

CITY OF NORWICH
PUBLIC SAFETY / PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

6 PM
September 28, 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 Jason Lawrence
Media Representative Jessica Lewis
Deputy Clerk Darlene Colaso

Committee Chairman Ald. Abraham presided at the Public Works/Public Safety Committee held at 6:19 PM on September 28, 2006, at the Public Works Highway Garage on Hale Street in Norwich.

Approval of Minutes

Ald. Williams **moved** to approve the minutes of the August 24, 2006 meeting. Seconded by Ald. Bresina and duly adopted ayes all.

Department Head Reports

Police Update

Homecoming Parade Request

Police Chief Angelino reported that a Homecoming parade request for October 6th was received and that it is a very easy parade to oversee. The parade usually involves a couple hundred students starting at P&C parking lot, takes up half the street, and ends at Midland Drive.

Veteran's Day Parade

Police Chief Angelino asked that, although an official request has not been submitted, he would like to obtain approval for a Veteran's Day Parade. He said that often times he will not receive a request until the last minute. The date of the parade is November 11, 2006 at 10:45 a.m.

Ald. Williams **moved** to approve the Homecoming Parade request and to recommend the Veteran's Day parade request to the Common Council. Seconded by Ald. Bresina and duly adopted ayes all.

Crosswalks

Chief Angelino reported that they are very busy and that one officer cannot always get to the downtown crosswalk for lunch hour crossings.

Return of Seized Federal Funds

Chief Angelino reported that the federal government has indicated that the city is likely to receive a percentage of the money the Norwich Police Department seized during drug enforcement activities. Roberts stated that it would be approximately \$7500. Angelino responded to a question from Ald. Williams that the money would likely go back into drug enforcement.

Fire Update

Police Chief Angelino reported that some of the Fire Department volunteers have indicated that they cannot be treated as paid employees and Chief Angelino wanted the Committee to be aware in case any complaints come in.

Fire Gear

Chief Angelino stated that he is trying to get a handle on the gear the Fire Department owns and that there are hundreds of pieces of gear out in the community (as there are over 200 fire fighters on the books; 100 of which are active; 50-60 which can be depended on in a major fire). He is trying to perform an inventory and inspection of gear to ensure the thousands of dollars of fire fighting gear is really out there.

Fire Alarm Boxes

Chief Angelino said neither he, nor the fire fighters, has any faith in the current fire alarm box system. The current system requires approximately \$50-75,000 to maintain it. He added that it is one continuous circuit loop. In the 1890's to 1920's, when it was state-of-the-art, people depended on it. However, the city has not had a fire reported by one of those boxes in years. Angelino believes it is due to the proliferation of cell phones.

He believes they should be removed. Several Aldermen spoke up saying that this was recently discussed and Angelino conceded that it was discussed in July, but the thing (people do not realize) is that we have to leave those boxes up until all the major buildings currently on that circuit, can get another method in place.

Fire Tanker Truck

Chief Angelino wanted to thank the Council members for approving the tanker.

Status of Equipment

Chief Angelino stated that when he talks about fire trucks at the fire house he's only talking about those trucks that pump water and put out fire – he's not talking about those ladders, utilities, and rescue trucks. Engine 231 is a 1987 LeFrance which the city bought used and it does not currently pump water. We have a repair quote on this vehicle for ~\$9300 to repair the pump. Angelino believes it would be a good investment to repair this pump. Engine 232, which is the Maydole Company truck was purchased new in 1987. It was a paid man's truck for 13-14 years, however it has a cracked head. It's currently a sealed unit and it isn't a problem until we loosen up the bolts – however, the truck failed its pump test Tuesday. It cannot sustain the high-idle required to pump water, hence that truck cannot pump water either. The next truck is engine 233, the Ontario truck, and this truck is 28 years old (a 1978 Mac). While it has never broken down, and is in good engine shape, the body is literally rotting off. Of those three, engine two and three need to go quickly. Engine one needs some money invested. The last fire truck, 234 (2001), is currently in Syracuse having the engine rebuilt, as one of the cylinders burned-up. Detroit Diesel agreed to pay for the parts to rebuild and we are paying for the labor. It will be back on the road tomorrow. A brief discussion ensued as to further status on the fire trucks and different types of cabs.

Angelino said that over the next year we will need to replace at least two vehicles. He indicated that the Truck Committee is going to continue on researching trucks that would be viable for the city to purchase. Angelino said that we need to implement a city replacement plan for all the city-owned vehicles. Mayor Maiurano indicated that he has a lot of faith in this particular Council to implement such a program.

Mayoral Comment

Mayor Maiurano indicated that in regard to the Westcott Street issue, the person who raised the problem with the spelling has been called and he has been informed that the spelling was taken care of quite some time ago.

DPW Superintendent

Manpower

Ivarson stated that he has lost another person, as the city's Park Maintainer has retired. Ivarson has revised his job description and he has turned it into Human Resources, who will be presenting the revised description to Finance/Personnel and Civil Service. The job description had not been re-written in over 20 years.

Also under manpower, they still have serious shortages on the water side. Ivarson said the Lead Operator has been out over 22 months in the past 25-26 months. Ald. Williams asked if this position has to be left open. Ivarson replied that he does. He stated that because he is so far behind, he hired someone part-time who works three-days per week at the Wastewater Treatment Plant to help him out, but as far as Ivarson is concerned, he said that they need to do something to resolve the problem with the Worker's Compensation and this employee being out so many months, as he is having a serious problem on both the operation of the water and wastewater treatment plant.

Ald. Abraham asked what HR has to say about that and Ivarson indicated that HR wants to hire a second Lead Operator. However, Ivarson said he has another proposal, as he is having such issues with the lab work. He would like to hire a lab technician who will be doing both water and wastewater lab work and will be running the plant. He said the person in the Lead Operator's position will have been gone 12 months in October and he would like some action taken on this. He is supposed to have four employees at the plant and he currently has only one full-time.

Ald. Abraham asked why we couldn't hire someone in the interim until it is determined whether the person currently out is coming back. Ivarson said that he could not get someone to fill this position knowing that it might be a temporary placement. Ivarson did comment that the new MEO is working out great. Ivarson would like to take forward to the Finance/Personnel Committee the addition of a Lab Technician for the Water and Wastewater side at an entry level salary of approximately \$28,000.

Ald. Williams **moved to** forward the Committee's recommendation of the addition of a Lab Technician for the Water and Wastewater side to the Finance/Personnel Committee. Seconded by Ald. Abraham and duly adopted ayes all.

Flood Damage, Water & Wastewater Systems, General Fund, NYSDEC Update

Ivarson reported that Rotary Park, the Nature Trail, the volley ball court, and the pool have been taken care. Ivarson summed up the damage to the WWTP as less than \$25,000 (as this was the deductible amount not covered). Ivarson also indicated that rollers were not a viable alternative for the city at a cost of \$19,000 versus \$1,900. Delaware Engineering is still working on the water main across the Canasawacta Creek and Ald. Williams asked if this cost was a shared cost. Ivarson indicated that FEMA will reimburse.

In regard to Ransford Creek and the streams that feed into the upper reservoir, which were laid-up stone built in 1881, were all wiped out. Ivarson stated that there is now 2000 cubic yards of debris in the streambed.

NYSDEC Meeting in October

Ivarson reported that there is an October meeting relating to possible flood plain changes. Code Enforcement Officer Jason Lawrence stated that he attended a meeting in Syracuse last Thursday and learned that the DEC will be working in Chenango County over the next couple years to re-map the flood zone for the area. Lawrence mentioned that any upcoming new construction will be required to have the first floor level two-feet above the determined flood level. He added that this is one of the reasons that the DEC is here, they are doing their research and assessments for this re-mapping. One of the FEMA members mentioned that the current 500-year flood zone will be deemed the new 100-year flood zone, what with the recent back-to-back flooding. A brief discussion ensued regarding assessing the water lines. A Jones commented that it is likely to cause an uproar, as many people who never had to purchase flood insurance will be required to do so after the re-mapping of the flood plain. Another brief discussion ensued as to the impact this will likely have on fixed-income residents and those wishing to sell their homes at some point.

Summertime Help Request for Increased Minimum Wage

Ivarson reported that he has received correspondence from his summer helpers requesting an increase to the state minimum wage level (versus the Federal minimum wage currently offered). Otherwise, they do not feel that they will be able to return next year. Ald. Williams asked if this topic had already been addressed and she thought it was budgeted. Ivarson indicated that nothing has been done, as HR wanted to wait and see if there were any complaints. He said that he has now received complaints, everyone who worked for him this summer has complained. Ald. Williams stated that she heard complaints also.

Ald. Williams **moved** to refer the issue to the Finance/Personnel Committee for reviewing an increase in the minimum wage. Seconded by Ald. Bresina and duly adopted ayes all.

Rt. 12 South Manholes

Ivarson reported that after much correspondence with the Department of Transportation the collapsing manholes on Route 12 South up to Rexford Street, will be repaired by NYS DOT next year. They will not do it this year, as they are so far behind, due to the floods. He should be receiving a letter confirming it sometime next month.

Ald. Williams inquired about unusual noise at the intersections of Mitchell and North Broad Streets and she indicated she believed it originated by something smaller than a manhole. Ivarson indicated that it was likely a valve box cover.

2006 Tree Removal Bid

Ivarson reported that the low bidder for the 2006 Tree Removal project came in at approximately \$6000 greater than we have allocated in the line budget. Ald. Williams asked who performed the work last year and Ivarson indicated that Central NY Tree did. Ald. Abraham asked if Ivarson id he was happy with the bid and he said yes. Roberts confirmed that Cook's was the lowest bid and said he believes there are some accounts where budget funds can be reallocated to cover the \$6385 needed in budget transfers.

Ald. Bresina **moved** to make the necessary budget transfers. Seconded by Ald. Williams and duly adopted ayes all.

NYSEG Work on Rexford St.

Ivarson reported that NYSEG is digging up the sidewalks to redo the gas lines. They will be replacing the sidewalks when they are finished (in case the committee members receive any phone calls from constituents). The new gas mains will be located beneath the sidewalks.

Timber Located on Water Plant Land

Chairman Ald. Abraham stated that he and Ivarson had discussed this in the past and it has been brought up previously. He recently received a 10-Year Forest Stewardship Management Plan (published by NYSDEC [New York State Department of Environmental Conservation]) and he is requesting the Committee members read and digest the report in order to discuss it at the next Public Safety/Public Works Committee meeting. Ald. Abraham quoted some items, stating that the DEC determined that there was a certain amount of harvestable timber. He also indicated that he felt this was a thorough report, which is why he believes they should discuss the report as a group. Ald. Bresina mentioned that it would be good to be able to view the property to gain a better understanding of the DEC's study and Ald. Williams added that this would require a company to assess the timber to see if it is even worth their time. Ivarson stated that he believes this should be put back to the Water Commission, as this timber is located within the Water System and he believes that those members should have input as to what would ultimately occur on that property.

A brief discussion ensued and Ald. Abraham asked Deputy Clerk Colaso to distribute copies to all Council members and to put this on the agenda for the October Committee meeting.

Canasawacta Dam Removal Update

Ivarson reported that he cannot give any update on the dam until he receives the permit (to come in from DEC; hopefully by this Friday, as per the Mayor). As soon as he receives it, he will know the conditions and determine his options. Ald. Williams stated she thought this was coming from the Army Corps of Engineers, as Ivarson once indicated that the Corps of Engineers needed to sign off on it. Ivarson stated that while they do sign off on it, the actual permit comes from the NYS DEC.

Training

Ivarson reported that there is an upcoming training in Chenango Forks for electrical background for DPW employees, which will cost \$22 per person. Ivarson would like the committee's approval to send several employees.

Ald. Williams **moved** to approve the training costs. Seconded by Ald. Bresina and duly adopted ayes all.

Paving Costs

Ivarson gave a brief update on the costs for the 2006 paving projects and indicated that he is \$7913.04 over the allotment from CHIPS. He explained that the grinding and profiling/grading took more material to complete. Ald. Williams asked if Ivarson ever wrote the letter previously discussed (regarding the maintenance fees received for East Main Street and North/South Broad Streets). Ivarson indicated that he has Roberts working on the inflation report and DeForest is going to get back to him with the increase in manpower. As soon as he receives those two figures, the letter is ready to go.

Ald. Bresina **moved** to refer this to the Finance/Personnel Committee to find the \$7913.04 to cover this amount not covered by CHIPS funds. Seconded by Ald. Williams and duly adopted ayes all.

Davis Street

Ivarson indicated that Davis Street is not a street built for heavy traffic and that he has seen for himself, and has received complaints regarding heavy contractor vehicles. Ivarson said if the Street is ruined, then the Contractor is going to be responsible for it. Lawrence did speak with the Contractor and has made him aware of the city's concerns. Ald. Abraham asked that they be notified in writing and a copy submitted to the committee to protect the city.

Ald. Williams initiated a brief discussion of other streets that need to be looked at, indicating the lower half of Calvary Drive is in bad shape. Ivarson indicated that that particular portion of the street is the Town's responsibility. Ald. Williams said she would contact Dave Law.

Director of Finance

Engineering/Historian Building Roof (Capital Reserves)

Director of Finance/City Clerk William Roberts reported that he needs to get some funds transferred from Capital Reserves to rehabilitate the Historian building. Ivarson stated that back in May he came to this Committee with a proposal from A&B Construction, who did the first half. He also indicated that he had to take \$15,000 from the heating that he was originally going to modify at City Hall and use it on the roof at the Engineer (current Historian's) office. That allowed him to do the front section of the roofing to deter the water running into the section where the Historian's records were located.

The second portion of it was going to have a cost of almost \$24,000, which has to go out to bid with specs done. He was never given any permission to do anything on it. He has the money in the 2007 Municipal Buildings budget and, if approved, would be finished in 2007. It's a built-up roof and it's not something he can do during the winter. Ald. Abraham asked that if in the meantime we simply work with it, and Ivarson stated that it does not leak as bad as everyone says it does. Ald. Abraham stated that when he went through the building there was water running down the walls and Historian boxes were in need of being moved. Ivarson stated that some of the racking was installed underneath an outside hatch and Ivarson has had all those boxes moved away from there. He is still working on a solution for the hatch. Ivarson said that in the process of filtering through items the

Historian is running out of room to maneuver boxes. Ivarson said that there is a room that was part of the treatment plant where the pumps were located, which he can remove with in-house labor and the inmates (it may take him three months). Ivarson noted that it is heated and they can put air conditioning and dehumidifiers in there and it can be a good place for the Historian. Ivarson said he needs to complete plans and specifications to put the bids out on the roof. A brief discussion ensued after Ivarson showed some photos of the existing roof. He stated that he would like to get this done in the spring of 2007, however he would like a motion to rip out all the equipment in the one room he would like for the Historian.

Ald. Abraham **moved** to approve Ivarson removing the equipment from the room in the Treatment Plant he has allocated for the Historian. Seconded by Ald. Williams and duly adopted ayes all.

Prior to the vote, Ivarson indicated that he can't just throw this equipment away, it needs to be declared surplus equipment. Ald. Abraham expressed concern that this issue would not get put aside. Ivarson indicated that it would not. A brief discussion ensued and Ivarson said that someone had indicated there was black mold in the current Historian building and he never found any black mold. Ald. Abraham indicated that there is asbestos in that building. Ivarson said it was fine if it is kept encapsulated.

Emergency Flood Measures (Capital Reserves – to be reimbursed by FEMA)

Roberts reported that during the flood last year the Council adopted a motion to take whatever steps were necessary to make repairs caused by the flooding, until the city was reimbursed by agencies such as FEMA and the State of NY. Roberts believes we should have this committee make a recommendation to the Finance/Personnel Committee to have the Council adopt a motion to be able to use the funds out of Capital Reserves to complete these transfers for the work that Ivarson has been updating us on for the past two months. These funds would subsequently be replenished by the FEMA and State flood relief funds forthcoming. Currently, there is no match, as the 12.5% the city should have been paying will be supplemented by the State of NY.

Ald. Williams **moved** to make a recommendation to the Finance/ Personnel Committee to have the Common Council adopt a motion to make necessary flood-related repairs via Capital Reserve funds, which, once FEMA/State reimbursements were received, would replenish the accounts utilized. Seconded by Ald. Bresina and duly adopted ayes all.

EMO

StormReady Recognition (October 17th)

A. Jones reported that while the city received the StormReady renewal back in June, due to the floods, it will be recognized in October. The National Weather Service would be attending the October 17, 2006 meeting to do a brief presentation to recognize our renewal.

Flood Updates

A. Jones stated that late this afternoon he received paperwork, and FEMA has rolled over the damage from the 2005 dam project, into the 2006 dam project. They have only approved another \$1700 worth of funding at this point, as they took a percentage of the money that was approved last year. Jones is still trying to get more funding.

EOC Upgrades

A. Jones reported that the County purchased new computer equipment for the EOC and hopefully it will be supplemented with some new equipment we will purchase with the \$1200 in rent coming in from FEMA; FEMA is anticipating staying longer (possibly through the end of the year). Jones is seeking out quotes for computer upgrades. Roberts added that when we get the rental payments, likely in 2007, we need to incorporate this, and the potential upgrades, into the budget process.

Ald. Williams inquired about the communications logistics regarding the new City Hall – particularly the telephone system. Ald. Williams wanted to ensure that Jones is included in the

decision making process. Jones did want to point out that if we moved City Hall to the third floor, his suggestion would be upgrading or tagging-on the phone system the Fire Department already uses. Ald. Williams inquired about the status of Time-Warner and suggested we take advantage of the possible promo opportunities.

Code Enforcement

Codes Update

Code Enforcement Officer Jason Lawrence gave an update on the Street Tree Committee stating that they would be meeting on October 3, 2006 at 3:30 p.m. at Cornell Cooperative Extension to evaluate a couple of municipal laws and ordinances to encourage people to take care of their own trees.

Lawrence also reported that we are up to ~200 free permits, which have been issued due to the flood. He stated that the Code office is about 1 to 1-1/2 months behind on everything. They have been trying to deal with the multi-dwelling issues and they finally have some assistance: Maureen Francis has been hired part-time and she's currently being trained by Bob Mason.

The codification process is being worked on actively. Regarding the Rental Registration, we are near completion and just fine-tuning the details with the City Attorney.

The Codes Office condemned a house located at 140 East Main Street and Lawrence added he has been working with Ivarson, who will hopefully assist with taking care of some trees which are in the way. Lawrence contacted NYSEG and they were there promptly to cut all the dead branches, which were piled neatly on the property.

The only other issue is the contract with the City and the Town regarding the Water System. Ald. Williams made some suggestions to encourage payment. Ald. Abraham said that we need to forward this to the City Attorney. Ald. Williams said that 10 years is long enough. It was agreed that Patrick Flanagan should pursue the matter.

Ald. Abraham **moved** to forward this issue to Patrick Flanagan, City Attorney. Seconded by Ald. Williams and duly adopted ayes all.

Lawrence added that he recently put the new 2007 State Code in everyone's mailboxes (it was also in the last NYCOM Edition), which lays out the new requirements. Despite many complaints, the State is continuing to mandate these changes.

Committee Concerns

Ald. Williams brought up concerns about the cost of the YMCA building permit recently procured. Although she approved the schedule, she feels that these fees for this particular refurbishing project are exorbitant. Lawrence responded to this by explaining the details behind the fees. Ald. Williams said she is using the YMCA as an example of a greater problem. She is concerned about people, like her, remodeling her kitchen for example. She indicated that if her cost is \$20,000, she would be paying a \$5,000 permit fee. Lawrence said that this was inaccurate and explained that fees for remodeling are very low; he believes Ald. Williams was looking at commercial rates versus private or residential rates. Lawrence said that in the past, the city has been giving permits away – now they are in line with the standard. Lawrence also mentioned that many of the commercial properties are located within the EDZ and those permits are ½ the cost. The YMCA is not located within the EDZ, so they are subject to the full-rate fees. Lawrence stops at the YMCA every other day to check the progress which is about 2-3 hours per week.

Ald. Williams does not want the city fees to discourage people, like herself, from procuring a permit, due to the high cost. Lawrence used an example that you can re-roof your entire home for \$40.00.

Adjournment

Ald. Abraham **moved** to adjourn the committee meeting at 7:44 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Williams and duly adopted ayes all.

Next Meeting – October 26, 2006