

CITY OF NORWICH
JOINT MEETING of the
PUBLIC SAFETY / PUBLIC WORKS and
FINANCE/PERSONNEL COMMITTEES
March 1, 2022

Present:

Mayor Brian Doliver
Ald. Matthew Caldwell
Ald. Fred Gee
Ald. Nancy Allaire
Ald. William Loomis
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 Anthony Testani
Fire Chief Jan Papelino
Police Chief Rodney Marsh
EMO Stephen Cady
Deputy City Clerk Agnes Eaton

Supervisor Robert M. Jeffrey

Media Representative: Sarah Genter, The Evening Sun

Absent

Supervisor James McNeil

Ald. Jeffrey called the joint meeting of the Public Works/Public Safety and Finance/Personnel Committees to order at 6:33 p.m. at the Council Chambers.

Approval of Minutes – Ald. Caldwell **moved** to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2022 meeting. Seconded by Ald. Gee, approved ayes all.

Street Tree Committee – Rebecca Hargrave, Street Tree Committee Chair and Jennifer Kelly from the Chenango County Soil and Water Conservation District did a presentation about City trees and their concern for the Ash trees and the invasive Emerald Ash Borer which first appeared in New York State in 2009. The Emerald Ash Borer has no natural predator and the only solution is to treat individual trees with pesticides. There are 1,200 trees in the City with approximately 23 Ash trees in Street Lawns or Parks out of which 16 have the potential to be treated and saved. Kelly stated that there is a direct State reimbursement program that would pay for the treatment of the trees. She proposed an intermunicipal agreement with Onondaga County Soil and Water who has a Certified Pesticide Applicator on staff in order to treat the Ash trees. The Triage pesticide used is injected into each tree, is approved for residential areas, is good for 2-3 years and will not come into contact with humans, pets or wildlife. By saving the trees now it will save money for removal of the tree which would certainly die if left untreated. Treatment would be covered by Onondaga Soil and Water and there would be no cost to the City. Hargrave said the City has an aging tree population and the Street Tree Committee only plants new trees when grant funds can be obtained. She would like to see a dedicated budget line included in future budgets in order to plant more trees to keep pace with those that are removed and to assist in pruning to keep existing trees healthy. Ald. Caldwell **moved** to proceed with an agreement with Onondaga County Soil and Water pending the City Attorney's review. Seconded by Ald. Loomis, approved ayes all.

Museum District Phase 1B – Pegi Lopresti asked for the same support from the City in Phase 1B of the Museum District project as was done in Phase 1A. Phase 1B of the project will encompass the area from the Rexford St. railroad tracks to North Broad St. Support would include the labor to install new sidewalks and ownership of the decorative lighting and corresponding energy costs after the installation. Ald. Caldwell **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the City's support for the sidewalks and lighting for Phase 1B of the Museum District project. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Correspondence

Hope for Healing 5K – Ald. Caldwell **moved** to approve a request from Chenango Child Advocacy Center for Police assistance during their 5K race held on April 30, 2022 from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. The race route will be the same as last year and special event designation is also requested. The event is to raise awareness on issues relating to Child Abuse. Seconded by Ald. Gee, approved ayes all.

Department Head Reports

Youth Bureau

Town Billing for Youth Services – A. Testani distributed information on a proposed new methods of billing the towns for Youth Services. He recommends using the method of billing based on participation. This change would bring the expenditures for the towns and City more in-line with participation levels based on a 5-year rolling average. He had sent a letter last month to all participating town Supervisors and received only one call with questions. Ald. Jeffrey moved to recommend the Common Council approve the method of billing based on participation levels by each Town. Seconded by Ald. Loomis, approved ayes all. There was discussion about the responses to the Youth Bureau survey concerning summer programs. The survey will be recirculated.

Human Resources

Refill MEO 1 – L. Murray reported that an employee has resigned from the MEO 1 position leaving a vacancy and asked for permission to refill. Ald. Zieno **moved** to refill the MEO 1 position. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Fire Department

Outside CON EMS mutual aid – J. Papelino reported only 10 mutual aid calls outside the CON – Oxford 5; Sherburne – 3; Mt. Upton – 1; South New Berlin – 1.

Grant application support- Barton & Loguidice – J. Papelino reported that the agreement has been signed and the grant deadline is April 1st.

Rabies Clinic Request – J. Papelino received a request from Public Health to hold a drive-thru rabies clinic at the Firehouse on March 26, 2022. In the past the clinics have not been drive-thru and have worked well. He had some concerns about a drive-thru clinic as all equipment would need to be removed from the bays and the bay doors would have to remain open for the 2 hours of the clinic. Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve a walk-in clinic and not a drive-thru clinic. Seconded by Ald. Caldwell, approved ayes all. Chief Papelino will contact Public Health to see if that would work for them.

Code Enforcement

City tax properties update – J. Papelino distributed information regarding the updated information on City-owned properties. The properties that were just taken for failure to redeem will have RFP's.

Plumbing and Electrical Board update – J. Papelino reported that the Plumbing and Electrical Boards have had two joint meetings since the beginning of the year to discuss how to increase the number of Licensed Plumbers and Electricians. The list of licensed persons has been dwindling as license holders have been aging out and retiring. Their suggestion is to create another classification called Residential License which will allow them to do work in residential settings, but not commercial. The license will be lower than the Master or Apprentice License. The Boards will have another meeting next month. Mayor Doliver said that there is also a need for commercial licensing within the City. Amy Donnison reported that Jean Hayes has contacted BOCES to look at a grant program to offer electrical and plumbing at BOCES in their Adult Education programs.

Ald. Zieno mentioned that after snowstorms there many street corners that are not shoveled out. He wondered if property owners are aware that they are also responsible for corners and the apron going to the street. He suggested having plow go slower at intersections so snow is not thrown as far onto the apron.

Finance Department

Marlene Meadows P.I.L.O.T. Renewal – D. DuFour reported that Marlene Meadows would like to renew the P.I.L.O.T. agreement with the same terms and conditions for another 5 years as has been done in the past. Ald. Caldwell **moved** to recommend the Common Council renew the P.I.L.O.T. agreement with Marlene Meadows. Seconded by Ald. Jeffrey, approved ayes all. Ald. Zieno expressed appreciation

for non-profits paying P.I.L.O.T. agreements as one third of the property in the City are owned by non-profits.

Chenango Housing Improvement Program Payment Plan Request – D. DuFour reported that Chenango Housing Improvement Program would like to continue to make payments for their P.I.L.O.T. agreement over a 10-month period as has been done in the past. Ald. Caldwell moved to approve the 10-month payment plan. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Amend 2022 Compensation Schedule – D. DuFour reported that with the addition of the Community Development Director position the 2022 Non-Unit Compensation schedule needs to be amended. Ald. Caldwell **moved** to recommend the Common Council amend the 2022 Non-Unit Compensation schedule. Seconded by Ald. Loomis, approved ayes all.

Actuary Report – D. DuFour distributed the Gasb Statement No. 75 Annual Report for December 31, 2021 for Post-Employment benefits which is required by New York State. The City's liability is \$13,324,137 which will need to be reported on annual financial statements and as long term debt on the AUD. It can have an impact on Bond ratings, but we are now in compliance with the NYS Comptroller's office. It does not have an impact on the Fiscal Stress score as the City is not required to fund it.

Other Items

City Historian – Mayor Doliver reported that although there has not been a City Historian for many years, the State does require the City to have one. As he investigated the duties of the City Historian, he found that Agnes Eaton was already doing some of those duties and asked if she would consider being appointed City Historian and doing the remaining additional duties with an accompanying stipend. Ald. Caldwell asked to discuss in executive session.

Stream Gauges – J. Papelino and Stephen Cady met with High Sierra Electronics and looked at the 3 stream gauges that have not worked the past two years. To replace the gauges would cost \$21,250. The original gauges were installed in 2008 with grant funds of \$27,000. Cady said it may be possible that some of the equipment can be reused. Ald. Zieno asked if the Flood Mitigation Commission could be polled prior to their first meeting [towards the end of March] to get their opinion. There was discussion of a possible maintenance agreement and annual fee. Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the purchase of stream gauges. Seconded by Ald. Zieno, approved ayes all.

Ald. Zieno said that a redistricting process is being investigated and being worked out as it seems there is a difference in population in certain wards. Mayor Doliver stated this will be placed on the April agenda.

Adjournment

Ald. Caldwell **moved** to adjourn the Joint Committee Meeting at 8:27 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Loomis, approved ayes all