

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATERVLIET
THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 2018 AT 7:00 P.M.**

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

Roll call showed that Mayor Manning, Councilman Patricelli, and Councilman McGrouty were present.

Also present from City Administration were: General Manager Jeremy Smith, City Clerk & Clerk to the Council Scott O'Reilly, Director of Finance Mike McNeff, Corporation Counsel Yorden Huban, Police Chief Mark Spain, and Fire Chief Rob Conlen.

Councilman Patricelli made a motion to dispense with the reading of the Minutes from the previous meeting, which Councilman McGrouty seconded. A vote was then taken to dispense with the minutes that passed unanimously.

REPORT OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT REPORT

Working Supervisor Mark Cady gave an overview of the responsibilities of his Department which included repairing roads, plowing roads, filling alleys with shale, trimming trees in alleys and roadways, and striping roads. Mr. Cady also pointed out that his department, which is made up of six employees, aids other departments with man power. Lastly, he explained that his department oversees fuel for City vehicles, Housing Authority Vehicles, and the School District vehicles.

Councilman Patricelli asked Mr. Cady to explain the work order process and how big of a back log there is. Mr. Cady stated that they did have a work order system in the past but now he has a weekly meeting on Monday mornings with the General Manager where they plan all the work for the week and go over the work that was completed the previous week. Councilman Patricelli then asked how he kept track of projects that may be pointed out to him in the winter but are not able to be completed until the summer. In that case, Mr. Cady stated, he would make a note of it. Also, Mr. Cady pointed out that he is constantly out on the streets looking for issues that need attention. General Manager Smith then explained that the work order system that used to be in place is not compatible with the City's new email system therefore does not work. Currently, the City uses a "task list" with in its new email system that allows you to set reminders. Mr. Smith also stated that the City is considering an "all encompassing" computer system that would include a work order system.

Councilman Patricelli then inquired about a couch that had been left near the "Welcome to Watervliet," sign in Port Schuyler. Mr. Cady informed him that the couch is in the Town of Colonie and that they had been notified to remove it. Councilman McGrouty then asked if the City could pick it up and Mr. Cady responded that he would.

General Manager Smith then gave a breakdown of the number of employees in the department. In 1975 there were fifteen which has steadily decreased ever since. Currently the department is made up of six members. Councilman Patricelli then applauded the Highway Department on their hard work during the winter.

OLD BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION NO. 9488 - The Council of the City of Watervliet hereby authorizes and directs Scott P. O'Reilly, City Clerk and Clerk to the Council, to advertise once in the official newspaper of the City that the City of Watervliet will issue Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for professional consulting services for development of a Watervliet Housing Needs Assessment Study. The proposals must be received in the City Clerk's Office of the City of Watervliet no later than 2:00 PM on May 10, 2018. Requests for Proposals (RFPs) will be on file and publicly exhibited at the Office of the City Clerk. The Council of the City of Watervliet reserves the right to waive any informalities in or to reject any or all proposals submitted.

General Manager Jeremy Smith explained that this RFP was connected to a grant received in 2017 that will include the entire City. He also pointed out that this study will allow the City to apply for further housing funding.

Councilman Patricelli asked if this study will address the recent reduction in Senior Citizen STAR Applications. General Manager Smith explained that this is not a census but the findings will show who owns the home and what each house may need.

Upon a motion from Councilman Patricelli, which was seconded by Councilman McGrouty, the Resolution passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 9489 - The Council of the City of Watervliet hereby authorizes and directs Scott P. O'Reilly, City Clerk and Clerk to the Council, to advertise once in the official newspaper of the City that a Public Hearing will be held on May 3, 2018 at 7:00PM at the J. Leo O'Brien Senior Citizen Center, to hear those persons who wish to be heard regarding possible submission of Community Development Block Grant applications for 2018.

General Manager Smith explained that this Public Hearing will allow residents to give

their input in the types of grants the City should attempt to acquire in 2018.

Councilman McGrouty made a motion to move on the Resolution which Councilman Patricelli seconded and the Resolution passed with a 3-0 vote.

RESOLUTION NO. 9490 – The Council of the City of Watervliet hereby authorizes and directs Scott P. O'Reilly, City Clerk and Clerk to the Council, to advertise once in the official newspaper of the City that a Public Hearing will be held on May 3, 2018 at 7:00PM at the J. Leo O'Brien Senior Citizen Center, to hear those persons who wish to be heard regarding the activities and effectiveness of active Community Development Block Grant programs.

General Manager explained that this Public Hearing will give residents an opportunity to comment on grants the City currently has underway.

After a motion to move on the Resolution by Councilman Patricelli which was seconded by Councilman McGrouty the Resolution passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 9491 - The Council of the City of Watervliet hereby selects Barton & Loguidice, D.P.C., with an address of 10 Airline Drive, Suite 200, Albany, New York 12205, to provide engineering consulting services to the City of Watervliet for the Watervliet Bike Path Construction Project and that Mayor Michael P. Manning is hereby authorized and empowered to execute a contract between the City of Watervliet and Barton & Loguidice.

General Manager Smith explained that the City Council approved the application for funding this project in 2015. This project will connect the bike path from the Fourth Street tunnel to Twenty-Third Street and Hudson Shores Park. Mr. Smith stated that a selection committee graded the bids with Barton & Loguidice having scored the highest and that he recommended this Resolution to the Council based on similar projects this company has completed in the past.

Councilman Patricelli then asked what the project would cost. General Manager Smith stated that Fifty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$55,000.00) were earmarked for consulting but the cost of the total project is Five Hundred Thousand dollars (\$500,000.00).

Councilman McGrouty then asked what the scoring process for this was. General Manager Smith explained that there were six criteria and each one was individually weighted.

Upon a motion from Councilman McGrouty which was seconded by Councilman Patricelli, the Resolution passed with a 3-0 vote.

APPROPRIATIONS AND ACCOUNTING

RESOLUTION NO. 9492 - The Council of the City of Watervliet hereby approves a Bond Resolution authorizing the issuance of an amount not to exceed Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000.00) in serial bonds for the purpose of financing the acquisition of Municipal Vehicles.

General Manager Smith explained that this bond would be used to purchase six vehicles. Two would be replacements for the Police Department, two would be replacement vehicles for the Department of Public Works, one would replace Fire Chief Conlen's vehicle and the last would be for the General Manager. Also, Mr. Smith Stated, some of the vehicles being replaced would be given to the Code Enforcement to replace their vehicles.

Councilman Patricelli commented that preventative maintenance on vehicles is a great way to save the City money and as of yet, he has not seen ample evidence that the City is following an effective vehicle maintenance program. Because of this, Councilman Patricelli recommended holding off on the purchase of new City vehicles until a vehicle maintenance program is established and being followed. General Manager Smith explained that previously the City did not have a vehicle maintenance policy but one was adopted in 2017 and that it is being followed. Currently, the Fire Department vehicles are going through their annual preventive maintenance and, Mr. Smith explained, now that plowing season is over, the Highway Department vehicles will be going in for their preventative maintenance in the near future. Mr. Smith went on to say that per the policy, the City's MEO 1, is in charge of keeping vehicle maintenance logs and making sure vehicles go in for their maintenance when scheduled. The reports are submitted to the General Manager quarterly. Mr. Smith stated that he hopes to get away from paper logs in the future but they are kept by hand at present. Councilman Patricelli stated that he appreciates that the City has instituted a policy but that he is still not comfortable with it.

Councilman McGrouty then asked what rate the City would receive on this bond is, what the annual payment would be, and if the City can afford them. General Manager Smith explained that we will not know the rate until the Resolution is approved but Finance Director Mike McNeff stated it would most likely be three percent. As for the yearly payments, Mr. McNeff stated it would be between Forty and Forty-Five Thousand dollars per year which is in line with the City's five-year plan financially. Mr. Smith then stated that the plan going forward is to purchase vehicles with reserve funds, once they are built up, rather than bonding them out.

Councilman McGrouty then asked Police Chief Spain if his department needed two new vehicles. Chief Spain confirmed that they did and explained that one vehicle is a larger replacement for the supervisor car that will be used as a mobile command center. The second car

will replace the most used car in the fleet which is the traffic patrol car that currently has one hundred fourteen thousand miles on it. Councilman McGrouty then asked General Manager Jeremy Smith to guarantee that the City has a vehicle maintenance policy in place. Mr. Smith responded that there is a vehicle maintenance policy and that it is being followed.

Councilman Patricelli then made a motion to move on the Resolution, which Councilman McGrouty seconded. After the votes were cast, the Resolution passed two to one, with Councilman Patricelli being the one opposed.

RESOLUTION NO. 9493 - The Council of the City of Watervliet hereby approves the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) in response to the Report of Examination from the Office of the New York State Comptroller regarding an audit of the fiscal affairs of the City of Watervliet for the period of January 1, 2014 to June 30, 2017.

General Manager Jeremy Smith explained that the Corrective Action Plan being proposed is the City's written response to the Comptroller's audit. The State Comptroller had six recommendations once they finished their audit. When the report was received from the Comptroller, the City had already answered five of the six recommendations. Mr. Smith explained that the sixth recommendation was a plan to help reduce the deficit in the sewer fund and that the City was currently following that plan but that it will be carried out over a five-year period.

Councilman Patricelli then asked if the audit recommended placing more burden on the City Council for budgetary oversight. General Manager Smith stated that two of the recommendations were aimed towards the City Council, one being developing and adopting structurally balanced General Fund budgets and the second being developing a comprehensive five-year plan and to frequently monitor said plan. Councilman Patricelli said he doesn't believe the Council has been included enough to satisfy the Comptroller's recommendation. He then cited a couple instances such as having to continually ask for the City's bills from the Finance Department when they are supposed to be submitted monthly. Also, Councilman Patricelli stated that he had asked the Finance Director to give a presentation to the Finance Committee, similar to the one he gave to the City Council at a previous meeting and that the request had been denied by the General Manager. He then stated that he still would like that presentation to take place. Due to these factors, Mr. Patricelli stated it would be hard for him to approve this Resolution. General Manager Smith explained that the Corrective Action Plan is a response to the Comptroller's recommendations and then asked Councilman Patricelli if he believed it did not answer those recommendations. Councilman Patricelli responded saying he doesn't feel he has had enough oversight of the budget therefore would not want to put his name on the proposed Corrective Action Plan. General Manager Smith then asked Councilman Patricelli if he felt these

actions correctively responded to the Comptrollers recommendations. Councilman Patricelli stated that the response was well written but he believed the City needs actions rather words. Mr. Smith responded by stated that five of the six actions have already taken place.

Councilman McGrouty then stated that he believed the City is heading in the right direction financially but also that Councilman Patricelli had a point with asking for the City's bills. Director of Finance Mike McNeff too responsibility for not getting the bills to the Council in a timely manner and apologized.

Councilman McGrouty made a motion to move on the Resolution which Councilman Patricelli seconded. With Mayor Manning and Councilman McGrouty being in favor and Councilman Patricelli being opposed, the Resolution passed by a two to one vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Paul Huban – 1500 12th Avenue – Mr. Huban asked if the owner of the new house being built on Fourteenth Street applied for a variance. General Manager Smith stated that he does not believe a variance was applied for.

Mr. Huban then asked if anything had been done about the underground gas tanks at the old Selby's Gas Station on the corner of Twenty-Third Street and Second Avenue. General Manager Smith stated that the City had not done anything with regards to the tanks. Mr. Huban then stated he believed they were supposed to be removed if the property was vacant for one year. Chief Spain then remarked that State Code states that the tanks don't have to be removed, rather they can be filled with an inert substance.

Kathy Crudo - 1863 9th Avenue- Ms. Crudo stated that she was a member of the Parks Committee and that they were interested in helping handicapped children at one or more of the City Parks by adding a handicapped swing and handicapped access. She offered to purchase a swing with the funds raised by Parks Committee. Mayor Manning stated that the new apparatus at Brotherhood Park is, in fact handicap accessible. Ms. Crudo then asked that we make all parks that way and asked to have one handicapped swing in each park. General Manager Smith stated that this had been brought up previously and the recreation department has researched it. He also stated that there is some money available in the playground budget to purchase the swing and that the City would certainly accept one if it were donated.

Paul Hughes – 108 15th Street – Mr. Hughes thanked the City employees who helped with the community build at Brotherhood Park. He then gave a reminder that “Keep Vliet Neat”

Mr. Hughes also asked if there was anything the City could do about low hanging wires in his neighbor's yard because they are potentially dangerous. He stated that National Grid looked at the wires but did not remove them. General Manager Smith stated that if National Grid did not remove them then they are not electrical wires and that remediating the issue would be the homeowner's responsibility.

Peg Germano -- Ms. Germano asked if anything had recently been done at the Reservoir to deal with the water chestnut problem. General Manager Jeremy Smith explained that the City has three upcoming studies to determine the best way to solve the water chestnut issue. Ms. Germano then asked if an air boat could be used like it had been in the past. Mr. Smith noted that the City no longer owns an air boat but that the City is considering that as an option with a private company.

Bill Conroy -- Mr. Conroy asked for an update on getting his name added to the list of possible contractors for Housing Rehab projects in the City. General Manager Smith explained that paperwork needs to be filled out to be added to the list. Councilman Patricelli stated that Mr. Conroy should have been notified of this sooner because he initially brought it up at a previous City Council meeting. General Manager Smith agreed that Mr. Conroy should have been made aware sooner.

Jeff Foster – 1201 8th Avenue – Mr. Foster cited an ongoing problem with garbage cans being damaged during refuse pick up. He asked if the City could start a program in which they purchase garbage cans that are able to be picked up by the garbage trucks directly, and residents can purchase the cans from the City. General Manager Smith stated that the City has looked into purchasing those types of cans in the past and would look into it again.

With there being no further comments Mayor Manning closed the Public Comment period.

Councilman Patricelli then asked Police Chief Spain if there had been any resolution to the graffiti issue at Seventh Street Park. Chief Spain responded saying no official complaint has been made to the Police Department as of yet therefore there has been no resolution.

Councilman Patricelli asked Fire Chief Conlen for an update on the smoke detector program. Chief Conlen reported that around fifty smoke detectors were installed by the Red Cross at various address in throughout the City. The program was a success.

Councilman Patricelli asked if the City had hired a person to work evenings at the Dome and if that employee's salary was being offset by the revenue generated from organizations

renting the facility. General Manager Smith stated that an employee was hired in December and informed him that the revenue was covering the cost of the employee.

Councilman Patricelli suggested the City having a study done to determine the pros and cons for flat water rates versus having water meters. He stated that he was not in favor of either side but it would be nice to know one way or another. General Manager Smith stated that he believed a study had been done in the past but he was unsure of when and the location of the findings. He also stated that he believed the report would state that a third of homes would see an increase, a third would see a decrease and a third would stay the same.

Councilman Patricelli then asked about a recent water report that the City released. General Manager stated that the bottom line of the report stated that there were no issues with the City's water.

Councilman McGrouty asked Fire Chief Conlen if the Fire Truck that was recently repaired was back and functioning. Chief Conlen stated that the truck has an air leak but is back in service. Chief Conlen also stated that the replacement truck the City purchased was currently being stored in Cohoes and that it would be used for mutual aid. Councilman McGrouty also asked about the recruit the department has at the Fire Academy. Chief Conlen reported that everything was going well.

A motion was made by Councilman Patricelli to adjourn the City Council meeting, which was seconded by Councilman McGrouty. The meeting was adjourned at 8:26PM.

***Next Meeting: April 19, 2018 7:00pm**

Respectfully Submitted,



Scott P. O'Reilly

City Clerk & Clerk to the Council