

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF WATERTOWN
May 17, 2010
7:00 P.M.**

MAYOR JEFFREY E. GRAHAM PRESIDING

PRESENT: **COUNCIL MEMBER ROXANNE M. BURNS
COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH M. BUTLER, JR.
COUNCIL MEMBER TERESA R. MACALUSO
COUNCIL MEMBER JEFFREY M. SMITH
MAYOR GRAHAM**

ALSO PRESENT: **MARY M. CORRIVEAU, CITY MANAGER
ATTORNEY ROBERT J. SLYE**

City Staff Present: James Mills, Jayme St. Croix, Eugene Hayes, Peter Monaco and Michael Lumbis

City Manager Corriveau presented the following reports to Council:

- 1 - Approving the 2010 Youth Employment Training Program Contract
- 2 - Funding Request, Jefferson County Historical Society
- 3 - Property Purchase Offer – 276 Moulton Street
- 4 - Property Purchase Offer – 523 Jefferson Street

REPORTS ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

Meeting opened with a moment of silence.

Pledge of Allegiance was given.

The reading of the minutes of the regular meeting of May 3, 2010, adjourned meeting of May 10, 2010 was dispensed with and accepted as written by motion of Council Member Burns, seconded by Council Member Smith and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

COMMUNICATIONS

Petition for Assessment Review was received from Kazi Foods of New York, Inc.

ABOVE PLACED ON FILE

WATERTOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT AWARDS

Sgt. James Spencer, Officer Frederick March and Officer Elizabeth Lewis were presented with the Meritorious Service Award.

Officer Jonathan Pitts was presented with the Honorable Service Award.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Laura Oakes, Vice President of North Country Arts Council, addressed the chair on behalf of the Council asking permission to celebrate artistic expression by holding a competition of entries by local artists to paint the Lachenauer Plaza fountain.

Mayor Graham advised that this would be discussed under new business.

Richard Chase, owner of the Wilson Monument Building, addressed the chair concerning a parcel he owns next to this property which has a water lateral but no sewer lateral. He asked that the City take a look at this as there is an ice cream stand business that would like to rent the property.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that she had researched this and it could be discussed under new business.

RESOLUTIONS

INTRODUCED BY COUNCIL MEMBER ROXANNE M. BURNS

WHEREAS the Jefferson County Department of Employment and Training and the Jefferson-Lewis Workforce Investment Area has allocated to the City of Watertown three (3) funded training positions under the Summer Youth Employment Training Program, and

WHEREAS various departments of the City of Watertown can provide training opportunities for young people of the community, and

WHEREAS the City and Jefferson County Department of Employment and Training have cooperated in past years with this same program,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York, that it hereby authorizes the City's participation in the 2010 Summer Youth Employment Training Program, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager, Mary M. Corriveau, is hereby

authorized and directed to execute the Youth Employment Training Program Contract on behalf of the City of Watertown.

SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH M. BUTLER, JR. AND CARRIED WITH ALL VOTING YEA

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Butler asked what work the person at the library would be doing. He commented that the summer reading program needs extra help.

Mr. Lumbis said that it would be filing and clerical work and perhaps other tasks would be assigned.

Mrs. Corriveau advised that this work program is designed for putting young people into an office setting for the first time and teaching them the basics of working in an office environment.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER SMITH TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING ON MONDAY, MAY 24, 2010 AT 7:00 P.M. TO CONSIDER THE 2010-11 OPERATING BUDGETS AND THE 2010-11 THROUGH 2014-15 CAPITAL BUDGET.

MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS AND CARRIED WITH ALL VOTING IN FAVOR THEREOF.

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COUNCIL DISCUSSED THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

Jefferson Count Historical Society Request

Mayor Graham referred to the request from the society asking for \$10,000 this year. He advised that Mrs. Corriveau had indicated that \$5,000, the same as last year, had been put into this year's budget. Mayor Graham also referred to the lateness of the request.

Council concurred to leave it at \$5,000.

276 Moulton Street

Discussion was held concerning the request from Stanley Hall to purchase this property for \$700.

Mr. Hayes addressed the Council and explained why he recommended not selling this lot due to the condition of the riverbank.

Mrs. Corriveau advised that the City has acquired a number of the properties on Moulton Street due to the concern with the topography.

Council Member Smith asked what the benefit would be for the City to retain this property.

Mr. Hayes explained that when there is a problem with the embankment, we would own it and wouldn't have to worry about it. We are trying to minimize the liability.

Council Member Smith responded that it would seem that if the City owns it, we would be more liable.

Attorney Slye advised that he didn't know if it would be any more or less.

Referring to photos showing a tool shed on the City property, Mayor Graham remarked that he could understand why Mr. Hall would want to buy the land that the shed sits on and he saw no harm in selling it to him.

Council Member Burns remarked that she tends to support staff on this. The property owner built a structure on City owned property and would have needed a building permit.

Attorney Slye responded that it might be a portable shed.

Council Member Smith suggested an agreement to indemnify the City if we allow them to leave the shed on City property.

Council Member Macaluso asked what would happen to the agreement, if and when, new members of Council come on.

Attorney Slye explained that it was permission and it could be revoked.

Council Member Butler asked for information on back taxes.

Mrs. Corriveau advised that it is assessed for \$2,800.

Mr. Hayes also advised that if a driver loses control of a vehicle coming down Bridge Street, it will go down the driveway of the property and into the river. There is nothing to stop it.

Council Members Butler and Macaluso stated that they have no problem with a sale.

Council Member Smith remarked that he agreed with staff.

Discussion centered on property lines and perhaps a smaller amount of land than was proposed in the request to purchase.

Council Member Burns remarked that if Council is going to propose a sale of something different than what is in front of them, Council needs more accurate numbers and a tax map drawn to scale.

Attorney Slye advised that Council should have the individual come to the City and tell us what he wants to buy and define his property line. He also advised that buyers pay for the surveys in this county.

Mayor Graham stated that the City should respond to Mr. Hall and explain that they are not in support of selling as he defined. However, Council might consider a sale of a lesser amount of land. Information with more defined boundaries would have to be submitted by Mr. Hall.

523 Jefferson Street

Adam Brown, 614 Gotham Street, addressed the chair concerning his desire to purchase the 523 Jefferson Street property. This property is slated for demolition by the City. He stated that he is willing to put substantial money into bringing it up to Code. He remarked that it has been a one family house for over 100 years. However, since it has been vacant for several years, he will have to go before the Board of Appeals as it is located in a light industrial zone. He remarked that this house is located in an area that needs to be rezoned as it has residences throughout.

Attorney Slye explained that houses don't have variances. They are under previously existing non-conforming uses.

Mayor Graham commented that there is always resistance to zone changes.

Council Member Butler concurred remarking that Council has tried before, in another area of the City, and the residents wanted it left heavy industry.

Council Member Smith remarked that he doesn't have a problem with selling it to Mr. Brown. However, there are going to be a lot of hurdles for him.

Mayor Graham asked what the demolitions costs would be.

Mr. Hayes indicated \$10,000, possibly more.

After discussion, Council agreed that they would ask the Planning Board to examine the street and surrounding area and make zoning recommendations.

Fountain Painting Request

Mrs. Corriveau advised that Mr. Mix has found the original color to be a deeper, darker blue than what is presently on it. The paint has been ordered and crews are ready to do the work. The arts council has agreed to work with the dark background.

Mayor Graham remarked that he isn't against the idea, but we have had urban art before.

Council Member Smith commented that it is a good idea and they should request proposals in keeping with historic downtown.

Council concurred to have DPW paint the dark blue and to have the arts group come up with a design for it.

871 Coffeen Street

Mrs. Corriveau advised that there is a water lateral, but no sewer lateral to the property. The adjacent property is served by a private line off of Bellew Avenue. She commented that if the City puts in the lateral, she would propose putting one into the Wilson Monument property as well. She explained that City Council has authorized the City to put in laterals at City expense. The estimated cost would be for labor (\$3900), material (\$1200) and Syracuse Utilities to soft cut the pavement (\$1200).

Mayor Graham asked about the ice cream business having to go to Planning Board.

Attorney Slye commented that they are entitled to a waiver as it is less than 400 sq. ft.

Council Member Burns asked if we did this for one business, would we have to do it for all that want to set up.

Mrs. Corriveau advised that in the past, Council has put them in. It would be stubbed off and the property owner would have to pay to attach to the stub.

Council was advised that this is as pre-fab structure that is not temporary.

Council Member Macaluso remarked that these people have gone to the trouble of starting a new business and now they find out that there is no sewer lateral there.

Council Member Butler responded that it was their responsibility for due diligence in checking into all of this before hand.

Council Member Smith commented that this lot wasn't always vacant. At some point the water line was put in, but never the sewer.

Council concurred to put the sewer lateral into this property.

Attorney Slye asked when the property owner wanted this done.

The response was as soon as possible once the planning board has given approval.

Attorney Slye responded that he would hesitate to make promises on time lines.

Mayor Graham stated that they understood that.

Armed Forces Day Parade

Council Member Butler commended everyone involved with Saturday's parade. He remarked that it was a great success.

High Street Property

Council Member Macaluso asked if a person could put a house on the market if it has been condemned. She explained that she had received calls from neighbors of a property on High Street. The property has been condemned. However, the owner has put the house on the market for \$30,000.

Attorney Slye explained that he would need to know more facts about the property before he could respond.

Council Member Macaluso was not willing to share the address with Council at this time.

Council Member Smith explained that there are different types of condemnations. It could be structurally sound, but condemned for occupancy due to some other reason.

Council Member Macaluso stated that people in the neighborhood have contacted her with their concerns.

Mayor Graham responded that this is a good example of why he has encouraged Council to contact city staff ahead of the meeting time so they can get the facts together for Council. He also commented that they all get these kinds of calls all of the time.

Noise Ordinance

Council Member Macaluso advised that she had received a call from a gentleman on Le Ray Street about noise levels.

Mayor Graham responded that the gentleman has phoned all of them and raises concerns about car stereos.

Council Member Macaluso remarked that the police should be able to have them quiet down.

Mayor Graham responded that it is a moving vehicle and by the time the police got there, the vehicle would be gone.

Parking in Private Lots

Council Member Macaluso stated that she had received complaints about people parking in the Sboro and Coleman lots when attending the circus on Saturday. She remarked that the circus trailers parked at the side of building and took up many parking spaces.

Mayor Graham remarked that he was aware of it and he would recommend that the lot owners have signage put up indicating that it was a private lot.

Mr. St. Croix commented that the circus has been coming to town for many years. A lot of people attended and the parking problems occurred because the second show attendees were trying to find parking spaces while the first show was still going on. He also advised that during fair week, the private lot owners usually rope off their private lots.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER SMITH TO MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MACALUSO AND CARRIED WITH ALL VOTING YEA.

Council moved into Executive Session at 8:43 p.m.

Council reconvened at 9:02 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

AT THE CALL OF THE CHAIR MEETING WAS DULY ADJOURNED AT 9:02 P.M. TO MONDAY, MAY 24, 2010 AT 7:00 P.M. BY MOTION OF COUNCIL MEMBER BUTLER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS AND CARRIED WITH ALL VOTING IN FAVOR THEREOF.

Donna M. Dutton
City Clerk