

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF WATERTOWN
March 16, 2026
7:00 p.m.**

Mayor Sarah V.C. Pierce Presiding

Present: Council Member Shane A. Garrabrant
Council Member Robert O. Kimball
Council Member Douglas E. Osborne, Jr.
Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen
Mayor Sarah V.C. Pierce

Also Present: Eric F. Wagenaar, City Manager
Joseph V. Frateschi, Harrison Beach Murtha, City Attorney

City staff present: Erica Anderson, James Mills, Thomas Compo, Michael Lumbis, Aaron Harvill

The City Manager presented the following reports to Council:

- Resolution No. 1 - Repealing the February 3, 2025 Flag Policy and Reinstating the Flag Policy Adopted May 6, 2024
- Resolution No. 2 - Approving School Resource Officer Agreement with Watertown City School District
- Resolution No. 3 - Accepting Bid for Demolition Project – Various Properties, Independent Commercial Properties, Inc.
- Resolution No. 4 - Accepting Bid for Demolition Project – 518 Coffeen Street, Bronze Contracting, LLC.
- Resolution No. 5 - Accepting Bid for Demolition Project – 531 Bradley Street, D&S Excavating, LLC.
- Resolution No. 6 - Approving the Sale of a Portion of Real Property Known as 424 Vanduzee Street, Portion of Parcel Number 1-18-102.000, to Walldroff Properties, LLC
- Resolution No. 7 - Readopting Fiscal Year 2025-26 through 2029-30 Capital Fund Budget to Add Settled Water Line Replacement Project
- Resolution No. 8 - Accepting Professional Services Agreement with Wright Pierce for the Replacement of the Water Treatment Plants Settled Water Line
- Ordinance No. 1 - An Ordinance Authorizing the Issuance of \$6,000,000 Bonds of the City of Watertown, Jefferson County, New York, to Pay the Cost of the Rehabilitation and/or Replacement of the Settled Water Main, in and for Said City
- Staff Report - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2026-2030 Consolidated Plan and 2026 Annual Action Plan Update

Meeting opened with a moment of silence and Mayor Pierce asked that it be in remembrance of former City Judge Eric Swartz, who recently passed away.

Pledge of Allegiance was given.

The reading of the minutes of the regular meeting of March 2, 2026 and work session of March 9, 2026, was dispensed and accepted as written by motion of Council Member Robert O. Kimball, seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

COMMUNICATIONS

A petition was received from Margaret King, 327 Butterfield Avenue, with approximately 139 signatures from individuals opposed to the rezoning of 376 Butterfield Avenue from Residential to Planned Development District.

An email was received from Connie and Phillip Muldovan, 207 Iroquois Avenue, expressing opposition to the proposed apartment/duplex development project within their neighborhood.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Jonathan Phillips, 735 Mill Street, spoke to Council regarding his concerns with the City trash service, the bus service's recent pilot program and the proposed relocation of the City bus transfer site.

Steve Tiernan, 327 Butterfield Avenue, addressed the chair concerning opposition to the proposed housing development on Butterfield Avenue. He discussed a recent meeting between the neighbors and the developer, and he questioned the site plan process while stressing the importance of input from the public.

Frank Battista, Palmer Street, expressed his support for changing the flag policy with Resolution No. 1 and his support for the demolition project within Resolution No. 4. He added that he would like the City to take possession of some of these deteriorating properties and try to sell them. He also stated he wanted to know if the City is being sued by any individuals or corporations.

Bianca Ellis, stating she lives near Fort Drum, spoke to Council about the raising of the Juneteenth flag in honor of the newest national holiday. She reviewed historic events leading to the creation of Juneteenth and how it became declared a holiday recognized by Federal and State organizations. She asked Council to vote against Resolution No. 1 or amend it to allow for the raising of the Juneteenth flag.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 1 - Repealing the February 3, 2025 Flag Policy and Reinstating the Flag Policy Adopted May 6, 2024

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS, on February 3, 2025, the City Council adopted a policy allowing flags of governments recognized by the United States, commemorative flags, or organizational flags to be displayed at City buildings upon approval by resolution of the City Council, and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined it is in the best interest of the City to repeal the policy adopted February 3, 2025 and return to the prior flag policy adopted May 6, 2024 governing the display of flags at City buildings, and

WHEREAS, the prior policy adopted May 6, 2024 provides for the display at City buildings of the United States flag, New York State flag, City of Watertown flag, POW/MIA flag, and Tree City USA flag,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council hereby repeals the flag policy adopted on February 3, 2025, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council hereby reinstates the City of Watertown Flag Policy adopted by Resolution No. 6 on May 6, 2024, which provides for the display of the United States flag, New York State flag, City of Watertown flag, POW/MIA flag, and Tree City USA flag at City buildings, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall take effect immediately upon approval.
Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Kimball stated he would be voting against this resolution because the February 2, 2025 policy was thoroughly researched and well-written by himself, as well as vetted by the City Attorney at the time. He said that the only complaints he has heard regarding this policy has come from Council and not from the public, so he feels that repealing this would be a step backwards.

At the call of the chair, a vote was taken on the foregoing resolution and carried with all voting yea, except for Council Member Robert O. Kimball voting nay.

Resolution No. 2 - Approving School Resource Officer Agreement with Watertown City School District

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS the City of Watertown possesses authority over the Watertown Police Department, which was created as a department and agency of the City government by Charter, and

WHEREAS it is the intent and desire of the City of Watertown and the Watertown City School District to provide for services of a School Resource Officer,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown that it hereby approves the School Resource Officer Agreement between the City of Watertown and the Watertown City School District, a copy of which is attached and made a part of this resolution, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager, or their designee, is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City.

WHEREAS the City of Watertown possesses authority over the Watertown Police Department, which was created as a department and agency of the City government by Charter, and

WHEREAS it is the intent and desire of the City of Watertown and the Watertown City School District to provide for services of a School Resource Officer,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown that it hereby approves the School Resource Officer Agreement between the City of Watertown and the Watertown City School District, a copy of which is attached and made a part of this resolution, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager, or their designee, is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City.

Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Garrabrant asked what the School Resource Officer does during the summer months when school is not in session.

City Manager Eric Wagenaar explained that the Officer performs work for both the Police Department and the School District, as well as training during that time.

At the call of the chair, a vote was taken on the foregoing resolution and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 3 - Accepting Bid for Demolition Project – Various Properties, Independent Commercial Properties, Inc.

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS the City desires to abate and demolish the existing structures located at the following sites: 308 Waltham Street, 247 Main Street West, and 235 Rutland Street North, Watertown, N.Y., and

WHEREAS the Purchasing Department advertised and received seven (7) sealed bids for the Demolition Project – Various Properties, and

WHEREAS on February 26, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. the bids received were publicly opened and read, and

WHEREAS Purchasing Manager, Tina Bartlett-Bearup reviewed the bids received with the Code Enforcement Supervisor and City Engineer and it is their recommendation that the City Council accept the lowest responsive responsible bid submitted by Independent Commercial Contractors, Inc.,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby accepts the total bid amount received from Independent Commercial Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$61,000.00, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager of the City of Watertown is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 4 - Accepting Bid for Demolition Project – 518 Coffeen Street, Bronze Contracting, LLC.

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS the City desires to abate and demolish the existing structures located at 518 Coffeen Street, Watertown, N.Y., and

WHEREAS the Purchasing Department advertised and received eight (8) sealed bids for the Demolition Project – 518 Coffeen Street, and

WHEREAS on February 26, 2026, at 11:15 a.m. the bids received were publicly opened and read, and

WHEREAS Purchasing Manager, Tina Bartlett-Bearup reviewed the bids received with the Code Enforcement Supervisor and City Engineer and it is their recommendation that the City Council accept the lowest responsive responsible bid submitted by Bronze Contracting, LLC,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby accepts the total bid amount (all structures on lot option) received from Bronze Contracting, LLC in the amount of \$28,625.00, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager of the City of Watertown is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Shoen mentioned past discussions regarding the demolition of the property and explained why he was in support of this resolution.

At the call of the chair, a vote was taken on the foregoing resolution and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 5 - Accepting Bid for Demolition Project – 531 Bradley Street, D&S Excavating, LLC.

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS the City desires to abate and demolish the existing structures located at 531 Bradley Street, Watertown, N.Y., and

WHEREAS the Purchasing Department advertised and received six (6) sealed bids for the Demolition Project – 531 Bradley Street, and

WHEREAS on February 26, 2026, at 11:30 a.m. the bids received were publicly opened and read, and

WHEREAS Purchasing Manager, Tina Bartlett-Bearup reviewed the bids received with the Planning and Community Development Director and it is their recommendation that the City Council accept the lowest responsive responsible bid submitted by D&S Excavating, LLC,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby accepts the total bid amount received from D&S Excavating LLC in the amount of \$24,800.00, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager of the City of Watertown is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 6 - Approving the Sale of a Portion of Real Property Known as 424 Vanduzee Street, Portion of Parcel Number 1-18-102.000, to Walldroff Properties, LLC

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS Walldroff Properties, LLC has submitted an offer to purchase a portion of real property owned by the City of Watertown known as part of 424 Vanduzee Street, City of Watertown, New York, Parcel Number 1-18-102.000, consisting of an approximately 0.75-acre parcel together with all building and improvements thereon, and

WHEREAS the proposed purchase price for said property is Eight Thousand Dollars (\$8,000.00), to be paid in cash at closing, and

WHEREAS pursuant to the Real Estate Purchase and Sale Agreement between the City of Watertown and Walldroff Properties, LLC, the purchaser has agreed to be solely responsible for all costs and fees associated with obtaining a survey and subdivision approval necessary to subdivide the subject property from the City's remaining lands, and

WHEREAS the purchaser's obligations under the Purchase and Sale Agreement are further contingent upon the proposed rezoning of the subject property from its current designation of Urban Mixed Use with Waterfront Overlay to either Urban Mixed Use without Waterfront Overlay or to Industrial Zoning, in accordance with applicable laws, procedures, and required approvals, and

WHEREAS the City Council previously considered and approved the related zoning and Waterfront Overlay District modification affecting the subject property in order to facilitate the conveyance of a portion of the City-owned parcel to an adjacent property owner and the expansion of a parking area associated with the adjacent property, and

WHEREAS the proposed sale is contingent upon approval by the City Council and the execution of a bargain and sale deed with lien covenant conveying good and marketable title, subject only to permitted easements, covenants, and restrictions of record, and

WHEREAS the City Council must evaluate all proposed actions submitted for its consideration in light of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), and the regulations promulgated pursuant thereto, and

WHEREAS the City Council previously completed its review under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) with respect to the zoning amendment and related actions affecting the subject property and issued a Negative Declaration determining that such actions would not have a significant impact on the environment, and

WHEREAS the City Council considered the "Whole Action," including the zoning amendment, potential subdivision of the property, conveyance of the subject parcel, and any subsequent site improvements during its prior SEQRA review, and

WHEREAS the City Council has determined that the subject property is surplus and not required for any present or future municipal purpose,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 23, Subdivision (b) of the General City Law, Section 247 of the Charter of the City of Watertown as amended by Local Law No. 1, 1985, adopted December 3, 1984, effective January 17, 1985, and the ordinance, Municipal Code, Chapter 16 adopted by the Council on June 6, 1977, that the attached purchase offer of \$8,000.00 submitted by Walldroff Properties, LLC, for the purchase of a portion of Parcel Number 1-18-102.000, is a fair and reasonable offer therefore and the same is hereby accepted, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council acknowledges that the environmental review required under the State Environmental review required under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) for the zoning amendment and related actions affecting the subject property has previously been completed and a Negative Declaration issued, and the proposed sale of land is consistent with that determination and will not result in any additional significant environmental impacts, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor is hereby authorized, empowered, and directed to effectuate the sale of said real property to Walldroff Properties, LLC, and to execute and deliver the deed and any other documents or instruments necessary to carry out the purposes set forth herein upon receipt of the purchase price by the City Comptroller.

Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Garrabrant recused himself from voting due to his employer being involved in this purchase and he left Council Chambers.

At the call of the chair, a vote was taken on the foregoing resolution and carried with all voting yea, except for Council Member Shane A. Garrabrant abstaining

Council Member Garrabrant returned to Council Chambers.

Resolution No. 7 - Readopting Fiscal Year 2025-26 through 2029-30 Capital Fund Budget to add Settled Water Line Replacement Project

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS on June 2, 2025 the City Council adopted the Fiscal Years 2025-26 through 2029-30 Capital Budget, and

WHEREAS City staff is recommending that the attached Settled Water Line Replacement Project be adopted to address the recent leak,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby re-adopts the Fiscal Year 2025-26 through 2029-30 Capital Budget to add the Settled Water Line Replacement project at an estimated cost of \$6,000,000.

Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Garrabrant questioned the cost of this project, asking if it was the worst-case scenario.

Mr. Wagenaar explained that the \$6 million figure is an estimate until the engineering study is completed and reminded Council that the amount of the bond needs to be for the maximum cost. He noted that the true cost of the project would be known once the bids are received.

At the call of the chair, a vote was taken on the foregoing resolution and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 8 - Accepting Professional Services Agreement with Wright Pierce for the replacement of the Water Treatment Plants Settled Water Line

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS the City of Watertown is seeking Council approval to enter into an agreement with Wright Pierce for professional services to develop a preliminary engineering report (PER) for the replacement of the Water Treatment Plant Settled Water Line, and

WHEREAS the PER will be used to seek funding from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and Congressionally directed spending from Senator Schumer and Senator Gillibrand, and

WHEREAS the PER will be used to gain approvals from the State of New York Departments of Transportation and Health to develop the design and construction timeline,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby approves the Professional Services Agreement between the City and Wright Pierce for \$45,000, a copy of which is attached and made a part of this resolution, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the adoption of this resolution is contingent upon the adoption of a bond ordinance authorizing the financing of the Water Treatment Plant Settled Water Line replacement project, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager, or their designee, is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Professional Services Agreement and all contracts/documents associated with Wright Pierce, on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Shoen asked if any other agencies were explored in addition to Wright Pierce.

Mr. Wagenaar explained that this is a professional service so a request for proposal (RFP) is not required, and because Wright Pierce is currently working with the City on other major water projects and the timeline for this grant funding is short, it was decided that Wright Pierce would be the best choice for this project as well.

At the call of the chair, a vote was taken on the foregoing resolution and carried with all voting yea.

ORDINANCES

Ordinance No. 1 - An Ordinance Authorizing the Issuance of \$6,000,000 Bonds of the City of Watertown, Jefferson County, New York, to Pay the Cost of the Rehabilitation and/or Replacement of the Settled Water Main, in and for Said City

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS, all conditions precedent to the financing of the capital purposes hereinafter described, including compliance with the provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act to the extent required, have been performed; and

WHEREAS, it is now desired to authorize the financing of such capital project; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED, by the Council of the City of Watertown, Jefferson County, New York (the "City"), as follows:

Section 1. For the specific object or purpose of paying the cost of the rehabilitation and/or replacement of the settled water main, in and for said City, including incidental expenses in connection therewith, there are hereby authorized to be issued \$6,000,000 bonds of said City pursuant to the provisions of the Local Finance Law.

Section 2. It is hereby determined that the estimated maximum cost of the aforesaid specific object or purpose is \$6,000,000 and that the plan for the financing thereof is by the issuance of the \$6,000,000 bonds of said City authorized to be issued pursuant to this bond ordinance; provided, however, that the amount of bonds ultimately to be issued will be reduced by the amount of any State and, or federal aid or any other revenue received by the City from other sources for such specific object or purpose, which monies are hereby appropriated therefor.

Section 3. It is hereby determined that the period of probable usefulness of the aforesaid specific object or purpose is forty years, pursuant to subdivision one of paragraph a of Section 11.00 of the Local Finance Law.

Section 4. Subject to the provisions of the Local Finance Law, the power to authorize the issuance of and to sell bond anticipation notes in anticipation of the issuance and sale of the bonds herein authorized, including renewals of such notes, is hereby delegated to the City Comptroller, the chief fiscal officer. Such notes shall be of such terms, form and contents, and shall be sold in such manner, as may be prescribed by said City Comptroller, consistent with the provisions of the Local Finance Law.

Section 5. The faith and credit of said City are hereby irrevocably pledged for the payment of the principal of and interest on such obligations as the same respectively become due and payable. An annual appropriation shall be made in each year sufficient to pay the principal of and interest on such obligations becoming due and payable in such year.

Section 6. Such bonds shall be in fully registered form and shall be signed in the name of the City by the manual or facsimile signature of the City Comptroller and a facsimile of its corporate seal shall be imprinted thereon and may be attested by the manual or facsimile signature of the City Clerk.

Section 7. The powers and duties of advertising such bonds for sale, conducting the sale and awarding the bonds, are hereby delegated to the City Comptroller, who shall advertise such bonds for sale, conduct the sale, and award the bonds in such manner as the City Comptroller shall deem best for the interests of the City, including, but not limited to, the power to sell said bonds to the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation; provided, however, that in the exercise of these delegated powers, the City Comptroller shall comply fully with the provisions of the Local Finance Law and any order or rule of the State Comptroller applicable to the sale of municipal bonds. The receipt of the City Comptroller shall be a full acquittance to the purchaser of such bonds, who shall not be obliged to see to the application of the purchase money.

Section 8. The power to issue and sell notes to the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation pursuant to Section 169.00 of the Local Finance Law is hereby delegated to the City Comptroller. Such notes shall be of such terms, form and contents as may be prescribed by said City Comptroller consistent with the provisions of the Local Finance Law.

Section 9. The City Comptroller is hereby further authorized, at the sole discretion of the City Comptroller, to execute a project financing agreement, and any other agreements with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and/or the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation, including amendments thereto, and including any instruments (or amendments thereto) in the effectuation thereof, in order to effect the financing or refinancing of the specific object or purpose described in Section 1 hereof, or a portion thereof, by a bond, and, or note issue of said City in the event of the sale of same to the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation.

Section 10. The intent of this ordinance is to give the City Comptroller sufficient authority to execute those applications, agreements, instruments or to do any similar acts necessary to effect the issuance of the aforesaid bonds and, or notes, without resorting to further action of the City Council.

Section 11. All other matters, except as provided herein relating to such bonds, including determining whether to issue such bonds having substantially level or declining annual debt service and all matters related thereto, prescribing whether manual or facsimile signatures shall appear on said bonds, prescribing the method for the recording of ownership of said bonds, appointing the fiscal agent or agents for said bonds, providing for the printing and delivery of said bonds (and if said bonds are to be executed in the name of the City by the facsimile signature of the City Comptroller, providing for the manual countersignature of a fiscal agent or of a designated official of the City), the date, denominations, maturities and interest payment dates, place or places of payment, and also including the consolidation with other issues, shall be determined by the City Comptroller. It is hereby determined that it is to the financial advantage of the City not to impose and collect from registered owners of such bonds any charges for mailing, shipping and insuring bonds transferred or exchanged by the fiscal agent, and, accordingly, pursuant to paragraph c of Section 70.00 of the Local Finance Law, no such charges shall be so collected by the fiscal agent. Such bonds shall contain substantially the recital of validity clause provided for in Section 52.00 of the Local Finance Law and shall otherwise be in such form and contain such recitals in addition to those required by Section 52.00 of the Local Finance Law, as the City Comptroller shall determine.

Section 12. The validity of such bonds and bond anticipation notes may be contested only if:
(1) Such obligations are authorized for an object or purpose for which said City is not authorized to expend money, or

- (2) The provisions of law which should be complied with at the date of publication of this ordinance are not substantially complied with, and an action, suit or proceeding contesting such validity is commenced within twenty days after the date of such publication, or
- (3) Such obligations are authorized in violation of the provisions of the Constitution.

Section 13. This ordinance shall constitute a statement of official intent for purposes of Treasury Regulations Section 1.150-2. Other than as specified in this ordinance, no monies are, or are reasonably expected to be, reserved, allocated on a long-term basis, or otherwise set aside with respect to the permanent funding of the object or purpose described herein.

Section 14. This ordinance, which takes effect immediately, shall be published in summary in the Watertown Daily Times the official newspaper of the City, together with a notice of the City Clerk in substantially the form provided in Section 81.00 of the Local Finance Law.

Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen

Motion for unanimous consent moved by Council Member Robert O. Kimball, seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

At the call of the chair, a vote was taken on the foregoing ordinance and carried with all voting yea.

STAFF REPORTS

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2026-2030 Consolidated Plan and 2026 Annual Action Plan Update

Mayor Pierce summarized the staff memo listing the proposed goals for the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan, as well as the proposed Program Year 2021 projects totaling \$862,000. She said staff is looking for guidance from Council as to whether they should proceed.

Planning and Community Development Director Michael Lumbis indicated that a minor adjustment could be made, but any major adjustments would require the process to begin over with a 30-day public comment period. He further explained the timeline and requirements for developing the annual plan.

Council Member Kimball compared this proposal to what was originally proposed and expressed his support for the adjustments that were already made.

In response to Council Member Garrabrant's questions about the Homebuyer Program, Mr. Lumbis indicated there was funding for approximately six homes and he explained the requirement that the homeowner must stay in the home for ten years or they must pay back the loan.

Council Member Garrabrant expressed support for the proposed plan.

In response to Mayor Pierce's question of whether the City receives feedback from the School District about the backpack program, Mr. Lumbis stated the School reports back each year and that he would provide Council with that information. In regard to Mayor Pierce's comments regarding complaints received about the sidewalk in front of Starbuck School, Mr. Lumbis said this falls within a target area

and could be an eligible project. He said that he will speak with the School District to determine if it is part of their capital projects.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposed Housing Development on Butterfield Avenue

Council Member Garrabrant said he has heard from many residents within this neighborhood that have concerns. He also said that Council has not received any more information than what has been reported in the media.

Mr. Wagenaar said Mr. Lumbis met with the developer and the discussion was similar to what was reported in the news. Reviewing the options that were presented by the developer, Mr. Wagenaar stressed that the project is still in the planning stages.

Homelessness

Council Member Garrabrant mentioned there has been recent media coverage on this topic and incidents occurring near a downtown business. He asked if there could be an increased Police presence in the downtown area.

Mr. Wagenaar said he is reengaging with the County on this issue and has met with the City Police Chief and DPW Superintendent to review the protocols used in the past to address this. Regarding more Police presence, he said it depends on staffing availability and noted that last year this was done by using overtime.

Council Member Kimball mentioned that he recently volunteered at the Salvation Army and noted how well the program is run. He pointed out that after speaking with various individuals he discovered that some of them are working but not making enough to pay for housing.

Recent Community Events - Irish Festival, Irish Flag Raising and Chili Cook-off

Mentioning that he attended these events, Council Member Kimball said they were successful events and well attended.

During their portion of New Business, Council Member Osborne, Council Member Shoen and Mayor Pierce mentioned their attendance at the Irish Festival and Irish Flag Raising. Mayor Pierce thanked the Italian American Civic Association for hosting the Irish Flag Raising.

Proposed Housing Development on Butterfield Avenue (continued)

Council Member Kimball said he was not surprised by the residents' reaction and concern over this proposed development. He did warn that vacant lots within neighborhoods should not be expected to remain vacant, noting that the one across the street from his home was used to build a beautiful house, and he reminded residents that these lots are privately owned. He expressed concern about some of the comments made about renters and noted that a majority of people rent and contribute to the community.

Homelessness (continued)

In response to Council Member Osborne's inquiry about the status of the new housing on Main Avenue, Mr. Wagenaar said tenants are expected to start moving into it in the upcoming months.

eBikes

Council Member Osborne asked if there could be a discussion with the Police Chief to determine what can be done to deter eBikes from using the sidewalks.

Demolition of Properties

Council Member Osborne discussed the demolition of City-owned properties and asked about the cleanup of other City-owned properties.

Mr. Wagenaar explained the rating system used to determine whether a property should be demolished. He said he can provide Council with more information and a list of properties.

City Bus System

Council Member Osborne mentioned the comments made during Privilege of the Floor by Mr. Phillips and asked for an update on relocating the transfer site.

Mr. Wagenaar said staff are reviewing this and it is still early in the process, but the findings will be reported to Council in a staff report or work session discussion.

Proposed Housing Development on Butterfield Avenue (continued)

Mentioning that he lives in this neighborhood, Council Member Osborne said he was not surprised by the neighbors' reactions. He said the main concern is regarding the increase in traffic and use of utilities. He said people in that area of the City want to maintain their quality of life.

Leash Law

Council Member Osborne raised concern from a constituent regarding the leash law and dogs being walked not on a leash. He asked about the enforcement of this law.

Mr. Wagenaar explained that the Police Department can enforce the leash law, so people can contact the Police and/or the Dog Warden with their concerns.

Demolition of Properties (continued)

Council Member Shoen said he is happy to see these properties cleaned up and he mentioned several other properties within the City that should be addressed. He also said he would like any City-owned properties advertised for sale and to prioritize new house construction.

Starbuck School Sidewalk Complaint

Council Member Shoen mentioned that the School District's budget is significantly larger than the City's so the School District should be responsible for repairing the sidewalks in front of their facilities.

City Bus System (continued)

Council Member Shoen expressed concern about relocating the transfer site to the J.B. Wise parking lot due to the significant change in grade between the parking lot and Public Square, which could make it less accessible to everyone. He suggested looking at the parking lot near Marshall Place on Court Street.

Brush and Yard Waste Collection

Council Member Shoen announced that the City's Brush and Yard Waste Collection program will begin on April 6.

Proposed Housing Development on Butterfield Avenue (continued)

Mayor Pierce mentioned that she only knows as much information as has been distributed to the public and noted that the project is still in the developing stages. She added that public feedback is important to the process.

Leash Law (continued)

Mayor Pierce said that she heard from the same individual as Council Member Osborne and had already informed the City Manager of the particular concern.

Undeveloped Property on the Corner of Sherman and Mullin Streets

Mayor Pierce indicated that she sent a letter to the property owner asking for the status of this development project but did not receive a response. Noting the property has remained unkempt for quite some time, she asked the City Manager to look into what else the City could do to force the property owner to clean it up.

Senior Center

Mayor Pierce announced that the Senior Center will be celebrating their second-year anniversary on Friday from 12:00p.m. to 2:00p.m.

Housing Project on Main Avenue

Mayor Pierce asked Council Members if they were interested in touring the new facility and she will make arrangements to facilitate a tour.

Lawsuits Against the City

Mentioning Mr. Battista's request during Privilege of the Floor, Mayor Pierce asked the City Manager to provide Mr. Battista with the information.

Motion was made by Council Member Robert O. Kimball to move into Executive Session to discuss the following:

- proposed, pending or current litigation
- the employment history of a particular individual or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal, or removal of a particular person or corporation
- collective bargaining

Motion was seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

Council moved into Executive Session at 8:04 p.m.

Council reconvened at 9:23 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

At the call of the chair, meeting was duly adjourned at 9:23 p.m. by motion of Council Member Robert O. Kimball, seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

Ann M. Saunders
City Clerk