

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF WATERTOWN  
November 1, 2021  
7:00 p.m.**

**Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith Presiding**

**Present:** Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson  
Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce  
Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero  
Council Member Leonard G. Spaziani  
Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith

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

**City staff present:** Michael Delaney

The City Manager presented the following reports to Council:

- Tabled Resolution - Discontinuance of an Unimproved Portion of the City Street Known as Hancock Street and Authorizing Sale of Said Real Property to Fredrick A. McWayne
- Zone Change – 108 Flower Avenue East
- Site Plan Review – 611 Main Street West
- Pool Attendance and Flynn Pool Repair

**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 October 18, 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.

**PROCLAMATION**

WHEREAS on October 14, 2021, there was a horrific traffic accident on Arsenal Street involving two vehicles, and

WHEREAS the following five soldiers from the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division assigned to Fort Drum happened to be in the area and witnessed an explosion and the power going out:

Specialist William L. Berube, 642<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Support Company  
Specialist Zachary Broxson, 642<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Support Company  
Specialist Shane T. Cockerham, 642<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Support Company  
Specialist Jacob G. Jones, 642<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Support Company  
Sergeant Major Jake Smith, Head Quarters and Head Quarters Battalion, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain  
Division

WHEREAS through their quick response and training, rushed to the scene and assisted in saving the lives of those involved by rescuing them from a burning car and working quickly to help extinguish the flames, and

WHEREAS these soldiers continued to provide assistance as needed upon the arrival of the City Fire Department, City Police Department and Guilfoyle Ambulance Services, who then continued in the rescue effort,

NOW THEREFORE, I, Jeffrey M. Smith, Mayor of the City of Watertown, New York, do hereby proclaim, Monday, November 1, 2021, to be in recognition of these five soldiers who have gone above and beyond in their duties, as well as our own Fire Department personnel, Police Department personnel, Town of Watertown personnel for providing support, and Guilfoyle Ambulance Services personnel in the City of Watertown. I urge all residents to reflect on the impact of having Fort Drum soldiers in our community who are so willing to put themselves in harm's way for their fellow citizens.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

A communication was received from Joanne Hughes, daughter of the late Wayne Zimmer, requesting the City place a plaque and dedicate the flagpole in the park between Katherine and Seymour Streets on the Northside in tribute to her father's commitment to both the Northside and the City of Watertown.

**Above communication on file in the City Clerk's office.**

A claim was received from National Grid regarding an accident on August 20, 2021, involving a City excavator bucket damaging a 2-inch plastic gas main at 708 Gilbert Street.

**Above claim has been referred to the Board of Audit.**

### **PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

**Patricia Whalen**, 11 Public Square, addressed the chair regarding crosswalk timing, and sidewalk conditions. She also requested more speed limit signs in the Downtown area, stating that motorists are speeding. She informed Council that Citibus Supervisor Doreen Dougherty had relayed information that Walmart was considering adding a covered bus stop.

**Jason Traynor**, 142 Mechanic Street, addressed the chair regarding the October 14<sup>th</sup> motor vehicle accident and suggested potential future litigation regarding the bedbug issue. He also offered thanks to the "transportation department" for upgrades to the bus system and requested expanded bus times.

**Jonathan Phillips**, 735 Mill Street, addressed Council regarding potholes on Coffeen Street, the need for the City to keep all three pools and his belief that the Police should do more to prevent jaywalking on Public Square.

**Robert Schorr**, 640 Leray Street, addressed the chair requesting Council alter the tabled Resolution from October 18 to only discontinue the proposed portion of the street and put the rest of the property up for bid "in the interest of fairness."

## **RESOLUTIONS**

There were no resolutions.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Resolution - Discontinuance of an Unimproved Portion of the City Street Known as Hancock Street and Authorizing Sale of Said Real Property to Frederick A. McWayne”** *(Introduced on October 18, 2021; tabled: appears in its entirety in the 2021 Minutes Book on page # 3-4 of the 10/18/2021 minutes).*

**The Resolution remained tabled.**

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### **Zone Change – 108 Flower Avenue East**

No discussion took place.

### **Site Plan Review – 611 Main Street West**

There was no discussion on this report.

### **Pool Attendance and Flynn Pool Repair**

Council Member Ruggiero asked who had prepared the cost estimate for Flynn pool repairs.

City Engineer Michael Delaney explained that his staff had prepared the estimate and it was a best-case scenario that presumed no hidden defects would be revealed once the shell was removed. He explained that the continually-patched cracks in the shell indicated a strong likelihood there would be foundation issues as well. He reminded Council that the repairs detailed in his estimate would give the pool, potentially, ten more years of use.

Council Member Ruggiero asked about the \$43,000 expense for the bathhouse, noting that this was the first she had heard of that building needing repairs in her four years on Council.

Mr. Delaney indicated that there were structural issues that would need to be repaired and he stressed that his staff does not make decisions, they just provide information. He explained that the shell was the easiest thing to evaluate, and the rest was very complicated. He noted he was tasked to perform an evaluation on which pool would be the most cost-effective to be repaired.

Council Member Ruggiero inquired as to whether there was \$125,000 for a filter for the Flynn Pool in the Capital budget.

Mr. Delaney said that every piece of equipment that could be utilized from the Flynn Pool would be repurposed for the Alteri Pool.

Council Member Spaziani asked if there were any other options for the pool repairs other than ripping the pool out and rebuilding. He noted he had received an email from a Matthew McKay who said there were other options.

Mayor Smith indicated he did not know who that was or what his credentials were.

Council Member Ruggiero asked if the Engineering Department had spoken with Brian Frasier to get an idea from him.

Mr. Delaney said while Mr. Fraser, Sundance Leisure, could be useful for providing information about chemical control, any construction estimates would have to be done by a licensed engineer.

In response to Council Member Spaziani's question regarding putting new swimming pools inside existing swimming pools, Mr. Delaney said that was basically what was being discussed when speaking of replacing the shell only.

Council Member Spaziani noted the email he received from Mr. McKay promised a 25-year warranty.

Mr. Delaney stated that he would be willing, if directed, to speak to anyone about alternatives, but clarified for Council that surface repairs are temporary repairs. He advised that cracks in the shell indicate weak points in the foundation below. He also noted that there would be issues with the new shell adhering in places where there have been leaks. He reminded Council that repairing the shell would be just a temporary fix to a pool that was over forty years old.

Mayor Smith advised the pool was closer to fifty years old.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Fort Drum Soldiers Honored with Proclamation**

Council Member Henry-Wilkinson noted that this was a very nice presentation and stated the soldiers had brought honor to the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division.

Council Member Pierce thanked the Mayor for taking the lead on these honors and added that it seemed especially fitting that the presentation happened at the beginning of Military Family Appreciation Month.

Council Member Ruggiero commented that our community is very fortunate to have Fort Drum as a partner.

Council Member Spaziani pointed out that the soldiers were very brave and that was due to their training, adding that the reason we are the nation we are is because of people like them.

### **Public Art**

Council Member Henry-Wilkinson informed Council that he would like to see a public art project, similar to what he had seen in Ithaca, where people would adopt electrical boxes in the downtown area to paint. He suggested rules and guidelines be established regarding obscenity, profanity and advertisement.

Council Member Pierce reiterated her interest in having an "adopt-an-island" program for the City's small park areas, indicating she would like to see businesses get involved. She stated that would make a big difference in the beautification of neighborhoods.

**Morgan Stanley Sidewalk**

Council Member Ruggiero asked Mr. Mix if staff had looked into Mrs. Whalen's complaints about the sidewalk conditions in front of the Morgan Stanley building on Washington Street.

Mr. Mix said he would have the sidewalk inspected.

**Northside/Flynn Pool**

Council Member Henry-Wilkinson remarked that the upcoming Election would probably decide the fate of the Flynn pool, depending on who would be sitting on Council, and, for that reason, he wanted to propose some ideas that might survive the election. He mentioned a pump track or a skate park being a desirable alternative to the previously proposed splashpad. He suggested working with park design teams to see what other cities had provided for recreation in place of pools. Council Member Henry-Wilkinson pointed out that if the City was serious about adding more bike trails in the park, a pump track might be a nice complement to those trails, but added he is not sure of their cost. Reminding Council that the splashpad in Thompson Park cost around \$400,000, he explained he would prefer to spend his last two months on Council lobbying the members of Council to seek other alternatives for recreation and finding out a price for a pump track.

Council Member Pierce remarked that she liked the idea of a pump track, which she had previously not heard of and noted it was important that the City diversify their recreational opportunities. She reiterated the practicality of a splashpad and mentioned that she had been looking into the possibility of a combination splashpad/ice rink like one they have in Buffalo.

Council Member Spaziani strongly disagreed with other Council Members regarding replacing the pool with other options. He said the people want three pools.

**Motion was made by Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson to move into Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining and the employment history of a particular individual and/or individuals.**

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

Council moved into Executive Session at 7:57 p.m.

Council reconvened at 8:57 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**At the call of the chair, meeting was duly adjourned at 8:57 p.m. by motion of Council Member Ryan J. Henry-Wilkinson, seconded by Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith and carried with all voting in favor thereof.**

*Lisa M. Carr*  
Deputy City Clerk