

CITY OF NORWICH
JOINT MEETING of the
PUBLIC SAFETY / PUBLIC WORKS and
FINANCE/PERSONNEL COMMITTEES
November 8, 2023

Present:

Mayor Brian Doliver
Ald. Nancy Allaire
Ald. William Loomis
Ald. David Zieno
Ald. Robert D. Jeffrey

Absent

Ald. Eric Warren
Ald. Fred Gee
Supervisor Robert M. Jeffrey
Supervisor James McNeil

Also:

Director of Finance/City Clerk Dee DuFour
Director of Human Resources Lynn Murray
DPW Superintendent Edward Pepe
Fire Chief Jan Papelino
EMO Stephen Cady
Community Development Director Erik Scrivener
Deputy City Clerk Agnes Eaton

Media Representative: _none_

Ald. Jeffrey called the joint meeting of the Public Works/Public Safety and Finance/Personnel Committees to order at 6:31 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Approval of Minutes – Ald. Loomis **moved** to approve the minutes of the October 3, 2023 meeting. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Presentation - Rick Wilson of NYSEG presented information regarding their proposed purchase of 1 State St. for \$10,000 for use as a gas regulator station. NYSEG would dismantle the station down the street on Mitchell which is near a playground and has no room for expansion. Ald. Zieno had hoped the parcel would be of interest to Norwich Housing, but indicated they are not interested in developing it. Mayor called Cobbler's Square but to no avail. Mr. Wilson said the pipes laid in the early '50's were low pressure and they plan to replace pipes with medium pressure. Ald. Loomis moved to approve the purchase of 1 State St. by NYSEG. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

EMO – S. Cady reported that the National Weather Service provided directions to forward information to them and in turn was forwarded to the software company. Flood information will be available on the City webpage once it is completed.

Correspondence

Holiday Parade of Lights - Ald. Allaire **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve a request from the B.I.D. for road closures and Police and Fire Police assistance for the Annual Holiday of Lights parade held on Saturday, November 25, 2022. The parade route remains the same, beginning at Hale/Northrup, proceeding North on Broad St. and ending at Mitchell/Cortland. Street closures will be from 5:30 p.m. to the conclusion of the parade. Seconded by Ald. Loomis, approved ayes all.

Chenango Blues Association 2024 Thursday Concert Series – Ald. Loomis **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve a request for special event status from the Chenango Blues Association for their free 2024 Concert in the Park series of concerts held in East Park every Thursday in July and August as well as the closing of East Park Place from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Street Tree Removal – Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve a request from Terry Swartz of 18 Maydole for a Street Tree removal. The owner is concerned about rot in the near future. DPW will look at it again for rot and if it is not rotted at this time, then the owner would like permission to remove the tree at his own expense. Seconded by Ald. Zieno, approved ayes all.

Department Head Reports

DPW

Well 4 Inspection – E. Pepe reported that the pump and motor of Well 4 must be pulled in order to be inspected at a cost of \$28,000. Once inspected, he hopes the motor can be repaired. If not, a new motor would be \$47,500. He asked for transfer of up to \$75,400 to cover the “worst case scenario” to replace the motor if needed. Ald. Loomis moved to recommend the transfer of the \$75,400. Seconded by Ald. Jeffrey, approved ayes all.

Filter Plant SPDES Permit Modification Update – E. Pepe reported that the application for permit modification will be done next week. The DEC is already re-ordering a sample plan and is comfortable with modifying the permit. The Filter Plant will be online by the end of the week as part of the testing.

Request to Rebid pickleball courts – E. Pepe asked to re-bid the pickleball court striping which will be scheduled for the Spring. Ald. Loomis **moved** to approve the re-bid of the pickleball court for Spring. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Request to Replace 2005 Silverado with new F350 with Plow – E. Pepe reported that the 2005 Silverado is completely rusted out, will not pass inspection, and has exceeded its life use and requested to replace it with a new F350 with plow. He will check State bid for the replacement first, but asked permission to put a new F350 with plow out for bid. Ald. Zieno **moved** to approve going out to bid for the new truck. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Request to Refill Foreman - E. Pepe reported that Scott Grover is retiring and thanked him for his service to the City. He also asked to refill the Foreman position. Mayor Doliver said they have been working on filling the Assistant Supervisor position and suggested holding off on refilling the Foreman until there is a clearer picture of next year's budget. Pepe expressed the need for a Foreman as soon as possible, especially with winter coming. Ald. Loomis asked who would fill the supervisory roll without a Foreman. A flow structure of DPW staff was requested by the Committee. Mayor Doliver said there is no doubt there is a deficit in DPW management. When asked about applications for Assistant Superintendent, Mayor Doliver said there are a few and will start interviewing soon. Ald. Allaire **moved** to refill the Foreman position. Seconded by Ald. Loomis, approved ayes all.

Discussion about the lack of downtown striping and crosswalks after the paving occurred. Mayor Doliver stated the DOT contractor will be coming back and be placing temporary paint and return in the spring to do a better, permanent job. Pepe said they will also be doing the resin crosswalks in the spring. Ald. Jeffrey reported a streetlight on Midland that is out but has no pole number. E. Pepe will call it in to NYSEG. Ald. Jeffrey reported some questions received on the Meter Replacement Project.

Community Development

Restore NY--45 Silver – E. Scrivener reported they are finalizing the Restore NY drawdown for 45 Silver St. with \$84,000 in reimbursement soon to be received.

Watermain Project – E. Scrivener reported another submitting another drawdown of \$1.1 million for the Watermain Project – to date we have received \$1.4 million. One final drawdown will be about a couple hundred thousand to close it out.

American Ave. DRI Project – E. Scrivener reported receiving the contract for American Ave. from the DRI which will be reviewed and submitted to the City Attorney.

Nuisance properties – E. Scrivener referenced the email of Hudson Falls Ordinances for Chronic Nuisance properties and Public Nuisance properties. The Ordinance working group has looked at a number of different communities and feels this is the best path forward. Chronic Nuisance is defined as being those with health hazards and such, and Public Nuisance being those affecting the entire community or neighborhood. There are 2 types of actions: Judicial action, which would classify it as a chronic or public nuisance and would levy fines or Administrative action which would revoke a Certificate of Occupancy. The Planning Commission will review the proposed ordinance at the November 20th meeting and will be making a recommendation to Council. Ald. Jeffrey asked if anyone has spoken with Judge Genute or Judge Flanagan, mostly because properties such as 18 Griffin have gone to Court 3 or 4 times and each time had received an extension. E. Scrivener said that speaking with the Judges is something that should happen. Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to

recommend the Common Council set a Public Hearing for the December meeting. Seconded by Ald. Loomis, approved ayes all.

Discussion of loitering ensued. Mayor Doliver reported that as a short-term fix property owners can post a “No Loitering” sign in their window which will help the Police Department enforce it. A long-term fix can be looked at, however it is a longer process and more difficult.

Fire Department

Outside CON EMS calls – J. Papelino reported there were 8 calls outside the CON – 6 of them were billable.

Staffing- 2 Captain and 1 Firefighter Positions – J. Papelino reported with the new labor contract another shift will be added and the number of hours worked on an annual basis has been reduced that starting January 1, 2024. Therefore, one shift Captain, one MTO Captain and 1 Firefighter must be added and filled. There is a current Civil Service list for Captain and there will be a provisional hire for the Firefighter position. The provisional hire is currently a Fire Assistant who is already an EMT and is putting himself through Paramedic school. Ald. Loomis **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve creating two new Captain positions and one new Firefighter position. Seconded by Ald. Jeffrey, approved ayes all.

Recruits at Utica Fire Academy – J. Papelino reported that the recruits at the Fire Academy have 2 weeks remaining, graduating on November 23rd. They will begin their orientation at the Firehouse and ready to shift start in January.

Engine 234 replacement – J. Papelino reported a pre-build Zoom meeting occurred and that the new engine would not be available for delivery until the end of 2025 or early 2026.

In response to a citizen’s concern of narrow streets and emergency access, Ald. Loomis asked if there was ever an instance in which emergency vehicles had no access. Papelino said they have not had an issue with no access, but said there are some tight situations, citing Locust Street’s parking on both side of the street. Mayor Doliver suggested the Traffic Commission look at the situation. Ald. Loomis suggested parking on one side of the street, or odd/even day parking.

Code Enforcement

Tax properties – J. Papelino reported that 61 Cortland St. RFP is out; 20 Barnes has had papers served.

Violations – J. Papelino reported to date there were 158 rental inspections, 137 permits issued and 395 complaint inspections.

Finance

Retro Pay for Firefighter Contract – D. DuFour reported that with the settlement of the Firefighter contract a transfer from Contingency to Fire Personal Services is needed in the amount of \$100,744.84 to cover back pay. Ald. Loomis **moved** to approve the transfer. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Other Items

Deer Management – Mayor Doliver reported that Ald. Allaire continues to get calls regarding deer in Ward 3. Ald. Jeffrey said previous discussion about deer management with help from the DEC had been tabled. In order to proceed, a committee needs to be formed to identify the issues which could then be taken to the DEC. Ald. Allaire said that several residents continue to bring up the issue. Ald. Loomis said in Ward 4 the deer traffic has increased and agreed a committee could gather information needed.

Adjournment

Ald. Loomis **moved** to adjourn the Joint Committee Meeting at 8:06 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Jeffrey, approved ayes all