

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2018 – 6:30 p.m.

COUNCIL CHAMBERS – OLEAN MUNICIPAL BUILDING

IN ATTENDANCE WERE: ALDERMEN CRAWFORD, WITTE, ANDREANO, GONZALEZ, DOUGHERTY, SMITH, AND GEORGE. OTHERS: MAYOR WILLIAM AIELLO; LENS MARTIAL, CITY CLERK; FRED SARADIN, CITY AUDITOR; BOB RING, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS; BOB BELL, FIRE CHIEF; JEFF ROWLEY, POLICE CHIEF, AND TIFFANY TAYLOR, MANAGERIAL CONFIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY.

Alderman Crawford called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and asked that the record show that all Aldermen were present.

1. PL #18-18: (Witte) To authorize the installation of a “STOP” sign and to designate that all traffic shall stop before proceeding on Fifth Avenue at its intersection with Prospect Avenue.

Alderman Witte stated that this has been a long time coming. There are many safety issues in this area. This is where Fifth Avenue comes onto Prospect Avenue.

Alderman Crawford stated that he is surprised that there is not already a STOP sign in this location. There are some trees and shrubs in the way, and he asked if these will be taken care of. Mr. Ring stated that he will look at these to determine how to handle the situation.

Alderman Andreano stated that she always stops there before proceeding, as it is the end of the road. She is surprised that there are people who do not stop here.

Alderman Gonzalez stated that this is where Fifth Avenue terminates. Alderman Smith asked if the sign is being put on Fifth Avenue only, and Alderman Witte stated that he is correct. There will be no signs added on Prospect Avenue with this Resolution.

Alderman Andreano voiced some concerns with confusing wording in the proposed legislation. Mr. Ring ensured that the sign will be placed in the correct location.

A motion to approve PL #18-18 was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman Crawford. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to Regular Meeting for Resolution.

2. PL #19-18: (Witte) To authorize the removal of signs designating school zone and school zone speed limits in the vicinity of 622 Main Street.

Alderman Witte stated that it was brought to her attention, as the Department of Public Works is doing the sign inventory in Ward 1, that there are still school crossing signs in the vicinity of the

old Boardmanville. She feels that we should remove the signs, with the exception of one that is closer to the Ambulatory Surgical Center of the hospital, as the crossing is used quite often.

Alderman Andreano questioned if the sign by the Surgical Center would need to be changed since the sign there was placed in association with the school zone, and Alderman Witte replied that it is just a sign signaling a street crossing. There are three to remove, and this fourth one should stay.

Alderman Gonzalez stated that he feels that this is an area that should be considered for the blinking crossing signs.

A motion to approve PL #19-18 was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman Andreano. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to Regular Meeting for Resolution.

3. PL #26-18: (Aiello) To authorize the Mayor to sign and submit a Grant Application to the New York State Department of Transportation for funding through the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan campaign.

Mayor Aiello stated that this is funding for crossings that would make streets safer. Mr. Ring added that it is a no match grant that was previously discussed in committee. He cannot guarantee that we would receive funding; however, if we did it would be a minimum of \$250,000 that could be used to update intersections for pedestrians.

Mr. Ring continued that this is a reimbursable grant, but that with State projects such as this reimbursement can be requested quarterly or sooner.

Alderman George asked if there is a list to be submitted of intersections, and Mr. Ring replied that there is a list of 12 signalized intersections and 16 non-signalized intersections to submit that are mostly near parks, schools, and along West State Street.

Alderman Crawford asked if this is the first time a grant like this has been available, and Mr. Ring replied that he is unsure if the State has ever offered this program before.

A motion to approve PL #26-18 was made by Alderman George, seconded by Alderman Witte. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to Regular Meeting for Resolution.

4. PL #31-18: (Crawford) To authorize the creation of Capital Fund #185, Tree Pruning and Removal, and to authorize the transfer of \$40,950 from General Fund Contingency to this newly created Capital Fund.

Alderman Crawford stated that previous discussions regarding tree removal stalled out at the end of last year. Neighborhoods have sustained serious damage due to recent storms, and emergency cleanup efforts are costly due to the elimination of the Tree Program. He has reached out to Mr. Ring and Ms. Cooper, the City Forester, for input on what trees need to be taken care of.

He stated that a week or two ago, a citizen on North 7th Street stated that a tree that was marked to come down hadn't, and a tree cracked and fell on their roof. Their major concern, though, was that the tree is located right above the sidewalk and a branch could have fallen on a person. They don't want to see someone's life risked.

Alderman Andreano stated that she does not oppose this at all. She questioned if we have a list of trees. Alderman Crawford replied that the tree list was sent to the Aldermen last week.

Alderman Witte stated that she thinks that this is a great idea. She has received a lot of calls regarding trees, and the biggest concern is for the safety of children. She supports this funding.

Alderman Crawford stated that there is a difference in freak accidents, and existing problems that can be taken care of. The Contingency is still at \$200,000, as nothing has been taken out of the account yet this year. From a public safety standpoint, this needs to be done.

Mr. Ring stated that there are 9 trees on the list to be pruned, and 31 to be removed. This is a running list and can change as time progresses. Alderman Crawford added that he asked for the list of trees that need to come down regardless of whether we received complaints about them or not. We want the trees removed that are in imminent danger.

Alderman Witte questioned if any of the tree pruning can be done in house, and Mr. Ring replied that he can look into this. Alderman Crawford mentioned that it seems that the costs for pruning trees is very low.

Alderman Gonzalez stated that he feels that everyone agrees that there is a need for this. He doesn't feel that we should get hung up on what trees are on the list. We are designating money for this, and we need to allow our City Forester to do her job and make the determination of what priorities are.

Alderman Crawford stated that when he discussed this with Mr. Ring, he let him know that he does not want this Capital Fund to sit there indefinitely. Some of these trees are ticking time bombs. The pruning and removal will happen post haste.

Alderman George stated that he feels that this is a good step to take in the direction of public safety.

Alderman Crawford stated that, in the following weeks during budget discussions, we need to find a permanent solution to this problem.

Mayor Aiello mentioned that all of the trees that the City is considering pruning or removing are in the public right of way and are not on private property.

Alderman Smith asked how the rates are determined, and Mr. Ring replied that the City has an annual contract with a tree management service. This will be renewed in June. Alderman Smith asked if these are the same rates that will be used to take these listed trees down, and Mr. Ring replied that they are.

Alderman Smith continued by stating that the City needs to declare war on trees. We need to stop being tree huggers, and he is not concerned with continuing to be a “Tree City USA”. Having all of these trees in the right of way is a luxury that we cannot afford.

A motion to approve PL #31-18 was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Dougherty. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to Regular Meeting for Resolution.

5. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Andreano. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:55 p.m.