

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Tuesday, June 1, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.

Council Chambers – Olean Municipal Building

Present: Members: Chairman Crawford, Alderman Barnard and Alderman Robinson. Others: Alderman Panus; Alderman Anastasia; Mayor William Aiello; Keri Kerper, Community Development Program Coordinator; Tim Richardson, Fire Chief; Ron Richardson, Police Chief, 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 except Aldermen Witte and Gonzalez, who were excused.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Committee Meeting (Tuesday, May 18, 2021)

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2021 meeting was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Robinson. 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 he met with the Mayor and Ms. Kerper and asked to dive into more of the Comprehensive Development Plan process. He explained that this was previously done in 2005, and it usually takes a year to two years to complete a 20 year plan. He explained that he thinks that it is probably the best plan for the City to pursue for the next 20 years of what we want Olean to look like. He explained that Ms. Kerper is probably the only person present who experienced the process in 2005, and he has asked her to give a presentation tonight. He explained that he would like to know what to expect, and what goes into the process as well as what we need to do to get our ducks in a row for a long strategic plan process.

Ms. Kerper explained that Empire State Development announced a couple of weeks ago that there would be Consolidated Funding Application opportunities this year, while there were not last year due to COVID and the State budget. She explained that this year there is up to \$1 million available statewide from the New York State Department of State under the Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant Process. She explained that this will be extremely competitive because this is the first time that funding has been specifically allocated for Comprehensive Development Planning. She explained that funding is up to \$100,000 and any

requests in excess of that amount will be disqualified. The Department of State would cover 90% of the project so the City's match would be \$10,000. She noted that this is a reimbursement program.

Ms. Kerper explained that there are M/WBE requirements on the project that include a 15% minority business owned, 15% women business owned, and 6 percent disabled veteran owned business requirement. She explained that the applications are due by 4 p.m. on July 30, 2021.

Ms. Kerper explained that for the 2005-2025 plan, AKRF Consultants was originally hired but their office was closed and their work came to a halt. The work was then subcontracted out to Richard Swist of Swist Government Consulting Services who ultimately did the work. She explained that the process generally takes about 18 months but should take no longer than 24 months. She explained that she has presented a draft bid document to the Council tonight which is the first piece of work in the process for the RFP for a consulting firm.

Ms. Kerper explained that if the City applies for and is awarded funding, the City would generally know in the fall as the Governor typically shoots for November or December for these types of awards. She explained that the City would then go under contract with the Department of State, and the RFP would be fine-tuned. She explained that she would like to have the RFP finalized in July so that we can include it as an attachment to the Department of State so they can see that we are able and ready if we were to go under contract with them. She explained that the RFP would be issued, and a consultant would be selected by a review committee that would interview the top three firm selections.

Ms. Kerper explained that the consultant would then be hired and the Mayor would appoint a special advisory board consisting of 15 to 20 people comprised of local officials, elected officials, various department heads, community leaders, CEOs, business owners, citizens, and so on. She explained that the scope of work begins from there, and there is a lot of public meetings that happen through the project. She explained that the current plans and conditions are reviewed, and the direction of the Comprehensive Development plan is formulated. She explained that technical investigation will occur such as environmental investigations, and from there, a draft Comprehensive Development Plan will be composed. She explained that the committee will review this draft, and the final Comprehensive Development Plan report will come before the full Council. There will be a public hearing for feedback, and the consultant will provide the Environmental Impact Statement and prepare all necessary materials for carrying out the SEQR. She explained that this will need to be sent to the Planning Boards for the City and County, as well as other entities in order to make sure that a full faith effort is being undertaken in terms of the SEQR process. She explained that the Council would then adopt the plan, and the City would execute the implementation of the plan.

Alderman Crawford explained that there is a \$100,000 cap and asked if that is the estimated cost for this Comprehensive Development Plan. Ms. Kerper explained that she did some research and contacted other communities, and for a city of our size the estimate is anywhere between \$100,000 and \$150,000, really depending generally on the scope of work. She explained that she was trying to be far in what this would look like, and is hoping that \$100,000 will cover the cost of the project. She explained that there is always room for negotiations with consultant firms, or costs could be cut down if the bid is more than \$100,000. Alderman Crawford asked, as far as the consultant goes, what their specialty is. Ms. Kerper explained that they will have a planning team, an environmental team and different divisions within their firm.

Alderman Crawford explained that the Comprehensive Development Plan gives a blueprint for what projects Olean will be undertaking in the next 20 years. Ms. Kerper explained that along with goals, the plan contains the vision and marketing plan for Olean. She explained that it is an all-encompassing plan, and we want other communities to see what we are doing. We want to be a trend setter moving forward. She explained that we want to meet goals and exceed them, like we have with the current plan. She explained that the consultant can help with suggestions and future ideas that we are not thinking of.

Alderman Crawford explained that if we started planning today, we are really looking at 2022 to 2023 to start implementing the plan and having a team in place. Ms. Kerper explained that even the Department of State will not let the project go past two years. She explained that if the funding is awarded, the City would get under contract in January or February with the Department of State and the RFP would be issued right away because it is complete. She explained that we would give a month for the consultant to respond, and the City would then take two to three weeks to make a selection depending on the number of responses received. She explained that then the process would be started, so it could be done in 18 months.

Alderman Panus asked about the previous process being subcontracted out. Ms. Kerper explained that this was to the City's benefit because Richard Swist was absolutely amazing and we were lucky to get him. Alderman Panus asked if this happens a lot, and Ms. Kerper explained that there were changes in AKRF so they had to close their closest office and employees assigned to our plan left the company. She explained that we were able to work with them to find someone acceptable to the City. Alderman Panus asked if these types of consultants come from Buffalo, and Ms. Kerper explained that they are all over the state.

Alderman Crawford asked that the Council look at the document. Ms. Kerper explained that if there are any suggestions or if the Council does not agree with the scope of work created, to let her or the Mayor know, or this can be discussed again after the Council has digested this if this is the direction that they would like to go in. She explained that what she has presented is not

the 2005 document. She explained that she wanted to start fresh, because we have progressed in the City from 2005 to 2021.

Alderman Crawford explained that he would like to provide, on behalf of the Council, support not only for the grant application but also in the context that this needs to be done. He understands that \$100,000 is a crazy amount of money, but we have to look at the return that we have received and the number of grants that we have received having the Comprehensive Plan in place while pursuing grant funding. Ms. Kerper explained that when we fill out grant applications, we can refer to a goal because the current Comprehensive Plan has not expired. She explained that this helps us gain points in the application, and these could be points that mean the difference between getting funding and not getting funding.

Alderman Crawford explained that he feels that this is needed. Ms. Kerper explained that this is the first time since she has been doing this that the State has put out funding for Comprehensive Development Plans. It is exciting but only ten communities are going to get funding. Alderman Crawford explained that this is something that we have to focus on as a Council. He explained that he spoke with County Legislator Snyder who had indicated that he would provide support for the City from the Legislature in regards to the grant application and the creation of the Comprehensive Plan. He really thinks that everyone realizes how important this is to our long term strategy, and he is on board with any way that we can move this along. Mayor Aiello explained that Ms. Kerper did an excellent job explaining this and the City will have the grant application ready by July 30th.

A motion to postpone PL #07-21 was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Robinson. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

4. New Referrals for Consideration

None

5. Approval of Committee Reports

None

6. Adjournment

AS motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Barnard. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:55 p.m.