

COMMON COUNCIL

Work Session
October 9, 2001

Mayor Robert Raphael presided at a work session of the Common Council held at 7 PM on October 9, 2001, at One Court Plaza.

Present:

Mayor Robert Raphael
Ald. Gary Clark
Ald. Patrick McNeil
Ald. Robert Rabinowitz
Ald. Jeffrey Thornton
Ald. Sharon Jeffer
Ald. Joseph Biviano

Also:

Director of Finance William Roberts
Human Resources Director Deborah DeForest
Fire Chief John Tighe
Police Chief Joseph Angelino
Public Works Supt. Carl Ivarson
Asst. Engineer Asa Allison
EMO A. Jones
Historian Patricia Scott
CD Assistant Katy Schwan
BID Administrator Melissa Downey
Deputy Clerk Donna Russell

Open Forum -- No one wished to be heard.

2002 Budget Status -- Finance Director Roberts distributed a draft of the 2002 general, water and sewer fund budgets for the Council to review. He indicated that the budget projections are within the parameters set by the Common Council and explained that the general fund budget would cause an increase in the tax levy of 2.7 percent resulting in a tax rate increase of three percent; the water fund rate increase would be 4.5 percent and the sewer rate increase would be zero percent which would result in an average increase of 2.5 percent. Ald. Biviano requested the Director of Finance perform a comparison of property tax rates from other cities of the same size providing the same services. Ald. Clark asked the status of the Common Council's request for a projected five year budget. Finance Director Roberts said the projection is nearly complete and would be out to Council members this week.

Job Descriptions for Mayor/Aldermen -- Ald. McNeil stated that the Personnel Committee discussed the duties and job descriptions of the Mayor and Aldermen with regard to committees and recommended that each committee review the roles at they relate to that committee. There was discussion relative to the matter and it was suggested that information could be compiled into a handbook. The subject would be on the agenda for the next Personnel Committee meeting.

Ward Redistricting -- Mayor Raphael noted, with regard to ward redistricting, that last month Community Development Director Serbin explained that the City of Norwich is not required to make any changes to its ward boundaries as a result of the 2000 Census. However, should the Council wish to balance the wards more evenly, the boundaries could be changed by resolution. The Mayor explained that there would be costs associated with redistricting including notifying the affected residents and drawing new city maps. The Board of Elections would also have to contact any registered voters in the affected block. Finally, the Mayor noted that any changes would have to take effect on January 1.

Discussion ensued. Ald. Biviano said he would like the Personnel Committee to look into reducing the wards from six to four. Ald. Thornton questioned the reason for making such a change. Ald. Biviano said it would be to consolidate. Ald. McNeil said he believes the City and Town should consolidate into one municipality. Ald. Thornton said he feels the possibility of having a City Manager should be looked at.

-- Ald. McNeil moved that no changes be made to the ward boundaries of the City of Norwich. Seconded by Ald. Thornton and duly adopted, ayes all on a roll call vote, 6-0.

BID Streetscape Project -- Ald. Biviano moved to authorize the Mayor to enter into an agreement with Nelson Engineering of Clinton, NY for engineering services relative to the BID Streetscape project, for an amount not to exceed \$107,988, as recommended by the Public Works Committee. Seconded by Ald. McNeil and duly adopted, ayes all on a roll call vote, 6-0.

-- Prior to the vote, concerns were raised regarding on-site inspections and staying within the scope of the project.

Fire and Ambulance Contracts -- Director of Finance Roberts reported the Finance Committee recommended one change to the current fire and ambulance contracts with the towns of Norwich, North Norwich, Plymouth and Guilford, that a scheduled rate increase of three percent be charged to each town each year. The matter was referred to the Public Safety Committee and City Attorney for review.

RESOLUTION # 69 - 2001.

APPOINTMENT OF CLERK IN THE FINANCE OFFICE

Ald. McNeil introduced the following and moved its adoption:

WHEREAS, a vacancy exists in the position of clerk in the Finance Office; and

WHEREAS, the Personnel Committee has made certain recommendations; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that

1. effective October 29, 2001, Judy Simmons of New Berlin, NY, be and hereby is provisionally appointed to a full-time position as Clerk in the Finance Department at Grade 11, and
2. such appointment is contingent upon the satisfactory completion of the required Civil Service Exam.

Seconded by Ald. Jeffer and duly adopted, 4-2 (Aldermen Clark and Thornton) on a roll call vote.

Development of Agenda -- The following agenda has been developed for the October 16, 2001 Council meeting.

- 1) Call To Order
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance
- 3) Invocation
- 4) Approval of minutes - the regular meeting of September 18, 2001 and work session of October 9, 2001
- 5) Public Hearing
- 6) Open Forum
- 7) Bids
- 8) Correspondence
 - ◆ Received from the CCIDA, a request from New York Susquehanna & Western Railway Corporation to extend its current lease with the IDA for a term of 10 years.
 - ◆ Notification from Robert Kohls DBA Gray Fox Tavern, 17 Lackawanna Avenue, of intent to renew liquor license.
- 9) Department, Board and Commission Reports
 - ◆ Historian monthly report for September, 2001
 - ◆ Public Works/Water System monthly report for September, 2001
 - ◆ Records Management monthly report for September, 2001
 - ◆ Youth Bureau monthly report for September, 2001
 - ◆ Parks Commission minutes of September 10, 2001
 - ◆ Water Commission minutes of September 19, 2001
- 10) Ward and Committee Reports
 - ◆ Personnel Committee meeting of August 27, 2001
 - ◆ Public Works Committee meeting of September 27, 2001
- 11) Old Business
- 12) New Business
 - Award of Bids
 - ◆ Commercial Uniform Supply and Laundering
 - Motions
 - ◆ Auth Elevator Contract for Police Building
 - ◆ Auth Standby Generator Contract for Police Building
 - ◆ Auth Agreement with Northeast Document Center for microfilming
 - ◆ Receive Ordinance -- Proposed changes to the Sign Ordinance relative to temporary signs
 - Resolutions
 - ◆ Res - Appointment of Firefighter
 - ◆ Res - Auth Submission of two grants to the NYS Archives for 2002/2003
 - ◆ Res - Transfer for Police Department Personal Services
 - ◆ Res - Transfer for Human Resources Contracted Services
- 13) Payment of Bills
- 14) Adjournment

Agenda Additions and Deletions

- ◆ Correspondence from Internal Analysis Committee - addition to agenda
- ◆ Correspondence from "A Christmas to Remember" Parade Committee - addition to agenda
- ◆ Correspondence from CWS relative to Street Opening Policy
- ◆ Ordinance to Amend Sign Ordinance - remove from agenda

Committee Reports

Finance – Ald. Rabinowitz reported the Finance Committee's primary focus was reviewing the status of the budget and noted the Council now has a draft budget in hand. He also stated that regarding the filling of the clerk position in the Finance, the general feeling of the Committee was that it be filled.

Personnel – Ald. McNeil reported the Personnel Committee reviewed several items including the Finance Office clerk's position, military benefits for the reservists and the appointment of a firefighter.

Public Safety -- Ald. Jeffer reported the Public Safety Committee discussed the citizens police academy and the possibility of a similar program through the Fire Department. The Fire Department will be holding an open house on Thursday.

Public Works -- Ald. Biviano reported that the Public Works Committee discussed the fairgrounds project and CWS sidewalk replacement on Midland Drive. Ald. Rabinowitz also noted that there were some frozen water complaints from residents with temporary water lines and the Healthy Heart Walk will take place with participants walking on the sidewalks.

Asst. Engineer Allison reported there is no heat in the old fire house and when the records from the third floor are moved into the building behind the station, he would like to "moth ball" the building.

-- Ald. Biviano moved to authorize the Engineer to winterize the old fire station. Seconded by Ald. Jeffer and duly adopted, ayes all.

Adjournment -- Ald. McNeil moved to adjourn at 7:48 PM. Seconded by Ald. Jeffer and duly adopted, ayes all.