

CITY OF NORWICH
JOINT MEETING of the
PUBLIC SAFETY / PUBLIC WORKS and
FINANCE/PERSONNEL COMMITTEES
December 6, 2022

Present:

Mayor Brian Doliver
Ald. Eric Warren
Ald. Fred Gee
Ald. Nancy Allaire
Ald. William Loomis
Ald. David Zieno
Ald. Robert D. Jeffrey

Also:

DPW Superintendent Edward Pepe
Youth Bureau Director Anthony Testani
Fire Chief Jan Papelino
Police Chief Rodney Marsh
Community Development Director Erik Scrivener
City Attorney Stephanie Hanrahan
Deputy City Clerk Agnes Eaton

Supervisor Robert M. Jeffrey

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 6:38 p.m. at the Council Chambers.

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

Ald. Jeffrey announced that the Public Hearing and subsequent 2023 Budget-related Resolutions that were scheduled for a special Common Council meeting following this meeting has been rescheduled for Monday, December 12th at 6:30 p.m.

Department Head Reports

Community Development

Restore NY application – E. Scrivener reported they are moving into the application phase and requests a resolution to submit the application to New York State Development for the Restore NY program on behalf of the Norwich Hotel. Ald. Zieno moved to recommend a resolution be forwarded to the Common Council. Seconded by Ald. Loomis.

Norwich Hotel SEQR Negative Declaration – E. Scrivener stated a SEQR negative determination is also requested for the Norwich Hotel. Ald. Loomis **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the SEQR Negative Declaration for the Norwich Hotel. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is doing their own evaluation and the project will comply with whatever they have determined.

Sign ordinance amendments – E. Scrivener updated the Council on the proposed Sign Ordinance amendments by the Planning Commission to date. They will continue at next month's meeting for a thorough discussion of the changes. One of the changes was to changeable copy signs. Discussion included signs with foul language (a fine line for 1st Amendment rights), construction and real estate signs, political sign setbacks, Special Event signage and a change in the definition of "Administrator". Ald. Zieno questioned the changeable copy signs being 2-sided with concerns about the Colonia Theater's plans to change the marquee to changeable copy. E. Scrivener stated that they would have to apply for a variance in any case as there is currently not changeable copy allowed anywhere in the B.I.D. district. Ald. Zieno requested the Planning Commission discuss the issue at their next meeting. E. Scrivener requested a Public Hearing be set at the December Common Council meeting for January 17, 2023. Ald. Loomis **moved** to recommend the Common Council set a Public Hearing regarding the Sign Ordinance for January 17, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all.

Sign Ordinance SEQR Negative Declaration – As part of an administrative requirement, E. Scrivener requested a resolution for a SEQR Negative Declaration. Ald. Warren **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the SEQR Negative Declaration for the Sign Ordinances. Seconded by Ald. Zieno, approved ayes all.

Open Space/Park designation on City-Owned Parcel for Bike Track – E. Scrivener reported that one of the steps to create a park for a pump or bike track on City-Owned property on Borden Ave. would be to declare the City to declare themselves immune from our own Zoning regulations for this parcel as it is in an Industrial zone. Otherwise, the process of creating an Open Space designation, a local law, and adoption would be lengthy. Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the City declaration of immunity from City Zoning regulations for this parcel on Borden Ave. and set a Public Hearing for January 17, 2023. Seconded by Ald. Loomis, approved ayes all.

Housing Rehabilitation Manual – E. Scrivener reported that they are working on items with HUD such as Emergency Housing Rehabilitation. The process will remain the same, but the income limit may be exceeded in an emergency situation. Options may be a (zero) 0% loan paid back over 3 years with a maximum award of up to \$10,000. Discussion included perhaps having different payment choices anywhere from 2 to 5 years for repayment terms.

Fire Department

Engine 234 bid awarded/accepted – J. Papelino reported that papers for the new pumper truck have been signed and received.

Transfer of funds – J. Papelino reported that if a prepayment of \$384,828 was paid the City could receive a \$15,152.60 discount on the pumper truck purchase.

Outside CON EMS Calls – J. Papelino reported a decrease in outside CON calls over the last 3 weeks. There has been changes in the dispatch of calls. EMS calls are now dispatched by CON holder. Oxford has 3 CON holders – Oxford, Greene and the County – so these three will be “toned” before Norwich resulting in responding to only 1 call to Oxford in 3 weeks. They have answered 14 CON calls with 7 of them being billable. Papelino also reported a new EMT class is being held with 25 participants.

Ambulance status – J. Papelino reported that ambulance 2392 has been at Botnick’s for 6 weeks. It is hopeful that the issue will be resolved **this week**.

Code Enforcement

Tax properties - J. Papelino reported that the RFP for 25 Hickok went out this week. The HVAC was not working and rather than repair it, the property has been winterized. Most likely a new furnace will need to be installed by whoever purchases it.

Appearance tickets – J. Papelino reported that 15 appearance tickets for December 8th have been issued.

Ald. Jeffrey asked if there was any follow-up to the explosion on Delaware Square. Chief Papelino stated there is not. It is unclear whether the propane tank was leaking due to a faulty valve or if it was not closed all the way. There was additional discussion about Barnes St. property cleanup, a particular piece of sidewalk replacement and the tents that were on Henry St.

DPW

Go Out to Bid for Broad Street Water Main Replacement Project – E. Pepe requested permission to go out to bid for the Broad Street Water Main Replacement Project. Ald. Zieno moved to go to bid. Seconded by Ald. Jeffrey, approved ayes all. The project will start in April and is slated to be finished by July. NYSEG will be doing their work in the Spring. DOT is requiring all work on Broad Street will be done at nighttime. They will not be diverting traffic around the City. There was concern about large vehicles such as tractor trailers or extra-wide vehicles. Ald. Zieno suggested talking to our State Representative to see about diverting that traffic around the City.

Go Out to Bid for Water Meter Replacement Project – E. Pepe requested permission to go out to bid for the Water Meter Replacement Project. Ald. Loomis approved going out to bid for the Water Meter Replacement Project. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all. Replacement will begin in March 2023 and should be completed by March 2024. The AMI remote technology will give daily readings and alerts and will eliminate the need for [manual] meter readings.

Sidewalk Program – E. Pepe said the current rate of sidewalk replacement is \$22 per linear foot. Due to an increase in costs, the \$22 per linear is not going to cover costs and he is recommending that it be raised to \$24 per linear foot. Ald. Jeffrey felt that the City doesn't go far enough with the program and would like to see the City pay 75% of sidewalk replacement at some point. As one of the largest utilized programs, he felt it should remain at the current rate. E. Pepe reported that not all of the 18 sidewalks scheduled for this year could be completed and there is already 25 on the list for 2023. It was asked how is the City going to absorb the extra cost and Ald. Jeffrey felt that other budget lines could be looked at, particularly [the Personal Services line] with the number of vacant DPW positions that most likely will not be filled by the first of January 2023. The increase will remain the same for 2023 and can be revisited at another time if need be.

Sweeper Bid – E. Pepe announced the bid for the street sweeper was opened on November 30, 2022 with the low bid of \$299,814.17 by Northeast Sweepers & Rentals, Inc. Ald. Loomis moved to recommend the Common Council award the bid to Northeast Sweepers for \$299,814.17. Seconded by Ald. Jeffrey, approved ayes all.

Ald. Jeffrey asked if the crow deterrent in East Park has been installed yet this year. E. Pepe stated that it is up and working in the nighttime mode.

Finance Department

Upgrading of City Credit Rating – Mayor Doliver reported that the City's credit rating has increased. With several large projects looming, this is a very good thing.

BOCES Print Shop Agreement Renewal – A. Eaton explained that this is a renewal of a 3-year agreement with BOCES to share their printing services. There is no specific dollar amount, but the [shared services] agreement allows BOCES to leverage better paper and printing pricing which it passes on to us. Pending verification from the Director of Finance Ald. Loomis **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the agreement with BOCES. Seconded by Ald. Jeffrey, approved ayes all.

Since there is a special Common Council meeting on December 12, 2022, there was discussion of moving the regular Common Council to that date instead of December 20th. Seeing no issues in doing so, Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to recommend the Common Council move their regularly scheduled Common Council meeting from December 20, 2022 to December 12, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Loomis

Adjournment

Ald. Loomis **moved** to adjourn the Joint Committee Meeting at 7:56 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all