

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF WATERTOWN
May 4, 2026
7:00 p.m.**

Mayor Sarah V.C. Pierce Presiding

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

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

City staff present: Erica Anderson, James Mills, Michael Lumbis, Thomas Compo, Matthew Timerman

The City Manager presented the following reports to Council:

- Resolution No. 1 - Authorizing the Sale of Surplus Police Department Vehicle and Equipment
- Resolution No. 2 - Authorizing the Sale of Surplus Fire Vehicles
- Resolution No. 3 - Accepting Bid for Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Cylinder Compressor & Fill Station Replacement – Watertown Fire Department Jerome Fire Equipment Co. Inc.
- Resolution No. 4 - Adopting the City’s Community Development Block Grant Program Consolidated Plan for Program Years 2026-2030 and Annual Action Plan for Program Year 2026
- Resolution No. 5 - Approving the Grant Agreement Amendment with the Community Action Planning Council of Jefferson County for the CDBG CARES Act Funding Food Pantry Program
- Resolution No. 6 - Approving the Grant Agreement Amendment with the Watertown Urban Mission for CDBG CARES Act Funding Food Pantry Program
- Resolution No. 7 - Approving the Grant Agreement Amendment with the United Way of Northern New York for CDBG CARES Act Funding for the Watertown City School District Food for Families Program
- Resolution No. 8 - Approving the Grant Agreement Amendment with the Salvation Army for the CDBG CARES Act Funding Food Pantry Program
- Resolution No. 9 - Finding that Changing the Approved Zoning Classification of 337 State Street, Parcel Number 6-02-317.000 from Downtown to Urban Mixed Use Will Not Have a Significant Impact on the Environment
- Proposed Local Law - A Local Law Amending the Code of the City of Watertown, Chapter 260: Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Control
- Old Business - Ordinance Changing the Approved Zoning Classification of 337 State Street, Parcel Number 6-02-317.000 from Downtown to Urban Mixed Use
- Old Business - Proposed Local Law - A Local Law Establishing the In Rem Tax Foreclosure Act
- Old Business - Tabled - Proposed Local Law - A Local Law Overriding the Tax Levy Limit Established by New York General Municipal Law §3-c
- Community Development Block Grant Program – Annual Community Assessment for Program Year 2024-2025

Meeting opened with a moment of silence and Mayor Pierce asked that it be in remembrance of Samuel Lundy, who recently passed away.

Pledge of Allegiance was given.

The reading of the minutes from the budget session of April 17, 2026 and regular meeting of April 20, 2026 was dispensed and accepted as written by motion of Council Member Robert O. Kimball, seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

COMMUNICATIONS

A letter was received from Senator Mark Walczyk stating he received a copy of the resolution adopted by Council regarding support for increased aid to municipalities. It stated that Senator Walczyk also supports securing additional AIM funding for municipalities, including the City of Watertown, and it indicated what is being done at the State level in hopes of achieving this goal.

A letter was received from Judith Morley, 290 Thompson Boulevard, offering support for the City's refuse program and expressing appreciation for the quality service provided by the City's refuse staff.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Stanley Campany, Public Square, expressed opposition to potentially closing a pool. He also thanked the City Manager for removing some of the benches downtown to prevent people hanging out in the area and he advised that there were three different reports of gun shots near the intersection of Franklin Street and Public Square that need to be investigated.

Jonathan Phillips, 735 Mill Street, discussed his concerns for pedestrian safety, mentioning that someone was recently killed after being hit by a car on Mill Street. He also expressed concern that vehicles have been ignoring the marked bicycle lanes on Coffeen Street and mentioned recent accidents. Lastly, he relayed disappointment in the new sidewalk on East Division Street, the condition of ADA ramps and the lack of enforcement of grass clippings being blown into the road.

Jose Ledezma, Black River, discussed safety concerns with the traffic markings on the road. He said they are not adequate and more crosswalks need to have flashing pedestrian-initiated beacons. He suggested the traffic markings be maintained twice per year.

PUBLIC HEARING

At 7:15 p.m. Mayor Pierce asked the City Clerk to read the notice of Public Hearing concerning changing the Approved Zoning Classification of 337 State Street, Parcel Number 6-02-317.000 from Downtown to Urban Mixed Use

Mayor Pierce declared the hearing open at 7:15 p.m.

No one spoke.

Mayor Pierce declared the hearing closed at 7:16 p.m.

At 7:17 p.m. Mayor Pierce asked the City Clerk to read the notice of Public Hearing concerning Proposed Local Law - A Local Law Establishing the In Rem Tax Foreclosure Act

Mayor Pierce declared the hearing open at 7:17 p.m.

No one from the public spoke.

Attorneys Kristen Smith and Mark Costello of Bond, Schoeneck & King assisted the City in writing this local law and were available through video conferencing for questions.

Mr. Costello provided an overview of the proposed local law and what caused the City to need to change its process. He indicated the new process would be similar to a foreclosure process and the goal was to make it cleaner and give the property owner and lienholders access to any surplus on the sale. He responded to Council Member Garrabrant's questions regarding the timeline for each phase of the process, noting it was structured to be similar to the timeline of the City's current process.

City Comptroller James Mills explained more details of the timeline for the current process and explained how tax sale certificates were handled when there were no bidders and the City became the default tax sale certificate holder. He responded to Council Member Shoen's questions and noted that, with the new process, the City will earn all the interest penalties. He provided estimates of the number of parcels with back taxes due and the dollar amount that the City would have to pay on these parcels.

Council Member Shoen asked if there was an easier way to still use the tax sale certificate process but provide the surplus to the property owner.

Ms. Smith noted that if the tax sale certificate holder ended up with the property, it would be at a lower cost than the property value, so the question would be who is going to make up the difference. She added that the City would not want that added cost.

Mr. Mills advised that the proposed local law contained a catch-up provision for parcels with delinquent property taxes that have been unpaid since the City's last tax sale certificate auction in June 2022.

Mayor Pierce declared the hearing closed at 7:32 p.m.

At 7:33 p.m. Mayor Pierce asked the City Clerk to read the notice of Public Hearing concerning Fiscal Year 2026-27 Operating Budgets and Fiscal Year 2026-27 through 2030-31 Capital Budget

Mayor Pierce declared the hearing open at 7:33 p.m.

Peter Monaco, 135 Smith Street, provided Council, as the former Assistant Superintendent of DPW, with the history of the City's refuse program and changes that occurred throughout the years. He said he reviewed previous budgets for the past ten years and he discussed what he saw as revenues. He then reviewed recent changes in policies that have occurred since the August 2024 work session which was focused on this topic and he mentioned that people are choosing to use private refuse haulers because of

these changes. In addition, he discussed assessment values and said it would be fair to change to a 100% equalization rate and advised that the City needs a full revaluation.

Jonathan Phillips, 735 Mill Street, indicated that he has also seen residents change from the City's refuse service to private refuse haulers since the changes in policies. He also stated that the City needs to keep both pools, as well as the zoo, open.

Kelly Martin, 1106 Coffeen Street, offered support for the zoo and asked Council to put a little funding for the zoo back in the proposed budget.

D.J. Macone, operator of D.J.'s at the Park, discussed how he would like to see the golf course remain open in the future and become more viable. He stated that he has worked for the past two years to build a successful restaurant venue and stressed that his goal is to be part of the solution with a long-term vision of the facility.

Mayor Pierce declared the hearing closed at 7:54 p.m.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 1 - Authorizing the Sale of Surplus Police Department Vehicle and Equipment

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS the City of Watertown Police Department has a surplus vehicle and various equipment, the description of which is attached and made a part of this resolution, and

WHEREAS the surplus vehicle and equipment may have some value best determined by an online auction, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York, that it hereby authorizes the sale, by online auction, of the surplus vehicle and equipment as described in the attached listing, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that final acceptance of such bids shall constitute acceptance of the same by the City Manager or their designee.

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

Resolution No. 2 - Authorizing the Sale of Surplus Fire Vehicles

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS the City of Watertown Fire Department has surplus vehicles, the description of which is attached and made a part of this resolution, and

WHEREAS the surplus vehicles may have some value best determined by an online auction, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York, that it hereby authorizes the sale, by online auction, of the surplus vehicles as described in the attached listing, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that final acceptance of such bids shall constitute acceptance of the same by the City Manager or their designee.

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

Resolution No. 3 - Accepting Bid for Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Cylinder Compressor & Fill Station Replacement – Watertown Fire Department Jerome Fire Equipment Co. Inc.

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS the City desires to contract with a qualified vendor for the purchase and installation of a Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Cylinder Compressor & Fill Station Replacement, per departmental specifications for use by the City’s Fire Department located at 224 S. Massey, Watertown, NY 13601, and

WHEREAS the Purchasing Department advertised and received three (3) sealed bids for the SCBA Cylinder Compressor & Fill Station Replacement – Watertown Fire Department (WFD), and

WHEREAS on March 25, 2026, at 11:30 a.m. the bids received were publicly opened and read, and

WHEREAS Purchasing Manager, Tina Bartlett-Bearup reviewed the bids received with the Fire Department, and it is their recommendation that the City Council accept the lowest responsive responsible bid submitted by Jerome Fire Equipment Co. Inc.,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby accepts the bid received from Jerome Fire Equipment Co. Inc. to include Option #2 base bid with trade-in in the amount of \$95,749.02 and Option #3 (additional services) in the amount of \$1,975.00 for a total award amount of \$97,724.02, and

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

Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Osborne stated he understands the importance of this and asked how long it would take to receive these items once this is approved.

Fire Chief Matthew Timerman replied that the bid specs said it would be 100 days. He also confirmed for Council Member Osborne that the warranty is for one year and he replied to questions regarding the funds listed in the budget for compressor testing and maintenance. He indicated that compressor testing is required annually by OSHA and that there is a backup compressor, which will still require maintenance.

Mr. Mills confirmed that any funds not spent in these budget lines would go back into the fund balance at the end of the fiscal year.

There was discussion of the other bids that were received at a lower cost but were rejected due to not meeting the bid requirements.

In response to Council Member Shoen's question, Chief Timerman explained that the unit which is currently the backup unit will be traded in and the current unit will then become the backup for the new unit.

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

Resolution No. 4 - Adopting the City's Community Development Block Grant Program Consolidated Plan for Program Years 2026-2030 and Annual Action Plan for Program Year 2026

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

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) under the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), and

WHEREAS, as an Entitlement Grantee, the City must adopt a Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan(s) for its Housing and Community Development Program, and

WHEREAS the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan must be developed with community input and citizen participation, and

WHEREAS Staff discussed the proposed plans at a City Council work session, at a meeting of Advantage Watertown, the City's Citizens Advisory Board, and at a public meeting held at a Watertown Housing Authority property, and

WHEREAS Staff conducted outreach efforts with local constituency groups, and the City Council held a public hearing on March 2, 2026, to solicit public comments for developing funding priorities and projects to be included in the plans, and

WHEREAS drafts of the Program Year 2026-2030 Consolidated Plan and the Program Year 2026 Annual Action Plan were completed and published on March 23, 2026, and

WHEREAS the draft plans were made available to the public for review and placed in various offices at City Hall, at the Roswell P. Flower Memorial Library, at the Watertown Housing Authority offices and on the City's website, and

WHEREAS a 30-day public comment period for the plans was held between March 24, 2026 and April 24, 2026, after a notice of the comment period was published in the *Watertown Daily Times*,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council hereby adopts and authorizes the submission of the City of Watertown's CDBG Program Consolidated Plan for Program Years 2026-2030 and the Annual Action Plan for Program Year 2026, which allocates the CDBG funds as follows:

CDBG Program Year 2026 Proposed Budget

Sources

Program Year 2026 Entitlement Grant	\$830,605
Total Funds Available for Allocation	\$830,605

Proposed Uses

Mill Street (500-600 Blocks) Sidewalk Replacement Project	\$218,605.00
Central Street (300 Block) Sanitary Sewer Replacement Demolition Project	\$240,000.00
Lead & Galvanized Water Service Replacement Program	\$50,000.00
Homebuyer Program	\$20,000.00
Watertown Urban Mission Food Pantry	\$240,000.00
WCSD Food for Families (Backpack) Program	\$8,000.00
Program Administration	\$8,000.00
Total Funds Proposed for Allocation	\$ 830,605

Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Garrabrant thanked staff for taking Council’s feedback and making infrastructure a priority. He noted that he had inquired about changing the amount allocated to the food pantries since the food pantries were receiving additional funds through the CARES CDBG funding, however, he was informed that it is too late in the process to make that change.

Mayor Pierce also thanked staff, as well as the public for providing feedback.

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

Resolution No. 5 - Approving the Grant Agreement Amendment with the Community Action Planning Council of Jefferson County for the CDBG CARES Act Funding Food Pantry Program

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS the City of Watertown Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2020 Annual Action Plan included CDBG Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to pay for food and associated supplies in support of the Community Action Planning Council of Jefferson County (CAPC) Food Pantry, and

WHEREAS on August 2, 2021, the City entered into a grant agreement with the CAPC for grant funding for the CAPC Food Pantry Program, and

WHEREAS the City Council desires to amend the grant agreement to provide additional CARES Act funding for the food pantry that will be made available to low- and moderate-income families living in the City, and

WHEREAS an Agreement Amendment between the City of Watertown and the CAPC for the CDBG CARES Act funds has been drafted,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown that it hereby approves the Agreement Amendment with the Community Action Planning Council of Jefferson County, a copy of which is attached and made part of this resolution, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager or their designee is hereby authorized and directed to sign the Agreement Amendment on behalf of the City Council for the CDBG CARES Act Community Action Planning Council of Jefferson County Food Pantry Assistance Program.

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

Resolution No. 6 - Approving the Grant Agreement Amendment with the Watertown Urban Mission for CDBG CARES Act Funding Food Pantry Program

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS the City of Watertown Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2020 Annual Action Plan included CDBG Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to pay for food and associated supplies in support of the Watertown Urban Mission Food Pantry Program, and

WHEREAS on November 17, 2020, the City entered into a grant agreement with the Watertown Urban Mission for grant funding for the Watertown Urban Mission's Food Pantry Program, and

WHEREAS the City Council desires to amend the grant agreement to provide additional CARES Act funding for the food pantry that will be made available to low- and moderate-income families living in the City, and

WHEREAS an Agreement Amendment between the City of Watertown and the Watertown Urban Mission for the CDBG CARES Act funds has been drafted,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown that it hereby approves the Agreement Amendment with the Watertown Urban Mission, a copy of which is attached and made part of this resolution, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager, or their designee, is hereby authorized and directed to sign the Agreement Amendment on behalf of the City Council for the CDBG CARES Act Watertown Urban Mission Food Pantry Program.

Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen and carried with all voting yea, except for Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen voting nay.

Resolution No. 7 - Approving the Grant Agreement Amendment with the United Way of Northern New York for CDBG CARES Act Funding for the Watertown City School District Food for Families Program

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS the City of Watertown Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2020 Annual Action Plan included CDBG Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to pay for food and associated supplies in support of the Watertown City School District's Food 4 Families Program, and

WHEREAS on August 2, 2021, the City entered into a grant agreement with the United Way of Northern New York for grant funding for the Watertown City School District's Food 4 Families Program, and

WHEREAS the City Council desires to amend the grant agreement to provide additional CARES Act funding for the program that will be made available to low- and moderate-income families living in the City, and

WHEREAS an Agreement Amendment between the City of Watertown and the United Way of Northern New York has been drafted,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown that it hereby approves the Agreement Amendment with the United Way of Northern New York, a copy of which is attached and made part of this resolution, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager, or their designee, is hereby authorized and directed to sign the Agreement Amendment on behalf of the City Council for the CDBG CARES Act United Way of Northern New York – Watertown City School District Food 4 Families Program.

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

Resolution No. 8 - Approving the Grant Agreement Amendment with the Salvation Army for the CDBG CARES Act Funding Food Pantry Program

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS the City of Watertown Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2020 Annual Action Plan included CDBG Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to pay for food and associated supplies in support of the Salvation Army Food Pantry, and

WHEREAS on August 2, 2021, the City entered into a grant agreement with the Salvation Army for grant funding for the Salvation Army Food Pantry Program, and

WHEREAS the City Council desires to amend the grant agreement to provide additional CARES Act funding for the food pantry that will be made available to low- and moderate-income families living in the City, and

WHEREAS an Agreement Amendment between the City of Watertown and the Salvation Army for the CDBG CARES Act funds has been drafted,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown that it hereby approves the Agreement Amendment with the Salvation Army, a copy of which is attached and made part of this resolution, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager, or their designee, is hereby authorized and directed to sign the Agreement Amendment on behalf of the City Council for the CDBG CARES Act Salvation Army Food Pantry Assistance Program.

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

Resolution No. 9 - Finding that Changing the Approved Zoning Classification of 337 State Street, Parcel Number 6-02-317.000 from Downtown to Urban Mixed Use Will Not Have a Significant Impact on the Environment

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

WHEREAS the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York, has before it an Ordinance to change the approved zoning classification of 337 State Street, Parcel Number 6-02-317.000 from Downtown to Urban Mixed Use, and

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

WHEREAS the adoption of the proposed ordinance constitutes such an “Action,” and

WHEREAS the City Council has determined that the proposed Ordinance is an “Unlisted Action” as that term is defined by 6NYCRR Section 617.2 (al), and

WHEREAS there are no other involved agencies for SEQRA review as that term is defined in 6NYCRR Section 617.2 (t), and

WHEREAS to aid the City Council in its determination as to whether the proposed zone change will have a significant impact on the environment, Part 1 of a Short Environmental Assessment Form has been prepared by the applicant, a copy of which is attached and made part of this Resolution,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York, that:

1. Based upon its examination of the Short Environmental Assessment Form and comparing the proposed action with the criteria set forth in 6NYCRR Section 617.7, no significant impact is known and the adoption of the zone change will not have a significant impact on the environment.
2. The Mayor of the City of Watertown is authorized to execute Part 3 of the Environmental Assessment Form to the effect that the City Council is issuing a Negative Declaration under SEQRA.

3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council considered Part 2 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form.

Council Member Shoen stated that he attends the Planning Commission meetings, and it appears that this request is to fix a mistake in zoning created by the new Zoning Ordinance. He noted that this will allow Burger King to install a second drive-through lane.

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

LOCAL LAW

Proposed Local Law - A Local Law Amending the Code of the City of Watertown, Chapter 260: Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Control

Introduced by Council Member Robert O. Kimball

A Local Law amending the Code of the City of Watertown, Chapter 260: Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Control

WHEREAS the New York Municipal Home Rule Law permits the adoption of Local Laws by a City in furtherance of the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the City, and

WHEREAS the City operates a Regulated Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) as that term is defined by Federal Environmental Protection Agency, and pursuant to regulations administered by the State Department of Environmental Conservation, and

WHEREAS the State/Federal Storm Water Management Program requires urbanized municipalities which operate MS4s to adopt local laws or equivalent regulations governing construction and post-construction storm water runoff, and it also requires certain procedures and other measures to implement such local laws, and

WHEREAS on March 6, 2017 City Council adopted Local Law No. 1 of 2017, which was designed to comply with the requirements of the State and Federal governments concerning the City's obligations in the operations of its MS4, and

WHEREAS the City of Watertown submits a Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR) and a review of the SWPPP to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) annually, which included Chapter 260 of the Code of the City of Watertown and their MS4 program, and

WHEREAS the Code of the City of Watertown, Chapter 260: Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Control was reviewed by the City Engineering Department and requires updates before the 2026 annual submission of the DMR later this year,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New

York, that § 260-1: Findings of Fact (C), (E), and (G) of the City Code of the City of Watertown is deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following:

C. Clearing and grading during construction tends to increase soil erosion and adds to the loss of soil to support native vegetation necessary for terrestrial and aquatic habitat;

E. Impervious surfaces allow less water to infiltrate into the soil, thereby decreasing groundwater recharge and stream baseflow;

G. Stormwater runoff, soil erosion and nonpoint source pollution can be controlled and minimized through the regulation of stormwater runoff from properly regulated land development activities;

And,

BE IT FURTHER ENACTED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York, that §260-2: Purpose (F) of the City Code of the City of Watertown is deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following:

F. Reduce stormwater runoff rates and volumes, soil erosion and nonpoint source pollution, wherever possible, through stormwater management practices and to ensure that these management practices are properly maintained and inspected to eliminate threats to public safety.

And,

BE IT FURTHER ENACTED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York, that §260-6: Stormwater pollution prevention plans (E) of the City Code of the City of Watertown is deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following:

E. A copy of the SWPPP shall be retained at the site of the land development activity during construction from the date of initiation of construction activities to the date of final stabilization. The City Engineering Department will receive a signed copy of the SWPPP for their department records.

And,

BE IT FURTHER ENACTED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York, that §260-8: Maintenance, Inspection and Repair of Stormwater Facilities (A) of the City Code of the City of Watertown is deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following:

A. Maintenance and inspection during construction.

- (1) The applicant or developer of the land development activity or their representative shall at all times properly operate and maintain all facilities and systems of treatment and control (and related appurtenances) which are installed or used by the applicant or developer to achieve compliance with the conditions of this chapter. Sediment shall be

removed from sediment traps or sediment ponds whenever their design capacity has been reduced by 50%.

- (2) For land development activities as defined in § 260-5 of this chapter and meeting Condition A, B or C in § 260-6B(2) the applicant shall have a qualified professional engineer conduct site inspections and provide a signed document confirming the effectiveness of all erosion and sediment control practices every seven days and within 24 hours of any storm event producing 0.5 inches of precipitation or more. Inspection reports shall be maintained in a site log book and turned over to the City weekly.

And,

BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that this Local Law shall take effect immediately upon filing with the New York Secretary of State.

Seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen

Motion was made by Council Member Robert O. Kimball to schedule a Public Hearing on the foregoing local law for Monday, May 20, 2026 at 7:15 p.m. Motion was seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

OLD BUSINESS

Ordinance Changing the Approved Zoning Classification of 337 State Street, Parcel Number 6-02-317.000 from Downtown to Urban Mixed Use. (Introduced on April 20, 2026; public hearing held this evening; appears in its entirety in the 2026 Minutes Book on page 7 of the 4/20/2026 minutes).

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

Proposed Local Law - A Local Law Establishing the In Rem Tax Foreclosure Act. (Introduced on April 20, 2026; public hearing held this evening; appears in its entirety in the 2026 Minutes Book on page 8-22 of the 4/20/2026 minutes).

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

Proposed Local Law - A Local Law Overriding the Tax Levy Limit Established by New York General Municipal Law §3-c. (Introduced on April 6, 2026; public hearing held on April 20, 2016; tabled; appears in its entirety in the 2026 Minutes Book on page 10-11 of the 4/6/2026 minutes).

Motion was made by Council Member Robert O. Kimball to remove the foregoing local law from the table. Motion was seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

Motion was made by Council Member Douglas E. Osborne, Jr. to table the foregoing local law. Motion was seconded by Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen and carried with all voting yea, except for Council Member Robert O. Kimball voting nay.

STAFF REPORTS

Community Development Block Grant Program – Annual Community Assessment for Program Year 2024-2025

The Annual Community Assessment for Program Year 2024-2024 CDBG program was available for Council to review. Mayor Pierce summarized the report stating HUD had reviewed the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 and found the City's performance to be satisfactory. She commended staff for their work.

NEW BUSINESS

Jefferson County Economic Development

Council Member Garrabrant thanked Marshall Weir, CEO of Jefferson County Economic Development, for meeting with him recently and providing him a tour.

Hydro Consultant Update

Council Member Garrabrant mentioned that there was a kick-off meeting with the hydro consultant and asked for an update.

Mr. Wagenaar noted there were two representatives on site last Friday, who took a tour of the facility and met to discuss details of the proposal for the next five years. He said the first step would be to assist the City in closing out the FERC investigation, the second step would be to look at the expiration of the National Grid contract, and the third step would be to assist with the FERC relicensing.

Refuse Program

Council Member Garrabrant said that 90-95% of the people he has heard from are in support of keeping this service running. He said he would wait to make a decision until the requested report of more information is received from staff.

Passing of Sean McDonough

Council Member Kimball noted the passing of Sean McDonough and offered condolences to his family.

Refuse Program (continued)

Council Member Kimball noted that most people seem to be in support of keeping this service. He said he is looking forward to reviewing the information of whether there is a savings if the service was to be eliminated.

Budget

Council Member Kimball said he has been reviewing prior years' budgets and tax rates. He pointed out that in 2018 the tax rate was a little higher than the State has calculated for this year. He compared the percentage of assessed values used by the State and the City. He said, at the last meeting, people were complaining that they wanted their taxes to stay the same. He noted Council's job is not to keep the tax rate as low as possible, stating Council's job is to maintain and do all the things that have to be done for the City while making the City an enjoyable place to live. He concluded that cutting out things like the zoo, pools and playgrounds are cutting too deep and there are things in the City that should be preserved in order to make it a nice City.

Council Member Osborne commented that Council's job is to be a steward for the taxpayer and it has to strike a balance between recreational items, infrastructure and other necessary items for the City. Noting that the cost of living has gone up, he said it is Council's job to not add to the burden of the taxpayer.

Refuse Program (continued)

Council Member Osborne said he agreed with the speakers during Privilege of the Floor who said that the uncertainty of the program is driving customers away and he expressed his support for keeping this program.

Law and Order Night

Council Member Osborne said he attended this event and it was good to honor these individuals who put their lives at risk to help others.

Crosswalks

Council Member Shoen mentioned the individual who spoke during Privilege of the Floor regarding the crosswalk markings. He said the City currently paints these once per year, but suggested that, in higher traffic areas, they should be painted in the spring and in the fall.

Needle Collection

Council Member Shoen said he would like a law requiring the agencies which pass out needles to also have needle collection sites. He also would like the agencies to put their logo on the needles to know who is responsible if the needles were to harm someone.

Manufacturing Development

Council Member Shoen suggested offering discounted electricity from the City's hydro plant to encourage more manufacturing companies to move into the City and create jobs.

Refuse Program (continued)

Council Member Shoen commented that he feels the policy changes have driven customers away. He also discussed the decision to change to weekly recycling, and he stated he feels this will increase labor costs. He reviewed statistics of the recycling tonnage received at the County transfer site and he disagreed with the Superintendent of DPW's decision to change to weekly recycling.

Upcoming Budget Sessions

Mayor Pierce suggested that Council cancel the budget session scheduled for Thursday, May 7 and reschedule it to next week after the Council Office Hours regarding the budget are held. Council agreed to reschedule it for Wednesday May 13.

Property at the Corner of Mullin and Sherman Streets

Mayor Pierce said she has received many complaints about the condition of this property and that she did not receive a response to the letter she sent the property owner. She said she would like to see something done and asked what the next steps could be.

Bicycle Helmets

Mayor Pierce reported that the Police Department is distributing certificates for ice cream to children they see wearing a helmet while riding their bicycle.

Motion was made by Council Member Robert O. Kimball to move into Executive Session to discuss proposed, pending or current litigation, to discuss the employment history of a particular individual or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal, or removal of a particular person or corporation, and to discuss collective bargaining.

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

Council moved into Executive Session at 8:38 p.m.

Council reconvened at 9:53 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

At the call of the chair, meeting was duly adjourned at 9:53 p.m. by motion of Council Member Benjamin P. Shoen, seconded by Council Member Douglas E. Osborne, Jr. and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

Ann M. Saunders
City Clerk