

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2019 – 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; BOB RING, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS; 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 #49-19: (Aiello) To authorize the Mayor to enter into a contract between the County of Cattaraugus and the City of Olean for the Department of Aging Senior Wellness and Nutrition Program site.

Mayor Aiello explained that the proposed contract will run from June 1, 2019 through May 31, 2021. He explained that the Council will pay \$5,304.60 per year to run the program out of the John J. Ash Community Center, and that this is a 3% increase from the previous year.

A motion to approve PL #49-19 was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman Andreano. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to Regular Meeting for Resolution.

2. PL #50-19: (Aiello) That the Common Council as Lead Agency declares the Well 18, Well 37/38 & Water Filtration Plant Improvements Project a Type II Action which is not subject to review under SEQRA, and it will not result in a significant impact on the environment.

Mr. Ring explained that this is in relation to the Fluoride Improvement Project that the City has been working on. He explained that the project is currently under review by the Department of Health prior moving into the construction phase. One step in this process is for the Council to approve the SEQR.

Alderman Crawford asked about the timeline on the project, and Mr. Ring responded that construction will hopefully begin in the fall and continue into the winter or spring.

A motion to approve PL #50-19 was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman George. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to Regular Meeting for Resolution.

3. PL #51-19: (Aiello) To authorize the Mayor to sign and submit grant applications to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for grant funding associated with the Design

portion of the Runway 4-22 Rehabilitation Project and the Design portion of the SRE Building Pavement Rehabilitation Project.

Mr. Ring explained that he has provided the Council with a four year plan for FAA grant funding at the airport. He explained that he has worked with a consultant to develop the plan. He needs to submit applications this month for the two Design phases, with a total local match of \$17,000 for this portion of the two projects. He explained that this could take six to ten months, and he plans to use funding from his current budget for the local match. He added that the four year plan takes care of the pavement at the airport, and that the total \$6 million project has a \$300,000 local match (5%). He explained that at this time, he is only asking to apply for the grant funding associated with fiscal year 2019 of the plan.

Alderman Smith explained that the local match is quite large in 2020 and 2021, and asked if there is plan for these matches, or if it is something that will be figured out down the road. Mr. Ring explained that the City will cross that bridge when they get there, and that it is important for the City to replace the pavement if they wish to continue to use the airport.

Alderman Andreano asked how many years the grant funding commits the City to the airport for, and Mr. Ring explained that it is based on a formula. For each year that the City continues to operate the airport, the grant repayment decreases by 5%. It will take twenty years for the City to no longer owe a reimbursement of this grant funding.

Alderman Crawford explained that his concern is of the sustainability and longevity of the airport. He explained that the 5% match required by the City is great, but that signs the City up to keep the airport open for the next 20 years. He noted that he disagrees that the airport is an economic driver for Cattaraugus County. He feels that the City needs to formulate a long term strategic plan for the airport.

Mr. Crawford asked at what point the City will decide that it can no longer ask taxpayers to subsidize the airport. He understands that the City is tasked with keeping the airport up and running, but that he cannot, in good faith, sign the City up for a four year plan to pay \$300,000 and prolong its commitment to the airport. He asked that the rest of the Council consider the impact that this decision could have down the road.

Alderman Witte explained that whenever the City has something going on at the airport, or when the Council has discussions regarding the airport, it is said that the airport is not just for the City, but for the whole County. She feels that the County needs to step up and help the City out with the airport.

Alderman Dougherty explained that if the Council looks at the point of view that the City will be tied to the airport for twenty years that the Council also needs to consider how deep the City is already in with the FAA at the airport. He explained that the City is stuck between a rock and a hard place, since the City accepted FAA grant funding last year and is already committed to the

airport for twenty years. He explained that if the city does not sign up and take care of things that are already on the radar, that it could impact the airport and it may need to close prior to the end of the City's current commitment.

Alderman Crawford explained that he understands that the idea of closing up shop and walking away is not doable. He feels that perhaps in twelve years, it may be doable. He feels that the Council should not sign up for such a large project, but he understands that the City also has to continue the airport for the next twelve years.

Alderman George asked how far away the City is from having to shut down the airport if the runway is not taken care of. Mr. Ring responded that it is hard to say, but that the runway is currently inspected annually. He explained that it is a difficult situation to determine if the runway is able to continue to be functional.

Alderman Gonzalez asked if the City would have another grant opportunity if this was not applied for, and Mr. Ring responded that he is unsure and he would need to speak with the consultant.

Alderman Andreano asked if the County could take over the airport instead of the City, and Mr. Ring noted that they currently contribute \$17,000 each year to the City for the airport. Alderman Andreano responded that she feels that \$17,000 is an insult compared to what the City pays.

Alderman Witte explained that the County really needs to step up because Olean shouldn't have to bear the entire burden. She does not think that the City of Olean can do this indefinitely. She explained that if the City continues to lose population, it will be very difficult to continue to pay for something that only a few residents use. She added that there is a lot of liability and no one helping with the burden.

Alderman Crawford explained that the City budgeted \$250,000 for the airport in 2019-2020, and the County's portion of \$17,000 is only 6.8% of that. He has a really tough time voting for these grants.

Alderman George asked about the timeframe for the grant applications, and Mr. Ring responded that if the Council waits two weeks to make a decision, it will be very difficult to have the grant applications in on time. Alderman Andreano asked if the Council authorizes the Mayor to submit the grant applications, will they still have to approve the acceptance of the grants, and Mr. Ring responded that they would.

Alderman Dougherty explained that out of all of the pieces in the four year plan, this is the part that he is okay with approving. He explained that this will allow the City to come up with a long term plan, and the Council is not committing to the higher priced portions of the project down the road.

Alderman Witte asked if the City has reached out to Bradford and Jamestown to see how they obtain revenue, and Mayor Aiello explained that they have charter services, where the City does

not. He explained that the City has been trying to bring in a full time person who would be able to begin a program like this, but it is not possible with only part time employees. He explained that he has asked the County numerous times for help, but they always turn us down.

Alderman Crawford asked what the County would do if the City decided to close the airport, and Mayor Aiello explained that it may be coming to that. Alderman Crawford noted that Alderman Dougherty has a valid point, that \$340,000 with a 20 year payback is a lot easier to swallow than the entire \$6 million.

Mr. Ring explained that \$5,000 of crack filling was done at the airport, but it did not get very far. He noted that the Council may want to visit the airport again. Alderman Andreano added that perhaps the Council could meet with the County at the airport. Alderman Dougherty explained that it is a great idea on paper, but he does not think that a lot of the County representatives will show up.

Alderman Witte explained that we need to tell them that we can't do this ourselves, that we need to have their help or we will bow out. Alderman Crawford noted that shared services and working together is being pushed across the state.

Alderman Crawford asked if the City still pays taxes on the airport, and Mayor Aiello explained that taxes are paid to the Town of Ischua and the Hinsdale School, but that the City has an agreement with the County and only pays \$1 per year to the County.

Alderman George explained that he feels that the Council should move forward with the applications, and then plan a field trip to the airport.

A motion to approve PL #51-19 was made by Alderman Dougherty, seconded by Alderman George. Voice vote, ayes all except Alderman Crawford, who voted nay. Motion carried. Referred to Regular Meeting for Resolution.

4. 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.