

PUBLIC SAFETY

Tuesday, October 5, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.
Council Chambers – Olean Municipal Building

Present: Members: Chairman Robinson, Vice Chairman Barnard, Alderman Witte, Alderman Gonzalez, Alderman Panus, Alderman Crawford, and Alderman Anastasia (entered at 5:34). Jack Hart, City Attorney; Ron Richardson, Police Chief, Bob Ring, DPW Director, and Michiko McElfresh, Mayor's Secretary.

1. Roll Call

Alderman Robinson called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. and asked that the record show that all Aldermen were present except Alderman Anastasia.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Committee Meetings (Tuesday, September 21, 2021)

A motion to approve the minutes of the Tuesday September 21, 2021 meeting was made by Alderman Robinson, seconded by Alderman Crawford. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

3. Unfinished Business

None

4. New Referrals for Consideration

i. Internet Exchange Zones

Alderman Gonzalez said that the Council did discuss the idea previously. He said that it would consist of a couple of parking spots that the city would designate as an "Internet Exchange Zone" and it would perhaps be located right outside the police station in a well-lit area that has cameras. He said that signs would designate the area. If people make purchases on the internet, it would be a place to make the transaction. He compared the idea to the custody exchange area on Times Square near the Police Department. Alderman Gonzalez said that he brought the idea back to the forefront because the town of Amherst recently designated such an area. He read an article that was posted on WKBW which stated that there are two spots, that under 24 hour surveillance and is well-lit. And it said that transactions can take place there or in the lobby of the building. He said that by offering the spaces, it is one more service we can add to our residents as people can basically sell anything via the internet. He added that he is free to negotiate on the place.

Alderman Witte said that the City should work with Courts to designate an area near the police station for parents, but she would like to hear from Police Chief Richardson.

Chief Richardson said that it is a good idea but that they would need one more camera. Mayor Aiello asked if the blue meters would be an idea for placement. Chief Richardson agreed.

Alderman Crawford asked why that idea wasn't carried out previously. He thought it was concerns about liability and he wondered if the liability issue had been alleviated.

Alderman Gonzalez said that it was a liability issue that stopped the progress. He said that the concern was that if the City designated a safe spot and it was not a safe spot, would the City be liable? He said that City Attorney would have to make that determination. He added, however that other localities have a designated area.

Alderman Crawford asked if Mr. Hart had any concerns, but added that Mr. Hart does not like to make a determination without doing his homework. Mr. Hart agreed that it was a good idea, but he was hesitant to make a final determination without learning more about the process.

Alderman Gonzalez said that he doesn't mind waiting and asked Mr. Hart to look into Internet Exchange Zone.

Mayor Aiello said that his daughter-in-law works for the Amherst Police department and he will ask her for more details.

Chief Richardson said that it might possible for a police officer to oversee the transaction, if they are in the police department at the time

Alderman Gonzalez said that that would be great, but he does not want to put another burden on the department. He would not want to turn this in to another item that has to be budgeted.

Alderman Robinson said that he does not want to burden the police department. But added that he likes the idea of having a safe transaction zone and for custody issues. He thinks it is a greater idea to install an extra camera and make a safe zone. And if an incident occurs, there is a recording of the incident.

Alderman Gonzalez said that they would have to keep the video recording for a period of time.

The discussion is on hold pending a legal opinion

- ii. Ambulance Equipment Purchase with American Recovery Plan Act Funding

Fire Chief Richardson said that he sent the Alderman information regarding the funding that the City received from the American Recovery Plan Act and this is a purchase that is fundable under the act. He added that the equipment purchase is necessary as it will prevent injuries of the firefighters, in fact they have one member on leave because of such an injury.

He explained the supporting documentation that he sent to the alderman and how it applies to the purchase. He added that the purchase is to insure the safety of the staff.

Alderman Witte asked the cost. He said that he is still working on the final cost as a steel plate has to be added to the ambulances to support the new power stretcher. She added that she supports the purchase.

Alderman Crawford asked Mayor Aiello where the city stood with the American Recovery Act. Mayor Aiello said that it is in the account that the state set up and the city has received a payment of over \$700K and will receive another check in about the same about next year. He said that they have to purchase items that are deemed fundable. He believes this is a good purchase and use of the money. He added that with this purchase injuries can be prevented and safety is a must for our employees.

Alderman Crawford asked if money was committed from that fund for the vacuum truck purchase. Mayor Aiello said that the vacuum truck is not fundable under the act. Mayor Aiello and Alderman Crawford discussed the difference between infrastructure and safety equipment purchase. Mayor Aiello said that he does attend O&A sessions regarding the payment and they hope that they will allow other purchases. He mentioned that he discussed the matter with an individual at NYCOM and she agreed that the vacuum truck was a stretch.

Alderman Panus asked if there was a performance guarantee. Chief Richardson said that one exits and believes that it is 5 years. He said the cost includes the preventative maintenance of the equipment (both the load system and the stretcher) for 5 years. He added that the batteries charge when the doors of the ambulance are closed.

Alderman Crawford asked when the raised the rate of the ambulance. Chief Richardson say that he would look in to that. He said the rates change based on the fee schedule. Alderman Crawford thought it was a great used of the money.

Alderman Witte added that the equipment will help the City's employees but will keep the patients from being injured.

Alderman Robinson asked if this will lower the insurance rates of the City. Mayor Aiello said that it may. As the City's claims may go down.

Alderman Robinson said that he supports it and added that it is sad when you try to help someone and you get hurt.

Alderman Robinson asked if there were any more questions. There were none.

5. Approval of Committee Reports

None

6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Robinson, seconded by Alderman Panus. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.