

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF WATERTOWN
March 20, 2023
7:00 p.m.**

Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith Presiding

Present: Council Member Patrick J. Hickey
Council Member Clifford G. Olney III
Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce
Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero
Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith

Also Present: Kenneth A. Mix, City Manager
H. Todd Bullard, Interim City Attorney (via teleconference)

City staff present: Scott Weller, Vicky Murphy, James Mills, Michael Delaney, Michael LaBarge, Brian Phelps, Logan Eddy

The City Manager presented the following reports to Council:

- Resolution No. 1 - Approving Flat Fee Use of Athletic Fields with Watertown American Little League
- Resolution No. 2 - Approving Professional Service Agreement for a 3rd Party Estimate for Water Treatment Upgrades with Dharam Consulting
- Resolution No. 3 - Accepting Proposal for Hydroelectric Facility Operation & Maintenance Contract with Ampersand of NY Operations
- Resolution No. 4 - Authorizing the Sale of Various Abandoned Bicycles
- Resolution No. 5 - Authorizing Sale of Real Property, Known as 8 Water Street to Gross Polowy LLC, 1775 Wehrle Drive, Suite 100, Williamsville, New York 14221
- Resolution No. 6 - Authorizing Sale of Real Property, Known as 56 Spring Street to Gross Polowy LLC, 1775 Wehrle Drive, Suite 100, Williamsville, New York 14221
- Resolution No. 7 - Authorizing Sale of Real Property, Known as 57 Spring Street to Gross Polowy LLC, 1775 Wehrle Drive, Suite 100, Williamsville, New York 14221
- Resolution No. 8 - Approving Supplemental Agreement #3 with Fisher Associates for the Public Square Traffic Signal Optimization Project – NYSDOT PIN: 7807.20
- Sale of Surplus Hydro-electricity – February 2023
- Sales Tax Revenue – February 2023

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 6, 2023 and work session of March 13, 2023, was dispensed and accepted as written by motion of Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero, seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

COMMUNICATIONS

A notice of intent to file claim was received from Progressive Insurance on behalf of Merisa L. Soluri, whose car was damaged by a City plow on Mullin Street on December 26, 2022.

Above claim has been referred to the Board of Audit.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mark Bonner spoke in support of his brother, Bill Bonner, and the issue that his brother has had with tenants damaging his rental properties.

Bill Bonner spoke of the property damage that has been done to his rental units and what he feels is a lack of assistance from the Police Department and District Attorney's Office. He disagreed with the DA's interpretation of the law that this is a civil matter and not a criminal matter.

Tammie Higby, Olive Street, told Council that when she was living at the Hotis Hotel, she witnessed the damage that was being done by tenants. She said that units were destroyed and that items were stolen from the units in order to sell them for money to buy drugs.

Jason Traynor, 424 Arsenal Street, advised that there needs to be a solution for affordable rent. He also said he does not support the City buying the golf course for the amount that they did, and that Council needs to start listening to the public.

Ed Smalls, 503 Franklin Street, addressed the chair stating he has invested in rental units and has \$2.1 million in assets in the City. He stressed that he has bought "ghost houses" in the City and renovated them to make more affordable housing, but renters are doing several thousand dollars' worth of damage to his units. He expressed his frustration with law enforcement and the Drug Task Force, noting that meth was being cooked in one of this units. He advised that, since he provides the utilities for his rentals, this is theft of services and not just a civil matter. He noted that he is thinking of liquidating his properties and moving outside the City and will no longer invest within the City.

Brian Watson noted that he has invested in the City but has faced the same issues as the other speakers and asked for the issues to be resolved.

Jonathan Phillips, 735 Mill Street, said that Council has focused on the golf course purchase, for which they over paid, but there are landlords struggling. He spoke of the roads and buses being in disrepair and said Watertown is falling apart. He asked for Council Members Ruggiero, Olney and Hickey to step down.

Seth LaBarge, stated that he is a contractor in the City and has seen the damage that has been done to rental units. He spoke of a situation where a person used a circular saw to make holes in the walls. He expressed concerns with property owners living outside the area needing to come back to Watertown in order to file complaints with the Police Department, instead of letting property managers file the complaint. Lastly, he stated that the Police and DA are not helping.

Ben Shoen, Academy Street, said he sympathized with the people who have spoken tonight but Council has no control over a lot of the problems, noting that Bail Reform has caused much of issues. He suggested that people vote for State representatives who do not support Bail Reform and mentioned that

tenants have more rights than landlords. Regarding the golf course, he said that he would like it to be successful since the purchase has gone through, but added he is concerned that the appraisal was much lower than the price the City paid. He urged the three Council Members who supported the purchase to step down from their duties on Council and resign.

Trina Kuan, 267 Pratt Street, spoke in support of the landlords who have sustained damages to their rental units and expressed her frustration with the DA and Police Department. She said she feels there is selective prosecution and selective enforcement of the law.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 1 - Approving Flat Fee Use of Athletic Fields with Watertown American Little League

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS the City of Watertown owns and operates numerous athletic fields throughout the city, and

WHEREAS the Watertown American Little League has expressed its desire to enter into an Agreement for Flat Fee Use of Athletic Fields, and

WHEREAS City Council of the City of Watertown desires to promote recreational activities at these community recreational facilities,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York, that it hereby approves the Agreement for Flat Fee Use of Athletic Fields between the City of Watertown and the Watertown American Little League, 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 execute said Agreement on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 2 - Approving Professional Service Agreement for a 3rd Party Estimate for Water Treatment Upgrades with Dharam Consulting

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS the City of Watertown desires to apply for Defense Community Infrastructure Pilot Program (DCIP) grant funds for the Water Treatment Plant Disinfection By-Products Improvement Project, and

WHEREAS DCIP applicants are required to submit a 3rd party engineer estimate, and

WHEREAS Dharam Consulting submitted a proposal to provide 3rd party cost consulting services for the City of Watertown.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby approves the Dharam Consulting Agreement, a copy of which is attached and made part of this resolution, in the amount of \$12,000, and

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

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Mayor Smith explained for Council Member Olney that this is required for the Defense Community Infrastructure Pilot Program (DCIP), which is a grant through the Department of Defense (DOD) and could help fund the project. He said that part of the application process requires a third-party estimate of the cost of the project.

Council Member Olney asked about the scope of the work, stating that it was not clearly defined.

Mr. Mix explained that this firm will take what GHD does and do a third-party cost estimate and it is only being done because the DCIP requires that someone other than the City and design engineers provide a cost estimate. He added that the total scope is still being evaluated, so when it is determined, this will be a second opinion on it.

Mayor Smith pointed out that there are two parts to the project: the sedimentation basins and carbon filtration. He stated that in order for the City to apply for the grant, DOD wants a third-party to verify the costs.

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

Resolution No. 3 - Accepting Proposal for Hydroelectric Facility Operation & Maintenance Contract with Ampersand of NY Operations

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS the City desires to enter into an Operation and Maintenance contract with an experienced and established firm to perform plant operations and maintenance work at the City's Hydroelectric Facility at 1050 Marble Street, Watertown, NY, and

WHEREAS the Purchasing Department advertised and received two (2) sealed proposals for Hydroelectric Facility Operation & Maintenance Contract services, and

WHEREAS on March 7, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. the proposals received were publicly opened and read, and

WHEREAS Purchasing Manager, Tina Bartlett-Bearup reviewed the proposals received with the Engineering Department and it is their recommendation that the City Council accept the lowest responsive responsible proposal submitted by Ampersand of NY Operations,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby accepts the proposal received from Ampersand of NY Operations in the amount of \$904,680.00, and

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

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Olney asked for the scope of this work.

Mr. Mix explained that this is for the operation of the hydro plant, which this company has done for many years.

City Engineer Michael Delaney added that this is for the general operations and the day-to-day work of the facility.

Council Member Olney asked if there is no one on staff who could do this work or if the City has ever considered doing this work in-house.

Mr. Delaney stated that City staff oversees the work done by Ampersand and that this is specialized work, so there are not many options for people willing to do it or with the expertise. It was noted that Ampersand provides 24-hour coverage every day of the year.

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

Resolution No. 4 - Authorizing the Sale of Various Abandoned Bicycles

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS the City of Watertown has acquired several abandoned bicycles, the listing of which is attached and made a part of this resolution, and

WHEREAS the bicycles may have some value best determined by on-line auction,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York, that it hereby authorizes the sale, by on-line auction, of the abandoned bicycles, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that final acceptance of such bids shall constitute acceptance of the same by the City Council.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Pierce noted that she was contacted by someone whose bike was stolen and she wondered how soon the auction would occur.

Mr. Mix indicated that the auction would happen soon after Council approves this, so this individual should contact the Police Department right away to see if their bike is there.

Council Member Olney questioned the process, noting that all the bikes are sold to one person through the auction who then will sell them individually for a profit. He said it appears as if the City is benefiting from bikes being stolen. He suggested having a better bike registration/license system that

would allow the owner to be located in order to return the bike to them. He also suggested giving the bikes to individuals who cannot afford to buy one themselves instead of selling them through an auction.

Mayor Smith noted that if someone's bike is stolen, they should contact the Police and possibly get it returned to them.

Council Member Olney recommended the City issue a PSA regarding the stolen bikes that are retrieved by the Police Department, stating this could be a responsibility of the marketing position that he has proposed.

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

Resolution No. 5 - Authorizing Sale of Real Property, Known as 8 Water Street to Gross Polowy LLC, 1775 Wehrle Drive, Suite 100, Williamsville, New York 14221

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS there has heretofore been bid in by the City of Watertown at a tax sale a certain lot of land known as 8 Water Street, approximately 50' x 115' in size, and also known and designated on the map of the Department of Assessment and Taxation of the City of Watertown, New York as Parcel No. 04-26-308.000, and

WHEREAS title to said lands have since been retained by the City of Watertown as acquired at said tax sale, which titles were retained by reason of the failure of anyone to redeem the same, and

WHEREAS said real properties have never been assigned by the Council for a public use, and

WHEREAS the City Council desires to ensure that properties such as these properties be brought into compliance with all applicable provisions of the Uniform Construction Codes, as defined by Watertown City Code Chapter 120, and the Code of the City of Watertown within one (1) year from the date of delivery of the quit claim deed of their sale to subsequent buyers,

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 offer of \$841.44 submitted by Gross Polowy, LLC, for the purchase of Parcel No. 04-26-308.000, is a fair and reasonable offer therefore and the same is hereby accepted, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor, Jeffrey M. Smith be and he hereby is authorized, empowered and directed to execute and deliver a Quit Claim Deed of said real properties to Gross Polowy, LLC upon receipt of the above mentioned sum of money in cash only by the City Comptroller, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the deed issued by the City contain a provision that if the property sold is not brought into compliance with all applicable provisions of the Uniform Construction Codes, as defined by Watertown City Code Chapter 120, and the Code of the City of Watertown within

one (1) year from the date of delivery of the quit claim deed of their sale to subsequent buyers, the City shall have the right to seek and be entitled to receive reversion of title to the premises to the City.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, City Comptroller James Mills explained, at Council Member Olney's request, that the original owner of 853 Water Street had owned 8 Water Street, 56 Spring Street and 57 Spring Street as well, but now 853 Water Street was in the process of being foreclosed by this law firm. He said that Gross Polowy, LCC would like to purchase the additional parcels to sell as one.

Council Member Olney asked if the City makes money when selling property for back taxes.

Mr. Mills replied that it depends on the property and that the City would like to receive at least what is owned in back taxes, which he noted is what is being offered in this case.

Council Member Olney said that he is interested in a different way of handling the properties taken for back taxes, noting that the County does it differently. He said he thinks the City should consider the circumstances as to why the owner cannot pay the taxes. He mentioned that the County offers payment plans.

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

Resolution No. 6 - Authorizing Sale of Real Property, Known as 56 Spring Street to Gross Polowy LLC, 1775 Wehrle Drive, Suite 100, Williamsville, New York 14221

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS there has heretofore been bid in by the City of Watertown at a tax sale a certain lot of land known as 56 Spring Street, approximately 50' x 98' in size, and also known and designated on the map of the Department of Assessment and Taxation of the City of Watertown, New York as Parcel No. 04-26-324.000, and

WHEREAS title to said lands have since been retained by the City of Watertown as acquired at said tax sale, which titles were retained by reason of the failure of anyone to redeem the same, and

WHEREAS said real properties have never been assigned by the Council for a public use, and

WHEREAS the City Council desires to ensure that properties such as these properties be brought into compliance with all applicable provisions of the Uniform Construction Codes, as defined by Watertown City Code Chapter 120, and the Code of the City of Watertown within one (1) year from the date of delivery of the quit claim deed of their sale to subsequent buyers,

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 offer of \$369.05 submitted by Gross Polowy, LLC, for the purchase of Parcel No. 04-26-324.000, is a fair and reasonable offer therefore and

the same is hereby accepted, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor, Jeffrey M. Smith be and he hereby is authorized, empowered and directed to execute and deliver a Quit Claim Deed of said real properties to Gross Polowy, LLC upon receipt of the above mentioned sum of money in cash only by the City Comptroller, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the deed issued by the City contain a provision that if the property sold is not brought into compliance with all applicable provisions of the Uniform Construction Codes, as defined by Watertown City Code Chapter 120, and the Code of the City of Watertown within one (1) year from the date of delivery of the quit claim deed of their sale to subsequent buyers, the City shall have the right to seek and be entitled to receive reversion of title to the premises to the City.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 7 - Authorizing Sale of Real Property, Known as 57 Spring Street to Gross Polowy LLC, 1775 Wehrle Drive, Suite 100, Williamsville, New York 14221

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS there has heretofore been bid in by the City of Watertown at a tax sale a certain lot of land known as 57 Spring Street, approximately 50' x 96' in size, and also known and designated on the map of the Department of Assessment and Taxation of the City of Watertown, New York as Parcel No. 04-26-323.000, and

WHEREAS title to said lands have since been retained by the City of Watertown as acquired at said tax sale, which titles were retained by reason of the failure of anyone to redeem the same, and

WHEREAS said real properties have never been assigned by the Council for a public use, and

WHEREAS the City Council desires to ensure that properties such as these properties be brought into compliance with all applicable provisions of the Uniform Construction Codes, as defined by Watertown City Code Chapter 120, and the Code of the City of Watertown within one (1) year from the date of delivery of the quit claim deed of their sale to subsequent buyers,

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 offer of \$369.05 submitted by Gross Polowy, LLC, for the purchase of Parcel No. 04-26-323.000, is a fair and reasonable offer therefore and the same is hereby accepted, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor, Jeffrey M. Smith be and he hereby is authorized, empowered and directed to execute and deliver a Quit Claim Deed of said real properties to Gross Polowy, LLC upon receipt of the above mentioned sum of money in cash only by the City Comptroller, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the deed issued by the City contain a provision that if the property sold is not brought into compliance with all applicable provisions of the Uniform Construction

Codes, as defined by Watertown City Code Chapter 120, and the Code of the City of Watertown within one (1) year from the date of delivery of the quit claim deed of their sale to subsequent buyers, the City shall have the right to seek and be entitled to receive reversion of title to the premises to the City.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 8 - Approving Supplemental Agreement #3 with Fisher Associates for the Public Square Traffic Signal Optimization Project – NYSDOT PIN: 7807.20

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS the City desires to reduce traffic congestion through the Public Square corridor, and

WHEREAS the City Council entered into Agreement with Fisher Associates for the construction inspection and management of the Project, and

WHEREAS on June 21, 2021, the City Council accepted the bid of Power & Construction Group, Inc. for installation of equipment for the Traffic Signal Optimization and Coordination project, and

WHEREAS additional underground utility work is necessary at the intersections of Arsenal and Public Square and State St. and Public Square, and

WHEREAS Fisher Associates has submitted a proposal in the amount of \$51,000 for Construction Administration and Inspection of the addition work, and

WHEREAS the City is financing this project using Federal and State Aid.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby approves the Professional Services Agreement Supplement No.3 in the amount of \$51,000, between the City of Watertown and Fisher Associates, a copy of which is attached and made a part of this resolution, bringing the total of the project to \$348,500 and

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

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea.

STAFF REPORTS

Sale of Surplus Hydro-electricity – February 2023

A report was available for Council to review.

Sales Tax Revenue – February 2023

A report was available for Council to review.

There was a lengthy conversation initiated by Council Member Olney regarding how sales tax is estimated for budget purposes and whether the Wayfair sales tax decision has played a role in increasing sales tax revenue.

Mr. Mills responded to several questions from Council Member Olney and advised that it is better to look at the actual-to-budget comparison, which is located on the bottom of the report, because even though the City has seen an increase in sales tax revenue, this increase has been figured into the budget to account for an increase in expenses. He pointed out that the year-to-date variance for actual-to-budget is 1.24%, so he thinks sales tax revenue will end the year close to his budgetary estimate. He also reminded Council that the City receives estimated amounts of sales tax monthly and then will true-up on a quarterly basis.

NEW BUSINESS

Upcoming Events and Meetings

Council Member Hickey listed the following: Full Alliance Board and Cannabis Cultivation meetings on March 21; Local Waterfront Revitalization on March 22; Watertown Local Development Corp, Tree City USA, Friends of Thompson Park and Eclipse meetings on March 23; Tom Homan speaking at Italian American Club on March 25; Pathway to Trafficking on March 26; and Youth Summit on April 1. He also mentioned that the DEC would be holding exams for falconry, dog handling and wildlife rehabilitation on April 14.

Schumer Xylazine Initiative

Council Member Hickey reported that Senator Chuck Schumer was in Watertown on Friday in support of his initiative concerning the drug Xylazine, known as the Zombie Drug, and he described the steps the Senator plans to implement. He went on to inform Council that Jefferson County has seen its first deaths due to the drug. Council Member Hickey reminded Council that he had brought his concerns about Xylazine to Council in a previous meeting.

Family Support Services for Addiction Act

Council Member Hickey advised that Senator Kirsten Gillibrand has introduced legislation which will provide \$25 million in Federal grant funding to support local organizations that help people and their families dealing with addiction.

Main Avenue Housing

Council Member Hickey offered his congratulations to Neighbors of Watertown, Transitional Living Services of NNY and CREDO for selecting a location for the new 60-unit affordable housing center for homeless and low-income individuals.

Colon Cancer Awareness Month

Council Member Hickey advised that March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month and offered himself as living proof that early detection can save lives.

Burn Ban

Council Member Hickey announced a statewide burn ban in effect from March 16 to May 14.

Drug Seizure

Council Member Hickey informed Council that a March 5 traffic stop in Theresa had found 13 duffel bags containing 278 pounds of marijuana worth \$400,000. He noted that Watertown and Jefferson

County now qualify as a high intensity drug trafficking area (HIDTA) according to the Drug Enforcement Agency's definition.

Irish Festival and Irish Flag Raising

Council Member Olney noted that the festival held over the weekend was very successful and he thanked the organizers.

Other members of Council echoed his sentiments during their portion of New Business.

Pothole on Burdick and Snell Streets

Council Member Olney thanked DPW staff for their quick response to repair a pothole on Burdick Street and Snell Street. He also stated that CSX was supposed to pull the rails up from the roads and asked when that would occur.

Shower at Massey Street Fire Station

Council Member Olney stated that about a year ago he noticed the showerhead in one of the showers at the fire station needed replacement. He commented that now the City is in the middle of a project to replace this shower and another one, as well as roof work on two stations. He mentioned that a showerhead and drain could have easily been replaced for approximately \$100 but now it has escalated to a \$70,000 project.

Oversight of Engineering

Council Member Olney remarked that he would be adding another layer of oversight to engineering and construction projects in the City so he would like an invitation to those types of meetings in order to hear what is being discussed. He said this will allow him to understand better what is being seen and what is not being seen when staff brings these projects before Council.

Landlords Concern of Property Damage/Drug Issues/Homelessness

Council Member Olney thanked everyone who spoke during Privilege of the Floor, as well as the District Attorney who attended the last work session. He said he does not agree with the opinion that nothing can be done and asked for the opinion of the City Attorney. He said he feels there are better ways of handling this and the preparation of Police reports. He stated he would like to see a faster response and charges brought forward against the individuals causing the damage. He added that he would also like these individuals' names put on a list to warn other landlords.

Council Member Olney thanked the Drug Task Force for their work but said he thinks more can be done. He went on to speak about the proposed homeless shelter on a Main Avenue property and thanked the organizations involved. He indicated that a lot of these issues can be solved by decisions made by Council and encourage individuals to reach out to their State representatives.

Golf Course Deal

Council Member Olney mentioned there have been a lot of disparaging comments made about the purchase of the golf course by other Council Members and said he feels the course would be more successful if these comments were to stop. He commented that it is time to move beyond this.

Stewart's Shops

Council Member Pierce recalled that there was discussion of Stewarts placing a sign stating there was to no be righthand turn onto Flower Avenue East and noticed it had not been installed.

Council Member Hickey noted that this requirement had been removed by Council.

Landlords Concern of Property Damage

Council Member Pierce mentioned that some of the issue was created by legislation in Albany and suggested that Council write a letter of concern to both the State representatives and the Governor. She offered to assist with creating a draft letter.

James Fitzpatrick's Funeral

Council Member Ruggiero mentioned that James Fitzpatrick's funeral was held on March 17, noting he was the spouse of former County Legislator Carolyn Fitzpatrick, who had also passed a few years ago. She spoke of Mr. Fitzpatrick's role in the community and in the Irish Festival.

Fire Department Annual Hockey Tournament

Council Member Ruggiero advised that the annual tournament was held last weekend and was very successful. She indicated that this was fundraiser for a family in need of a handicapped accessible van for their child.

Garrett Loomis Training

Council Member Ruggiero announced that this training will be held at Jefferson Community College on April 8 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Council Member Hickey added that the topic will be PTSD.

Snow Removal

Council Member Ruggiero thanked DPW for quickly responding to the request to clear snow from the sidewalk along the Jefferson County Historical Society from Washington Street to the Stone Street Parking lot after the recent snowfall.

30-Day Notice From DEC

Mayor Smith mentioned that the City received a 30-day notice from the DEC for discharging sewage water into the wetlands by Butterfield Avenue. He said he has talked to Mr. Mix about short-term plans and that flow studies have been completed, adding there is infiltration from the Town of Watertown. He advised there will be further discussion with Town of Watertown Supervisor Bartlett regarding fixing that problem. He asked if there were any more updates.

Mr. Mix explained that staff met with the DEC today to discuss what the DEC is looking for in a response and they received a good amount of feedback. He further explained that they discussed the projects that had been done through the years, what is being done now and what can be done next year. He noted there will be projects in the proposed budget to accommodate this and the City will no longer be discharging this if there is a large rain event.

Golf Course Update

Mayor Smith asked for an update on the electrical issue and concessions at the golf course.

Mr. Mix indicated that some of the electric work will be done in-house by staff. He also stated that C&S had an electrical engineer look at everything and will be letting the City know this week what else needs to be done. Regarding concessions, he reported that staff met with Spokes last week and the City is working with the attorney to develop a license agreement.

Water Treatment Plant / Disinfection By-Products

Mayor Smith indicated that he has had regular discussions with the garrison leaders regarding the City applying for the DCIP grant and Fort Drum is supportive of this application. He also explained that he has discussed with Senator Schumer, Congresswoman Stefanik and Congresswoman Tenney the need for this project and earmarking funding sources. He estimated the total cost of the project at \$33 million and noted that they are supportive as this provides reliability and enhancement to the military base.

Motion was made by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero to move into Executive Session to discuss the employment history of a particular person, to discuss the proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property, to discuss proposed, pending, or current litigation, and to discuss collective bargaining.

Motion was seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

Council moved into Executive Session at 8:57 p.m.

Council reconvened at 10:37 p.m.

A D J O U R N M E N T

At the call of the chair, meeting was duly adjourned at 10:37 p.m. by motion of Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero, seconded by Council Member Clifford G. Olney III and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

Ann M. Saunders
City Clerk