

CITY OF NORWICH
JOINT MEETING of the
PUBLIC SAFETY / PUBLIC WORKS and
FINANCE/PERSONNEL COMMITTEES
May 6, 2025

Present:

Mayor Brian Doliver
Ald. Eric Warren
Ald. Fred Gee
Ald. Nancy Allaire
Ald. William Loomis
Ald. David Zieno
Ald. Matthew Caezza

Supervisor Robert M. Jeffrey

Also:

Director of Finance/City Clerk Dee DuFour
Director of Human Resources Lynn Murray
DPW Superintendent Tim Miller
Youth Bureau Director Anthony Testani
Fire Chief Jan Papelino
Asst. Police Chief Scott Burlison
Det. Sgt. Matt Roberts
EMO William Edwards
Deputy City Clerk Agnes Eaton
Delaware Engineering, Derrick Wilcox

Absent

Supervisor James McNeil

Ald. Loomis called the joint meeting of the Public Works/Public Safety and Finance/Personnel Committees to order at 6:01 p.m. at the Council Chambers.

Approval of Minutes – Ald. Gee **moved** to approve the minutes of the April 1, 2025 meeting. Seconded by Ald. Zieno, approved ayes all.

Correspondence

Curb Cut at 48 Hayes St. – Ald. Gee **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve a curb cut request at 48 Hayes St. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Achieve .5K – Ald. **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve a request from Achieve for Police assistance for their walk/run on October 25, 2025. The .5K beginning at 9:30 a.m. starting at 27 Griffin St., heading to Birdsall, East Main to Midland and back to Griffin. The 5K begins at 10:00 a.m. at 27 Griffin St., heading to Birdsall to Brown Ave., continuing North on S. Broad St. to Borden Ave. and continuing on Silver, Birdsall and ending at Griffin. Seconded by Ald. Gee, approved ayes all.

YMCA Gus Macker, Halloween Parade, Turkey Trot – Ald. Caezza **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve requests from the YMCA for their three annual events, including Police Assistance, Fire Assistance and necessary road closures as has been done in previous years: Gus Macker, Friday, July 12 to Sunday July 14; Halloween Parade, October 25 beginning at 11:00 a.m.; Turkey Trot 5K, Sunday, November 23 beginning at 12:30 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all.

Department Head Reports

DPW

I & I Project Update (by Delaware Engineering) – D. Wilcox gave an update on the Sanitary Sewer Line Rehabilitation Project, saying the date of substantial completion is currently May 30, 2025. The contractor is working on cast packages for some unforeseen conditions. Already completed is 14,558 lineal feet of lining out of the 30,715 lineal feet and 338 lateral reinstatements out of the 521 scheduled. NYSDOT has issued highway work permits. The contractor may ask for an extension that will not affect the funding of the project.

Lead Service Line Update (by Delaware Engineering) – D. Wilcox gave an update on the Lead Service Line Replacement Project saying the current date of substantial is May 31, 2025. The contractor is working on exploratory digs to confirm unknown material types and working through the final submittal process for valves, fittings etc.

2025 Street Grinding & Paving Project – D. Wilcox reported that bids for the 2025 paving were opened with the lowest bid of \$744,040.44 coming from James Bray Paving. They have received positive information from 2 references and are waiting on another. Barring anything unexpected with the third reference, he recommends awarding the bid to James Bray Paving of Sauquoit, NY. Ald. Zieno **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve awarding the bid to James Bray Paving, pending the third reference check. Seconded by Ald. Gee, approved ayes all.

Reservoir Maintenance Plan – T. Miller reported that he has been in contact with GHD who created a five-year reservoir maintenance plan which includes mostly general maintenance. He and EMO Edwards also made updates to the emergency action plan.

Equipment Surplus List – T. Miller requested various listed items to be declared surplus which have little to no value. Ald. Zieno **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the items be declared as surplus. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all.

Request to Purchase Stump Grinder – T. Miller reported that the 1973 Premier stump grinder has been to the repair shop and due to the age, they would not attempt to due repairs. He has researched various options for a new stump grinder and feels the cheaper, towable version for \$62,000 would be the better option. D. DuFour said this would need to go to bid unless it is on State contract. Ald. Zieno **moved** to go to bid if the stump grinder cannot be found on State contract. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all.

Fire Department

Outside CON EMS calls – J. Papelino reported 5 calls outside the CON with four of them billable.

Equipment transfers from reserves – J. Papelino asked for a Fire Department Capital Reserve transfer for equipment to include flares, masks, a digital camera and a chain saw, and from Ambulance Reserves for heart monitor batteries and a pile driver. Ald. Warren **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the transfers. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Bell Tower – J. Papelino reported the bell tower now will be lit at night and they are working on a plaque.

Stream gages – EMO Edwards reported that parts to fix the stream gauges that were on backorder hopefully will be available on Friday and the company will be here next week [for installation]. Edwards plans on contacting the National Weather Service to see what other companies are out there, because there seem to be no issues in other parts of the state. He said that currently the only working gauge is at Rexford St.

(Later in the Meeting) J. Papelino reported that Oxford's engine is undergoing repairs and he will be sending Engine 2 to Oxford to assist with their coverage. Hopefully their engine will be back by Thursday.

Code Enforcement

April JC meeting Statement Correction - J. Papelino also wanted to correct his statement he made regarding 134 N. Broad, when he misspoke saying that the property was going to be a 2-family. Converting the property to a 2-family must go before the Zoning Board of Appeals for a special use permit which is being held on May 12th. Neighboring property owners have been notified of the Zoning hearing as is required. Out of the 90 properties notified, he reported that there are 6 single-family rentals, 13 2-family rentals, 3 3-family rentals, 6 resident rentals, 2 vacant lots, 2 vacant homes and 2 commercial properties. As far as special permits, 1 was issued in 2021 for 72 West Main St., 1 in 2023 for 10-12 Mechanic St. for the Warming Center, 2 in 2024 for 63 and 65 Silver St. for a 2-unit bed and breakfast and a 4 unit bed and breakfast respectively. Reading from the Code, Papelino explained how a determination of a special permit by the Zoning Board must take into consideration that they "may not grant such permit unless it finds that the use for which such permit is sought will not be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare and will be in harmony with the general purpose of this chapter. In determining its findings the Board shall take into account the character in the neighborhood and the use of adjoining buildings and those in the vicinity, the number of persons residing or working in such buildings or on such land and traffic conditions of the vicinity".

Properties – J. Papelino reported that 53 Canasawacta St. has been referred to Community Development for the sidewalk program; 40 Henry St. has been issued a permit to tear down the garage; 31 Court is in rent receivership, but their attorney has been on vacation for 2 weeks. The property manager has been good about getting things done, but he will keep an eye on it.; there are still issue with 39 Guernsey St. saying Codes and the Police Department

have made frequent visits there; 51 West Main experienced a fire in the garage years ago – they are getting further information. He reported squatters there, however their hands are tied till the mortgage company can be reached.

Contracted Services – J. Papelino reported that 35 Pleasant St. was cleaned up last Thursday again. Last fall a contractor removed and loaded 6 ½ tons of garbage which cost the City around \$1,000 and will be added to the taxes which the mortgage company has been paying.

Properties taken for taxes are 32 Hickok and 14 Jones saying both of the owners had passed away. Family members for 32 Hickok have been contacted to remove items if they wish and 14 Jones Ave. has a tenant.

Police Department

Sex Offenders Living Near Schools – S. Burlison reported that after an email to the Mayor was received regarding the lack of enforcement of sex offenders living near schools, he said that in New York State, sex offenders can live anywhere as long as they report where they are living. He said from 2023 – 2025 there has been a Bill on the Senate floor and has been consistently sent back to the Crime Victims and Corrections Committee, so essentially it dies. There is no law currently on the books to enforce. The only thing enforceable is if there is someone on probation or NYS parole. He said sex offenders are required to report within 10 days if they move. Ald. Zieno also reminded that the State has a map of where sex offenders are living.

PD Cameras – S. Burlison reported that the third week in May camera installation will begin.

Bike Patrol – S. Burlison reported that as soon as the bikes are tuned up they will begin bike patrols. An Officer was sent for e-bike, e-scooter, ATV and dirt bike training. In addition, they brought back information on how the City can deal with e-bikes.

Loitering/Camping Issues – S. Burlison reported that with the good weather there has been an increase in loitering and camping and tickets have been issues. [Patrol] around properties will continue.

Finance

City Band Funds from RC Smith Foundation – D. DuFour reported that each year the City receives grant funds from two Foundations in support of the City Band. \$3,525 has been received from the R.C. Smith Foundation and would like permission to appropriate the funds. Ald. Allaire moved to recommend the Common Council approve the fund appropriation. Seconded by Ald. Zieno, approved ayes all. The City thanks the R.C. Smith Foundation for their continued support.

Community Development

(In absence of E. Scrivener, Ald. Loomis will present)

Remove Two-Family Dwelling as a use Permitted by Special Permit in the R-1 Zone – Ald. Loomis reported that a recommendation was made by the Planning Commission to remove the two-family dwelling by special permit in an R-1 Zone from the Use Table. Ald. Warren **moved** to recommend the Common Council set a Public Hearing for June 17, 2025. Seconded by Ald. Gee, approved ayes all.

Snow Removal Ordinance Update – The Planning Commission has reviewed the language changes to the snow removal ordinance as asked and emailed them the revisions. They also recommend the penalty fees be increased to \$100, \$300 and \$500. Ald. Caezza **moved** to recommend the Common Council set a Public Hearing for June 17, 2025. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Hayes St. Parking Lot and DRI – Mayor Doliver said that years ago during the first talks of a boutique hotel going in, the City agreed to supply \$25,000 of in-kind labor from the DPW for the re-working of the City-owned Hayes St. parking lot. As work did not commence, he would again like to recommit the \$25,000 of in-kind work, saying the hotel will be paying for the design and reconstruction of the parking lot in order to increase parking for the hotel. It was also pointed out that the previously agreed 71 parking spaces set aside for the hotel is illegal per the NYS Comptroller and will be rescinded. Ald. Loomis said that there is the potential of the purchase of some houses that could provide additional parking. The redesign of the lot could yield another 50 parking spaces. Ald. Loomis **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the \$25,000 of in-kind labor by the DPW and the rescinding of the 71 parking spaces in the Vehicle and Traffic Ordinance. Seconded by Ald. Gee, approved ayes all.

Ordinance Updates – Ald. Loomis reported that he and the Mayor met with Community Development to revisit the Nuisance Ordinance. They propose not calling it the Nuisance Ordinance, but something like Unsafe Buildings

or Exterior Property Maintenance issues similar to the example from Oneonta who uses an Administrative Council composed of 5 individuals. Their Administrative Council levies fines against landlords and/or tenants which has generated over \$300,000 in revenue for such things as buildings that aren't being maintained properly, have consistent Code violations, etc. They asked Planning to engage in this discussion again to see and make a recommendation. Ald. Warren **moved** to have the Planning Commission look at the Ordinance and make recommendations to the Council. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all.

Discussion before the vote: Ald. Allaire and Zieno said that this was discussed during the last Nuisance Ordinance change and was not incorporated due to legalities and do we really want to go there. Ald. Loomis felt the Administrative Council should be the members of the Common Council since no one knows our Wards better than they do. Mayor Doliver said we would check on legalities before enacting anything. Ald. Zieno said that anything drafted should also include how it will be enforced.

DRI Updates – Ald. Loomis reported that projects are preparing for bids. The Heritage Building project will be bid in 30-60 days, Chenango County Board of Supervisors will meet on May 12 to review the proposal to provide Code Enforcement services for the Heritage Building project and an MOU has been drafted. Several other projects will also look to bid their projects in the summer. Ald. Zieno also mentioned the Special Project Grant fund is accepting more applications.

Other Items

Park Place Special Liquor License for Summer Concert Series – Ald. Zieno **moved** to recommend the Common Council approve the special liquor license for Park Place Restaurant under the same circumstances as the last several years. Seconded by Ald. Warren, approved ayes all. A. Eaton said that although a request has not been made by Park Place, one is expected. Approval now will allow for a smoother process rather than waiting for the letter at the last minute.

Salary Increase for Mayor and Alderpersons – Mayor Doliver said that since he is not seeking re-election he felt now is the time to recommend an increase in pay beginning in 2026 for Alderpersons to \$5,000 and Mayor to \$20,000. Ald. Gee and Ald. Zieno were not comfortable voting on their own raises. Ald. Zieno considers it a public service. He also stated that next year's budget is already going to be very tight, particularly with a number of properties off the tax roll. The potential City Manager position is also a big unknown. Mayor Doliver said you can still vote for it and then decline to take it for yourself. Ald. Warren felt a raise would be more for those who come after them. Ald. Warren **moved** to recommend the Common Council set a Public Hearing for June 17, 2025. Seconded by Ald. Caezza, approved 5 – 1 with Ald. Zieno voting nay.

Executive Session – Ald. Warren **moved** to enter executive session at 7:30 p.m. to discuss the financial history of a particular corporation and the employment history of a particular individual. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all.

Ald. Loomis **moved** to exit executive session at 8:14 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Gee, approved ayes all.

Adjournment

Ald. Warren **moved** to adjourn the Joint Committee Meeting at 8:15 p.m. Seconded by Ald. Allaire, approved ayes all