

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES

October 9, 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; NICHOLAS DICERBO. JR., CITY ATTORNEY; FRED SARADIN, CITY AUDITOR; KERI KERPER, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM COORDINATOR; 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. Discussion Item – “Common Council Park Concept Imitative”

Alderman Crawford explained that he would like to get thoughts from the Council for the City’s parks moving forward, including ideas and concepts. City parks are in need of work and updating, and he’d like to see some ideas thrown out there and have a discussion regarding what the Council would like to see in the future.

Alderman Crawford presented plans for the Oak Hill dog Park concept that is being funded by the DRI. He explained that when he reached out to obtain information and fixture options for the “bark park”, he also received information from vendors regarding splash pad fixtures. He realizes that there is currently no funding available, but he feels that this would be an interesting concept for Franchot Park. He is not aware of the current condition of the wading pool, but besides the initial cost up front, a splash pad that does not require lifeguards and pool maintenance may provide cost savings in the future.

Alderman Crawford asked the Council to take a look at the parks in the area to see what ideas we can pass along to City officials in order to see what sort of funding is out there.

Alderman Witte explained that there is not a park in Wards 1 or 5. The five year plan included park replacement, and several parks were replaced due to this. King Street Park is in desperate need of work. Alderman Crawford commented that the City is currently awaiting a response regarding potential grant funding for King Street Park.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that the dog park was one of the most commented on projects during the DRI process by the public. The public response was that it is very much needed. It is a new service, and is relatively low maintenance. He feels that if we do it right, it could be great.

Alderman Crawford asked again that the Council look at the other parks through the City so that in the future a brainstorm session can be held to plan for the future.

2. Cattaraugus-Allegany Counties Central Labor Council request to plant a memorial tree in Forness Park

Mayor Aiello explained that he received a letter from the Cattaraugus-Allegany Counties Central Labor Council requesting to place a tree in Forness Park in memory of Flo Tripi, a longtime member of their organization. He explained that there is currently a workers memorial in the park, and he anticipates that the tree will be placed near this. Mayor Aiello added that the Labor Council was instrumental in putting up the shelter that is located in the park.

A motion to authorize the planting of a memorial tree in Forness Park by the Cattaraugus-Allegany Counties Central Labor Council in memory of Flo Tripi was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman Crawford. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

3. PL #106-18: (Aiello) To approve the following Olean Homeownership Assistance Program (OHAP) application: OHAP #29-17, in an amount not to exceed \$2,180.

Ms. Kerper explained that this funding would be to assist the purchaser of a single family home in the City of Olean. The closing will occur on October 22, 2018, and the \$2,180 will cover the funding gap between bank funding and the purchaser's funding for the home.

A motion to approve PL #106-18 was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman Gonzalez. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to City Attorney for Resolution.

4. PL #107-18: (Aiello) To adopt the Sexual Harassment Policy for the City of Olean.

Mayor Aiello explained that the State has mandated as of today that a new policy goes into effect for all employers in New York State. All employers must now have a Sexual Harassment Policy which meets the State's guidelines. The City has taken the State's model policy and used it to create a policy for the City of Olean. The policy will be distributed to all employees, and posters with information regarding the policy will be hung in all buildings in which City employees work.

Mayor Aiello continued that complaints will be able to be filed with either department heads or with the Mayor's Office, and all employees will need to be trained regarding the policy within the next year. There are certified trainers in the Police and Fire departments who will aid in this effort. He is asking that the Council adopt the policy in order to be in compliance with New York State requirements.

Alderman Crawford asked if training requirements include elected officials, and Mayor Aiello replied that they do. The policy and its requirements apply to all employees, elected officials, board members, and volunteers.

Alderman Smith expressed that, although he will be voting “yes” because this is law, he feels that the requirement by the State is draconian and in excess, and it is opening the door for a legal field day. He feels that it will be expensive to put into place by employers, and it will be one more reason why people and businesses do not want to continue to live and do business in New York.

Alderman Witte expressed that she feels that anyone could come up with a story about a time that they were uncomfortable. She does agree with Alderman Smith, that there could be abuse of the policy, but she does feel that there has to be boundaries and that the policy could help.

Alderman Crawford explained that he feels that a Sexual Harassment Policy is probably standard for larger companies, but for smaller businesses, he understands how this could be seen as just one more hole to jump through. Alderman George added that the State providing a model policy, complaint form, and other materials does aid in adopting the policy quickly with less expense.

Mayor Aiello explained that the City of Olean has had a policy in place for a long time, and this is just a rewording of the policy. The City will be complying with State requirements that certain things be included in the policy.

Alderman Smith explained that he is, in no way, advocating sexual harassment. He simply feels that the policy will be abused, and that it will create a “guilty until proven innocent” environment. He feels that the policy is punitive and unnecessary.

A motion to approve PL #107-18 was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Andreano. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to City Attorney for Resolution.

5. PL #108-18: (Witte) To authorize the installation of a street light on National Grid pole #NM4 on Second Avenue.

Alderman Witte explained that she received a call from a constituent who had their car broken into, and shortly after another car was broken into, and a rock was thrown through a window. A business used to have their lights on overnight, but they no longer do. She is requesting a second light on the first block, as it is very dark.

Alderman Crawford added that he drove through the area at night as well, and he too feels that an additional streetlight could be used.

A motion to approve PL #108-18 was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman George. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to Regular Meeting for Resolution.

6. PL #109-18: (George) To authorize the installation of street lights on National Grid poles #11 and #14 on River Street.

Alderman George explained that a resident came to a council meeting to bring to the Council’s attention that the roadway is not as well lit as it used to be. Alderman George took a look at the

area and discovered that there are no streetlights on River Street between East Elm and East Water Streets. He then reached out to DPW, who recommended these two locations for the installation of streetlights. It is very dark in that part of North Olean and the lights are greatly needed.

Alderman Witte added that she, too, drove through the area at night, and it is very dark.

Alderman Dougherty asked if these lights will be LED. Alderman Gonzalez asked how these lights would be different from those recently replaced in Seneca Heights. Mr. Ring responded that the Seneca Heights light poles are owned by the City, and the City pays only the electric cost for the lighting. These two lights will be installed on metal hangers on the wooden poles owned by National Grid, and the City will be paying both the electric costs as well as a leasing fee for the light itself. He added that the lights could be installed as LED's for a greater leasing cost, and he is unsure if there would be savings for the City with the decrease in electrical costs due to the increase in the leasing cost.

Alderman Crawford explained that the Council does not have these discussions often, and he is glad that the Council can work with DPW to determine what needs to be done and where.

A motion to approve PL #109-18 was made by Alderman George, seconded by Alderman Dougherty. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

7. Adjournment

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