

COMMON COUNCIL

Work Session

October 10, 2006

Mayor Joseph Maiurano presided at the work session of the Common Council held at 7:00 PM on October 10, 2006 at One Court Plaza.

Present:

Mayor Maiurano
Ald. A. Abraham
Ald. Terry Bresina
Ald. Suzanne Williams
Ald. Walter Schermerhorn
Ald. Paul Laughlin
Ald. Robert Jeffrey
Supervisor James McNeil

Also:

Dir. of Finance/City Clerk, William Roberts
Human Resources Director Deborah DeForest
Police Chief Joseph Angelino
DPW Superintendent Carl Ivarson
EMO A. Jones
Planning & CD Specialist Todd Dreyer
Media Representative Jessica Lewis
Deputy Clerk Darlene Colaso

Absent:

Supervisor Linda Natoli

Call to Order: The work session of the Common Council was called to order by Mayor Maiurano at 7:03 p.m.

Open Forum

Ed Morano, 21 Miller Street, encouraged the Council members to place a proposed PUD in the Northwest corner of the city on the agenda. These were zoned R1 with condition that lots do not meet zoning requirements. He'd like Council to get it on the agenda for some open discussion. He believes there's a wealth of tax dollars to be made up there and that you can turn it into a nice residential middle to high-end housing development. He suggested several ideas for development. The Mayor commented that he and Todd Dreyer, Planning and Community Development Specialist, are looking at it and trying to figure a way to develop it.

Jim McNeil, 47 Fair Street, wanted the Council to be aware that the County adopted the equalization rates for 2007. He said he wasn't sure if Council members received the information yet, but it is not very good. The City of Norwich's equalization rate is at 70% - the lowest he's seen in 6 years. He said that this is not the greatest thing for the rest of us in the City of Norwich because our county tax, as well as our school tax, rate is based on this equalization rate. Right now, the town of Plymouth, which is in the Norwich School District is at 75%, so they will actually be paying less school taxes per 1000 than residents of the City of Norwich are paying – they will also be paying less county tax per 1000. He has asked the city Council each and every year since he's been supervisor, to keep an eye on that rate. He stated that sometimes it's been fought with the state equalization board, and other times he doesn't even know if it's been looked at. He said that at the rate this is going, it is going send the county tax rate for the citizens & property owners of the City of Norwich up and cost unduly amounts of money. He believes the Council should really be looking at this. Mayor Maiurano commented that something will definitely have to be done as the City of Norwich went from 79% to 70%. The Mayor spoke to Assessor Steve Harris and said that they need to work on this.

Committee Chair Reports

Finance/Personnel Committee of October 3, 2006

Committee Chair Ald. Schermerhorn gave a brief report on the items brought forward at the October 3, 2006 Finance/Personnel Committee meeting. He stated that the codes software needs upgrading and that there was quite a long discussion on that issue. He noted that the computer network we have which is in need of upgrading would cost approximately \$32,000 for the most comprehensive configuration and \$27,000 for the less expansive version of the software, as confirmed by Director of Finance/City Clerk William Roberts. Roberts added that no dollar figure was determined for the cost to completely replace the software. Ald. Schermerhorn expressed concerns over whether or not the software could be supported by existing staff members.

Ald. Schermerhorn also reported that the committee endorsed the Chenango Greenway Grant Application and as well as the Shared Municipal Services grant and forwarded both applications to the full Council for approval. He also reported that because Jason Lawrence, Code Enforcement Officer, has a part-time person working with him, the codes vehicle use has been raised and the Police Department stated that they could assist.

In regard to public safety items, he stated that Chief Angelino informed us that within a couple weeks we will be notified by state regarding the contract with the court.

In regard to Public Works and Engineering items, the committee authorized the transfer of reserves for flood repairs pending State and Federal reimbursements. There was a Lab Technician's position established, which boils down to Carl Ivarson, Superintendent of Public Works, needing to create that position; which will hopefully take some of the burden off Ivarson. In regard to the 2006 paving costs, after Federal and State reimbursement, it should cost us approximately \$8,000, as that is what we were short of what was needed. The committee also recommended budget transfer for the new Parks Position and sent it to full council with an upgraded job description. In regard to the elevator service contract, it is currently being reviewed with a proposed monthly rate of \$75 per month annually, or \$65 per month with a three-year contract. This is being reviewed by the City Attorney. In regard to the 2006 Tree Removal Bid, the lowest bid was from Cooks Tree Service in Vestal, NY.

Ald. Schermerhorn reported that there was some old business discussed in which updated information was given regarding the FEMA staff staying a bit longer than originally intended at the Emergency Management Office. He also reported that since the next Finance/Personnel committee meeting falls on Election Day evening, the committee meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 8th at 6:00 p.m. (NOTE: This date was subsequently changed to Thursday, November 9, 2006 at 6:00 p.m.) Ald. Schermerhorn also reported that Roberts reviewed the annual auction process for tax sale properties. Additionally, the Street Tree Committee request for a \$2500 grant to plant trees throughout the city was recommended to the full Council.

Ald. Williams asked Code Enforcement Officer Jason Lawrence what the city's role will be regarding the new NYS Codes mandates (setting fees or no fees, etc.).

Public Works/Safety Committee of September 28, 2006

Ald. Abraham reported that at the Special Council meeting, which occurred prior to the Public Safety meeting, Chief Angelino presented his thoughts and information on the purchase of the new fire tanker truck. Ald. Abraham reported that the money (\$169,306.00) comes out of the Capital Reserves Fire Equipment fund. He stated that the city should be receiving the tanker within the next month or so. He also reported that Chief Angelino made the statement that the city needs to replace at least two more vehicles, and that the Truck Committee would continue to research truck options for the city. Ald. Abraham made the comment that perhaps the city will bond it.

Ald. Abraham stated that Carl Ivarson has been working on the Historian's building and that they are doing a fine job repairing some leaks. Ald. Abraham asked when engineering paraphernalia was going to be moved over to the other building and Ivarson responded that as soon as inmates can help him with the work.

Ald. Abraham also took the opportunity to quote a portion of our code which consisted of Section 2 of the general provisions regarding signs prohibited. He wanted people to know that we do have an ordinance on signs. He realizes that this is political season, however if we're not going to abide by the ordinance, then what's the point of having an ordinance. He read the ordinance saying that in regard to political signs "One political sign per lot, not to exceed four-square feet in a sign area per sign. Such signs shall not be erected more than 30-days prior to election or referendum ... and shall be removed seven days following such election. Political signs may be placed only on private property and only with permission of the property owner." He believes people are overdoing their sign placements. Although he does not expect any action on this, he did want to bring it to the Council's attention. We all know this is an ordinance, and even though it is the political season, he recommends they remove it from the books if we're not going to follow it.

Development of Agenda for Regular Common Council Meeting of October 17, 2006

- 1) *Call To Order*
- 2) *Pledge of Allegiance*
- 3) *Invocation*
- 4) *Presentation: City of Norwich to Receive Recognition by National Weather Service of StormReady Renewal*
- 5) *Approval of minutes of the work session of September 12, 2006, the regular meeting of September 19, 2006, and the special meeting of September 28, 2006*
- 6) *Public Hearing: Regarding Proposed Rental Registration Program*
- 7) *Open Forum*
- 8) *Bids*

9) *Correspondence*

- ◆ *Request for Annual Veteran's Day Parade on November 11, 2006 at 10:45*
- ◆ *Resignation from Robert Almeter, member of Parks Commission (effective October 1, 2006)*
- ◆ *Notice of Liquor License Renewal for Beadle's Restaurant and Lounge (expiring September 30, 2008)*
- ◆ *Notice of Liquor License Renewal for Nina's Pizzeria and Restaurant (expiring October 31, 2007)*

10) *Department, Board and Commission Reports (*report not yet received)*

- ◆ *Fire Department/Codes monthly report for **
- ◆ *Historian monthly report for **
- ◆ *Police Department monthly report for **
- ◆ *Public Works/Water System monthly report for **
- ◆ *Records Management monthly report for **
- ◆ *Youth Bureau Monthly Report for September 2006*
- ◆ *Civil Service Commission minutes of &**
- ◆ *Parks Commission minutes of August 14, 2006*
- ◆ *Planning Commission minutes of August 21, 2006*
- ◆ *Traffic Commission minutes of **
- ◆ *Water Commission minutes of September 30, 2006*
- ◆ *Youth Board minutes of **
- ◆ *Zoning Board of Appeals minutes of **

11) *Ward and Committee Reports*

- ◆ *Finance/Personnel Committee of September 5, 2006*
- ◆ *Public Works/Safety Committee of August 28, 2006*

12) *Old Business*

13) *New Business*

Mayoral Appointments

- ◆ *Parks Commission Member Appointment*

Resolutions

- ◆ *Res – Authorizing the Mayor to Sign an Intermunicipal Agreement Between the County and the City of Norwich for Conducting Elections*
- ◆ *Res – Approving the Proposed Rental Registration Program*
- ◆ *Res – Authorizing Application to Department of State for Shared Municipal Services Incentive Grant*
- ◆ *Res – Budget Transfers – Codes Vehicles Reimbursements*
- ◆ *Res – Transfers from Capital Reserves for Flood Damage Repairs*
- ◆ *Res – Establishing Laboratory Technician Position in Water and Wastewater Operations*
- ◆ *Res – Budget Transfer – Additional Street Paving Costs*
- ◆ *Res – Authorizing Contracts with Delaware Engineering for Flood Damage Related Services*
- ◆ *Res – Authorizing Revised Parks Position*
- ◆ *Res – Awarding Bid and Authorizing Budget Transfers for 2006 Tree Removal*

12) *Payment of Bills*

13) *Adjournment*

Additions to Agenda for Next Week's Regular Common Council Session

Roberts noted that a resolution approving an application for a DEC grant by the Street Tree Committee should be added to the agenda. It was omitted from the Finance/Personnel Committee minutes and Roberts noted that he will give Deputy Clerk Colaso the details for next week's agenda.

Motion

Receive the Proposed Rental Registration Program and Set Public Hearing for October 17, 2006

Ald. Williams **moved** to receive the proposed Rental Registration Program and set a public hearing for October 17, 2006. Seconded by Ald. Jeffrey and duly adopted ayes all.

Resolution

RESOLUTION #71-2006 **ENDORSEMENT OF CHENANGO GREENWAY CONSERVANCY, INC. GRANT APPLICATION TO RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM FOR CONSTRUCTION OF WALKING TRAIL ALONG CHENANGO RIVER**

Alderman Williams introduced the following and moved its adoption:

WHEREAS, the Chenango Greenway Conservancy, Inc. is applying to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for a grant under the Recreational Trails Program for a trail project to be located within the territorial jurisdiction of this Council along the western bank of the Chenango River within the City of Norwich, connecting to the trail on the City-owned property at Jamba Flats; and

WHEREAS, as a requirement under the rules of these programs, said not-for-profit corporation must obtain the "approval/endorsement of the governing body of the municipality in which the project will be located;" and now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Norwich hereby does approve and endorse the application of the Chenango Greenway Conservancy, Inc. for a grant under the Recreational Trails Program for a trail project known as the Chenango Greenway and located within this community.

Seconded by Alderman Bresina and duly adopted ayes all.

Prior to the vote, Ald. Williams stated that she feels it is really important in enhancing our quality of life in Norwich and she would really like to see a strongly worded letter endorsing this program. Mayor Maiurano stated that a letter was sent to Tom Holmes endorsing this program and their committee has been working very hard on this. Maiurano believes we will see some action on this one.

Mayoral Comment

Prior to moving into executive session Mayor Maiurano wanted to say that over the weekend they had the folks from the Norfolks and Norwiches across the world, who traveled all the way from Norwich, England and Norwich, Canada. Planning and Community Development Specialist Todd Dreyer will pass around the plaque we were presented with this weekend, indicating all the Norwich and Norfolk communities throughout the world. The Norwich and Norfolk communities are the largest number of similar namesakes in the world.

He noted that this was initiated by former City of Norwich Mayor, Marge Chomysak, and that this is a tribute to her life's works and he hopes it will continue for many years to come.

Executive Session

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to enter executive session to discuss the proposed purchase and sale of real property where the price may be affected at 7:35 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Schermerhorn and duly adopted ayes all.

Ald. Williams **moved** to exit executive session at 8:03 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Schermerhorn and duly adopted ayes all.

Resolutions

RESOLUTION #72-2006. **ESTABLISHING TIME AND PROCEDURES FOR TAX AUCTION**

Ald. Williams introduced the following and moved its adoption:

WHEREAS, the City of Norwich bid in on certain parcels of real estate sold for unpaid taxes on October 26, 2004; and

WHEREAS, said delinquent parcels were not redeemed within the fifteen month period as provided under Section 218 of the Charter of the City of Norwich; and

WHEREAS, Sections 216 and 220 of said Charter provide that the City may acquire, sell, and convey such unredeemed parcels; and

WHEREAS, the Finance/Personnel Committee has made certain recommendations; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that

1. the following properties be sold at public auction by the Director of Finance:

<u>Property Address</u>	<u>Tax Map Id #</u>	<u>Owner's Name</u>
23 Grove Avenue	136.58-2-5	Barbara J. Lovetro
5 State Street	136.41-1-12	Barbara J. Lovetro
5A State Street	136.41-1-11	Barbara J. Lovetro
9 State Street	136.41-1-8	Allante Mgmt. Group, Inc.

2. said public auction shall be conducted by sealed bid with all bids being received no later than 3 PM, prevailing time, December 1, 2006, after which time they shall be publicly opened and read; and
3. the Common Council acting through the Director of Finance reserves the right to withdraw from sale any of the above listed properties up to the moment of final sale; and
4. all bids shall be in writing, signed by the bidder, and evidenced by a certified bank check equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the bid amount at the time of the public sale; and
5. the balance of all bids shall be paid to the Director of Finance no later than three (3) business days following notification to the parties of the acceptance of the bid with such payment being by cash or certified bank check; and
6. the City will issue only quitclaim deeds; no warranty or guarantee deeds will be issued; also, no abstract of title will be provided, and no deeds will be issued until all elements of the sale are reviewed by the City Attorney; and
7. the Common Council reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and no sale shall be final until approved by the Common Council; and
8. no sale shall be made to an individual or other parties who shall be delinquent in taxes or any other obligations to the City of Norwich, Chenango County or the State of New York; and
9. the Director of Finance shall send courtesy notices through the United States Postal Service to all affected property owners of this resolution stating the amount due, date and time of auction and the urgency of the notice; and
10. affected property owners shall have until five o'clock PM, prevailing time, on October 31, 2006 to redeem their property from said public auction by paying their taxes and all associated fees; and
11. all properties acquired through this tax auction and sale must be brought into compliance with all applicable codes within nine months from acquisition unless exceptions or extensions are otherwise authorized by the Common Council; and
12. the City Attorney and the Director of Finance be and hereby are directed to take all other necessary and legal steps to prepare for and conduct such public auction.

Seconded by Ald. Schermerhorn and duly adopted, 6-0, on a roll call vote.

Adjournment

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to adjourn the Common Council work session at 8:05 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Abraham and duly adopted ayes all.