

# COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES

*September 25, 2018 – 6:35 p.m.*

## COUNCIL CHAMBERS – OLEAN MUNICIPAL BUILDING

IN ATTENDANCE WERE: ALDERMEN CRAWFORD, WITTE, ANDREANO, GONZALEZ, DOUGHERTY, SMITH, AND GEORGE. OTHERS: LENS MARTIAL, CITY CLERK; NICHOLAS DICERBO. JR., CITY ATTORNEY; FRED SARADIN, CITY AUDITOR; BOB BELL, FIRE CHIEF, JEFF ROWLEY, POLICE CHIEF, KERI KERPER, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND MICHIKO McELFRESH, SECRETARY TO THE MAYOR.

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# 86-18: (Dougherty) To enact a local ordinance pursuant to the City of Olean Charter Section 2.044 (a) to increase the Council Salary from \$3,500 to \$5,500.

Alderman Crawford made a suggestion regarding PL 86-18, PL87-18 and 88-18. He said that these proposed legislations were introduced to discuss wages that have not been changed for 25 years. As the discussion evolved regarding the proposed legislation, he wondered if it had evolved into something bigger. He said that the Council wants the City to have the best government possible. He contacted NYCOM to inquire about the process. NYCOM told Alderman Crawford that the Council's PL's were the correct way to raise the salaries and that a permissive referendum was not allowed as our City Charter does address the issue about salary raises. Alderman Crawford said that his information got him thinking on how to give the Citizens of Olean a say in the process and take the decision out of the hand of the Common Council. Alderman Crawford asked that the Common Council to kill the proposals and instead offer two future referendums to the City of Olean residents. The possible referendums would gage: 1. if residents want to review the charter and 2. if residents want to pass a new charter.

Alderman Gonzalez said that Alderman Crawford's proposal was well stated and that he agreed with it. He added that this is about attracting better candidates. He asked how you get capable people out from behind their desks to serve the City at the highest level. It is clear to him that in order to do so some type of raise was in order to make the positions more economically viable. He stated that we should make the mayor's position and common council positions more accessible. He stated that he fully supports this position and it is time to look at the charter.

Alderman Witte agreed with both Alderman Crawford and Alderman Gonzalez. She said the next step is to figure out how to go about it. She said that looking at a part-time mayor; a smaller council would not be a bad thing to do. She thinks that the Community has to have a voice.

Alderman Crawford added that the writers of the current Charter gave the power to instill wages onto the Council. But he said that the residents truly do not agree. After 30 years this might be the best way.

Alderman George did not want to rehash, but he does agree with the concept of a Charter adjustment.

Alderman Dougherty said that he put the proposals out because these are things we need to review for strategic purposes. Best way is to plan for the future. And if the Charter has not been reviewed for 30 years this is the best way. He would like to sponsor

Alderman Smith understands all the reasons for discussions and said that they did take on a life of their own. He is, however, cautious about tampering with the Charter. For example the Charter does not specify that the Mayor's position is a full time position.

John agreed, however, at \$50,000 per year, people should expect that the Mayor position is a full time. He wants to allow people have a voice.

Alderman Gonzalez said that the initial referendum would decide the process. He said that it would take 12-24 months to complete.

Alderman Andreano said that she agrees with our declining population, perhaps the Charter should be re-evaluated.

Alderman Gonzalez added that they should also look at the institutions and ask why we have them. This offers the opportunity.

Alderman Crawford said for starters we should kill the PL's and when the Mayor returns we can continue the discussion. He added that the process is laid out well in the New York State Handbook.

A motion to postpone PL# 86-18 indefinitely was made by Alderman Dougherty, seconded by Alderman Witte. Voice Vote, All Ayes.

2. PL #87-18: (Dougherty) To enact a local ordinance pursuant to the City of Olean Charter Section 2.044 (b) to increase the Council President's stipend from \$500 to \$1,000 per annum.

A motion to postpone PL# 87-18 indefinitely was made by Alderman Dougherty, seconded by Alderman George. Voice Vote, All Ayes.

3. PL #88-18: (Dougherty) To enact a local ordinance pursuant to the City of Olean Charter Section 2.022 to increase the Mayor's salary from \$50,000 to \$80,000.

A motion to postpone PL# 88-18 indefinitely was made by Alderman Dougherty, seconded by Alderman Crawford. Voice Vote, All Ayes.

4. PL #104-18: (Aiello) To authorize the use of up to \$140,000 of leftover project funding for the William O. Smith Recreation Center Complex Improvements Project for costs associated with additional projects.

Alderman Crawford said that the PL was discussed in committee.

Alderman Andreano asked Mr. Ring if the money is leftover from the project. Mr. Ring stated that it was and detailed that the project would be used for bleachers, ADA changes, a new door and a concession stand.

Alderman Gonzalez asked what the total project cost was. Mr. Ring stated about \$3 million. Mr. Gonzalez said that since we have the money now we should spend it to get the City much closer to having the project actualized.

Alderman George Agreed

5. PL #105-18: (Witte) To authorize the installation of a STOP sign and designating that all traffic shall stop before proceeding on Monroe Street at its intersection with Madison Avenue.

Alderman Witte explained that this a housekeeping issue: The stop sign and the intersection of Monroe and Madison was taken down and it could not be put back up as there is nothing on the books to have a stop sign at the intersection.

A motion to approve PL #105-18 was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman Crawford. Voice vote. All Ayes.

## 6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Gonzalez. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:50 p.m.