

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF WATERTOWN  
April 5, 2021  
7:00 p.m.**

**Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith Presiding**

**Present:** Council Member Sarah V. Compo  
Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson  
Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero  
Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith

**Also Present:** Kenneth A. Mix, City Manager  
Robert J. Slye, City Attorney

**City staff present:** James Mills, Scott Weller, Michael Delaney

The City Manager presented the following reports to Council:

- Resolution No. 1 - Approving Agreement Between the City of Watertown and State of New York, Unified Court System
- Resolution No. 2 - Accepting Bid for Ready Mix Concrete, Cranesville Block Company
- Resolution No. 3 - Accepting Bid for Ready Mix Concrete, Watertown Concrete
- Resolution No. 4 - Accepting Bid for Fairgrounds Bleacher Project, Northern Tier Contracting, Inc.
- Resolution No. 5 - Readopting Fiscal Year 2020-21 General Fund Budget, Fairgrounds Bleacher Project (Rebid)
- Resolution No. 6 - Readopting Fiscal Year 2020-21 General Fund Budget, Parks and Recreation Department Staffing
- Resolution No. 7 - Approving Professional Services Agreement for Watertown Municipal Arena Boiler and Hot Water System Replacement Project
- Resolution No. 8 - Approving the 2021-2022 Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the City of Watertown and the Local CSEA Unit 7151
- Ordinance No. 1 - An Ordinance Authorizing the Issuance of \$1,400,000 Bonds of the City of Watertown, Jefferson County, New York, to Pay the Cost of the Purchase of a New Aerial Platform Fire Ladder Truck for Use by the Fire Department, in and for Said City
- Sales Tax Revenue – February 2021
- Sale of Surplus Hydro-electricity – February 2021
- NYS Office of the State Comptroller – Fiscal Stress Monitoring System

**Complete 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 March 15, 2021 and adjourned meeting of March 23, 2021 was dispensed and accepted as written by motion of Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson, seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

A letter was received from Jason Traynor, 142 Mechanic Street, asking Council for their plans for the City for the next five years and for the use of the \$23 million Covid-19 relief funds. He suggested the funds be used towards the Thompson Park Zoo, local pools, transportation infrastructure, expansion of the bus system and recreation activities utilizing the Black River.

**Above communication was placed on file in the office of the City Clerk.**

A claim was received from Enterprise Rent-A-Car seeking reimbursement for damages to one of their rental vehicles while driving over a loose manhole cover in the 700 block of Gotham Street on February 21, 2021.

A summons and claimant was received from Shawn Granger regarding an incident involving the Police Department.

**Above claims have been referred to the Board of Audit.**

## **PROCLAMATIONS**

### **TAR Syndrome Awareness Month**

Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith proclaimed the month of April 2021 to be TAR Syndrome Awareness Month in the City of Watertown and encouraged awareness of this syndrome by all residents of the City of Watertown.

### **Month of the Military Child**

In recognition of the importance of the Military Child and their contributions to our nation's strength and resilience, Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith proclaimed the month of April 2021 to be The Month of the Military Child in the City of Watertown and encouraged all citizens to direct their attention to the important role Military Children play in our armed forces community.

### **Fair Housing Month**

Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith proclaimed the month of April 2021 as Fair Housing Month in the City of Watertown to establish the City as an inclusive community committed to fair housing and to promote appropriate activities by private and public entities intended to provide or advocate for equal housing opportunities for all residents and prospective residents of the City of Watertown.

## **PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

**Jason Traynor**, 142 Mechanic Street, mentioned a letter that he sent to Council and reviewed what he would like to do to make the community better. He asked Council to make a five-year plan to invest in the City's future.

**Patricia Whalen**, Woolworth Building Apartments, spoke of a recent accident at the corner of Arsenal Street and Arcade Street in which a police car traveling on Arsenal Street was struck by another vehicle driving illegally across Arsenal Street from Arcade Street. She indicated that this is the location at which she was struck by a car last year and spoke of the dangers of that intersection. She asked that the "shortcut" from Arsenal Street to Court Street be closed, for traffic lights to be installed at various locations throughout the City and for the Police Department to do foot patrols in the downtown area. She also noted that crosswalk signals do not allow enough

time for a disabled person to cross the street and expressed concerns for the homeless people of Watertown.

**Anita Seefried-Brown**, Alliance for Better Communities, addressed the chair concerning the disposal of unused drugs program, noting that most abuse begins with the use of unused prescription drugs within the home. She also thanked Council Member Ruggiero and Mr. Patrick Hickey for their work on the Neighborhood Watch Program.

**Tammy Miller** presented Council with gift bags filled with information and a drop box container for the disposal of unused drugs from the home.

**Jonathan Phillips**, 735 Mill Street, spoke of areas in the City that are deteriorating and littered with trash. He also expressed concerns of pedestrian safety while crossing the street in the downtown area, especially on lower Arsenal Street near the recent car accident involving a police car. He asked that lower Arsenal Street be changed back to the way it was prior to the road diet being done.

**Dolores Surowiec**, 142 Mechanic Street, spoke on behalf of pedestrian safety and cited several intersections that she feels are dangerous. She stated that the crosswalk signals do not allow enough time to cross the street.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

### **Resolution No. 1 - Approving Agreement Between the City of Watertown and State of New York, Unified Court System**

#### **Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson**

WHEREAS the City of Watertown is required by law to furnish and maintain adequate court facilities for use by Trial Courts of the State of New York, and

WHEREAS Chapter 686 of the Laws of 1996 was enacted to invest the State of New York with the fiscal responsibility of managing the interior cleaning of court facilities and performance of minor repairs therein, and with the ability to cover the cost thereof, and

WHEREAS Chapter 686 of the Laws of 1996 requires the State of New York to contract with political subdivisions of the State for the cleaning of court facilities, as well as minor emergency repairs thereof, and

WHEREAS the City of Watertown is responsible for furnishing and maintaining the City Court facility,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to execute this Agreement and the budget incorporated as Appendix B on behalf of the City of Watertown.

**Seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero and carried with all voting yea.**

### **Resolution No. 2 - Accepting Bid for Ready Mix Concrete, Cranesville Block Company**

#### **Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson**

WHEREAS the City Purchasing Department has advertised and received sealed bids for the purchase of Ready Mix Concrete products for use by various City Departments during Fiscal Year 2021-2022, and

WHEREAS invitations to bid were also sent to (5) prospective bidders with (2) bids received and publicly opened and read in the City Purchasing Department on Thursday, March 18, 2021, at 11:00 a.m., and

WHEREAS City Purchasing reviewed the bids received with the Engineering Department and the Department of Public Works, and it is their recommendation that the City Council accept the bid from Cranesville Block Company, Inc. as the lowest qualifying bidder for all requirements six cubic yards and more:

<b>Ready Mix Concrete</b>	<b>Cranesville Block Amsterdam, NY</b>
4,000 lb. Coarse Mix	\$ 114.00
4,000 lb. Fine Mix	115.00
5,000 lb. Fine Mix	121.00
4,000 lb. Coarse Mix / Heated Concrete	124.00
4,000 lb. Fine Mix / Heated Concrete	125.00
5,000 lb. Fine Mix / Heated Concrete	131.00
733.0102 - Controlled Low Strength Material (No Fly Ash)	98.00
Minimum Delivery Amount	7 cubic yards

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown accepts the bid submitted by Cranesville Block Company, Inc. of Felts Mills, New York, as detailed above, being the lowest qualifying bidder meeting City specifications, for the purchase of Ready Mix Concrete products for use by various City Departments during Fiscal Year 2021-2022 for all requirements 6 cubic yards and more, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to sign all contracts associated with implementing the award to Cranesville Block Company, Inc.  
**Seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero and carried with all voting yea.**

**Resolution No. 3 - Accepting Bid for Ready Mix Concrete, Watertown Concrete**

**Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson**

WHEREAS the City Purchasing Department has advertised and received sealed bids for the purchase of Ready Mix Concrete products for use by various City Departments during Fiscal Year 2021-2022, and

WHEREAS invitations to bid were also sent to (5) prospective bidders with (2) bids received and publicly opened and read in the City Purchasing Department on Thursday, March 18, 2021, at 11:00 a.m., and

WHEREAS City Purchasing reviewed the bids received with the Engineering Department and the Department of Public Works, and it is their recommendation that the City Council accept the bid from Watertown Concrete as the lowest qualifying bidder for all requirements three cubic yards and less than seven cubic yards:

<b>Ready Mix Concrete</b>	<b>Watertown Concrete Watertown, NY</b>	
4,000 lb. Coarse Mix	\$ 126.00	cu yd
4,000 lb. Fine Mix	126.00	cu yd
5,000 lb. Fine Mix	130.00	cu yd
4,000 lb. Coarse Mix / Heated Concrete	136.00	cu yd
4,000 lb. Fine Mix / Heated Concrete	136.00	cu yd
5,000 lb. Fine Mix / Heated Concrete	140.00	cu yd
733.0102 - Controlled Low Strength Material (No Fly Ash)	100.00	cu yd
Minimum Delivery Amount	<b>3 cubic yards</b>	

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown accepts the bid submitted by Watertown Concrete of Watertown, New York, as detailed above, being the lowest qualifying bidder meeting City specifications, for the purchase of Ready Mix Concrete products for use by various City Departments during Fiscal Year 2021-2022 for all requirements 3 cubic yards and less than 7 cubic yards, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to sign all contracts associated with implementing the award to Watertown Concrete.

**Seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero and carried with all voting yea.**

**Resolution No. 4 - Accepting Bid for Fairgrounds Bleacher Project, Northern Tier Contracting, Inc.**

**Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson**

WHEREAS the City Purchasing Department has advertised and received sealed bids for Fairgrounds Bleacher Project, as per City specifications, and

WHEREAS bid invitations were also issued to qualified bidders with two (2) sealed bids submitted to the Purchasing Department, and

WHEREAS on Friday, February 26, 2021, at 2:00 p.m., the bids received were publicly opened and read, and

WHEREAS City Purchasing Manager Dale Morrow reviewed the bids received with the Engineering Department, and it is their recommendation that the City Council accept the bid submitted by Northern Tier Contracting, Inc.,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown accepts the bid of Northern Tier Contracting, Inc. in the amount of \$122,400 for Fairgrounds Bleacher Project as the lowest qualified bidder meeting our specifications, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to sign all contracts associated with implementing the award to Northern Tier Contracting, Inc., and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that approval of this resolution is contingent upon approval of the Resolution to readopt the 2020-2021 General Fund Budget to appropriate \$31,617 to partially fund the project.

**Seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero**

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Mayor Smith clarified that this is for the base bid and one of the alternate bids.

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

**Resolution No. 5 - Readopting Fiscal Year 2020-21 General Fund Budget, Fairgrounds Bleacher Project (Rebid)**

**Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson**

WHEREAS on June 1, 2020 the City Council passed a resolution adopting the Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21, of which \$41,872,180 was appropriated for the General Fund, and

WHEREAS the City approved the project in the Fiscal Year 2018-19 Capital Budget at an estimated cost of \$95,000 with funding being \$75,000 from a New York State “State and Municipal Facilities Program” grant and \$20,000 from the City’s General Fund and,

WHEREAS City Council has accepted a bid from Northern Tier Contracting in the amount of \$122,400, and

WHEREAS the City has an available State and Municipal Facilities Program grant balance of \$70,783 plus the City’s initial share of \$20,000 funded in Fiscal Year 2018-19 leaving a funding deficit of \$31,617, and

WHEREAS City Council wishes for the project to go forward,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby re-adopts the General Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21 to make the following adjustments in the re-adopted General Fund Budget:

GENERAL FUND

Expenditures:

A.1990.0430	Contingency	(\$31,617)
A.9950.0900	Transfer to Capital Fund	<u>\$ 31,617</u>
Total Expenditures		<u>\$ -</u>

**Seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero**

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Mayor Smith explained that this came in over budget, so this readoption is to cover the approximately \$30,000 shortage in funding.

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

and carried with all voting yea.

**Resolution No. 6 - Readopting Fiscal Year 2020-21 General Fund Budget, Parks and Recreation Department Staffing**

**Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson**

WHEREAS on June 1, 2020 the City Council passed a resolution adopting the Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21, of which \$41,872,180 was appropriated for the General Fund, and

WHEREAS the Assistant Superintendent of Parks and Recreation position remains vacant, and

WHEREAS it is the City Council’s desire to hire a Parks and Recreation Maintenance Worker and an Account Clerk Typist, instead of an Assistant Superintendent, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby re-adopts the General Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21 to eliminate the Assistant Superintendent of Parks and Recreation and add a Parks and Recreation Maintenance Worker and an Account Clerk Typist to the Parks and Recreation Department, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby makes the following adjustments in the re-adopted General Fund Budget:

GENERAL FUND

Expenditures:

A.7020.0120	Parks and Recreation Administration-Salaries	(\$24,800)
A.7020.0120	Parks and Recreation Administration-Clerical	\$ 6,000
A.7020.0810	Parks and Recreation Administration- Retirement	\$ 600
A.7020.0830	Parks and Recreation Administration–Social Security	\$ 475
A.7020.0850	Parks and Recreation Administration–Health Insurance	\$ 4,775
A.7140.0120	Parks and Recreation Playgrounds-Wages	\$ 1,050
A.7140.0810	Parks and Recreation Playgrounds- Retirement	\$ 100
A.7140.0830	Parks and Recreation Playgrounds–Social Security	\$ 100
A.7140.0850	Parks and Recreation Playgrounds–Health Insurance	\$ 725
A.7141.0120	Parks and Recreation Outdoor Recreation-Wages	\$ 5,150
A.7141.0810	Parks and Recreation Outdoor Recreation- Retirement	\$ 400
A.7141.0830	Parks and Recreation Outdoor Recreation–Social Security	\$ 500
A.7141.0850	Parks and Recreation Outdoor Recreation–Health Insurance	\$ 3,600
A.7265.0120	Parks and Recreation Arena-Wages	\$ 700
A.7265.0810	Parks and Recreation Arena- Retirement	\$ 50
A.7265.0830	Parks and Recreation Arena–Social Security	\$ 75
A.7265.0850	Parks and Recreation Arena–Health Insurance	\$ 500
Total Expenditures		<u>\$ -</u>

**Seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero**

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Mayor Smith explained the change in staffing which left a shortage of approximately \$1,200 in funding and noted that the current budget eliminated some

positions. He asked if the City will be rehiring the individual whose position was eliminated in the current budget.

City Manager Ken Mix indicated that this individual has already been moved into another position within the City.

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

**Resolution No. 7 - Approving Professional Services Agreement for Watertown Municipal Arena Boiler and Hot Water System Replacement Project**

**Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson**

WHEREAS the City of Watertown is planning for a Watertown Municipal Arena Boiler and Hot Water System Replacement Project in the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year, and

WHEREAS the City Council desires to have the design phase completed in the current fiscal year so that work can be completed before the next ice season, and

WHEREAS Jade Stone Engineering PLLC has submitted a proposal to provide engineering services for a fee of \$11,600,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown approves the Agreement for Professional Services with Jade Stone Engineering PLLC, a copy of which is attached and made part of this resolution, and

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

**Seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero**

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Mayor Smith pointed out that the items being addressed by this resolution were not included in the Arena's rehabilitation project.

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

**Resolution No. 8 - Approving the 2021-2022 Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the City of Watertown and the Local CSEA Unit 7151**

**Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson**

WHEREAS the 2017-2021 Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City of Watertown and the Local CSEA Unit 7151 expires on June 30, 2021, and

WHEREAS negotiations have concluded on a successor Agreement, a copy of which is attached and made a part of this resolution,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby approves the 2021-2022 Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City and the Local CSEA 7151, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City of Watertown, as well as City Manager Kenneth Mix and Human Resource Manager Matthew Roy.

**Seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero**

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Henry-Wilkinson disclosed that his wife is a member of this bargaining unit and that he has recused himself in the past from this vote. He explained that after speaking with the City Attorney and his colleagues it was decided that he will not be recusing himself tonight because his wife is not singled out, and the benefit of the contract goes to the full bargaining unit.

**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 \$1,400,000 Bonds of the City of Watertown, Jefferson County, New York, to Pay the Cost of the Purchase of a New Aerial Platform Fire Ladder Truck for Use by the Fire Department, in and for Said City**

**Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson**

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, as follows:

Section 1. For the specific object or purpose of paying the cost of the purchase of a new aerial platform fire ladder truck for use by the Fire Department, in and for the City of Watertown, Jefferson County, New York, including incidental expenses in connection therewith, there are hereby authorized to be issued \$1,400,000 bonds of said City pursuant to the provisions of the Local Finance Law.

Section 2. It is hereby determined that the maximum estimated cost of the aforesaid specific object or purpose is \$1,400,000 and that the plan for the financing thereof is by the issuance of the \$1,400,000 bonds of said City authorized to be issued pursuant to this bond ordinance.

Section 3. It is hereby determined that the period of probable usefulness of the aforesaid specific object or purpose is twenty years, pursuant to subdivision twenty-seven 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 of Watertown, Jefferson County, New York, 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 of Watertown, Jefferson County, New York, 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 he shall deem best for the interests of the City; provided, however, that in the exercise of these delegated powers, he 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. 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 9. 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 10. 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 11. This ordinance, which takes effect immediately, shall be published in full in summary in the Watertown Daily Times, the official newspaper, 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 Lisa A. Ruggiero**

Mayor Smith explained that he received an email today asking why this was not going through the traditional bidding process.

Attorney Slye explained that in 2019, the Council at the time authorized the City to participate in a national cooperative purchasing program which allows the City to take advantage of cheaper prices while still complying with the General Municipal Law.

**Laid over under the rules.**

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### **Sales Tax Revenue – February 2021**

A report was available for Council's review and Mayor Smith noted the State withheld funding of approximately \$112,000 to fund a fiscally distressed health facilities fund and approximately \$117,000 to cover the State's appropriation of AIM related payments to Jefferson County towns and villages that were cut from the State's budget.

### **Sale of Surplus Hydro-electricity – February 2021**

A report was available for Council to review and Mayor Smith commented that hydro revenue is still down but it seems to be improving.

### **NYS Office of the State Comptroller – Fiscal Stress Monitoring System**

City Comptroller James Mills explained the report, warning that the State Comptroller combines all of the City funds when rendering this determination even though the funds are divided and some, such as the Water and Sewer Funds, have restrictions as to what they can be used for.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Pedestrian Safety - Privilege of the Floor Comments**

Mayor Smith addressed the concerns over pedestrian safety in crosswalks in the downtown area. He stated that a traffic light at the Arsenal Street and Arcade Street intersection has been discussed and they are considering using some of the CARES bus funding to pay for it since the bus transfer station is on that corner.

City Manager Mix explained that this will be evaluated by Fisher and Associates as part of the study of downtown traffic flows and synchronizing the traffic lights. He indicated that staff is looking into whether the CARES bus funding can be used.

In response to comments asking why Council was not at the scene of accident in which a police car was hit at the intersection, Mayor Smith explained that he was unable to attend because he was working his full-time job as a Physician Assistant for Neurosurgeons' Practice and was attending to patients.

Council Member Compo thanked the speakers for bringing their concerns forward and said there needs to be more work done towards better pedestrian safety and preventing distracted driving. She suggested implementing a Pedestrian Safety Awareness Month.

Council Member Ruggiero added that she has witnessed distracted driving and that it is causing a lot of issues. She wondered if lights similar to what were installed on Factory Street could be installed at this intersection of the first block of Arsenal Street.

City Manager Mix said that it is all being looked at as part of the streetscape project.

In regard to the police car accident, Council Member Ruggiero said she was made aware of the incident and given updates but felt it was best to not be in the way of the first responders.

City Manager Mix agreed, stating that if more people attended, they could get in the way of the people trying to respond to the accident. He stressed that he was in constant contact with the Police Chief on the status of the Police Officer.

### **NYS Legalization of Marijuana**

Mayor Smith stated Council needs to discuss the State's recent decision to legalize marijuana and whether the municipality wants to opt out of it. He said the timeline is approximately one year so the City will need to hear from stakeholders and interested parties.

Council Member Compo agreed that there has to be some thought given to what the legalizing of marijuana means for the City.

Council Member Henry-Wilkinson said he will speak to the Planning Department about the zoning for a business that sells marijuana and ask that it be considered by the Zoning Re-write Committee.

Council Member Ruggiero noted that there are concerns about the locations of the shops and that this needs to be discussed with zoning.

### **\$23 Million Federal Relief Funds/American Rescue Plan**

Mayor Smith stated that he has been in constant contact with Senator Schumer's Office and is waiting for additional guidance as to how the funds can be used. He provided his suggestions of doing more paving and sidewalks, investing in Thompson Park and the Zoo, installing a premier turf field at the Fairgrounds and implementing a single stream recycling program by working with Fort Drum. In regard to programs for the homeless, he indicated that Jefferson County deals with this problem through social services and funding county-wide programs.

City Manager Mix added that CDBG funds are used for the Point-In-Time program and counts the number of homeless people.

#### **Target's Community Service Project**

Council Member Compo said she was approached by Target regarding the store wanting to do a community service project.

City Manager Mix stated there is always a need for volunteers at Thompson Park and will work with Council Member Compo to put together an organized plan for a project.

#### **New City Website Update**

Mentioning there was money put in a previous budget for a new City website, Council Member Henry-Wilkinson asked if there was an update.

City Manager Mix explained that this project is moving forward. He said a software company has been picked and been working with the individual departments on their areas.

#### **Cornell Cooperative Extension's Student Government Program**

Council Member Ruggiero mentioned that both she and Council Member Compo were asked to participate and speak at this program and that it was a good event.

#### **Police Foot Patrols in Downtown**

Noting that this had been done in the past, Council Member Ruggiero asked if this could start up again.

City Manager stated that he can look into this.

#### **Interview for Vacant Council Member Seat**

Mayor Smith indicated that this meeting will be adjourned until tomorrow at 6:00 p.m. so that Leonard Spaziani can be interviewed for the vacant seat. He pointed out, for the record, that Mr. Spaziani is his brother-in-law's uncle, but stressed that Council Member Ruggiero brought Mr. Spaziani's name forward for consideration and he did not.

#### **Hydro Committee**

Mayor Smith stated that former Mayor Butler has scheduled the first meeting for this group to be held on Thursday, April 8.

**Motion was made by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson to move into Executive Session to discuss proposed, pending or current litigation and collective bargaining.**

**Motion was seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero and carried with all voting in favor thereof.**

Council moved into Executive Session at 8:22 p.m.

Council reconvened at 9:00 p.m.

The following resolution was offered:

**Resolution No. 9 - To Settle Proceeding to Review Real Property Assessment Challenge at 213 Stone Street, Watertown, NY 13601, Parcel No: 10-05-108.000**

**Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson**

WHEREAS, certain premises owned by COR ARSENAL STREET COMPANY, LLC (“COR”), in the City of Watertown at 213 Stone Street, Parcel No.: 10-05-108.000 on the assessment roll and map of the City are assessed for the payment of taxes starting with tax year 2019 as follows:

2019	Parcel #: 10-05-108.000	\$172,500.00
2020	Parcel #: 10-05-108.000	\$172,500.00

and

WHEREAS, COR, has heretofore duly instituted in the Supreme Court proceedings to review the assessment and the determination of the Board of Review of the City for tax years 2019-2020, and

WHEREAS, the parties have agreed that the assessment for the following years shall be reduced and set as:

2019	Parcel #: 10-05-108.000	\$105,800.00
2020	Parcel #: 10-05-108.000	\$105,800.00

and

WHEREAS, in consideration of the City adjusting and/or setting the assessment as set forth above, the Petitioner agrees not to commence tax assessment review proceedings pursuant to Article 7 of the Real Property Tax Law of the State of New York or under any other applicable provision of law for tax years 2021, 2022 or 2023 except as otherwise authorized by RPTL § 727, and

WHEREAS, the City reserves the right to adjust the assessment on the subject property for years 2021, 2022, or 2023 as authorized by RPTL §727 and similarly the Petitioner shall not be barred from challenging and/or commencing proceedings to review the assessment on the subject premises in those instances, and

WHEREAS, a compromise and settlement of the aforesaid proceedings upon the above basis is deemed in the best interest of the Respondents,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York that the City attorneys of the City of Watertown be and are hereby authorized, empowered and directed to enter into a formal Stipulation & Order of the aforesaid proceedings with counsel for COR on the following terms and conditions:

1. The total assessment of the subject property shall be set as follows:

2019	\$105,800.00
2020	\$105,800.00
2. That the above adjustments, with rebates for 2019 and 2020 are made in consideration of the Petitioner's agreement not to commence tax assessment challenges pursuant to Article 7 of the Real Property Tax Law of the State of New York, or under any other applicable provision of law, for tax years 2021-2023 so long as the assessment is fixed as set forth above.
3. That the City reserves the right to adjust the assessment of the subject property as authorized by RPTL §727 during years 2021-2023.
4. That in the instances specified at paragraph 3, the Petitioner reserves the right to challenge the assessment on the subject property as relates to RPTL §727.
5. That an Order of the Supreme Court shall be made and entered settling the aforesaid proceedings to review said assessment without costs to either party as against the other and upon the terms and conditions set forth above, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Assessor and all other municipal officers, agents or employees be and they hereby are directed to do such acts and things as may be necessary to give full force and effect to the aforesaid settlement, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

**Seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero**

**Rules waived by Motion of Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson, seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero and carried with all voting in favor thereof.**

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

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**At the call of the chair, meeting was duly adjourned at 9:04 p.m. until April 6, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. by motion of Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson, seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero and carried with all voting in favor thereof.**

*Ann M. Saunders*  
City Clerk