

# City of Norwich, Department of Finance

One City Plaza  
Norwich, New York 13815  
(607) 334-1230

## Minutes

### Finance/Personnel Committee Meeting of September 5, 2006

#### Present:

Mayor Joseph Maiurano  
Ald. Walt Schermerhorn  
Ald. Paul Laughlin  
Ald. Robert Jeffrey

#### Also Present:

Director of Finance William J. Roberts  
Human Resources Director Deborah DeForest  
Police Chief Joseph Angelino  
DPW Superintendent Carl Ivarson  
Ald. Terry Bresina  
Code Enforcement Officer Jason Lawrence  
Planning/Comm. Dev. Specialist Todd Dreyer  
BID Director Pegi LoPresti  
Media Representative Jessica Lewis  
Deputy Clerk Darlene Colaso

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#### Call To Order:

The meeting was held in the Council Chambers at One Court Plaza and called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Committee Chair Ald. Schermerhorn.

#### Approval of Minutes

Ald. Laughlin **moved** to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of August 8, 2006. Seconded by Ald. Jeffrey, and duly adopted ayes all.

#### Public Safety Items

##### Fire Items

#### Purchase of Replacement Tanker on Emergency Basis and to Gift the Old Tanker to Chenango County Fair Association

Police and Fire Chief Joseph Angelino stated that he took the 1973 Ford Tanker Truck out of service. Currently, he will be using mutual aid for the use of a tanker. He noted that this is an emergency situation and would like this committee to deem it as such, as determining this to be an emergency allows him to bypass the specifications and bid process (which could take months). Chief Angelino stated that there are places where he can purchase an off-the-shelf truck making it a faster procurement for the replacement.

Ald. Schermerhorn asked if there was anything that could be salvaged on the existing vehicle and a brief discussion ensued. Angelino noted that declaring it an emergency will speed the process of locating and subsequently purchasing one. He found them in the price range of \$90,000 to \$200,000. Chief Angelino stated that Roberts provided him with policy to declare an issue of this nature an emergency purchase. Ald. Jeffrey asked how many miles the existing tanker has on it and whether not having a tanker in our current fleet would raise our insurance premiums. Chief Angelino stated that our ISO rating is very good and that by removing the tanker (thus removing our water supply) would likely have an impact on the industrial insurance ratings (not Norwich insurance ratings). Angelino also wanted to note that this tanker truck was given to the city by the Town of Norwich and that if the tanker is removed from service, the Town would like it back. Roberts noted that Dave Law has indicated that the Chenango County Fair Association would like the tanker truck back to give to a non-profit organization (he also indicated that this was a gift not a purchase).

A brief discussion ensued as to options for purchase and the current status of the tanker truck in question. Chief Angelino also stated that there were fire truck representatives at the Fire Station currently reviewing options for the Fire Captains. Ivarson said that despite the low miles, the truck has been driven overweight (with the water) for so many years, that much of the frame and mechanical parts have been severely damaged.

Chairman Schermerhorn was concerned about the city needing to financially stabilize so that we are not constantly in emergency mode. He also mentioned the need to build up reserves for emergency situations such as this. He then confirmed with Roberts that this was an expense we had funds for. Chairman

Schermerhorn also indicated that we need to be seriously thinking about a solid replacement program and we have to be pro-active now to ensure our financial future.

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to recommend Police Chief Angelino moving forward with the purchase of the emergency fire tanker truck on an emergency basis and to gift the old fire tanker truck to the Chenango County Fair Association. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin and duly adopted ayes all.

### **Community & Economic Development Projects & Funds**

#### **Restore New York Grant Application – Availability and Authorization up to \$58,000 Match (CD Funds)**

Planning and Community Development Specialist Todd Dreyer reported that he is here to report on the status of the grant he discussed at the last Council meeting. He mentioned that he distributed a packet earlier today which includes a resolution, which will be considered at the upcoming work session on September 12<sup>th</sup> and he reviewed some of the fine details involved in the grant application. He noted that the key element of the resolution, which concerns this committee, is the requirement of the funds from the city, which totals \$58,000 (or 10% of the total up to \$58,000) and went on explaining the details of the application process.

He is asking the committee to recommend the 10% match so that this may go before the full Common Council. Ald. Jeffrey inquired about the 10% match and noted that Dreyer had mentioned (in another meeting) the fact that we have a better chance of procuring the grant if we were able to match more than the minimum 10%. Ald. Jeffrey asked what type of number they should be considering to contribute. Dreyer stated he is proposing the minimum cash match with another \$5,000 in in-kind services (including his time, Code Enforcement's time). He also mentioned that he received verbal expression of interest from two property owners. They will, in turn, send the city a letter stating that they are interested in selling the city their property for an amount not exceeding \$2,000, plus the city's assumption of back taxes. Ald. Jeffrey confirmed that the minimum 10% match would be sufficient. Roberts added that to strengthen the application Dreyer should indicate the amounts to be used in-kind and Dreyer noted that he could find out the highest back-tax amount owed and estimate in-kind amounts based on those figures. A brief discussion ensued as to how the in-kind city staff numbers were arrived at for this grant application.

Dreyer indicated that he has some façade drawings of what the newly constructed homes could potentially look like. Ivarson asked about the County's plans for the old Sixty-Plus building on the corner of Conkey and Elm Street, and whether or not this could be included in this grant. Dreyer said that it would not be something that could be included in this grant round, but perhaps in the future.

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to recommend that the Community Development Specialist move forward with applying and to recommend authorization for the up to \$58,000 cash match for the Restore NY Grant. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin and duly adopted ayes all.

Prior to the vote, Ald. Jeffrey asked where the funds realized from the sale of these reconstructed properties would be allocated and Dreyer responded that the net proceeds would go back into Community Development and the General Fund would be in line to receive reimbursement for other outlays. Roberts added the funds would go towards the back-taxes as well.

#### **BID Request for Replacement of Bluestone Stripe in Downtown Sidewalks - \$25,000 (CD Funds)**

Pegi LoPresti reported that she received updated quotes for replacing the bluestone portion of the sidewalks in the downtown area and noted that unfortunately, the price of the materials has increased, due to fuel prices. The first quotation gives a total price of ~\$48,306 which assumes we have a filler material as a base. She and Ivarson discussed with the quoting company as to what that filler material could be and LoPresti and Ivarson are hesitant to use anything but the quoting company's product in that channel. So to use all that product is the second number on that quotation, which is \$60,012.40 is for pouring a base material and a top material and stamping it (to match our crosswalks). LoPresti noted the disappointment in the failure of the bluestone to hold up and she expressed concerns for these sidewalks surviving another winter. LoPresti believes the issue needs to be addressed right away. She said that the BID has \$25,000 from their Main Street Grant which they are willing to apply to correcting this situation and she is hoping the city can come up with the remainder to help BID out.

Ald. Jeffrey asked Ivarson what the best way to handle this is and Ivarson said that the entire product should be that of the installer and that whatever filler goes in there needs to properly accommodate the top of that. Human Resources Director Deborah DeForest just discovered (with the handout) that the total figure is \$10,000 over the cost originally discussed with LoPresti. DeForest stated that a \$25,000 contribution was one thing, but that \$35,000 is a huge burden on the budget at this time. LoPresti stated that BID is seeking out other funding sources and should those sources come through, they would not need the total amount requested. Ald. Jeffrey asked if the city and the contractor be able to perform the work right before the winter at this point and Ivarson stated that they can do this into November. A brief discussion ensued as to the materials used.

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to recommend granting the BID request for \$35,012.40 to replace the bluestone in the downtown city sidewalks with no less than a three-year warranty and City Attorney approval of the contract. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin and duly adopted, ayes all.

### **Multi-Family Dwelling Registration Status**

Code Enforcement Officer Jason Lawrence stated that the draft for the Rental Registration program has been distributed and that the Task Force has been working hard to make this happen as quickly as possible. Deputy Clerk Colaso mentioned that City Attorney Patrick Flanagan is very comfortable with the majority of the document (in regard to the legislation itself), but that there are some issues regarding the enforcement, which need to be clarified. Flanagan will continue to review the document and will be approving it for final draft form after the next Common Council meeting, where input from the council members will be taken into consideration. Lawrence said that we have done as much as we can to make the landlords and the tenants responsible for the code violations that occur. Lawrence also said that the best part of this program is that he will now have a name and a number of someone he can actually contact for property violation remedies. Often times, absentee owners are impossible to locate in a timely manner. Lawrence also mentioned that some of the pet requirements sections were clarified to coincide with current practices. Ald. Laughlin asked why Social Services, who fund many of these multi-family rental occupants, is not performing regular inspections or code-checks. Lawrence stated that while Social Services, Opportunities for Chenango, Section 8, do perform certain inspections, they don't always look for the same things that the city will. The whole intent of this program is to make a safer, healthier place for city residents.

Ald. Jeffrey stated that he wants to add a certificate of occupancy requirement when a property changes hands, as well as narrowing the scope for the residency of the agent (Ald. Jeffrey wants the agent to live within the City of Norwich, not the County of Chenango) and he asked Deputy Clerk Colaso to discuss this with City Attorney Patrick Flanagan for some direction. A brief discussion ensued and Lawrence talked about the effectiveness of the new garbage ordinance, adding that he believes the Rental Registration will be implemented as smoothly. Ald. Jeffrey reiterated that he would like a Certificate of Occupancy added to the requirements of property transfer within this document. He also suggested that the agent section be revised, to avoid pseudo agent office issues (i.e., fake office fronts). Lawrence suggested that Post Office boxes not be accepted as agent addresses. Ald. Jeffrey inquired as to how soon City Attorney Flanagan could review the information and Colaso, with concurrence from DeForest, stated it would not be until the October work session (October Fin/Per meeting at the earliest) before anything could be revised, as it would require a public hearing. The Mayor inquired and Lawrence replied that this issue has been discussed with both the Planning and Zoning Committees. DeForest pointed out that what the committee has in front of them has been tested thoroughly in Buffalo and Colaso concurred with DeForest, stating that expanding the scope would require much more forethought to reduce potential risk. Another brief discussion ensued as to the definition of an absentee landlord. DeForest initiated a discussion about enforcement and impact on the staff necessary to run the program. Ald. Schermerhorn wanted to reiterate Ald. Jeffrey's concerns for additions to the Rental Registration and inquired as to whether there would be other opportunities to incorporate some of the additional concerns raised. Colaso and DeForest concurred that there will be ample opportunities for incorporating many of these suggestions, aside from the Rental Registry program.

Ald. Jeffrey also inquired as to penalties for violations to the Rental Registration and Lawrence stated that there are definitive penalties for violations. Another brief discussion ensued as to how soon the City Attorney could review the documents and how soon it could be ready for approval with the changes suggested this evening incorporated. Ald. Schermerhorn said that one of the most important issues is to ensure that the program is done right the first time and that the city is, at the very minimum, recouping their costs. Another brief discussion ensued as to upcoming regulations that will be effective in January 2007.

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to recommend that the Multi-Family Registration status be discussed at the upcoming work session. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin and duly adopted ayes all.

### **Public Works & Engineering Items**

#### **Flood 2006 Damage Update**

Superintendent of Public Works Carl Ivarson reported that the General Fund reimbursement should be approximately \$50-55,000. All the paperwork has been turned over to A. Jones, which includes manpower, equipment, and materials and the outside repair for that.

The water reservoir damage has been turned over to FEMA, the estimates on that are a little less than \$300,000 for the reservoir area, and the city still needs to get permission from the County, hopefully sometime this week, to put the water main through the West Main Street Bridge.

Ald. Jeffrey inquired about the Canasawacta Creek and whether or not the demolition will be taking place this fall or next spring. Ivarson replied he will not know until he gets the permit back, and they have 45 days as of the 28<sup>th</sup> of August to get back to us (Ivarson has called to see if he can get that expedited). Ivarson said that the permit will have all the conditions that he will have to comply with and the permits are usually good for two years. Ald. Jeffrey asked what would happen if the permit did not come back until October and who would be involved in the removal. Ivarson stated that there is still a lot of gravel that needs to be removed and that he cannot get in there with a lot of running water. At this time he can't even get in there (the creek).

**Budget Transfers for Increased Vehicle Maintenance Costs (\$20,000 From Snow Removal Personal Services)**

Ivarson stated that they are currently \$400 below last year and \$600 below the previous year's figures, but DPW's equipment is in sad shape and he is consistently making repairs to keep everything running. Since they haven't had a full staff, there is still money in there. Snow removal costs only ran \$1700 for the entire year. The equipment fund for the Highway General Fund needs some help. It only has about \$100,000 in there and that's not even half of what he needs. A brief discussion ensued as to the high costs involved for vehicle maintenance.

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to transfer \$20,000 to snow removal personal services to the vehicle maintenance budget. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin and duly adopted ayes all.

**Budget Transfer for (Second) RBC Repairs – WWTP \$14,000**

Ivarson said after he did the first repair on the rotating biological contactors, he would come back and report what he would need for the second RBC: He will need \$14,000.

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to transfer \$14,000 from Equipment Reserves to RBC Repairs at the WWTP. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin and duly adopted ayes all.

**Appointment to MEO I Position**

DeForest reported that the candidate's name is Corey DuBois from South New Berlin and if he Council approves the appointment, he will begin September 20, 2006. A brief discussion ensued as to the remaining positions open.

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to recommend appointing Corey DuBois to the MEO I position. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin and duly adopted ayes all.

**Pavlovich Pavement Markings Quote for Striping Streets, Walks, Parking Lots**

Ivarson reported that the paving markings are going to cost ~\$7,000 and will come out of a line item that is already in the budget. However he has been asked to put some additions on there so we will know how much money we will need to spend on crack sealant. Ivarson said that he has ~\$9,000 to spend on crack sealant. Ald. Jeffrey asked what was spent annually on crack sealant and Ivarson replied approximately \$10-11,000.

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to accept the quote from Pavlovich Pavement for striping streets, walks and parking lots. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin and duly adopted ayes all.

**Old Business:**

**City Sidewalk Program Status**

Roberts stated that this was put on the agenda to simply keep it as a running line item. A brief discussion ensued as to a newspaper article that came out today, which stated the program was in the discussion stage and that the price per square-foot was ~\$500 per sq. ft. (which was an error). Another brief discussion ensued as to more of the details involved with the program and when they would be discussing it again.

Ald. Jeffrey wanted to confirm that the sidewalk program is still being discussed. Ivarson noted that this is an item that still needs to go back to the Public Safety/Works Committee.

**New Business: (none)**

**Executive Session: To Discuss Matters Involving Labor Contract Negotiations**

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to go into executive session at 7:55 p.m. to discuss matters affecting contract negotiations, the employment history of particular individuals, and the employment history of a particular individual. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin and duly adopted ayes all.

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to exit executive session at 8:55 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin and duly adopted ayes all.

**Adjournment**

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Laughlin and duly adopted ayes all.