

CITY OF NORWICH
JOINT MEETING of the
PUBLIC SAFETY / PUBLIC WORKS and
FINANCE/PERSONNEL COMMITTEES
March 7, 2023

Present:

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

Supervisor Robert M. Jeffrey arrived 6:39 p.m.

Also:

Director of Finance/City Clerk Dee DuFour
Director of Human Resources Lynn Murray
DPW Superintendent Edward Pepe
Youth Bureau Director Anthony Testani
Fire Chief Jan Papelino
Police Chief Reuben Roach
Community Development Director Erik Scrivener
City Attorney Stephanie Hanrahan
Deputy City Clerk Agnes Eaton

Media Representative: Sarah Genter, The Evening Sun

Absent

Supervisor James McNeil
Ald. William Loomis

Ald. Jeffrey called the joint meeting of the Public Works/Public Safety and Finance/Personnel Committees to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Council Chambers.

Approval of Minutes – Ald. Gee **moved** to approve the minutes of the February 7, 2023 meeting. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all.

Correspondence

Achieve Half-K Fun Walk/Run – Ald. Gee **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve a request for Police Assistance for the Achieve Half-K Fun Walk/Run on October 8, 2023 with the race route beginning in East Park and ending approximately at 11:00 a.m. at the Northeast Classic Car Museum. Seconded by Ald. Warren. There was brief discussion on whether the road work in that area would affect the race. The Police Chief will keep in contact with Achieve.

Department Head Reports

Community Development

NCSO Capital Improvement – SEQRA – E. Scrivener reported that NCSO has requested to be the lead agency for their Capital Improvement Project to issue the SEQRA. The Mayor needs to sign off on that to make that happen. Ald. Allaire moved to authorize the Mayor to sign the document agreeing that NCSO is the lead agency for the project. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all.

Norwich Placemaking Initiative – E. Scrivener referenced the presentation that was done at the Joint Committee meeting about the Placemaking Initiative and asked for formal approval to proceed before moving forward with the RFP process and requesting funding from the foundations. Ald. Jeffrey asked for a motion of general approval with the understanding it would not be going to Common Council at this time. Ald. Warren **moved** to generally approve the Placemaking Initiative idea. Seconded by Ald. Zieno, approved ayes all. For clarification, Scrivener said that the requested funds from the foundations would be to complete the plan, engineering and design costs. The plan would include Phase I which would be in the DRI area and Phase II which would be outside the DRI area.

Microenterprise Assistance Grant – E. Scrivener explained that the Microenterprise Assistance Grant will be used for new and startup businesses as well as existing business with grants from \$5,000 to \$35,000. Criteria that must be met includes hiring low to moderate income employees and can be used for equipment and operating expenses among other expenses. Ald. Zieno **moved** to recommend the Common Council set a Public Hearing for April 18, 2023. Seconded by Ald. Gee, approved ayes all.

EPA Application – E. Scrivener asked for approval for the Mayor to sign all documents associated with the EPA Application. The application is to access the Congressional spending award of \$2.5 million. Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to authorize the Mayor to sign any necessary paperwork for the EPA application. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Fire Department

Outside CON EMS Calls – J. Papelino reported only 2 calls outside the CON – Sherburne – 1; Afton – 1. Discussion of the County EMS plan and responses to surrounding areas was discussed.

Ambulance Status – J. Papelino reported all 4 ambulances are in service. New batteries were replaced in one of them. He has begun looking at replacing the 2003 ambulance stating an estimation for a new ambulance will be \$270,000 to \$350,000 with volatile prices.

New Vision Students – J. Papelino reported that they have signed an agreement with BOCES New Vision students for ride-alongs as has been done in the past. They will be participating for 2 hours per day.

Code Enforcement

Tax Properties Status – J. Papelino reported the RFP for 48 Brown Ave. will be out tomorrow. All other properties that are occupied have been verbally notified of pending eviction. Ald. Jeffrey asked if the RFP for 18 Griffin St. could be out soon.

Nuisance Ordinance – J. Papelino reported that a Nuisance Ordinance is being worked on by A. Donnison, the City Attorney and Police Chief and a draft should be available soon. He asked the Committee to look it over when they receive it and provide feedback.

Courtesy Tags – J. Papelino reported that there were 100 courtesy tags, mostly for snow and garbage, issued from January to February with 67 of them issued within the last 2 weeks of February.

Department of Public Works

New Plow Wings for Trucks #15 & #17 – E. Pepe requested a transfer of \$31,728 for 2 new plow wings for trucks #15 and #17. Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the transfer. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all.

Watermain Replacement Project – E. Pepe reported that there will be a pre-bid meeting at 10 a.m. Wednesday followed by a site visit. Bids will be opened on March 17, 2023. The DOT will be milling and paving East Main St. in September. Broad St. milling and paving is contracted to be completed no later than April/May of 2024, however everyone involved is pushing for completion this year. The Mayor and Ed will call DOT about a 2023 completion. Pepe also reported that the hard date of completion for the Water Main Project is July. The Mayor will also speak with Rep. Angelino and Sen. Oberacker about completion of paving this year.

Water Meter Replacement Project – E. Pepe reported that the Water Meter Replacement Project is out to bid with an opening of March 30, 2023. The project received a \$1 million grant from EFC through the Green Infrastructure Grant. Deadline for completion is August 2024.

Ice Rink Resurfacing Project – E. Pepe reported that the Ice Rink Resurfacing Project bid opening has been rescheduled to March 23, 2023 with work being completed this Spring/Summer. He credited the Youth Bureau for a \$50,000 grant to make this possible.

Brick Repointing at City Hall & Fire Dept. – E. Pepe reported receiving quotes for the repointing of bricks at City Hall (\$10,320) and the Firehouse (\$7,480) for a total of \$17,800 and requested a transfer of funds. Ald. Gee **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the transfer. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all.

DPW Staffing Update – E. Pepe reported that positions are still vacant including an MEO I, 2 Water Maintainers, a Mechanic, and an Operator. He stated the biggest problem is a lack of Water Maintainers and listed a backlog of work that needs to be done. He felt that wages are not competitive with other municipalities in the area.

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to enter executive session at 7:19 p.m. to discuss contract negotiations. Seconded by Ald. Zieno, approved ayes all.

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to exit executive session at 7:39 p.m.. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all.

Tree Removal at 8 Northrup Ave. – Ald. Warren received the request to remove a Street tree at 8 Northrup Ave. E. Pepe looked at the tree and contacted an arborist who determined that the tree is healthy. Ald. Warren **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the removal of the healthy tree. Seconded by Ald. Zieno, approved ayes all.

Police Department

Status of New Hires – R. Roach reported 3 new recruits will be starting the Academy March 27 if approved at the March 21 Common Council meeting. Two of the three will be filling the “training” positions that were created.

Authorization to Refill - R. Roach requested to refill the Detective Sergeant, Sergeant and Detective positions. Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to refill all 3 positions. Seconded by Ald. Gee, approved ayes all.

Department Vehicle Inventory – R. Roach requested to purchase 2 used unmarked vehicles with funds designated in Reserves, each less than \$30,000 each. These will replace cars 17 which was in an accident and 21 which is a 2012 and in rough shape. Ald. Warren **moved** to purchase 2 used vehicles under \$30,000 each. Seconded by Ald. Zieno, approved ayes all. Prior to the vote there was discussion about eventually considering EV’s in the future. Mayor Doliver said that he had talked with Chief Marsh about starting with Hybrids instead of all electric, but it is currently cost prohibitive.

R. Roach requested to purchase 1 marked patrol vehicle estimated at \$49,000 without equipment and \$68,841 fully equipped to replace SUV 28 [which the SRO will be taking over]. Ald. Warren **moved** to approve the purchase of the marked patrol car. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.6

Change to Window at PD – R. Roach reported that he is going to have a trial period of one month to replace the desk Sergeant with the Secretary II position to allow more Officers to be on the street. The desk will be manned from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Roach has spoken with Under-Sheriff Gould who is amenable to phones being rolled over to them after 5 p.m. For any walk-ins after 5 p.m., there would be a button connecting to the Sheriff who would then dispatch a uniformed Officer back to the Police Department. There was discussion of a bike patrol and e-bikes and speeding in the City.

Other Items

JC and CC Meeting Times – Mayor Doliver asked if the times of meetings could be moved to 6:30 p.m. Ald. Zieno said he could not make it at that time. Discussion ensued and a change of time was not pursued.

Executive Session – Ald. Warren **moved** to enter executive session at 8:05 p.m. to discuss the employment history of particular individuals and pending litigation. Seconded by Ald. Zieno, approved ayes all.

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to exit executive session at 8:52 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Adjournment

Ald. Gee **moved** to adjourn the Joint Committee Meeting at 8:53 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all