

CITY OF NORWICH
PUBLIC SAFETY / PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

7 PM
August 24, 2006

Present:

Chairman Ald. Abraham
Ald. Williams
Ald. Bresina

Also:

Superintendent of Public Works Carl Ivarson
Police Chief Joseph Angelino
Director of Finance William Roberts
Mayor Maiurano
Assistant Police Chief Dale Smith
EMO A. Jones
Code Enforcement Officer A. Jones
BID Director, Peg LoPresti
Planning & CD Specialist Todd Dreyer
Media Representative Jessica Lewis
Deputy Clerk Darlene Colaso

Committee Chairman Ald. Abraham presided at the Public Works/Public Safety Committee held at 7:00 PM on August 24, 2006, at the Public Works Highway Garage on Hale Street in Norwich.

Approval of Minutes

Ald. Williams **moved** to approve the minutes of the July 27, 2006 meeting. Seconded by Ald. Bresina and duly adopted ayes all.

Visitors

Pegi LoPresti, BID Director

Business Improvement District Director Pegi LoPresti attended to discuss the Hayes Street Parking Lot and the several phone calls she has received from a new business, which has located within the old Masonic Temple. The eight people working at that location are concerned about receiving tickets from Citation Officer Jeremy Stoppford for parking violations, as they recently received courtesy tickets for parking in three hour areas. LoPresti said now that Morrisville is gone and the lot is rarely full, she would like the city to consider a request for all day parking for business people working in surrounding buildings.

Police/Fire Chief Joe Angelino stated that he has had several requests for this from business owners and residents who reside in the upper levels of the downtown structures. The Traffic Commission had stated that once SUNY relocated they would review the situation and offer suggestions. Chief Angelino said that Assistant Police Chief Dale Smith, liaison to the Traffic Commission, would take the request to the September meeting (they meet every 2nd Wednesday). Chief Angelino also mentioned one of the Traffic Commission's concerns is that NBT employees would park there all day.

Joan Spicer

Ms. Joan Spicer, 11 Chenango Avenue, was in attendance to discuss two issues: First, was to congratulate the DPW Superintendent on the incredible job that DPW has done all year, particularly with the flooding. She personally thanked Carl Ivarson, Superintendent of Public Works, and Police/Fire Chief Joseph Angelino, both for their efforts and the efforts of their respective employees for jobs well done.

The second item she wanted to discuss was the manhole cover problem on South Broad Street at Chenango Avenue and South Broad Street. She said it sounds like a bomb going off every time a large vehicle passes over it. Ivarson stated that he was in that manhole cover just yesterday taking

photos to forward to the NYS DOT (Department of Transportation) and that there are currently 13 manholes in the city (that have concrete blocks compiling the grates) which are collapsing (hence, the noise). He noted that it is down an inch and a half on the one side. He told Spicer and the Committee that he is working on the problem.

Department Head Reports

Police Update

Police Chief Angelino reported that Police Officer Annesi has returned from basic recruit school and he is now in his field-training segment, which amounts to ~60-days supervised on the street. He will subsequently graduate from the police academy and be right back into the schedule rotation. The police budget is currently being fine-tuned and he will give it to Director of Finance/City Clerk Bill Roberts on Monday or Tuesday of next week.

Crossing Guards

Chief Angelino went on to discuss crossing guards, and Roberts wanted to note that the crossing guards were discussed at the last Finance/Personnel meeting, by Dale Smith, and the topic was tabled until next month to get more input to review it. Chief Angelino reported that he has four crossing guards currently with no alternate at this point. In regard to the discussion about cutting two of the crossing guard positions, the schools would like all of them to remain in-place. Roberts stated that beginning in the first of the year, they will be looking at the budgetary impact of decreasing the posts. Chief Angelino said that the cost of the four crossing guards totals approximately \$15,000-16,000 per year.

Fire Update

Police Chief Angelino reported that the city received \$25,000 last night from Senator Libous to assist with Fire Department operations. The Community Cooperative meeting was canceled and the Cornell Study was not presented to the Chamber, as all the firemen in Chenango County were in Bainbridge for a mutual aid fire emergency.

2007 Fire Department Budget

Chief Angelino is currently working on the 2007 Fire Department budget, which (because it is his first) he is doing as a zero-based budget. He is trying to analyze all the past purchases made in the Fire Department to determine where costs have been expended and where he anticipates them being spent in 2007.

The emergency responses are a large part of the overtime for second calls for ambulances and he is looking at and gathering information from all of the sources he can. However, his concern is that many of their second calls are to back-up Superior and he is very concerned about how that business (Superior) and their business decisions affect the city's operations. He is trying to come up with some kind of alternative to what they are doing right now.

Fire Tanker Truck

Chief Angelino also reported that the Fire Department tanker truck (No. 236; the 1973 Ford Tanker truck) is no longer in service. He stated that it has used its life up as a first line fire assault vehicle and the Town of Norwich (who originally purchased that vehicle) would like to purchase it back for the \$1 they sold it for. Roberts said that Town Supervisor Law had said the truck originally was actually a gift from the town to the city at no cost. The desire now is to have the city transfer it to the Chenango County Fair Association for dust control.

Ald. Abraham asked what the city will do in the meantime. Chief Angelino responded that he would be using automatic mutual aid through fire control to call in tankers. Roberts stated that we could transfer that truck for \$1 municipality to municipality without bidding. Mayor Maiurano spoke with Dave Law last night and he felt that this was a show of good will by the city.

Ald. Bresina **moved** to recommend the fire tanker truck transaction. Seconded by Ald. Williams and duly adopted ayes all.

Fire Truck Committee

Chief Angelino stated that everyone should have received a letter about having formed a truck committee and that this committee met last night for the first time. The truck committee discussed the basics of what needs to be replaced, what we can afford, and what we can consolidate (or not) on vehicles. Chief Angelino stated there are some good people working on this.

Fire Chief's Vehicle

Chief Angelino asked the Committee to consider whether or not it would be possible for the former Chief's vehicle to be utilized by the Volunteer Fire Chiefs. Chief Angelino spoke with the Volunteer Chiefs and told them that now, more than ever, he needs to be able to rely upon them. They already have a schedule worked out, and if they are the Duty Chief ready to respond, Chief Angelino would like to be able to offer them the use of that vehicle. Ald. Abraham stated that this was a fine idea and Ald. Williams agreed that she would rather see the vehicle utilized.

Ald. Abraham **moved** to allow the Volunteer Fire Chiefs the usage of the former Fire Chief's vehicle. Seconded by Ald. Bresina and duly adopted ayes all.

Prior to the vote, Chief Angelino stated that they carry around a lot of equipment, which the ultimately end up hauling in their personal vehicles and he feels that this is a nice way to be able to give them a pat on the back for a job well done. They are in leadership positions and the responsibility they bear is tremendous. Ald. Bresina agreed that this sends the right message to the volunteers. Chief Angelino indicated that he is trying hard to build faith and trust within the Fire Department, since he is not a fire fighter.

Fire & Police

Multi-Family Dwelling Progress

Chief Angelino stated that he would simply like to remind Committee members to keep the Multi-Family Dwelling project on the front-burner. He stated that he will probably speak at the public hearing for the upcoming extension and he simply wanted to the Committee to be thinking about it as an important project.

Chief Absent

Chief Angelino stated that he will be out of town tomorrow, as two of his Marines were killed in Iraq. One was a State Trooper, whose funeral he will be attending tomorrow and the other Marine's funeral is on Saturday. He will be returning after the second funeral on Saturday.

Manholes Letter to Editor

Chief Angelino stated that in regard to Joan Spicer's comment on manholes the Chief received a letter, which was a copy of today's letter to the editor, regarding manholes and speeding vehicles. The patrolmen are aware of this and the letter has been posted at the police department. Angelino conceded that it may be a result of the manhole cover issue versus people actually speeding in that particular area. Trimming back trees, to enable people to see the speed limit signs was suggested.

Colorscape Request for Road Closure

Chief Angelino stated that they have been doing this for Colorscape for 13 years now and they are very familiar with the closure area, which includes West Main, East Park and West Park. Ivarson wanted to confirm the date and Angelino said it was the weekend of September 9th and 10th. Angelino asked Dale Smith to make sure that Deputy Clerk Colaso had a copy of the letter, as she did not believe she had received a copy.

Ald. Abraham **moved** to recommend the road closure. Seconded by Ald. Williams and duly adopted ayes all.

Director of Finance

2006 Flooding

Roberts wanted to mention that he was just speaking with Finance Department employee Christa Swarts, who spoke with our insurance company (Crane-Mirabito) today about opportunities for items such as turn-out gear or any other equipment that may have been damaged, or compromised (as a result of the flood emergency) which might be covered under our insurance policy.

Ald. Abraham asked Chief Angelino if he had any of those items damaged by the flooding and Chief Angelino responded that he did. He saw some volunteers carrying in some new equipment and they commented that it was purchased as a result of the flooding and Angelino asked for the receipts. He wrote insurance claim across those. The damage to Rescue Truck No. 235, according to Roberts has already been covered and paid for. Roberts also mentioned some bumper damage that may be a result of the flood. Ivarson and Angelino noted that this was due to an emergency extraction due to trying to retrieve it from the water (before the water did more damage). Roberts asked for more details, as he could have Christa resubmit the claim and our insurance adjustor would very likely consider it (under that type of scenario). Chief Angelino stated that it was definitely an emergency extraction issue, to save the truck from being totally submerged under floodwaters and to avoid further damage.

DPW Superintendent

Manpower

Ivarson stated that he is still short on manpower. He interviewed a person yesterday, and should the candidate pass the requisite tests, he looks good to hire.

Ivarson added that for some reason he had the DEC (Department of Conservation) and the DOH (Department of Health) inspections of both the Waste Water and the Water Systems on Monday and Tuesday and he is expecting to be cited for not having enough people.

Flood Damage: Water & Wastewater Systems, General Fund

At the water reservoirs the estimate for repair of the Ransford north and south creeks is \$287,000. At waste water, the screw pumps have sustained additional damage, which was found when they removed the covers from the bearings and the rollers, and found numerous bolts broken off from the ring that rides on the rollers. He had to call out for service, as it is too difficult to remove. The last time they had to come in, in 1991, the cost was ~\$40,000.

In regard to the general fund and the water system and waste water system, Ivarson stated that he is nearly finished calculating the totals regarding the man-hours and equipment, but is waiting on further information from HR Director Deborah DeForest so that he can finish the report, which will then be submitted to FEMA and EMO A. Jones.

NYSDEC Update

In regard to the DEC update on the dam, Ivarson reported that DEC had ear-marked \$19,000 for the repair for the initial damage of the dam back in 2005 (resulting from flooding). After talking with their engineers and discussing that our bids are required to go out for formal bids on any project over \$20,000 in Public Works, they had to revise several items and the engineers cost was estimated at \$50,500 to repair the existing damage (before we've had new damage calculated in).

Ald. Williams said that her understanding was that the dam would be removed and Ivarson responded saying that they are trying to get as much money as they can adding that they are arguing over the cost of the repair, since the \$19,000 estimate was so low. Ivarson stated that the dam is going to come out, as soon as he can get approval from the Corps of Engineers and NYSDEC.

A. Jones clarified, stated that they are waiting to get paid for the repair of the dam, as it gives the city the best shot at the highest reimbursement. If they remove the dam, it is considered an alternate project, and on an alternate project, the city would only get paid 75% of the amount requested. If it remains below \$55,500 (the 2005 maximum amount; 2006's maximum reimbursement is \$57,000) they pay on the estimate, but we can do as we please on the money. In year past, the DEC would allow us to go into the creek and begin working, now we are required to go through the full permit process, so he does not know how he will be able to get into Canasawacta Creek to do any work this year. Ald. Bresina asked if this included the dam and Ivarson said that it does not include the dam. He stated that with the dam, and if he gets permission to put the waterline through the west main street bridge, they will have permits in the contract. A. Jones stated that this will remove all the gravel built-up. Ivarson noted that with the dam project, they have the removal of the gravel behind the dam built-into the project.

2007 Paving Projects

Right now, Ivarson stated that he has Eaton Avenue, which he would like to pay for in funds other than CHIPS. Right now to pave Locust Street all the way and Canasawacta from a bit below Beech all the way up to Ridgeland Drive and York Street is estimated at \$105,500 and we get \$106,000 from CHIPS. Unless the Council has other streets they want to add, we are tapped out for 2006.

Roberts asked if we received a 2007 CHIPS allocation letter and Ivarson stated that we did and that the city will receive ~\$106,500 next year.

Budgets 2006 & 2007

Ivarson reported that utilities and fuel are problems, as the prices are going too high. He added that they received an increase in utilities and he will not know yet what those increases are until the end of September when the bills arrive. So even though his budgets are done, he may have to revise them in October based on the cost of the utility bills received.

Sidewalk Program

Ivarson reported that the proposed sidewalk program items have been submitted (via mailboxes), and one item is coming from Planning and Community Development Specialist Todd Dreyer. He stated that there was a long discussion on this at the department head meeting and although he really likes the low income support, he is unsure how it could be set up. He asked Dreyer for ideas. Dreyer stated that he is hoping to find it through another source and that he did inquire with the USDA Rural Development. Although they do have a 1% loan program for very low-income people, and there is also an out-and-out grant program for folks over 65, that money can only be used for home repairs and not sidewalks. Currently, he knows of no outside sources that would be a significant source of fund assistance. Ivarson posed the question of the city contributing a certain percentage to low-income, and or 65 and above. A brief discussion ensued as to funding sources. Roberts stated that they have existing criteria for moderate to low-income property owners. Dreyer stated that it's a certain percentage of median income. Roberts feels strongly that if the city is going to subsidize any portion of the projects that it should be limited to a low to moderate income criteria.

Ivarson did point out that the labor costs listed on a distributed sheet is 2007 labor costs. He stated that if you take a typical 60-foot frontage, it costs ~\$1400. He added that one of the questions that arose in regard to this program is whether we want to do a three-year or five-year payback. Roberts suggested both options, with a reasonable interest rate of approximately 5%. Ivarson said that he looked up the last time the Public Works Department did sidewalks, and the last time was 1998 at \$4.35 per square foot, right now, we are at \$5.82; he stated that it's less than the inflation from 1998 to 2006.

Ald. Bresina asked if it was ready for a recommendation and Ivarson said that the topic was simply for input at this point. Ald. Abraham quoted a portion of the handout stating that the "city selection committee will identify blocks most in need, then contact property owners for voluntary participation" and his question is who "the city selection committee" members are? Ivarson directed

his response to Dreyer (who wrote the proposed policy) that in the past the Common Council Aldermen would look in their wards for blocks that need to be done and then put them into list form. Ivarson stated that they need to set up something almost three years in advance, not just one year ahead. Ivarson stated that if we are to do this in 2007, then he will need to modify his 2007 budget; he also wants to be ready to go in February, notifying people of what we are going to be doing (that way workers will be ready in May to get the work done).

Roberts mentioned that Charter revisions will be necessary and that this may take some time in order to make it coherent and consistent. It will also require a public hearing and subsequent vote.

Dreyer stated that there are two proposals out there: One is Ivarson's proposal and Dreyer's alternative proposal. Ivarson stated that when it was discussed in the department head meeting, the elements they took out of Dreyer's were 1) the low-income support and 2) that the customer's would pay for everything. Dreyer asked if this would be a mandatory program and Ivarson responded that it would. Ivarson also pointed out to Dreyer that DPW cannot do bluestone sidewalks, as they are extremely labor-intensive: If residents want to maintain their bluestone sidewalks and they aren't up to code, they must bring them up to code the same year the city does the sidewalks in that block. This scenario occurred on Cortland Street last time, and luckily the ones who wanted to maintain their bluestone sidewalks had them done at the same time and there were no problems. Ivarson also noted that the other reason that the city stopped doing this before is that the Common Council received numerous complaints from private contractors that the city was under-bidding and taking work away from them. Even with the increased wages, the city is going to be way-below the contractors' rates. He stated that should they go forward with this, Council members need to prepare themselves for some complaints from contractors; however Ivarson stated that he does not see a lot of sidewalks being done. Dreyer has been receiving inquiries from property owners inquiring if there is a program and that it was one of the reasons that this program was suggested.

A brief discussion ensued when Ivarson asked what if a resident wants their sidewalks done and they are not in an area designated for replacement. Roberts also noted that although this is a mandatory program, a property owner whose sidewalk is up to par in an area that is designated for replacement, should not have to participate in replacement. The Committee admitted that there are so many details that need to be worked out before the program is implemented.

Ald. Williams brought up the point that the Weiler Park area has no sidewalks and a brief discussion ensued. Roberts recommended that installing new sidewalks in that area should be an issue tackled separately from the sidewalk replacement program. Another brief discussion ensued as to whether or not new construction requires sidewalks be installed and whether or not grant funds would be available for this. Ald. Bresina stated that he does not believe the city owes it to the local contractors to make a profit on the sidewalks. Another brief discussion ensued as to the market demand of sidewalk replacements. Ald. Abraham asked if Ivarson has the labor to do this and Ivarson replied that he has allowed for this program. Ivarson stated that he would like to have himself, Roberts, and Dreyer continue to work on this and bring something back to the committee in November. He also added that between the two policies (his and Dreyer's proposed policy) he believes that they can come up with a sidewalk program that's really going to work. Ivarson did not require a motion.

City Property: Silver St. & West Midland Dr.

Ivarson noted that the city still has property on Silver Street and West Midland Drive. He believes the city should keep West Midland, due to the parking problems across the street, however he would really like to get rid of the property on Silver Street. Roberts noted that that property plays right into Community Development's new program. Dreyer is uncertain as to whether it should be sold as a vacant property or to sell it with a house on it, pointing out the tax benefits to someone who purchases it and then builds a property versus the city building a home on it. He stated that the city could very well sell the lot at a premium price, due to the way it is currently zoned (the tax savings could amount to a substantial savings). Roberts disagreed with Dreyer in that building a home on the lot and subsequently selling the property with the home would be much more advantageous to the city. Dreyer conceded Roberts' point.

Ivarson asked when Dreyer would know about the grant and Dreyer stated by October. Ivarson said that we would wait to sell the lot until we know the outcome of the grant application and also said that he would continue to maintain it until a decision is made.

BID Blue Stone Replacement

Ivarson reported that BID has submitted a letter to replace the bluestone in the sidewalks downtown and that they have also requested assistance from DPW moving the bluestone – that is if they get whatever money they are seeking to complete the project. Ivarson stated that he didn't have a problem with that, as it would probably only take him about two days to rip it all up (that's how flimsy it is). Ald. Abraham asked about the replacement and Ivarson stated that they would only be involved with ripping it up and placing safety barricades in place. Ivarson stated that he refuses to rip the bluestone out without an immediate plan in place to replace it, as he will not have the sidewalks ripped up like they were in years past. A discussion ensued as to the replacement material that would be used. It would be the same simulated brick effect as in the crosswalks. Roberts and Ivarson pointed out that this is all hand-work. Ald. Williams asked what this would be replaced with, as she was concerned with the aesthetics of the replacement. She said she does not see the beauty of a red-stripe down the sidewalk and a brief discussion ensued.

The outcome was that Ivarson stated that he wanted the committee to determine whether or not having DPW involved with the removal and barricading. The committee agreed that DPW could be involved with the removal and barricading.

New Dam Rules & Regulations

Ivarson reported that there are new rules and regulations for dams, although they are only in the comment stage right now. A. Jones commented that there has been a major issue with the Gilboa Dam in Schoharie County near New York City where millions of dollars have been spent on shoring it up (as well as other problematic dams) which may have prompted these new rules and regulations.

Due to staffing shortages, Ivarson is unable to attend the training session offered tomorrow and simply wanted to bring the new rules and regulations to the committee's attention.

BID Electric Cost

Ivarson showed the committee a layout of the area at issue near Gordon Park and the covered walkway to the rear area of the Hayes Street Parking Lot. Ivarson stated that the BID, for whatever reason, is paying for the lights in that rear parking lot and he is unsure why. The City is paying for the lights in the alleyways. Ivarson stated that this is another issue where it is private property and the city is paying the cost. Ivarson said that BID should not be paying for the parking lot lights and the city should not be paying for the alleyway lights. Ivarson's main question is why is the BID is paying for this? Ivarson stated that this went back before former Mayor Marge Chomysak, that nothing is in writing and that there are a lot of misconceptions as to what the city actually owns.

Dreyer asked if perhaps there is a public right-of-way through that area. Ivarson stated not that he is aware of, but that there could be an issue where a public right of way is involved. A brief discussion ensued as to whether this is an issue that needs to be researched. Roberts stated that what is relevant now are the current facts, which should be addressed. Ivarson replied that the current issue now is that the BID should not be paying the electric bill and the city should not be paying for the alleyway electric bill. Ivarson suggested that the committee make a motion to have the city pay the legitimate electric charges in this area instead of the BID.

Ald. Williams **moved** that the City of Norwich pay the legitimate electric charges in this area instead of the BID. Seconded by Ald. Abraham and duly adopted ayes all.

Ready-Cult; On-Line

Ivarson has had some really serious problems with some lab work and it has to do with the color of the test results. When you perform the (water) tests they are performing right now, they come back a yellow shade and if it's positive for e-coli you use a black light and it fluoresces. The materials Ivarson is using currently can range from an extremely dark yellow to an extremely light yellow and any of those can be positive, which incurs more lab testing costs to determine such. The reason

Ivarson is sharing this is that he needs to get his certification back. He also stated that it has to be either green or it's nothing (versus which shade of yellow indicates a positive test result). The cost of the materials is a little bit more expensive, but he wants to start using this product, which will ultimately save on lab work expenses.

Street Painting Proposal

Ivarson stated that he added this agenda item, to get approval for the street crosswalk and parking lot striping (painting) proposal from Pavlovich Pavement which was distributed to council members.

Ald. Williams **moved** to recommend the proposal to the Finance/Personnel Committee. Seconded by Ald. Bresina and duly adopted ayes all.

Village of Oxford Assistance

Ivarson also mentioned that he would be helping the Village of Oxford run their water system, while their operator is gone, as they do not have another operator either. He will be doing this on his own time during the day, and if anyone has any questions they can contact him.

Community Development

Update on Restore New York Grant Application

Planning & Community Development Specialist Todd Dreyer reported that he was here to give an update on the RESTORE NY grant application process. He is working on a (required) lengthy notice for the public hearing which will occur September 12, 2006. He stated that the list of projects will refer to single family homes, although Dreyer stated that he didn't see anything in the grant application that says you need to distinguish single-family from two-family. However, Dreyer said they do require a fairly explicit description of what you propose to do with redevelopment and it was the consensus of the Common Council that single-family dwellings were preferred. Also on the 12th, there will be an additional resolution stating that the grant application is in compliance with the city's Comprehensive Plan.

Dreyer is still trying to reach property owners and gave a brief update on the status of interested property owners. He also mentioned that 45 Gold was added to the list, as it was a fire-affected property. Ivarson wanted to clarify that Dreyer was not planning on utilizing Public Works for tear-downs and he confirmed they were not.

Ald. Williams inquired as to whether the council members would be able to see some type of drawing of the proposed construction and Dreyer stated that there are elevation drawings he will be able to share.

Director of Finance

Director of Finance/City Clerk William Roberts reported that he is currently working with the departments on compiling their 2007 budgets. He would like to have a complete picture to share with council members, rather than segmented pieces, as is it is not that meaningful until you know the bottom line.

EMO

Flood Updates

A. Jones stated that he is just doing paperwork for damage cost recovery. He asked committee members with any friends, relatives, etc. who sustained any kind of water damage in the floods, to remind them that they have until September 1 to submit their reimbursement applications to FEMA. Also, the State's program deadline for applications is 5 days later (September 5) and those are grants up to \$5,000 for any type of damage not covered by insurance or FEMA. Jones added that part of the reimbursement process for the State is applying for an SBA (Small Business Administration) loan and Jones encourages people to apply (whether or not they have any intention of accepting funds) as if

they are denied for the SBA loan, they can come back and FEMA may give them additional grant funds.

Additionally, because the city has had back to back floods, FEMA has a new requirement that if you receive FEMA assistance funds, you must take out a mandatory flood insurance policy on your property and they pay ~3 years of it: If you do not continue the policy after the said period, and you incur flood damage, then they will not give any assistance. Ald. Abraham asked if flood insurance was available to all properties and Jones responded that flood insurance is now available to anyone, regardless of whether or not you are in a flood zone.

Ivarson asked how the Waste Water Treatment Plant would be affected. Jones replied that it won't, as this is relative to individual assistance only.

Committee Concerns

There were no committee concerns.

Adjournment

Ald. Bresina **moved** to adjourn the committee meeting at 8:23 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Williams and duly adopted ayes all.

Next Meeting – September 28, 2006