

CITY OF NORWICH
JOINT MEETING of the
PUBLIC SAFETY / PUBLIC WORKS and
FINANCE/PERSONNEL COMMITTEES
August 6, 2024

Present:

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

Supervisor Robert M. Jeffrey

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 Papolino
Police Chief Reuben Roach
Community Development Director Erik Scrivener
City Attorney Stephanie Hanrahan
Deputy City Clerk Agnes Eaton

Absent

Supervisor James McNeil

Ald. Zieno called the joint meeting of the Public Works/Public Safety and Finance/Personnel Committees to order at 6:29 p.m. at the Council Chambers.

Swearing-In Ceremony – Police Chief Roach performed the swearing-in ceremony of new officers, Police Officer Lawrence and Police Officer Vinal.

Correspondence

Curb Cut – 16 Jones Ave. - Ald. Gee **moved** to approve the request for a curb cut at 16 Jones Ave. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Colorscape 2024 Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to approve a request from Colorscape Chenango Arts Festival for restricted parking and road closures on September 6, 7 and 8, 2024. Road closures include East and West Park Place; West Main St. from Court St. to Elm St.; Court St. from south of the library drive to West Main St.; NO PARKING on North Broad St. between East and West Parks; and the first six parking spaces on the West side of South Broad St. as an extension of the Culinary Court. Special Event designation is also requested. Seconded by Ald. Loomis, approved ayes all.

City Flag Presentation – A. Eaton presented the newly adopted City Flag. In addition, Zachary Smith, a student from Unadilla Valley School District and the designer of flag, was presented with his own copy of the new City flag. The design represents “the geography and the beauty of the Norwich area. Nestled in the Chenango River Valley, one can see the rolling hills of the valley tops alongside the flowing river. The sun rising behind the valley represents the City of Norwich’s ever improving state, along with a bright future that beholds the City. The rays represent the wide-reaching influence over many other local towns...” The sun rays can also represent the 7 major entrances into the City, in other words, “leading home”.

Department Head Reports

DPW

Sludge Drying Bed change order – E. Pepe reported that the project cost an additional \$12,440.96 over the bid amount due to more stone and less asphalt being needed and asked for approval and transfer of funds. Ald. Jeffrey moved to recommend the Common Council approve the additional expenditure and needed transfer. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all.

WWTP Upgrade – E. Pepe reported that RFP's were received and reviewed by the Water Commission and they are recommending GHD with a fee proposal of \$499,500. Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to recommend the Common Council authorize the Mayor to enter into an agreement with GHD for engineering services for the WWTP Upgrade Project. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Bid for 2 new pickup trucks – E. Pepe requested permission to go out to bid for 2 new pickup trucks that would replace the P1 and W3 trucks, both of which are 2005 Chevy Silverados that have reached the end of their useful life. Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to approve going out to bid for the 2 new trucks. Seconded by Ald. Loomis, approved ayes all.

Refill MEO 1 – E. Pepe requested to refill the vacant MEO 1 position. Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to approve the refill. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all.

Repair of Rotary Park Lights – E. Pepe reported many repairs to lighting. He will be going to Rotary Park tomorrow with an electrician. A. Testani said that the tower lights do shine on the pool and bath house but that does not stop the vandals. Light repairs are needed in the field and along the path.

Community Development

Public property/camping definition – E. Scrivener referenced the email he sent with the updated definition. Assistant Chief Burlison and the City Attorney have reviewed it.

Term limits – E. Scrivener said that the Planning Commission is looking for more context and direction in regards to its task in looking into term limits. They will be looking into other municipalities who have implemented term limits. Mayor Doliver restated the initial idea of 3 terms for Alderpersons and 5 terms for Mayor that had been previously discussed.

Parks RFP – E. Scrivener reported that the Parks Masterplan RFP's received will be reviewed on August 30th. Funding will be over 2024 and 2025 budget years.

B.I.D. Meeting- E. Scrivener reported that B.I.D. will be putting out a bid for the 31 lights in the B.I.D. downtown district. They will be looking at matching the Museum District lighting.

Flood Hazard Analysis – E. Scrivener reported working on a Flood Hazard Analysis with Barton & Lagudice who will be doing a presentation at City Hall the week of August 20th. The study will be completed by September 30, 2024.

Ald. Jeffrey asked if there were any updates on the research related to a City Manager position. Scrivener said he reached out to one government efficiency team, and another, MRB of Rochester has also been recommended and will investigate others agencies as well.

Fire Department

Outside CON EMS calls – J. Papelino reported 9 calls outside the CON since July 16th with all 9 billable.

Ambulances status - J. Papelino reported that ambulance 2394 is in Balston Lake getting the stretcher out and will be installed in the new ambulance. Both ambulances should be here on Friday. The new ambulance will then have radios installed and stocked with supplies. Ambulance 2392 is at Botnick's in Binghamton for service.

Staffing – J. Papelino reported the new firefighter will start on Monday and that one firefighter is still out on medical. He said that they are all set to cover staffing at the Fair.

Code Enforcement

Tax properties status – J. Papelino reported the RFP for 20 Barnes is out and that the Open House had 7-8 people. RFP's are due back August 16th. An RFP for the lot on the corner of Park and East Main will be coming out shortly.

City Court – J. Papelino said of the court cases scheduled last week only one showed up. The owner of a N. Broad property was given 90 days to remove the vehicles. The 33 and 37-39 N. Broad owner did not show up and was postponed again to the end of the month. The City Attorney said the initial offer was 30 days in jail – that will now increase.

Papelino said that 45 Gold St. they have been trying to get into the property with no luck, particularly since there is a tenant that resides there. Ald. Zieno said there are people coming and going all day and night. Papelino said that it is a legitimate concern to do an inspection. Ald. Zieno felt that they should be accompanied by an Officer during an inspection.

Code numbers – J. Papelino reported 93 walk-ins; 2,310 correspondence (2,301 were letters regarding the changed Rental inspection fees); 42 permits; 82 complaints; 25 red tags; 16 rental inspections.

Human Resources

Refill Coordinator of Disaster Preparedness – Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to approve refilling the Coordinator of Disaster Preparedness position. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all.

Police Department

Incident at 44 N. Broad St. – R. Roach reported he had an official statement from the FBI for release. The release said it is confirmed that the FBI was at 44 N. Broad St. in connection with an ongoing Federal investigation. DOJ policy prevents the FBI from commenting further as the investigation is ongoing. Roach said this was in coordination with the Norwich Police Department and he confirmed there were several SWAT teams present. An individual is in custody and there is no threat to the community.

Drone pilot certification– R. Roach reported that Officer Stratton went to Homeland Security to become FAA Security certified. He will be able to operate the drone that the City already has. The drone can be used for mass gatherings, searching for homeless camps, search and rescue etc.

Interview School – R. Roach reported they hosted Lt. Albert Joseph, retired from the Rochester Police Department, who is a world-famous investigator at SUNY Morrisville. He sent 3 detectives to the event and another 41 peace officers from around the State also attended.

Update on Cameras – R. Roach reported that an estimate from the company Garam found was very high. Due to Federal grant money being used, materials used must be American made. Cameras for just the Police Department came in at \$45,907.47. He will continue to look for other vendors.

Police K-9 Discussion – R. Roach reported adding more Police Officers would not be fiscally possible, but a fully trained K-9 would be \$13,000 to \$15,000. The dog would be a Patrol dog that would be universally trained and would be able to do a variety of tasks.

Homeless Encampment – R. Roach reported experiencing a lot of, mostly abandoned property, particularly on the Greenway trails. The Sheriffs are aware of an encampment behind the bowling alley. He said most people they encounter are agreeable to moving when confronted. Ald. Zieno referenced an article about the County receiving an additional \$66,000 funding regarding homelessness and hope to add staff. Roach said that a member of the Drug Task Force has located monies through Mental Health for MSW's. He continued, saying the downtown businesses are frustrated as they are still experiencing issues such as flower pots being used as toilets, broken items and garbage.

Cap Court – R. Roach reported that there are still issues with Cap Court as the Sheriff's office is having staffing issues. An individual was held at the City police station for 24 hours before they could see a judge. There have been meetings to see what can be done to fix the situation.

Citizens Academy – R. Roach reported that he and the Mayor have worked hard on reinstating the Citizens Academy and he has received overwhelmingly positive feedback. He hopes to start October 2nd and will be one night a week for two hours for a period of six weeks.

There was discussion of the situation at 45 Gold St. Ald. Loomis asked about revoking the Certificate of Occupancy. S. Hanrahan said the first step would be to gain access, which they have not been able to do to date, but felt there will not be enough to revoke the Certificate of Occupancy. Ald. Loomis expressed frustration at the situation. R. Roach reported that charges at the property were mostly disorderly conduct with a maximum of 15 days in jail and some assault charges as well. CPS has been notified several times in the last couple of months. When asked why it takes so long, Hanrahan said the Court calendar is packed. Roach said that in June there were 117 arrests, in May there were 70 and the added cases each month compound the matter.

Finance

Transfer from Contingency to Parks Overtime – D. DuFour reported that a transfer from Contingency to Parks Overtime in the amount of \$8,000 will be needed to cover staff for pool maintenance on the weekends. Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the transfer. Seconded by Ald. Loomis, approved ayes all.

Change date of September JC – All were in agreement to move the regularly scheduled September Joint Committee meeting to August 27, 2024.

Executive Session – Ald. Loomis **moved** to enter executive session at 7:52 p.m. to discuss the sale of property where price may be affected, contract negotiations, pending litigation and the employment history of a particular individual. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to exit executive session at 8:36 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Motion

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to refill a firefighter position. Seconded by Ald. Loomis, approved ayes all.

Adjournment

Ald. Jeffrey **moved** to adjourn the Joint Committee Meeting at 8:39 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all