MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATERVLIET
THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2019 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, Police Chief Mark Spain and Corporation Counsel Yorden Huban.

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

2018 Police Department Operations Report

Police Chief Mark Spain gave a breakdown of the amount of calls the Police Department responded to in 2018. He stated that the department received roughly 1,800 calls per month which is about Sixty per day. He went on to explain that the Police Department issued roughly 4,600 traffic tickets for the year which is about Thirteen per day. In 2018 the Watervliet Police Department made 855 arrests.

Police Chief Spain also pointed out various types of training the department took part in throughout the year, most notably "Active Shooter Training," which every member of the department was able to participate in during a mock active shooter demonstration at the Watervliet High School. He explained that the department took part in over 1,000 total hours of different types of training in 2018.

Chief Spain then described a few of the notable arrests that were executed by the department during 2018.

Councilman Patricelli asked Chief Spain about the upcoming Heroin Forum. Chief Spain announced that the Albany County Sherriff's will be holding the forum on March 12th at the Watervliet High School.

There was then a question from the gallery about the best way to report something to the Police Department. Chief Spain explained that "first person" reporting is always best. Residents can utilize any number of ways to contact the Police Department, including in person, email, telephone, Facebook, and Twitter.

OLD BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION NO. 9593 - The Council of the City of Watervliet hereby approves, authorizes and directs Mayor Michael P. Manning to execute a contract to purchase 2112 Fourth Avenue, Watervliet, New York 12189 from the Albany County Land Bank pursuant to the NYS HOME Local Program in the amount of $4,151.10.

General Manager Jeremy Smith explained that the cost of the property will be covered by the grant the City received. The purpose is to rehabilitate the vacant property in an effort to get it back on the City's tax rolls.

Councilman Patricelli then asked for the time frame on the project. Mr. Smith explained that if approved, the engineer's inspection of the property would take place the following week. After that, the bid specifications will be comprised, and the City will put the project out to bid. Mr. Smith stated that it is difficult to give a time frame for the completion of the project until the inspection takes place and the scope of work is confirmed.

Corporation Counsel Huban then clarified that the City will initially pay for the home but will be reimbursed by the grant it received.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 9594 - The Council of the City of Watervliet hereby approves the Grant Disbursement Agreement between the City of Watervliet and the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York ("DASNY") and further ratifies and confirms the Mayor's execution of said Grant Disbursement Agreement.

General Manager Jeremy Smith explained this would authorize Mayor Manning to accept the grant funding that will reimburse the City for the purchase of a Fire Truck that was purchased to replace the one damaged in a fire in the City of Cohoes.

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

APPROPRIATIONS AND ACCOUNTING

There was no legislation proposed however, General Manager Smith gave an update on the on-going work being done by the New York State Financial Restructuring Board (FRB). He stated that the City expects to receive the FRB's report in May. Councilman Patricelli then asked if a draft of the report would be made available to the members of the City Council. Mr. Smith claimed he believed that was the case.

Prior to the opening of the Public Comment Period Councilman Patricelli thanked City Employee Janice Meyer for her efforts in helping residents with their STAR Program applications.

Councilman Patricelli then announced that he had been contacted by a local volunteer group that is willing the aid the City in a project during the month of June if the City was interested.

Councilman Patricelli thanked Saqib Choudry for donating the new water fountain that has been installed at the Dome.

Councilman Patricelli asked Police Chief Spain if a "Speed Limit" sign could be placed near the base of the Nineteenth Street hill because he has received many complaints of motorists speeding up the hill. Chief Spain stated he believed there was a "Speed Limit" sign in that area but that he will look into it.

Lastly, Councilman Patricelli asked if there was anything the City could do to help the owner of the Rusty Anchor that was recently damaged and would not be able to open for business this year. Mayor Manning stated that the owner has reached out to the City to talk about options, one including constructing a permanent building at Hudson Shores Park. Mayor Manning stated the City had to look at his permit to see what is allowed but that they would meet with the owner.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Jeff Foster – 1201 8th Avenue – Mr. Foster made a comment about fines given out by the City for garbage. He stated he had a problem with the rule being that all garbage cans must have lids on them when it is put out for collection. He claimed that he has found many times lids from his cans have disappeared or been damaged after collection. He also stated that recycle bins have no lids, therefore, in his opinion, garbage cans shouldn't be required to have them either.

Saqib Chourdy – 1856 12th Avenue – Mr. Chourdy expressed concern with being charged a vacant building fee for a property he owned but not having it refunded once he rehabilitated the home. General Manager Smith explained that if paid, vacant building fees are refunded once the home is occupied. He went on to explain that in this case the home wasn't occupied, Mr. Choudry instead sold the property after he rehabilitated it. Mr. Smith also pointed out that the vacant building fee for that property was not paid and was re-levied on to the property taxes instead.

Councilman Patricelli then asked if a property owner rehabilitated a home then moved into it would they be entitled to the vacant building fee reimbursement. General Manager Smith stated that if the fee had been paid and not re-levied that would be correct. Councilman Patricelli then asked if the property owner should get the refund if they sell the home before moving into it or renting it out. According to the law, General Manager stated, they would not be entitled to the refund in that scenario.

Councilman McGrouty stated he believed the law should change. Mayor Manning then

stated the Council would look at the law because the intent is to get property owners to fix these homes so that they can be lived in once again.

Paul Hughes – 108 15th Street - Mr. Hughes asked for an update on a few properties in the City. The first was a Church on First Avenue and he asked who was in charge of maintaining the property. General Manager Smith stated he would have to do some research to find out.

Mr. Hughes then asked if there had been any progress on upcoming project at the city owned former Dutch Reformed Church on Fifteenth Street. General Manager Smith explained that the first phase, clean out by City forces, was underway. He noted that next the electrical to the building will be upgraded so that more work can be completed.

Mr. Hughes then stated there is a home on 1st Avenue that has deteriorated and needs to be roped off or boarded up. He explained that there are holes in the concrete steps leading to the home and he believed them to be unsafe.

Christian Conte – 1819 6th Avenue – Ms. Conte stated she had no issue with the rules for garbage collection being enforced but commented that the Sanitation employees throw cans once they are emptied and often damage them. She explained that the previous day she watched one of her cans get thrown causing a wheel to break off.

Cheryl Gordon – 2102 Broadway – Ms. Gordon commented on the upcoming Bike Path Project. She asked if the proposed route of the Bike Path could be altered. Ms. Gordon suggested having the Bike Path turn right on 20th Street and then follow an alley to the 787 crosswalk, rather than using Broadway until it turns right at 23rd Street. She stated that there are already many accidents in that area of Broadway and that she believed adding a bike lane would be dangerous. She also stated that the new Bike Path would cause parking issues in that area of Broadway as well. General Manager Smith stated he would have the engineer on the project take a look at the route again but that based on previous conversations her suggested route is not feasible.

Danielle Woodruff – 1207 Hillside Drive – Ms. Woodruff shared some information she acquired on Crows, in response to the recent complaints she saw on Social Media regarding the issue of Crows in the City. She shared that the "Roost" of crows currently located in the City of Watervliet has been in the area for over 100 years and that they are migratory. They typically stay in the area from October through March. After researching the subject, Ms. Woodruff stated she doesn't believe the City should spend money to remove them because they are likely to leave on their own at the end of the month.

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

Councilman Patricelli made a motion to adjourn into Executive Session which was seconded by Councilman McGrouty. After a 3-0 vote the Council adjourned into Executive Session at 8:01 PM.

***Next Meeting: March 21, 2019 7:00pm**

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott P. O'Reilly

City Clerk & Clerk to the Council