

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Tuesday, September 4, 2018 – 6:20 p.m.

Police Training Room – Olean Municipal Building

Present: Members: Chairman Gonzalez, Vice Chairman Andreano, Alderman Witte, Alderman Crawford, and Alderman Smith. Others: Alderman Dougherty; Alderman George; Mayor William Aiello; Nicholas DiCerbo, Jr., City Attorney; Bob Ring, Director of Public Works; Bob Bell, Fire Chief; Jeff Rowley, Police Chief, and Tiffany Taylor, Managerial Confidential Administrative Secretary.

1. Roll Call

Alderman Gonzalez called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. and asked that the record show that all committee members were present.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Committee Meetings (Tuesday, August 21, 2018)

A motion to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2018 meeting was made by Alderman Gonzalez, seconded by Alderman Smith. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

3. Unfinished Business

- a. PL #86-18: (Dougherty) To enact a local ordinance pursuant to the City of Olean Charter Section 2.044 (a) to increase the Council Salary from \$3,500 to \$5,500.
- b. PL #87-18: (Dougherty) To enact a local ordinance pursuant to the City of Olean Charter Section 2.044 (b) to increase the Council President's stipend from \$500 to \$1,000 per annum.
- c. PL #88-18: (Dougherty) To enact a local ordinance pursuant to the City of Olean Charter Section 2.022 to increase the Mayor's salary from \$50,000 to \$80,000.

Alderman Dougherty explained that the proposed amounts figured a 2% annual increase, where the rate of inflation is 2.24%. He reminded the committee that the raises would not take place until after the next elections.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that in the last discussion, and since, a lot of people were asking where this money would come from. All of the raises will not go into effect for some time, two years for aldermen and three for the mayor. These are down the road types of scenarios.

Alderman Dougherty presented a spreadsheet to the committee with examples of how the raises could be budgeted in gradually.

Alderman Crawford explained that the issue at hand is an effective way to implement and roll out raises without one big hit to the City's budgetary season. He also questions what a reasonable raise for the mayoral position would be. The spreadsheet presented shows a raise of \$64,000 rather than the \$80,000 presented in the PL. The number was chosen because it was a little less than halfway between the current salary and proposed raises, and it takes into consideration feedback received since the last meeting. He explained that this is how strategic planning works, that we raise salaries with an implementation plan in order to get the best candidates that we can. After a gradual increase over time, the salary plateaus at \$64,000. He then hopes that the salaries are addressed before 24 more years go by. He also mentioned that the salary increase on the spreadsheet proposed for aldermen is \$5,000 rather than the \$5,500 proposed in the PL.

Alderman Crawford continued that \$64,000 and \$5,000 in 2025 do not equal \$64,000 and \$5,000 today, but he feels that discussions and planning should occur. He has canvassed his ward, and most people he has spoken to agree to a gradual increase in salary.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that part of what he wants to see addressed is avoiding this situation again down the road. He questions if a Charter change is required. Mr. DiCerbo responded that a Charter change may be required, as the Council cannot bind a future Council into what they're doing. The Charter revision could set up the new salaries, and with that, the future Council could increase the salary, but could not go backwards. Without a Charter change, the next Council could set the salaries back to \$50,000 and \$3,500.

Alderman Dougherty mentioned that, if there is a Charter change, he would rather see cost of living adjustments (COLA) worked in. Mr. DiCerbo mentioned that it could also be tied into union increases.

Alderman Crawford explained that he feels that a flexible model is useful. There are a lot of ideas out there, and it is up to the seven aldermen, with the Mayor's input, to make a decision.

Alderman Crawford continued that increases were previously compared to the union increase, and he presented a handout showing CSEA increases since 1994. He explained that if the mayoral salary changed with the union, the current salary would be \$87,479; the current aldermen's salaries would be \$6,124.

Mayor Aiello responded that you are not taking into consideration what the unions gave up for the raises. Alderman Gonzalez mentioned that if the person in the mayor's position chose to take health insurance, they would pay the same amount as the CSEA union members do.

Alderman Crawford responded that it may not be a complete apples to apples comparison, but he is showing that in order to continue to recruit good, qualified candidates, some change is needed. Alderman Dougherty added that a balance needs to be struck.

Alderman Smith explained that he is not sure if he is a “no”, or if he is an “ok, but less” decision. He agrees that you need compensation to get people to serve, but the numbers that are currently there haven’t failed yet.

Alderman George explained that in the corporate world, even after you have reached your maximum salary, you still receive a cost of living increase periodically. He feels that we are at the point that change is needed. The numbers presented today seem more reasonable, and he feels that a gradual increase is a step in the right direction.

Alderman Andreano explained that she doesn’t feel that there is anyone that would say that they don’t deserve a raise. However, she did not get into this for the money, and she is not paid to be a part of the PTO of Sports Boosters. She is getting the same pit in her stomach that she gets at budget time, where she wonders what she could do with this money in her ward rather than put in her pocket. She just can’t, in good faith, support raises when money can be used for capital projects. She continued that she doesn’t think that \$2,000 would break anyone in the room, but it is a big deal to someone on a fixed income.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that he thinks that a part of where the discussion goes wrong is that people don’t understand that the sitting Council is not looking to give themselves a raise, as raises will not take place until after the next elections. The last eight out of twelve Council elections went unopposed, and the last two mayoral elections had the same candidates.

Alderman Crawford explained that he understands that this is a very emotional topic. He understands that the Council does not get into this for the money. He looks at this as voting on getting and retaining good candidates for the elected positions. Otherwise, he questions why there is any compensation at all.

Alderman Dougherty responded that good heart can only get you so far.

Alderman Witte explained that her thoughts have not changed since the last meeting. She agrees with Alderman Andreano, Alderman Smith, and Mayor Aiello. She wishes that we would have put the same amount of thought into the budget process that we are putting into these raises, and the principle of what we are talking about. She explained that she is firmly against the pay increases. Many people in this community live on fixed incomes, are losing their jobs, or are living paycheck to paycheck. She does not feel comfortable doing this.

Alderman Witte continued that there are bills coming up, and all of this money comes from the same pot. Our community is losing population and tax money. It is not money that keeps you coming back, but rather worrying about how things are going to get done.

Alderman Crawford explained that this is currently a five person committee, and he would like all seven of the aldermen to be able to have a vote. Going into this, maybe something makes sense, and maybe nothing makes sense, but seven minds are better than one.

A motion to refer PL #86-18 to the Committee of the Whole Tuesday, September 18, 2018 was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Smith. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

A motion to refer PL #87-18 to the Committee of the Whole Tuesday, September 18, 2018 was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Gonzalez. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

A motion to refer PL #88-18 to the Committee of the Whole Tuesday, September 18, 2018 was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Andreano. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

4. New Referrals for Consideration

a. "Operation Slumlord"

Alderman Gonzalez explained that a constituent brought to his attention in the Buffalo News regarding "Operation Slumlord", where any condemned house would have a sign placed out front with the name and address of the owner of the home. Alderman Witte added that she believes that Jamestown does this too. Alderman Gonzalez continued that he will forward the article to the rest of the Council, as this may be something that the City of Olean could begin doing.

Alderman Witte explained that a few years ago, neighbors rallied to send a letter to the owner, who lived in another town, of a home in Olean that was in disrepair. They informed him that they would be notifying the newspaper of the situation, and he did not seem concerned until they mentioned they would be notifying the newspaper of the town he resides in. He fixed up the property. Sometimes shaming can get you somewhere.

Alderman Gonzalez added that this may be worth looking into.

b. September 11, 2018 Council Meeting

Mayor Aiello explained that next Tuesday, September 11, 2018, the American Legion will be having their 9/11 ceremony at 6:00 p.m., and it would be nice to have the presence of the

Council there. Mr. DiCerbo added that the published start time of the meeting can be 6:30 p.m., and per two NYCOM opinions, the meeting can always start later (but not earlier).

5. Approval of Committee Reports

A motion to approve committee reports was made by Alderman Gonzalez, seconded by Alderman Smith. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Gonzalez, seconded by Alderman Smith. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 p.m.