

# COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES

*TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2021 – 6:30 p.m.*  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS – OLEAN MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

IN ATTENDANCE WERE: ALDERMEN CRAWFORD, WITEE, PANUS, GONZALEZ, ROBINSON, AND ANASTASIA. OTHERS: MAYOR WILLIAM AIELLO; LENS MARTIAL, CITY CLERK; FRED SARADIN, CITY AUDITOR; BOB RING, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS; RON RICHARDSON, 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 except Alderman Barnard, who was excused.

## 1. Finance & Bills

A motion to approve Finance and Bills was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman Anastasia. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to Regular Meeting for Resolution.

2. PL #61-21: (Aiello) To approve the following Downtown Property Improvement Program (DPIP) application for financial assistance as recommended by the Revolving Loan Fund Committee: DPIP #71-03, in an amount not to exceed \$30,000.

Ms. Kerper explained that the Revolving Loan Fund Committee met on September 22, 2021 and reviewed the application, financial information, estimates and quotes received for work. She explained that the work involves improvements to the HVAC system, the roof and façade, as well as masonry. She explained that the building currently sits vacant so hopefully this will help the applicant and owner secure a tenant. Alderman Witte asked if there are plans for who will be going into the building, and Ms. Kerper explained that there are none at this time. She explained that the owners have put quite a bit of equity into the building themselves recently, and these things really need to be done to make this a rentable space.

Alderman Crawford asked about the program details. Ms. Kerper explained that the DPIP provides up to \$30,000 in funding at prime rate over 7 years and 20 percent is forgivable. She explained that the applicant needs to spend the funds and a lien is placed on the building, and after the work is done it is inspected and at that point repayments are done. She explained that payments are automatically taken from a checking or savings account and if the loan is not defaulted on over the life of the loan, the 20 percent is forgiven.

A motion to approve PL #61-21 was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman Crawford. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to Regular Meeting for Resolution.

### 3. Discussion – Update on City Website Design

Alderman Crawford explained that the Council has received two good presentations, one from CivicPlus with higher capabilities and a higher price tag, as well as one more recently from Town Web. He explained that he reached out to the Council a little while ago and received some feedback. He explained that funding has been set aside for the website design and he would like to know where we are thinking of going.

Mayor Aiello explained that he has a conversation with the City's IT Department and he feels that Town Web will serve out the desired purpose and will be more economical to go with. Alderman Witte explained that she thought that both companies were great, but she agrees that she thinks Town Web will work out better. Alderman Crawford explained that he wants to see some movement so he felt that this was necessary to put on the agenda and get the Council's consensus. He explained that he supports a new website and this is something that we can update and make easier to manage. He explained that he hopes that Department Heads can be trained to manage their own sites. He explained that he spoke with Mr. Wells in the IT Department who felt that Town Web would be the best fit for the City and our needs at this time. Mayor Aiello explained that he will get things into motion.

### 4. Update – Feral Cats and SPCA Contract

Alderman Crawford explained that he spoke to the Mayor regarding an update on the SPCA contract as well as the Catnippers. He explained that he has received many more calls as feral cat populations are booming in Olean, and COVID is partly to blame. He explained that the Catnippers have no staff to set up shop in the City, and he thinks that we need a strategy for improvement.

Mayor Aiello explained that we are in negotiations with the SPCA and have had some issues, and Mr. Hart and Chief Richardson are working with the SPCA. He explained that one of the things that we need to do is have an Animal Control Officer, He explained that we have been in talks with an individual for this, and the individual had wanted to come on as a City employee. He explained that he thinks it would be better to have someone contracted in this position, so he is working to get a quote from this person on a contract service.

Alderman Crawford explained that in previous talks with the SPCA, they did not want to deal with the feral cat business. He explained that he has even trapped some cats and fostered some, and there is an abundance of cats and kittens that the SPCA will take. He explained though that the SPCA will not take feral cats. We need a legal and humane solution. He explained that the Catnippers and the TNVR program still has a place in the City but we need to help them find people who are willing to volunteer and do the services needed. He explained that he has asked the Mayor to set up a meeting with the SPCA and the Catnippers to see what we can work out for a strategy for the out of control cat population in Olean. Mayor Aiello explained that he sent the Council a timeline of the Catnippers to give them an idea of what has been going on. He explained that the person in Olean has had some health issues and has had difficulty getting out to trap.

Alderman Crawford explained that the person is based out of the north part of the County and she can't get to Olean as much, so he feels we need a group of volunteers to be trained to trap here in Olean. He explained that businesses who want to do volunteer work could get involved and help hit some of these colonies. He explained that if we don't, they won't disappear.

Mayor Aiello explained that prior to COVID we were making a dent in the feral cat population but when COVID hit we lost everything that we gained and more.

#### 5. Update – Water Issues on North Union Street

Alderman Crawford asked if there are any updates on the water issues on North Union Street near 7 Eleven. Mr. Ring explained that he emailed the Council last week, and that he was on location with Mr. Camp this past week to speak with the property owner about where the catch basin could be installed so it will work. He explained that October 8<sup>th</sup> is the deadline to get the catch basin in, and Alderman Crawford noted that the funding has already been appropriated.

#### 6. Deer in the City of Olean

Alderman Witte explained that she has had several calls about the deer issue again. She explained that the deer problem has not gone away, and she knows a couple of years ago we spoke with someone from the DEC. She explained that she has found out that other communities have taken the DEC's suggestion and people want to know what we are going to do.

Alderman Gonzalez asked how many deer have actually been hit in the City, and Alderman Witte responded that someone hit one on Main Street recently. She explained that they aren't just crossing the road, they are in neighborhoods and backyards and are becoming comfortable in the community. Alderman Gonzalez explained that he is against anything that would make them dead.

Alderman Robinson explained that last week he got his hunting license and when he applied for a doe permit, this area was rated so low that he couldn't get a doe permit. He explained that this shows that numbers are low in the area. It maybe something to speak with the DEC about but he doubts that the DEC will allow anything in terms of hunting. Alderman Crawford explained that an individual came and gave a presentation regarding a targeted culling that would allow targeted areas and specific people to handle pockets of deer. He explained that he is on the fence with Paul, as he does not get many calls in his area. He explained that he does agree that they are getting to be more brazen, but he doesn't know how much destruction they actually do. He explained that he hasn't heard anything from the County about Lyme disease or ticks. Mayor Aiello explained that he does not get any complaints. He explained that there are a lot of deer in the City. He explained that there is a program that we could get involved in, but that the DEC would not shoot the deer and we would have to choose someone to do so. He explained that when it was brought up by Alderman Smith, there was some hesitancy. He explained that he would be happy to look into the program again and get more information.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that he feels that there are more pressing issues to worry about. Alderman Panus explained that he has not had any personal issues, and he thinks that the issues are isolated, but they are there.

#### 7. Adjournment

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