

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF WATERTOWN
May 4, 2020
7:00 p.m.**

Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith Presiding

Present: Council Member Sarah V. Compo
Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson
Council Member Jesse C. P. Roshia
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, David Wurzburg (assisting with GoToMeeting virtual meeting software)

This meeting was conducted in accordance with Governor Cuomo's Executive Order No. 202.1 that restricts in-person access to meetings. The public was able to view or listen to the meeting live at: <https://livestream.com/swp/wcc>.

The City Manager presented the following reports to Council:

- Resolution No. 1 - Requesting the City's Representatives to the State Assembly and State Senate to Introduce Legislation Reducing the Number of City Court Judges in the City of Watertown
- Resolution No. 2 - Accepting Bid for Production Services, Steve Weed Productions
- Resolution No. 3- Approving Renewal of Agreement For Professional Land Surveying Services, Storino Geomatics
- Resolution No. 4 - Accepting Bid for 2020 CHIPs Sidewalk ADA Ramps Repair Project
- Resolution No. 5 - Accepting Bid for Ready Mix Concrete, Cranesville Block Company
- Resolution No. 6 -Accepting Bid for Ready Mix Concrete, Watertown Concrete
- Resolution No. 7 - Accepting Bid for Truck Rental Services, T.J. Clement Construction Company, Inc.
- Resolution No. 8 - Adopting the City of Watertown's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Annual Action Plan for Program Year 2020
- Resolution No. 9 -Readopting the Citizen Participation Plan for the Community Development Block Grant Program
- Public Hearing - Proposed Local Law No. 2 of 2020 - A Local Law Overriding the Tax Levy Limit Established by New York General Municipal Law §3-c
- Public Hearing – FY 2020-21 Operating Budgets and FY 2020-21 through 2024-25 Capital Budget
- FY 2020-2021 Budget Review

Complete Reports on file in the office of the City Clerk

Prior to the start of the meeting, Mayor Smith publicly thanked Hanes, who have fabricated and donated millions of cloth face masks nationwide, including to Jefferson County who distributed 350 masks to City of Watertown staff.

Meeting opened with a moment of silence.

Pledge of Allegiance was given.

The reading of the minutes of the regular meeting of April 20, 2020, was dispensed and accepted as written by motion of Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson, seconded by Council Member Jesse C.P Roshia and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

COMMUNICATIONS

A letter was received from Larry Reinhardt, 166 Haley Street, describing an event in which he needed the EMS services provided by the Fire Department and he asked Council to reconsider the latest action regarding the change in the Fire Department's dispatch.

An email was received from Patrick Hickey, 394 Pawling Street, offering to provide assistance to Council during time period.

Above communications were placed on file in the office of the City Clerk.

PROCLAMATION

Mayor Smith interrupted the regular course of business and proclaimed the month of May 2020 to be Safe Sleep Month in the City of Watertown and encouraged awareness of the ABC's of sleep for infants by all residents of the City of Watertown.

PUBLIC HEARING

At 7:30 p.m. Mayor Smith asked the City Clerk to read the notices of Public Hearing concerning Proposed Local Law No. 2 of 2020 - A Local Law Overriding the Tax Levy Limit Established by New York General Municipal Law §3-c and the 2020-21 Operating Budgets and 2020-21 through 2024-25 Capital Budget

The public hearing was conducted through a video conference using the virtual meeting software of GoToMeeting.

Mayor Smith declared the hearing open at 7:30 p.m.

Patrick Hickey, 394 Pawling St., addressed the chair directing Council to remember their fiduciary responsibilities. He noted that the City is in the money making business with billing for services and with the proceeds from hydro. He mentioned the City often talks about the difference between "wants vs. needs." He drew Council's attention to two items on the budget which he believes are wants, not needs. They are: Consultant for Black River Trail and the Contingency budget. He stated that he feels the City should use the Contingency budget and all the hydro proceeds to cover the budget shortfall and not raise taxes.

Mayor Smith explained that the Black River Trail consultant was 100% funded with grant money and cannot be used for other purposes, the hydro revenue is already used in the general revenue stream and the Contingency account covers salaries in contract negotiations.

City Comptroller James Mills added that the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the consultant on the trail is an expense but there is an equal and off-setting revenue so there is no direct impact for taxpayers. He explained that it is a pass-through grant from the MPO. He stated the contingency amount of roughly \$1 million each year covers outstanding fire contract years, adding that eventually that will move into the Fire Department budget for wages. He said that the projected hydro revenue is determined by looking at more than 15 years of production data and all of the projected revenue is in the budget, clarifying that there is no extra reserve somewhere else.

Cliff Olney, no address given, expressed to Council his belief that it is premature to predict that the drop in sales tax will be as large as the budget suggests. He noted he had been in local restaurants and they were pretty busy. He further added that Amazon would be paying their portion of the sales tax owed. To increase revenue and solve the budget gap, he suggested a plan to Council involving asking National Grid to buy out the remainder of the City's Hydro contract and allow the City to sell its own electricity.

Mayor Smith compared Mr. Olney's plan to get National Grid to buy out the City's contract to J.G. Wentworth's "If you need money now" cash-up-front commercials. He indicated this would cost the City more than \$20 million in revenue. He also noted that the City doesn't have a distribution system for selling electricity. Mayor Smith also pointed out that State grants are unlikely as the State is "dead broke."

Mr. Mills explained that the sales tax numbers for the period currently affected by the Covid-19 pandemic will not be available until July and the City cannot wait until then. He also pointed out that although, as Mr. Olney mentioned, restaurants can still collect sales tax, 18% of the City's sales tax revenue comes from car sales and those were deemed non-essential.

Mayor Smith added that gasoline sales also accounted for a large amount and the cost of gas was way down, so those numbers would be lower as well.

Alison Christiansen, 240 Wealtha Ave., expressed her concern with the proposed property tax increase noting that she is both a taxpayer and an employee of the City of Watertown who was laid off. She added this was particularly difficult as she feels she is being hit doubly hard.

Mayor Smith noted that this was a proposed budget and that he understood her concerns, adding that Council would do all they could.

Larry Sorrell, no address given, offered his thanks to City staff for all their hard work in preparing the budget.

Mayor Smith clarified that Larry Sorrell was the Zoo Director.

Cliff Olney, no address given, clarified his previous comments by suggesting that the City would sell the electricity but National Grid would still handle distribution.

Virginia Robenski, 8937 Fish Hatchery Road, Remsen, explained that she was a laid-off City employee and expressed her hope that her job could be saved because she loved her position with the City.

Christin Filippelli, 925 Ives St., requested clarification on who would be receiving the pay cuts for City workers and if those were going to be effective for everyone including members of Council.

Mayor Smith explained that it is a 2% pay cut to all management and non-union personnel.

Mr. Mix explained that each union had been contacted about potential pay cuts to avoid layoffs.

Mayor Smith noted that regarding Council pay cuts, Council Member Roshia had a proposal.

Council Member Roshia proposed that each member of Council forego \$2,000 of their salaries to contribute a total of \$10,000 to either a playground or to CAPC to make sure youths are fed.

Karen Ernest, 1364 Loomus Drive, echoed the first two speakers that the Council has taken the same easy route as usual in raising taxes for homeowners, admonishing Council that they can do better than that.

Gary Andrew, 336 W. Main St., Apt. 207, offered his appreciation for Council and said they were doing a fantastic job. Indicating that he had recently moved to the City, he said he knew that Council got a lot of flak and suggested they not give up.

Jason White, 250 Rexford Place, thanked Council for moving forward with plans to eliminate the extra court room and for making Council an interactive experience. He commented that the City had a very need-based budget and hoped they would find other ways to bring the tax rate down.

Mayor Smith declared the hearing closed at 8:00 p.m.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 1 - Requesting the City's Representatives to the State Assembly and State Senate to Introduce Legislation Reducing the Number of City Court Judges in the City of Watertown

Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson

WHEREAS, the State Legislature amended the New York Uniform City Court Act and New York Judiciary Law to increase the number of judges in several City Courts throughout the State, which amendment took effect on April 1, 2014; and

WHEREAS, among the changes made by the Legislature was an increase in Watertown City Court Judge positions from one full-time City Court Judge and one part-time City Court Judge (1/4 time) to two full-time City Court judgeships; and

WHEREAS, the initial proposal of the ad hoc City Court Advisory Committee of the State's Chief Administrative Judge recommended, in its initial report to the State Legislature, that the City of Watertown remain at one and one-quarter judgeships; and

WHEREAS, the ad hoc Advisory Committee's report made specific findings that, in connection with municipalities where the number of judgeships would be increased, there had been a process of

statewide consultation with Mayors and a review of facilities of affected cities, to include the “suitability and sufficiency of existing courtrooms and other facilities to accommodate the proposed new and expanded judgeships;” and

WHEREAS, the political process resulted in amendments to the legislation calling for two full-time Watertown City Court judgeships in lieu of the ad hoc Advisory Committee’s recommended one and one-quarter judgeships; and

WHEREAS, the amended legislation was referred back to the ad hoc Committee for its comments; and WHEREAS, the ad hoc Committee re-issued its report, recommending the assignment of two full-time judges to the Watertown City Court, but made no changes in connection with its comments that there had been a process of statewide consultation with Mayors and that the “facilities were suitable and sufficient to accommodate the proposed new and expanded judgeships, including courtrooms;” and

WHEREAS, effective April 1, 2014, the new legislation went into effect, creating two full-time elected judgeships in the City of Watertown; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Watertown believes that the original allocation of one and one-quarter judges, one of which was elected and the other was appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of City Council, was and is sufficient to handle the workload of Watertown City Court; and

WHEREAS, the City of Watertown’s Mayor was never consulted concerning the expansion of elected judgeships and, regardless of the ad hoc Committee’s claim that facilities were sufficient, the Office of Court Administration has now insisted that the City expand its facilities, to include an additional courtroom, to accommodate a judgeship which was never requested and is not necessary; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Watertown believes that it is in the best interests of the City to ask its elected officials, at the State level, to introduce legislation designed to reduce the City of Watertown City Court judgeships to one and one-quarter judgeships, to be filled in the same manner as existed prior to the 2014 legislation; and

WHEREAS, one of the City of Watertown’s existing City Court Judges is running unopposed for a judgeship at the County level, the election to which, and taking of that oath of office, will create a vacancy in that position as of December 31, 2020, and the timing is appropriate to request legislation, now, to be in effect at the end of this calendar year;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Watertown that the Mayor is hereby directed to make application to the member of the New York State Assembly representing the City of Watertown and the member of the New York State Senate representing the City of Watertown for Home Rule Legislation, pursuant to Article IX Section 3 of the New York Constitution and Section 2 of the New York Municipal Home Rule Law, for a special law designed to reduce the number of Watertown City Court Judges from two full-time judges to one and one-quarter positions, with the full-time position to be elective and the part-time to be appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of Council, and that the Mayor be directed to work with the City’s elected State officials to advance the Home Rule Request for a special law to that effect as soon as possible.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V. Compo

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Comp offered her full support of this resolution and expressed her hope that the State would take into consideration the City's current financial situation and realize that the second courtroom is not affordable at this time.

Council Member Roshia echoed her sentiments stating that the timing was right for this now more than ever.

Council Member Henry-Wilkinson suggested that this would be great for the City, in that it might clear up some discrepancies in the number of judges the City requires.

Mayor Smith noted for the public's understanding that in 2013-2014 the City of Watertown went from 1 ¼ judges to 2 judges. He noted that at that time there should have been consultation by the State with local mayors and officials and that never occurred, adding that initially there was no recommendation for an increase in judges. He added that the Office of Court Administration initially said that the City's current facilities were adequate and no upgrades were needed. Mayor Smith noted that the City has been operating with two judges in the current facilities with no case backlog and he said that the two judges are often assigned to other courts in Jefferson and Lewis counties. He remarked that this is the most appropriate time to request a reconsideration by the State. He further noted that after January 1st there would be a vacancy as Judge Renzi is elected to his County position.

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

Resolution No. 2 - Accepting Bid for Production Services, Steve Weed Productions

Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson

WHEREAS the City Purchasing Department has advertised and received a sealed bid for productions services for the purpose of recording City Council Sessions, as per City specifications, and

WHEREAS bid specifications were sent to eight (8) area Production Companies, with one (1) bid received, and

WHEREAS on Wednesday, April 15, 2020, at 11:00 a.m. the bid received was publicly opened and read, and

WHEREAS the bid received was reviewed by City Purchasing Manager Dale Morrow, and it is her recommendation that the City Council accept the bid for production services,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown accepts the bid received for production services for the purpose of recording City Council Sessions as per City specifications from Steve Weed Productions in the amount of \$250 for a regular session and \$150 for a short session,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that City Manager Kenneth Mix is hereby authorized and directed to sign all contracts associated with implementing the award to Steve Weed Productions.

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

Resolution No. 3- Approving Renewal of Agreement For Professional Land Surveying Services, Storino Geomatics

Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson

WHEREAS on May 1, 2017, City Council approved the City of Watertown to entered into an agreement with Storino Geomatics to provide professional surveying services within the meaning of the New York General Municipal Law, and

WHEREAS the agreement includes the option to extend it for a three-year term at the City's discretion, and

WHEREAS Storino Geomatics has offered to continue performing routine surveying services for the City in connection with assigned projects for identified services on a non-exclusive basis at revised rates,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby approves the three-year extension of the Agreement for Professional Land Surveying Services, between the City of Watertown and Storino Geomatics, 179 Conger Avenue, Watertown NY, per the rates stated in the letter from Thomas Storino dated April 20, 2020, a copy of which is attached and made a part of this resolution, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that City Manager Kenneth A. Mix is hereby authorized and directed to notify Storino Geomatics on behalf of the City of Watertown that the agreement is extended.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V. Compo

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Compo questioned why this was not bid out.

City Manager Mix noted that this was a non-exclusive agreement and it did not preclude any other similar business from making the same agreement.

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

Resolution No. 4 - Accepting Bid for 2020 CHIPs Sidewalk ADA Ramps Repair Project

Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson

WHEREAS the City Purchasing Department has advertised and received sealed bids for 2020 CHIPs Sidewalk ADA Ramps Repair Project, as per City specifications, and

WHEREAS bid invitations were also issued to Bid Net with four (4) sealed bids submitted to the Purchasing Department, and

WHEREAS on Friday, April 24, 2020, at 11:00 a.m., the bids received were publicly opened and read, and

WHEREAS the City Purchasing Department reviewed the bids received with City Engineering, and it is their recommendation that the City Council accept the bid submitted by Concrete Slipform, Inc. in the amount of \$264,160,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown accepts the bid of Concrete Slipform Inc. in the amount of \$264,160 for 2020 CHIPs Sidewalk ADA Ramps Repair 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 Concrete Slipform Inc.

Seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Roshia noted there were four bids for this project and inquired about a lower bid by a Dexter firm, asking why the Canastota firm was accepted over the local one.

Mr. Mix explained that the Dexter company did not offer the same performance bonds and insurance which were required for this project and also a lack of experience.

In response to Council Member Ruggiero's query about grant coverage of the cost of this project, Mr. Mix confirmed that CHIPs covered 100% of the costs.

Council Member Henry-Wilkinson inquired as to whether this project went over and above the CDBG sidewalk program.

Mr. Mix noted it did, adding that this was a way to catch up on the corner ramps project that had been started by City crews and remained unfinished.

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 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 2020-2021, and

WHEREAS invitations to bid were also sent to (4) prospective bidders with (2) bids received and publicly opened and read in the City Purchasing Department on Thursday, April 16, 2020, at 2:00 p.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 seven cubic yards and more:

Description	Cranesville Block Company, Inc.
	Felts Mills, NY
4000 lb. Coarse Mix	\$112.00
4000 lb. Fine Mix	\$113.00
5000 lb. Fine Mix	\$119.00
4000 lb. Coarse Mix / Heated Concrete	\$122.00
4000 lb. Fine Mix / Heated Concrete	\$123.00
5000 lb. Fine Mix / Heated Concrete	\$129.00
733.0102-Controlled Low Strength Material	\$94.00

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 2020-2021 for all requirements 7 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. 6 -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 2020-2021, and

WHEREAS invitations to bid were also sent to (4) prospective bidders with (2) bids received and publicly opened and read in the City Purchasing Department on Thursday, April 16, 2020, at 2:00 p.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:

Description	Watertown Concrete
	Watertown, NY
4000 lb. Coarse Mix	\$125.00
4000 lb. Fine Mix	\$125.00
5000 lb. Fine Mix	\$129.00
4000 lb. Coarse Mix / Heated Concrete	\$135.00
4000 lb. Fine Mix / Heated Concrete	\$135.00
5000 lb. Fine Mix / Heated Concrete	\$139.00
733.0102-Controlled Low Strength Material	\$100.00

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 2020-2021 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. 7 - Accepting Bid for Truck Rental Services, T.J. Clement Construction Company, Inc.

Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson

WHEREAS the City Purchasing Department has advertised and received sealed bid for truck rental services for use by the Public Works Department, per City specifications, and

WHEREAS bid invitations were sent to three (3) area trucking companies, with one (1) sealed bid received and publicly opened and read in the City Purchasing Department on Wednesday, April 16, 2020, at 11:00 a.m., and

WHEREAS City Purchasing Manager Dale Morrow reviewed the bid received with the Public Works Department, and it is their recommendation that the City Council accept the bid submitted by T.J. Clement Construction Company, Inc.,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York, accepts the bid submitted by T.J. Clement Construction Company, Inc. for truck rental services for use by the Public Works Department as the lowest qualifying bidder meeting our specifications in the amount of \$90.00 per hourly rate, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the two-year contract will begin July 1, 2020 and end June 30, 2022, with the ability to renew the contract for three additional one-year contracts, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to sign all contracts associated with implementing the award to T.J. Clement Construction Company, Inc.

Seconded by Council Member Jesse C.P. Roshia

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Ruggiero asked if these trucks were used for snow removal.

Mr. Mix replied that the trucks were used in all seasons and explained that they are used for delivery of stone or other materials, as well as snow removal in the winter.

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

Resolution No. 8 - Adopting the City of Watertown’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Annual Action Plan for Program Year 2020

Introduced by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson

WHEREAS on August 5, 2013, the City Council adopted a resolution authorizing the City of Watertown to become an Entitlement Grantee under the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), and

WHEREAS, as an Entitlement Grantee, the City must adopt Annual Action Plans for its Housing and Community Development Program, and

WHEREAS Annual Action Plans have to be developed with community input and citizen participation, and

WHEREAS Staff conducted outreach efforts with local constituency groups and presented an overview of the program and discussed project priorities at the February 11, 2020 City Council work session and discussed the program with Council members at the February 18, 2020 City Council meeting, and

WHEREAS the City Council held a public hearing on March 2, 2020 to solicit public comments regarding the development of funding priorities and projects to be included in the plan, and

WHEREAS a draft of the Program Year 2020 Annual Action Plan was completed and published on March 24, 2020, and

WHEREAS the draft plan was made available to the public for review and was placed on the City’s website, and

WHEREAS a 30-day public comment period for the plan was held starting on March 24, 2020, after a notice of the comment period was published in the *Watertown Daily Times*, and

WHEREAS the plan was finalized after the 30-day public comment period,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council hereby adopts the City of Watertown’s CDBG Annual Action Plan for Program Year 2020 and authorizes the submission of the plan to HUD which allocates the CDBG funds as follows:

Tilden Street/Starbuck Avenue Sidewalk Project	\$250,000.00
North Side ADA Ramp Replacement Project Phase 2	\$100,000.00
Owner-Occupied Housing Rehab Program	\$215,000.00
Homebuyer Program	\$150,000.00
NDC Housing Stabilization Program	\$45,000.00
Homeless Assistance Point-In-Time Outreach & Education	\$8,500.00

Fair Housing Education	\$5,000.00
WCSD Food 4 Families Program	\$6,500.00
CDBG Target Area Smoke Detector Program	\$5,000.00
Planning – Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Phase 2	\$75,000.00
Program Administration	\$60,779.00
Total Funds Proposed for Allocation	\$920,779.00

Seconded by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Roshia questioned the funding for the Food for Families program, noting this was an area that Council might want to allocate a little more to.

Mr. Mix stated that if Council wished to add more to that program, then the City might look at spending some of the special allocation that was made because of Covid-19. He indicated that program would eliminate the 15% limit on services and suggested this would be a good place to use it.

Mayor Smith commented that, in the CARES act, the City was funded in two areas: transportation for \$3.1 million and \$541,000 in CDBG money. He suggested that the backpack program and a potential food pantry might be able to be funded with that money, now that there were fewer restrictions. He added that the City was going to have more flexibility this year.

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

Resolution No. 9 -Readopting the Citizen Participation Plan for the Community Development Block Grant Program

WHEREAS Section 104 (a) (3) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 and Federal Regulations (24 CFR 91.105) require that the City of Watertown adopt a Citizen Participation Plan for its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, and

WHEREAS the Citizen Participation Plan details how the City plans to involve residents, community organizations and agencies as the City develops its Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for the CDBG Program, and

WHEREAS the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), during a recent monitoring visit to the City of Watertown, identified the need to amend the City's adopted Citizen Participation Plan for the program to include language defining a Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) Neighborhood, and

WHEREAS the City's draft Citizen Participation Plan was published on February 12, 2020 and copies were made available for public viewing at City Hall, the Flower Memorial Library, the Watertown Housing Authority main office, and on the City's web site, and a 30-day public comment period took place from February 14, 2020 to March 15, 2020, and

WHEREAS a public hearing notice was published in the *Watertown Daily Times* and the City Council held a public hearing on the proposed plan at its meeting on March 16, 2020, and

WHEREAS during the 30-day public comment period and during the public hearing, the City received no public comments on the draft Citizen Participation Plan, and

WHEREAS a digital copy of the draft was distributed to local constituency groups and organizations identified in the plan on March 25, 2020 and no comments received in the 30 days thereafter,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby readopts the attached Citizen Participation Plan for its CDBG Program.

Mayor Smith stated that this was being removed from the agenda by him and the resolution was not introduced.

OLD BUSINESS

Proposed Local Law No. 2 of 2020 - A Local Law Overriding the Tax Levy Limit Established by New York General Municipal Law §3-c. (Introduced on 4/20/2020; public hearing held this evening; appears in its entirety in the 2020 Minutes Book on page 5-6 of the 4/20/2020 minutes).

Prior to the vote on the foregoing local law, Mayor Smith explained that this does not mean that Council will override the tax levy and that this is just being done as a matter of procedure.

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

STAFF REPORTS

FY 2020-2021 Budget Review

Regarding budget discussions, Mayor Smith set the dates for the meetings for Monday, May 11 at 6 p.m., Saturday May 16 from 8:30 to 11 a.m. and noted the third meeting would be Saturday, May 23 if necessary. He asked that water and sewer be prepared to present at the first meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Thanks to Staff for Budget Preparation Work

Council Member Compo offered her thanks to staff for preparing the budget and noted she could not imagine the amount of work that must have gone into it. She also offered her thanks for the feedback she had received from the public since the preliminary budget was announced.

Each Council Member echoed Council Member Compo's thanks to staff for their hard work on budget preparation.

Council Member Ruggiero noted that she recognized that a lot of work had gone into it to get the proposed budget where it is currently. Mentioning the budgets presented during her previous two years

on Council, she said she was spoiled last year by a budget under the tax cap, noting there were very few difficult decisions to made in that budget. She recognized the many difficult decisions that had to be made for this proposed budget. She added she had received both positive and negative feedback from the public, noting she was sure she would hear more in the weeks to come.

Mayor Smith offered his thanks specifically to Mr. Mills and Mr. Mix for getting the proposed budget down from an initial double digit tax increase to a more reasonable 6.65%. He further noted that in his previous time on Council in 2000, there were routine double digit tax increases, the City had no fund balance and was borrowing money to buy Police vehicles. He explained the hard work in the City Manager's and Comptroller's offices had greatly improved that situation.

Street Repair near Art's Jug

Council Member Compo passed along thanks from Art's Jug for repairs done to the street near the restaurant.

Mr. Mix noted the fix was temporary but should take care of the problem for now.

Garbage Sticker Availability

Council Member Compo inquired as to whether there was any decrease in the availability of trash stickers in the City.

Mr. Mix said all the stores that had been carrying them were still receiving supplies and that the only place you could no longer purchase them was in City Hall.

Mayor's Letter to Governor Cuomo

Council Member Compo thanked Mayor Smith for his letter sent to Governor Andrew Cuomo which expressed the sentiments of small businesses and others impacted by New York State's Pause.

Council Member Roshia added his thanks to the Mayor for his strongly worded letter.

Council Member Ruggiero offered her appreciation for Mayor Smith's letter, noting she was not sure how much it would help but that she hoped it would since her job had been deemed non-essential during these times. She added that she had reviewed the Governor's four phases and thought she might have to stay non-operational until mid-June and noted she had not received any income since early March. She stated that it would be nice to get back to work, adding her hope that the Governor would listen to Mayor Smith and other representatives asking to get the North Country reopened.

Thanks to Tunes 92 for PSAs

Council Member Henry-Wilkinson thanked Tim Sweeney at Tunes 92 for their public service announcements for the Census, noting they were good partners with the City who had also provided PSAs for the Comprehensive Plan last year.

Arts Council Grants

Council Member Henry-Wilkinson explained that last year he and former City Manager Finn had spoken with Lindsey Paranzino of the Arts Council regarding potential grants that the Arts Council might be able to apply for. He asked Mr. Mix to consider whether this was something the City was still interested in and offered to forward Ms. Paranzino's information to the City Manager.

Virtual North Country Heart Walk at Thompson Park

Council Member Roshia informed Council that he had attended the virtual walk Saturday and noted he was impressed how many people came out for it. He commended the public, noting that it was good to see families out walking, while social distancing, in separate places all over the City, not just in the Park.

Emergency Management Dispatch (EMD) Meeting with Jefferson County Officials

Council Member Ruggiero inquired about the email she received about the EMD meeting. She asked for explanation about the meaning of the email.

Mr. Mix explained that the meeting was educational on how the County operated the EMD program. He noted that two things came out of that meeting: Council wants EMD followed and Council wants to change the vehicles that are sent to various types of calls. He advised that the change in vehicle dispatch is very doable. He explained that the issue seemed to be in following the EMD and added that would need further discussions involving personnel higher than Joe Plummer – probably with the County Administrator and potentially with the Legislators.

In response to Council Member Ruggiero’s question if things were currently operating “business as usual,” Mr. Mix explained that the City could fill out the form the County requires to change the types of vehicles sent to what types of calls. He added that he has learned that there is an issue, in that the Department of Health has a policy about sending all BLS (basic life saving) first-responders to every call, and he noted that staff was still looking into that.

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

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

Council moved into Executive Session at 8:00 p.m.

Council reconvened at 8:50 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

At the call of the chair, meeting was duly adjourned at 8:50 p.m. by motion of Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson, seconded by Council Member Sarah V. Compo and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

Ann M. Saunders and Lisa M. Carr
City Clerk and Deputy Clerk