

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

Tuesday, April 20, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.

Council Chambers – Olean Municipal Building

Present: Members: Chairman Crawford, Vice Chairman Gonzalez, Alderman Witte, Alderman Barnard and Alderman Robinson. Others: Alderman Anastasia; Mayor William Aiello; Bob Ring, Director of Public Works, and Tiffany Taylor, Managerial Confidential Administrative Secretary.

### 1. Roll Call

Alderman Crawford called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and asked that the record show that all committee members were present.

### 2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Committee Meetings (Tuesday, April 6, 2021)

A motion to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2021 committee meeting was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Gonzalez. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

### 3. Unfinished Business

- a. PL #07-21: (Crawford) To form a Recruitment, Retention and Rebranding Taskforce for the City of Olean.

Alderman Crawford explained that this is a working title. He explained that he think that it is time to turn our attention to the long term strategic plan for the City. He explained that he would like to focus these efforts going into the summer months. He explained that as a starting point, the Council should evaluate the current Comprehensive Plan. He explained that it is online, and that a lot of effort went into making the document. He explained that this will be a good starting point to see where we are going.

Alderman Crawford explained that the document was created in 2005 and times have changed since then. He explained that he thinks that the City has done a good job keeping on its task, and utilizing the Comprehensive Plan as a playbook as to what Olean should look like and what projects we should pursue. HE explained that we should look at the plan and determine what updates and modifications can be made. He explained that he did draft an email to the Mayor requesting that Community Development provide within the coming weeks a presentation that will give the Council an idea of what the process looks like to create or update a Comprehensive Plan. He explained that he would like to know how long it takes, who the key players are, if consultants were hired, and how much it cost. He explained that the Comprehensive Plan states that there should be annual reviews and reprioritization of action strategies, and although he is sure that this happens and the Community Development and Mayor's office levels, it has not happened with the Council since he began as an Alderman,

Alderman Crawford explained that the Comprehensive Plan ends in 2025 and he thinks that it is time to make the decision to update the plan, or to think about the next 20 year plan for the City. He explained that this will aid in the creation of a branding and marketing strategy. This will need to work alongside the Comprehensive Plan, and the Plan will run parallel with the marketing strategy.

Alderman Crawford again asked the Aldermen to go through the plan and try to think of any questions that they have, and then bring these to the first or second committee night in May when Ms. Kerper presents what the process looks like. He noted that he did meet with the Mayor who will be reaching out to follow up with the website developer as well. He explained that he thinks that this goes hand in hand with what he is trying to accomplish.

A motion to postpone PL #07-21 to the second committee meeting in May was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Witte. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

#### 4. New Referrals for Consideration

- a. PL #18-21: (Gonzalez) To authorize the transfer of \$50,000 from General Fund Contingency to newly created Capital Fund #203 – Franchot Park Entrance Project.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that this is a project that has been under consideration for a number of years, but it has been consistently deprioritized and pushed aside for other strategic City-wide initiatives. He explained that he feels that this has gone on long enough, and we need to take a serious look at this and allocate funding. He explained that two houses that were notoriously the worse houses on the street were demolished three years ago with the idea to turn the land into a formal park entrance. He explained that ideas were batted around like a uniform gate and sign like at Lincoln Park. He noted that these are only ideas and there is currently no final plan.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that he would like to have a capital fund created, transfer money, and go from there. He explained that you can go on and on about the virtues of Franchot Park, and explained that it is used by all ages and socioeconomic groups. He explained that sports leagues have practices there, and the wading pool at Franchot was the only one open last summer. He explained that there are playgrounds and gazebo rentals, and that Franchot is one of the largest parks in the City. He explained that it is criminally underinvested in. He explained that we should show our commitment to this area, Mayor Aiello added that youth soccer will be using Franchot this year as one of their sites.

Alderman Crawford explained that we do spend a certain amount annually to upkeep the park, and that he took his kids there a few days ago to see what Alderman Gonzalez is proposing. He

explained that the playground is in very good condition. He explained that there is money spent to upkeep the pool as well as for mowing, so the City does invest in the park. Alderman Gonzalez explained that you can argue that upkeep isn't investment.

Alderman Crawford explained that there is a parking area on South 4<sup>th</sup> Street that could be improved, as well as the parking area off of South Union Street. He explained that the walking path from Green Street to the park is comical the way it is now, but he doesn't see how adding a parking area would beautify the neighborhood. He explained that he's on board with beautifying the park and the space on Green Street and creating a grand entryway, but adding more black to doesn't seem like it would invest in that community. He explained that he wants to have a safe, well light, improved entrance to the park, and then we can build upon that concept, but he doesn't know if a parking lot is what we need.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that he feels that this is a very valid point, and if a parking lot is put in could be filled with people who just don't want to park on the street. He explained that there are some considerations that we need to make in terms of design. He explained that we can look into a sitting area with a bike repair stand. He explained that there are a million things that we could do but they all cost money. He explained that we keep punting this year after year. If we commit money to it, then it will get done. He doesn't want to keep looking at an empty lot.

Alderman Witte explained that this would be the fourth parking lot over there, and maybe instead of that, a walkway with benches would make the property beautiful. She explained that we could take the money and do something with the current parking areas that are by the Children's Garden, by 5<sup>th</sup> the wading pool and on Fourth Street. She explained that this area would be a good avenue for people who walk to the park. Alderman Gonzalez agreed and explained that this is a great idea. He explained that we could use some funds for rejuvenating the entrances that we do have and then make this lot a more walkable entrance into the neighborhood. He explained that this design that he has presented is not final at all. He just wants to see things improve over there.

Alderman Robinson explained that he would love to see some funds put towards the park, he explained that we could come up with the projects that we want to see done in the park and prioritize from there., He explained that we could allocate funds based on what needs to be done. He explained that the driveway into the park is horrible. He is a frequent flier of the trail in the park, and you can tell where roots are pushing through blacktop. He feels that, despite recent upgrades in the park, we can do something there to improve it. He explained that we could use this \$50,000 to fix the South Union Street entrance and maybe do an inclusive playground, like previously discussed. He explained that this may invite more people to want to come there.

Alderman Witte explained that the trail used to have stations where you could exercise, but it is now rotting away. She explained that this had been a very active park but it has a bad name, and we need to work on that. Alderman Gonzalez explained that at some point, depending on how far we want to go, we can look into putting a dog park in as well. Alderman Robinson agreed and explained that it seems like everywhere he goes there are dog parks. He explained that he feels that this is one of the best parks in town, so he completely agrees.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that we need to think really hard about whether or not we want to see a parking lot on Green Street, and noted that there are things that we can do to spruce up that entrance if not for a low cost to make it better. Alderman Crawford explained that he agrees, and explained that he would love to do away with the wading pool and install a splash pad. He explained that he doesn't think that we could overspend on our park spaces.

Alderman Crawford explained that this concept is a work in process, and we want to try to engage and incentivize people from Green Street and the south streets to walk to the park and use the space. He explained that we could create a very inviting path on the Green Street property. He explained that if we can keep an open mind we can come up with some ideas like planting trees and putting in benches. He explained that he has no problem setting aside money earmarked for this.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that Franchot has a bad reputation, and when we spend money on parks more people use them and he feels that the more people use them, the fewer shenanigans that happen when people go to empty parks and cause trouble. He explained that he feels that this is a step in the right direction. Alderman Crawford explained that we can force the bad out by reactivating parks with activities that you want to see in those spaces. Alderman Anastasia explained that he feels that an entry versus a parking lot will be more appropriate. He explained that he has received complaints about people partying in empty parking lots.

A motion to approve PL #18-21 was made by Alderman Gonzalez, seconded by Alderman Crawford. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to City Attorney for Resolution.

b. Discussion – Update on Human Resources Position

A motion to enter into executive session to discuss personnel matters was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Witte. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Executive session began at approximately 6:05 p.m.

A motion to adjourn from executive session was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Witte. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Executive session adjourned at approximately 6:05 p.m.

Mayor Aiello explained that he has reached out to Cattaraugus County Civil Service and has asked what positions they have listed for a Human Resource Specialist. He explained that they have sent him two documents regarding this and that once we get the job duties down for this person, they will create a position for them. He explained that he will look at what they have sent over and get things put together. He noted that he would like everyone's input on this.

Mayor Aiello explained that he would like to have this position filled by June 1<sup>st</sup>. He explained that he needs to look at some things in the building to figure out what office they will use, He explained that this is a 20 to 25 hour a week part time position with no benefits.

Alderman Crawford asked if this will be posted locally or on Indeed. Mayor Aiello explained that we usually put notice in the local media and put information on the website and on the City's Facebook page, He explained that the way it sounds there will probably be a Civil Service test for this position so the candidate would be hired provisionally.

Alderman Robinson asked why this position is Civil Service if it is part time. Mayor Aiello explained that this is due to New York State law and that we are governed by Civil Service. He explained that there are very few positions that are not governed by Civil Service anymore. He noted that he wants to fast track this so he will be reaching out to everyone for their input and will go from there. Alderman Robinson asked if this will be advertised so that people can apply, and Mayor Aiello responded that it will be. He explained that the indications are that there is not an existing list.

Alderman Anastasia asked if there are any updates for negotiations, and Mayor Aiello explained that he can only briefly update since we are not in executive session. He explained that he meets with Patrol next Wednesday and Command next Friday. Alderman Witte asked if any other unions are due, and Mayor Aiello explained that the Fire Department is up and we will be starting negotiations with them. He noted that CSEA expires next year. He noted that the Police Department's contracts expired 5/31/2019.

#### 5. Approval of Committee Reports

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

#### 6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Robinson. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:15 p.m.