated cost of \$60,000 - \$70,000 each with funds coming from HR26 which has a balance of \$251,000. Ald. Zieno suggested getting the public involved, possibly by having a contest to name the new trucks like they did in Syracuse. E. Pepe also reported that receiving the new salt truck has been taking a very long time and not sure if it is because of Covid or not.

Ald. Caldwell questioned how the bid process is started. E. Pepe said that Delaware Engineering does a great job preparing the bids cheaper than if they were done in-house. Caldwell wondered if the engineering firm that is now within the City limits could be utilized. E. Pepe didn't know their qualifications, but would explore options.

- ◆ **Recycle Flow Meter at WWTP** – E. Pepe reported that the City does not measure the internal recycle flow, therefore the internal meter is measuring the entire cycle flow which inflates the flow and impacts the permitted flow number and artificially increases the pollutant loading. Measuring the recycle flow will be critical with the more stringent nutrient removal of nitrogen and phosphorus limits coming in 2025. This is also a recommendation from the DEC. The purchase of a flow meter would be around \$20,000 and he requests a transferred from HR42 Sewer Equipment to G8130.2100 Equipment. Ald. Allaire **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the transfer. Seconded by Ald. Jeffrey, approved ayes all.

Discussion ensued about the major snow storm, removal of the snow, some issues, complaints and compliments. Ald. Caldwell wanted to go on the record and addressed the pot holes which are forming once again on South Broad St. Caldwell said that the DPW is doing what they can and wanted E. Pepe to know when he calls with a complaint regarding the pot holes that he understands that and we [the Council] know it's a problem. It was discussed that the State has South Broad St. on their 2022 paving schedule.

Finance

- ◆ **NYMIR Training** – D. DuFour had sent information on the training for the Council, Mayor and Department Heads recommended by NYMIR. Ald. Caldwell has no objection to using training through NYMIR as the County uses it extensively. He questioned how many of hours of training, what would happen to the City's premium rate if the Council said no, and what is the risk other than higher premiums. D. DuFour felt this is not a requirement by NYMIR but a heavy implication that they are suggested. NYMIR is looking to know that the City is attempting to comply with their suggestion and at least take some of the courses and make an effort to educate ourselves. By doing so this may help reduce the City's

claims and the premium may go down as a result. L. Murray stated the classes are about a half hour in length with a test at the end. She would like to use this platform for all employees particular for the mandatory training required by all employees. It was agreed that the training is a good idea and the D. DuFour would respond to NYMIR that the City would comply with their suggestions. DuFour stated that NYMIR can go in to the training to see that we are making the effort.

Other Items

- ◆ **Change to 2021 Rules of Procedure** – Ald. Jeffrey moved to make the change to section 2 of the 2021 Rules of Procedure to include notification by electronic means as part of the way notification is given. Seconded by Ald. Zieno, approved ayes all.
- ◆ **Overtime Policy** – Mayor Sastri felt that if there are no suggestions or ideas on how to proceed at this time, discussion should be postponed. Ald. Doliver felt something could be worked on to curb overtime, but no ideas on how to do that. Ald. Caldwell concurred and saying that normally overtime issues occur towards the end of the year so there is time to explore options. Ald. Zieno proposed taking the policy Ald. Caldwell created and meeting with the Department Heads and challenge them to come up with a plan to curb overtime that is “easy to use operationally, but still have the control we are looking for”. Ald. Doliver said it should be looked into, but said he “wants the Department Heads to run their department and doesn’t want to infringe on that”. He also said overtime comes from public safety and he doesn’t want to jeopardize public safety. The subject of overtime will be put on the February Joint Committee meeting to see what has been discussed.
- ◆ **Norwich Copies Plus – Amazon lockers** – Ald. Kays-Biviano discussed the request from Chris Hayes of Norwich Copies Plus for the installation of Amazon lockers that would be attached to his building, but would also encroach into the parking lot owned by the City, therefore the installation would need permission from the City. Ald. Kays-Biviano stated that Norwich Copies Plus would receive no income from the installation, Hayes would be providing electricity for the lockers from his building and any liability would be assumed by them [Amazon]. There was discussion of liability, snowplowing and shoveling and no loss of any parking. Ald. Kays-Biviano responded to the City Attorney that Amazon needs the City’s approval to proceed before they present an agreement. The City Attorney remarked he would prefer to see an agreement before he makes any recommendations to approve the request. Discussion of the agreement’s for use of City property such as the agreement with the Bohemian Moon was discussed. The City Attorney will reach out to Chris Hayes for follow up.

Adjournment

Ald. Caldwell **moved** to adjourn the Joint Committee Meeting at 8:26 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Zieno, approved ayes all.