

PUBLIC SAFETY

Tuesday, October 2, 2018 – 5:57 p.m.

Police Training Room – Olean Municipal Building

Present: Members: Chairman Andreano, Vice Chairman Gonzalez, Alderman Witte, Alderman Dougherty, Alderman Crawford, Alderman Smith, and Alderman George. Others: Mayor William Aiello; Nicholas DiCerbo, Jr., City Attorney; Bob Ring, Director of Public Works; Bob Bell, Fire Chief; Jeff Rowley, Police Chief, Fred Saradin, City Auditor, and Michiko McElfresh, Mayor's Secretary.

1. Roll Call

Alderman Andreano called the meeting to order at 5:57 p.m. and asked that the record show that all committee members were present.

2. Unfinished Business

None

3. New Referrals for Consideration

- a. PL #96-18: (George) To authorize the installation of "STOP" signs and designating that all traffic shall stop before proceeding on all four corners at the intersection of Spruce Street and West Elm Street.

Alderman George said that the Police Department study on this corner is completed. Chief Rowley said that the Police Department and DPW have purchased a device that allows them to do traffic studies. He said that they used the device to do a study on this corner. They did a three day study and a 7 day study to determine if it was a valid complaint. Chief Rowley said that during that period 2,000 cars traveled and there were 5 (or.8%) enforceable violations. In addition they completed a historical study and discovered only one reported accident in the past three years. Chief Rowley said that from his prospective there is no evidence to support putting in a stop sign.

Alderman Gonzalez asked about the equipment that was used for this study, Chief Rowley explained that the device is small, basically unnoticeable and has a radar gun. It tracks all the cars that go through a given location and can do a number of different reports. He added, that the report that was distributed is one of the many functions of the device

Alderman George said that it is great information and great data. But the evidence is disputed by the 7 residents and he would like to have a second study done by the police department. He

said that the past practice of installing Stop signs is making it more difficult as the residents can refer back to the sign on Coleman that was installed because of a petition.

Mayor Aiello agreed that the City does not have a policy regarding the installation of new traffic signs. He said that we never had a tool that allowed the City to make a data-based decision.

Alderman Gonzalez asked if the police department does another study wouldn't the data be different, especially if the neighborhood knows that the device is tracking.

Alderman Crawford said that Alderman George is doing the correct thing, working with his constituency. However the decision is up to the Council.

Mr. Ring said that Stop signs are technically not considered a traffic calming mechanism. Installations of Stop signs can in fact lead to more dangerous situations.

Alderman George asked if the study could be done again. Alderman Gonzalez asked about statistical samples. Alderman Andreano said that she supports a new study, especially since school is in session.

Chief Rowley said that the Council has no uniform procedure in place regarding requests for Stop signs. He said that if the Council passed the request on to the Police and DPW, that they they could determine if a sign was necessary.

Alderman George understands that, but he thinks given the newness of the procedure, two sets of data would help convince the neighborhood about the data driven decision.

Mr. Crawford cautioned against bias in the data. Mr. Gonzalez said that correct sample size is necessary.

Mr. Ring said that Stop signs are used to keep the traffic flowing and stop preventable accidents. Not to slow people down. Mr. Gonzales determined that there is about 300 feet between the two blocks. He thought that people going 35 between the two signs was very fast.

Alderman Witte asked Chief Rowley if the Police Department was going to use the device for other studies. Chief Rowley said that Mr. Ring will probably use it more frequently for traffic studies and such. Alderman Witte suggested using it on Front Street.

Nate Smith said that 70 people actually sped—going 31 miles per hour. Every year someone wants the side street speed limit reduced. Speed Limit is the limit under optimal conditions. He thinks the City should have the same reputation as Allegany and Franklinville. Have everyone who goes 32 miles per hour get a ticket. No looking for the money or convictions – just need to reduce the speed.

Alderman George suggested temporary Stop signs. Alderman Andreano said that a temporary sign on Sullivan caused a number of near misses.

Alderman Crawford wanted to circle back to Mayor Aiello's point that we need a firm policy about stop signs. He asked if the council should even be involved. Mayor Aiello suggested that sign requested be delegated to the Chief of Police and the Director of DPW. Based on need, Chief Rowley said that if there is a need they will put the sign up. They are there to keep the City safe.

Alderman George made a motion to postpone, Alderman Andreano seconded. Voice vote, all ayes.

a. Discussion Item: Neighborhood Watch Sign Purchases

Alderman Andreano said that the Committee has used the majority of the the signs and that there are requests to order more. She would like to pass it by the Council before she orders more.

Alderman Witte would like more metal signs. Mayor Aiello said that the signs that are up were purchased by a grant. Alderman Andreano said that the Watch Committee can look into grants.

She asked the Council if they were okay for her to spend the money—the Council agreed. No vote was necessary

4. Approval of Committee Reports

None

5. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Andreano, seconded by AldermanSmith. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:40 p.m.