

COMMON COUNCIL

Special Meeting

October 3, 2000

Mayor Robert Raphael presided at a special meeting and budget work session of the Common Council held at 7:08 PM on October 3, 2000, at One Court Plaza.

Present:

Mayor Robert Raphael
Ald. Gary Clark
Ald. Patrick McNeil
Ald. Robert Rabinowitz
Ald. Sharon Jeffer
Ald. Joseph Biviano
Ald. Jeffrey Thornton (7:11 p.m.)

Also:

City Clerk/CD Director Joseph Serbin
Director of Finance William Roberts
DPW Supt. Carl Ivarson
Fire Chief John Tighe
EMO A. Jones
Police Chief Joseph Angelino
Deputy Clerk Donna Russell

Award of Bid – Ald. Biviano moved to award the bid for Sunset Drive Restoration to the lowest qualified bidder meeting specifications, as recommended by the Public Works Committee, Burrell's Excavating of Norwich, NY in the amount of \$ 94,060 – base bid and \$ 4,004 – alternate bid. Seconded by Ald. Jeffer and duly adopted, ayes all on a roll call vote, 5-0.

Review of Tentative 2001 Budgets – Mayor Raphael turned the meeting over to Director of Finance Roberts to review the Engineering, Municipal Buildings and Parks/Public Works budgets.

Roberts indicated that he had previously reviewed details on the first two departments with Asa Allison, and that the tentative Engineering budget was essentially even with the current year 2000 budget. On Municipal Buildings, he pointed out that the current year modified budget was almost \$14,000 higher than the tentative 2001 budget as the result of the recent installation of new overhead doors on the front of the highway garage and the restoration of the salt barn roof. An amount of \$12,000 will be displayed on the Capital Reserves 2001 budget schedule for transfers out to the General Fund in expectation of replacing the overhead doors on the rear of the garage next year. Superintendent Ivarson added that an additional \$9,000 should also be included to cover the planned fencing for the police impoundment area to go behind the garage next year. Roberts said he would include it for a total of \$21,000. The council concurred with the details and amounts as presented. A separate discussion followed regarding the need to determine where future temporary and permanent quarters will be located for records storage, as well as office space for records management and historian, in conjunction with the firehouse building project.

Roberts then turned the review presentation over to Superintendent Ivarson, who covered the Parks and Public Works categories. On the Parks budget, Ald. McNeil pointed out the extensive need to build up the Pool Maintenance & Repairs Reserve. He suggested that the Estimated 2000 Actual column be modified to reflect a reduction of \$8,000 in the "Other" line, and increases of \$4,000 in the Parks Capital Reserves and \$4,000 in the Pool Repair Capital Reserves lines. He then suggested that the Budget 2001 column be correspondingly modified to reflect a \$4,000 reduction in the Parks Capital Reserves line. In this manner, the Parks reserve would wind up at the same level by the end of 2001, while the Pool reserve would wind up with an extra \$4,000. Superintendent Ivarson then pointed out that the 2001 special projects amounts listed at the bottom of the page for the Green Belt and Weiler Walkway were not included in the operating budget detail, nor in the Capital reserves detail. This is to highlight the items, and if they are to be approved, they will need to be added to the "Other" line for actual expenditure during 2001. Finance Director Roberts added that if they are not going to be expended in 2001, but are desired to be set aside for future expenditure, then they would need to be included in the budgeted transfers to Capital Reserves. Meanwhile, Ald. Biviano felt that the Parks Commission Chairman and members should be asked to attend a work session in the very near future to discuss and help clarify these items. Ald. McNeil agreed, and the council concurred on the rest of the details as presented, with the special projects items to be confirmed later.

Ivarson next reviewed the Highway and DPW Services related items. Street Lightning should be set at \$149,900 for 2001, to allow for the increased security lighting in the downtown parks. Also, the budgeted transfer to Capital Reserves for Highway Equipment should be \$33,400 to reflect the second year of the five-year plan for truck replacement. Under Special Items, Ivarson pointed out that similar to the Parks budget, these highlighted items will need to be added to one of the operating budget lines if they are to be carried through with next year. Council discussion concurred that the \$17,500 amount for street curbing would be deleted, leaving only the \$5,000 for street sign replacement to be budgeted. After further discussion, it was decided to include this in the General Fund Contingency line.

Superintendent Ivarson then reviewed the Water and Wastewater budgets. The only modification he indicated was the Estimated 2000 Actual column in the Wastewater Revenue budget should reflect \$30,000 for District Sales. He indicated that the schedule of three-year water and sewer use rates projected by W. Roberts in 1999, in conjunction with the new water project, were still applicable for the 2001 budget. Ald. Clark questioned if the sewer rate could be lowered (instead of remaining unchanged) while the water rate would increase as originally indicated, since the sewer fund balance appeared to be more robust than the water fund. Finance Director Roberts said that this was previously considered, but it was determined that the need for future replacement of sewer mains would require extensive capital and debt service reserves just like the water mains. Mayor Raphael interjected with a reference to a recently received DEC letter requiring the City to prepare plans for dealing with excessive

infiltration and inflow of ground water getting into the mains and overloading the treatment plant. Roberts again emphasized that it is essential to maintain sewer fund revenues at current rates in order to meet the capital and debt service needs, since so many of the sewer mains, like the water mains, are also extremely old and in bad condition.

Executive Session - Ald. Biviano moved to go into executive session at 8:35 PM to discuss the employment history of a particular individual. Seconded by Ald. McNeil and duly adopted, ayes all.

Ald. McNeil moved to go out of executive session at 8:50 PM. Seconded by Ald. Biviano and duly adopted, ayes all.

Adjournment – Ald. Jeffer moved to adjourn at 8:51 PM. Seconded by Ald. McNeil and duly adopted, ayes all.