

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATERVLIET
THURSDAY, AUGUST 7, 2008 AT 7:00 P.M.**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Michael P. Manning at 7:00 P.M.

Roll call showed that Mayor Michael P. Manning, Councilman Charles J. Diamond and Councilwoman Ellen R. Fogarty were present.

Also present from City Administration were: Yorden C. Huban; Corporation Counsel, Bruce A. Hidley City Clerk and Clerk to the Council, Rosemary Nichols; Deputy General Manager of Economic Development, Fire Chief Don Clickner and Police Chief Ron Boisvert.

A motion was made and seconded to dispense with and approve the minutes from the previous Council Meeting.

The following agenda was presented to the Council by Bruce A. Hidley City Clerk and Clerk to the Council.

REPORT OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

ITEM #1 – Bruce A. Hidley; City Clerk requested Rosemary Nichols; Deputy General Manager of Economic Development and Planning to address a couple of issues with the Council. Ms. Nichols informed the Council that the City of Watervliet received a Housing Rehabilitation Grant from Albany County in the amount of \$400,000.00. Ms. Nichols explained that the grant money will be targeted for single family homes throughout the City. Ms. Nichols stated that the City hopes to combine this program with existing programs in weatherization and energy efficiency. This will allow the City to maximize the delivery of the rehabilitation of single family homes.

Ms. Nichols informed the Council that the City has received from the Office of Community Renewal, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in the amount of \$650,000.00. The money received from this grant is targeted on the Rt.32, Third Avenue corridor of Port Schuyler. Approximately half of the money will be expended for rehabilitation of housing, three additional dwelling units, improve facades and encourage micro enterprise. Ms. Nichols noted that hearings were held in March and April. The City will now be in the position to take advantage of the interest expressed during the public hearings and encourage renovation and revitalization. Additionally, Ms. Nichols explained that the City was also a partner with Albany County for a CDBG grant. The City was informed that Albany County was awarded \$750,000.00 from this grant program. Ms. Nichols noted that the City will also receive a share of that program money also. This money will also be used for the rehabilitation of housing in the City.

Ms. Nichols informed the Council that the City will be participating in a new program called that Vacant Apartment Management Program (VAMP). Ms. Nichols explained that this program will be coordinated with the Watervliet Housing Authority (WHA) who will act as property managers. The City will use the \$150,000.00 funding to bring dwelling units up to code and to rehabilitate as necessary. All units will be subjected to energy audits. Ms. Nichols stated that this program will assist homeowners who may not want the responsibility of being landlords. Ms. Nichols noted that this program will allow units which are vacant to become occupied. The main goal is to keep the population up. Items such as Sales Tax Revenue are based upon our population. Ms. Nichols concluded by stating that this is a very exciting development program for the City to participate in.

Mayor Manning stated that depending on the share the City gets from the County the City will receive nearly \$1.5 million dollars to focus on Rt. 32 and the rest throughout the City.

ITEM #2 – Bruce A. Hidley; City Clerk informed the Council that a Budget Workshop would be held on Thursday, August 21, 2008 at 5:30 PM. Mr. Hidley noted that this workshop will be the first of many for the 2009 budget cycle. Mr. Hidley noted that Police Chief Ron Boisvert and Mark R. Gilchrist; Assessor will address their department budget needs.

OLD BUSINESS

PUBLIC HEARING – A Public Hearing for those persons who wish to be heard regarding the City of Watervliet acting as the lead agency in the environmental review of the Comprehensive Capital Grant Program for the Watervliet Housing Authority. (See Resolution No. 8280 authorizing the advertisement).

Mayor Manning opened the Public Hearing for comment.

Mayor Manning explained to those in attendance that this Public Hearing allows the City to act as the lead agency for the environmental review to allow the Watervliet Housing Authority to apply for grant money under the Comprehensive Capital Grant Program.

There being no further comment, Mayor Manning closed the Public Hearing.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION NO. 8284 – The Council of the City of Watervliet authorizes Mayor Michael P. Manning on behalf of the City of Watervliet for the implementation and funding in the first instances 100% of the Federal Aid and State Program Aid eligible costs for the 19th Street Reconstruction Project. Upon motion of Councilman Diamond, seconded by Councilwoman Fogarty, this Resolution was approved and adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 8285 – The Council of the City of Watervliet authorizes Mayor Michael P. Manning to apply for permits with State and Federal Regulatory Agencies and to negotiate and coordinate with engineering firms on construction design of a community boathouse at Hudson Shores Park. Before voting Mayor Manning explained that the purpose of this Resolution is to allow the Mayor and other Department Heads to advance talks for the community boathouse in Hudson Shores Plaza. Councilman Diamond stated that this is a great way to gain participation in the park, it adds to the park being first class for city residents. Councilman Diamond noted that the community organization Kids Count has agreed to development and implement a brick program that will make the area around the boathouse look better. It will utilize that area in a more functional capacity. The proceeds from the bricks will offset the cost of running the boathouse and the children programs in the City. Mayor Manning noted that as the financial information becomes available there will be public hearings to keep the public involved. Upon motion of Councilwoman Fogarty, seconded by Councilman Diamond, this Resolution was approved and adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 8286 – The Council of the City of Watervliet does hereby approve the grant oversight and administration provided in various instances at the direction of the Mayor through the City of Watervliet Local Development Corporation. Deputy General Manager of Economic Development and Planning Rosemary Nichols explained to the Council that this follows up on the grants reported on. It is the intention to use the Local Development Corporation to do the leg work for the grant administration. The Mayor will supervise the oversight and administration. The LDC will act as a limited extent as the agent for the City in other instances the City will work with the LDC to take appropriate action. This will only be done at the direction of the Mayor. Upon motion of Councilman Diamond, seconded by Councilwoman Fogarty, this Resolution was approved and adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 8287 – The Council of the City of Watervliet authorizes Mayor Michael P. Manning to execute an agreement with O'Brien & Gere Engineering, Inc. for the performance of an Environmental Performance review. Before voting Mayor Manning explained that O'Brien and Gere will audit the City for environmental regulatory State, Federal and Local requirements. The City has never done this environmental review before. They will target the Department of Public Works Highway and Water, Filtration Plant, Fire Department and the public swimming pool. This is approximately \$5,800.00 to have this review done. If in fact an official audit is done by a regulatory agency and there are finding. The preliminary work completed may give you some time to correct the findings without any fines. Mayor Manning noted that this is a very healthy item to have done in conjunction with the State Comptrollers Audit on the City's finances and the NYS Civil Service is also performing an audit. The City will get a fresh start and will be able to correct any findings noted. Upon motion of Councilwoman Fogarty, seconded by Councilman Diamond, this Resolution was approved and adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 8288 – The Council of the City of Watervliet authorizes Mayor Michael P. Manning to execute an agreement with Certified Ambulance Group, 145 Dividend Road, Rocky Hill, CT. 06067, to provide ambulance billing service. Before voting Bruce A. Hidley; City Clerk explained that bids were received on July 15, 2008. Robert A. Fahr; Director of Finance decided that the low bidder of 5.7% from CAG be accepted. Captain Scott Skinner detailed for the Council information related to the proposal. Mayor Manning explained that the overall picture for the City plan was to extend our current Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to transporting also which is the only thing the City does not do. Upon motion of Councilman Diamond, seconded by Councilwoman Fogarty, this Resolution was approved and adopted.

APPROPRIATIONS AND ACCOUNTING

Bruce A. Hidley; City Clerk informed the Council on behalf of Robert A. Fahr; Director of Finance that at the August 21, 2008 Council Meeting there would be a couple of financial transfers on the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

- 1.) Bob Gusberti – 1212 Hillside Drive – Watervliet, NY – Mr. Gusberti was concerned about Resolution No. 8271 passed a couple of weeks ago. He stated that when the City was re-assessed, 100% evaluation eight years ago, the State Equalization Board of Review stated that they had a computer program that would aid cities to update the property from time to time. Mr. Gusberti wanted to know if the City actually purchased this program, have we been updating our programs or has the City even used the program. Mr. Gusberti noted that the City is considering another revaluation and was the program used which was offered by the state. Mayor Manning responded by stating that the City never signed up for the program. Mr. Gusberti noted that this was a widely publicized program at the time. Mayor Manning explained to Mr. Gusberti that Resolution No. 8271 was not to do a revaluation. Mayor Manning further explained the accounting category, things associated with assessment review and any legal fees when homeowners challenge their review. That is what that funding was put into place for use of from Resolution No. 8271.

- 2.) Michael Calacone – 410 2nd Avenue – Watervliet, NY – Mr. Calacone had a concern regarding the dog legislation recently enacted from Ordinance No. 1827. Mr. Calacone asked the Council why they decided on Pershing Green and Hudson Shores Park for dogs to run in. Mayor Manning explained that originally all the parks did not allow dogs to enter parks. There was feedback during discussions to have dogs allowed on each side of the City. Council Diamond stated that there were three Council Meetings which residents wanted to be able to walk their dogs in public parks. The Council did not want all the parks included which is how the Council decided on one park uptown and one park downtown. Parks which had a lot of programs and children were excluded from consideration. Mr. Calacone stated that he lives directly across from Pershing Green and that residents are not cleaning up after their dogs. Mr. Calacone stated that there could be other areas of the City to allow dog walk areas such as the 4th Street incinerator area. Mr. Calacone further stated that it would be nice not to have dogs in any parks. Mr. Calacone explained that Pershing Green is the only park dedicated to a national war hero General John Black Jack Pershing. Mr. Calacone explained that Pershing Green is in terrible shape compared to all the other parks in the City. It would be nice in General Black Jack Pershing's honor and with community pride to fix up the park area. The monument is not to grade, grass needs cutting, weeds all over, concrete imbedded in the turf and water pipes exposed. Mr. Calacone has told the past administration about this problem. Mr. Calacone stated that Mr. Al Turton used to take care of the park but the City does not maintain the park. Mr. Calacone requested that a flag be placed back up due to the other one missing.
- 3.) Marion Foutage – 1554 3rd Avenue – Watervliet, NY – Ms. Foutage requested wanted to know how she could obtain the minutes. Councilman Diamond suggested that the City place them on the counter after the meeting or placing them on the bulletin Board. Ms. Foutage asked about placing the agenda on the Vliet 17 Channel through the Watervliet Housing Authority. Mayor Manning stated that this could be done. Ms. Foutage thanked the Mayor. Ms. Foutage stated that she sees that the McDonalds project is ongoing. At the Planning Board meeting Ms. Foutage expressed her concern about garbage and debris for several blocks. When McDonalds first opened the residents were assured that McDonalds would clean up for a two block area. Ms. Foutage stated that McDonalds has not lived up to that promise. Ms. Foutage asked the Council what they will be doing to stop the litter problem. Mayor Manning noted that McDonalds is under new management and that the Planning Board placed the same stipulation regarding the removal of debris in the area not on just their property. Ms. Foutage also has a concern about the trees which will be removed on the west side. Deputy General Manager of Economic Development and Planning Rosemary Nichols stated that if trees are being removed they will be replaced in kind. The buffering approved by the Planning Board is more extensive than the buffering that is currently there. Ms. Foutage raised her concern about St. Patrick's Church proposed parking area on 19th Street. Ms. Foutage wants to know why the City couldn't let the pharmacy who has requested parking be available for their customers on the

6th Avenue side. Ms. Foutage feels that they could have pharmacy customers only parking during pharmacy hours. Along with one or two handicapped parking spaces there to accommodate the parking needs. Ms. Foutage understands that the City is trying to encourage business in the City. Mayor Manning replied by saying yes. Ms. Foutage is concerned that she pays City, County, State and Federal taxes. She does not think the City should be wasting tax dollars on just trying to obtain 10 parking spaces in front of St. Patrick's Church. There are already eight on the street, the City does not need the bump outs, and Ms. Foutage feels they are hazardous especially during plowing season. Mayor Manning explained that with the project being pushed off until next year, the General Manager explained at the last Council Meeting that there will be one more Public Hearing. Ms. Foutage understood General Manager Mark Gleason that there was not a Public Hearing on the parking in front of St. Patrick's Church, but a Public Hearing re-design will be held at a later date. Ms. Foutage stated that people are discouraged that things are a done deal. Mayor Manning concluded by saying that something will be done to post the minutes and agenda.

Councilman Diamond stated that he noticed that the signs are posted in our park areas. Councilman Diamond has one problem with the sign stating Watervliet I.D. required at the Watervliet Veterans Park at 16th Street and 2nd Avenue. Councilman Diamond noted that people who are parking their cars are afraid they are not welcome to visit the park.

There being no further business to come before the Council, a motion was made and seconded for adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bruce A. Hidley
City Clerk and Clerk to the Council