



City Council Minutes  
The City of Cortland  
February 19, 2013

Council Meeting #4  
February 19, 2013  
Regular Session  
City Hall  
7:00 PM

Present: Mayor Brian Tobin, Aldermen Ken Dye, Julie Bird, Kathryn Silliman, John Bennett, Dan Quail, Linda Ferguson and Thomas Michales.

Staff Present: Corporation Counsel Kelly Colasurdo, Director of Administration & Finance Mack Cook, and Donna Coye from the City Clerk's Office

Absent: Alderman Ferrer

Mayor Tobin called the fourth Common Council meeting of the year to order at 7:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Public Comments

Mayor Tobin instructed anyone making public comments to limit their comments to 3 minutes and asked that people speak on items relative to City business and on things that can be dealt with by the City.

First to speak was Jim French, congratulating all the Community, noting the interested students here tonight on behalf of Wickwire Pool. Mr. French wished to address the problems with traffic on Port Watson Street and future problems that may arise on Pendleton Street when they put in the unloading dock for the railroad down there. He also noted, as he had discussed with the Mayor, the empty lot that goes into the back of Marietta's parking lot, if it would be possible to run a one-way street off from there. He would like the City to consider making Port Watson a one-way street from Pendleton to Main Street to possibly alleviate traffic congestion in the area. The Mayor assured him that in going forward with the railroad yard, traffic issues will be considered.

Next to speak was Arnold Talentino to voice his objection to the Community garden in Suggett Park. He felt it would be an inappropriate use of the park as it has been a public playing field for many years, and often used by young people, kids, for picnics and other gatherings in the park. At the time when the garden would be most instructive to students, the students would not be in school. Also, grant money runs out, interest fades and the City might be left with a section of the park all dug up and not usable for a playing field.

Next to speak was Ann Doyle noting there would be a Neighborhood Watch meeting tomorrow at the Parkside Church at 78 Homer Ave at 6:30. Mike Dexter will be there to speak on the City tree program and she hopes to have more information on the garden that is going to be in Suggett Park. She let the students in attendance know that they were always welcome to come to the Neighborhood Watch meetings.

Ms. Doyle also wanted to mention that the League of Women Voters has a program tomorrow night at the Beard Building on global warming at 5:00 in case you can't make her meeting.

She also would like to thank all the students getting Wickwire pool back in order.

Finally, Beverly Ellefson, who resides on Chestnut Street, spoke to address the proposed garden in Suggett Park. Residents did not find out about this idea until Friday evening, and did not know until this morning that this was going to be an agenda item for the Common Council. She sent the Mayor and the Aldermen an email addressing the concerns of the residents. Mrs. Ellefson stated that it would be a very dangerous precedent for the City to set, to carve up a park to be used for things that are not established uses for the Park. Several of her neighbors are opposed to this use.

## **MINUTES**

**RESOLUTION #23** of 2013 – Resolution to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2013 Meeting.

Motion By: Alderman Quail  
Seconded By: Alderman Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

Bills were reviewed.

Some discussion among the Council ensued regarding a Workers Compensation yearly payment of \$172,463.28. Council waited until Director of Finance Mack Cook was present before discussing with the public.

### Ward Reports

Ward 4 – Alderman Bennett

Nothing to report.

Ward 8 – Alderman Michales

The crows have entered Ward 8 and he is trying to obtain the crow machine to place in one of the neighborhoods.

A meeting of Ward 8 is scheduled for March 13<sup>th</sup>, in the Mayor's Conference Room at 7 PM to discuss the Pendleton update, go over some neighborhood concerns, and the railroad crossing issues.

Ward 3 – Alderman Dye

Quiet in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward, but he did receive an email about a problem of cats on Otter Creek Place.

Ward 2 – Alderman Silliman

Very quiet in the second ward, however she had some concerns regarding parking. Cars that are parked illegally have not been getting ticketed so she was glad to see Item #7 as a discussion on the agenda regarding increasing the hourly rates for Parking Enforcement Officers so we can keep more people on the job.

Ward 1 – Alderman Bird

The biggest thing happening in Ward 1 is the Suggett Park Garden. She had received a lot of phone calls about it.

Ward 7 – Alderman Ferguson

The 7<sup>th</sup> Ward has been quiet. She is planning a Ward meeting in March, which will be announced at the next meeting and topics will include Neighborhood Watch and discussion of events to plan for children at Dexter Park.

Ward 5 – Alderman Quail

The 5<sup>th</sup> Ward is having a Neighborhood Watch meeting this Thursday at 6:30 at the Daily Grind South, however with construction going on, the meeting may be changed to the Mayor's Conference Room. Discussion will be about a dog park and a Community Garden.

### Mayor's Report

Mayor Tobin had a few things to relate. First, Aldermen Michales, Ferguson and Silliman attended the Housing Committee meeting to discuss some housing issues in the Community and more information will be coming forward in the next couple of weeks.

There was a Gateway Project Committee meeting to give a presentation to the public about some plans for The Gateway, which runs from Route 81 all the way down to Main Street, and what the impression is that people get when first coming into our City. Different potential designs and plans may be viewed on the City website, Cortland.org and the City is looking for feedback from the general public. The idea is to spruce up our Community and keep people proud of the area we live in.

There will be a County, City, Towns, Villages and Schools meeting at the Courthouse next Tuesday at 6 PM to discuss the landfill and recycling. This has a direct impact on everyone in the County, and will give them an opportunity to hear about what the County may be doing with the landfill.

Item # 1 - Wickwire Pool presentation of the Pool's impact upon the Community .  
(Caroline Kaltefleiter, PhD, SUNY Communications Department)

To speak was Caroline Kaltefleiter to acknowledge some of the work that has been done in previous semesters. Justin Smith is a recent graduate of the Communication Studies Department, and he designed the media hub featured in tonight's presentation. She also wanted to acknowledge her colleague, Dr. Cynthia Sarver in the English Department. The blogs that will be seen in the media were produced by her students.

Ms. Kaltefleiter noted that last year they gave a presentation at the Blue Frog using mobile photography to document the economic injustice, or poverty in and around Cortland, getting the students to think about where they are living and how they might contribute to making a better life here for everybody. The suggestion from that presentation was if something could be done with the Wickwire Pool.

Four students, Jessica Childers, Victoria Grillo, Ethan Giventer and Simon Tucky were introduced, who put together a presentation, condensed an entire semester of work into about 20 minutes. About 35 students are present here tonight.

Mayor Tobin thanked Ms. Kaltefleiter and the students for their time, efforts and commitment to the Community.

To speak was Sara Watrous, explaining the exact areas to be closed off to traffic and that Police Chief Catalano, the Fire Department, and the St. Charles Hotel gave their approval.

**RESOLUTION #24** OF 2013 – Resolved to allow the Mayor to close a small part of Central / Greenbush and East Ave. / Pendleton on April 21, 2013 from 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM for Cortland Blooms 2013.

Motion By: Alderman Bennett  
Seconded By: Alderman Michales

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

Item #3 - Discussion regarding the Parker School neighborhood Garden Plan.

Alderman Bird stated that the Garden would actually be presented by Sustainable Cortland representatives Anna Bennett, of the Environmental Advisory Committee, and Sara Watrous, who also is a new member of that Committee.

Sustainable Cortland met with John McNerney of the Youth Bureau to discuss the possibility of putting the garden in Suggett Park, taking advantage of a thousand dollar grant available through the Seven Valleys Health Coalition. Discussion ensued, some of

which was in favor of the Garden and some was against the idea. The Council decided to table the discussion and consider the plan at the March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting in order to review the proposal and allow time for residents to voice opinions.

Mayor Tobin suggested compiling a list of concerns that have come up, to meet with Sara, Alderman Bird and any other Council members and residents.

**RESOLUTION #25** OF 2013 – Resolved to enter into a contract with Mike Dexter, for the care and maintenance of the Water Works, pending review by Corporation Counsel.  
(Mayor Tobin)

Motion By: Alderman Quail  
Seconded By: Alderman Bird

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

The Mayor noted that this is annual contract to be updated and signed, with no changes from last year's contract, including compensation for landscaping and care of the Water Works. It is a very extensive contract and covers a multitude of things that Mike does there.

**RESOLUTION #26** OF 2013 – Resolved to allow the Mayor to enter into a User Agreement with Cortland County, pending review by Corporation Counsel.

Motion By: Alderman Bennett  
Seconded By: Alderman Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

Mayor Tobin explained that the User Agreement involves primarily Chief Catalano and Chief Glover. When the radio agreement came about, there was certain equipment requested and as time has evolved, the need for additional equipment is needed. This does not deal with the finances of the agreement, it deals with proprietary rights of the equipment, which is under warranty for 3 years, after which the City will take responsibility for the maintenance.

**RESOLUTION #27** OF 2013 – Resolved to designate the Common Council of the City of Cortland as Lead Agency for the SEQR process for the renovation project to upgrade the existing Waste Water Treatment Plant. (Bruce Adams)

Motion By: Alderman Bennett  
Seconded By: Alderman Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

Bruce Adams noted the Council packet included a long form SEQR, and Corporation Counsel has raised the question if a long form is necessary.

**RESOLUTION #28** OF 2013 – Resolution to increase the hourly rate for the Parking Enforcement officers employed in the Police Department to \$10.50/hour.

Motion By: Alderman Quail  
Seconded By: Alderman Dye

Approved: Ayes - 7  
Nays – 0

Chief Catalano offered explanation for the increase in pay. Recruiting and training for this position is very difficult for various reasons:

- The pay rate
- The abuse they sustain – some people would rather have handcuffs slapped on them than get a parking ticket.
- The weather is a factor

It is a Civil Service position that requires passing an exam, scoring in the top three. The Department has had only one person for several months now. The current pay rate is \$8.75 an hour with no benefits. The Chief is proposing to raise the pay to \$10.50 an hour.

Item #8 - Consideration of a Resolution to allow the Mayor to enter into a contract to have cameras installed on Main Street. (Deputy Chief Paul Sandy)

Mayor Tobin suggested pulling this item from the agenda until he could spend more time with Deputy Chief Sandy and craft out some of the details regarding the potential for cameras on Main Street and all the little things that go along with that. His concern is to put a clear picture of what is being proposed in front of everybody to save some time in discussing what can be done.

Council was in agreement to take more time.

**RESOLUTION #29** OF 2013 - Be it resolved, the Common Council of the City of Cortland does hereby release the tax lien on the real property known as 17 Stewart Place, City of Cortland, County of Cortland, New York for all taxes owed through 2013, except the 2013/2014 school taxes, in exchange for payment of all sums received from the mortgage foreclosure action (Cortland County Index No. 09-11) presently pending against said property after payment of attorney fees and disbursements in and related to said foreclosure action; and further authorizes the Mayor to settle and/or sign a settlement agreement and/or any other document(s) necessary to release said tax lien upon these terms and conditions.

Motion By: Alderman Quail  
Seconded By: Alderman Bird

Approved: Ayes - 7  
Nays - 0

Mayor Tobin stated that the City has a “vacant” property on Stewart Place that has some outstanding money, and some legal tie-up as the reason it has not moved forward. In conjunction with outside counsel for another entity we will be able to move on the property. It should bring the property back on the tax roles.

Adjournment

Motion By: Alderman Silliman  
Seconded By: Alderman Bird

Approved: Ayes - 7  
Nays - 0

**I, JUDITH CHAMBERLIN, CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF CORTLAND, NEW YORK DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT SAID RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CORTLAND, HELD ON THE 19th DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2013. I FURTHER CERTIFY THE FOREGOING RESOLUTIONS WERE PRESENTED TO THE MAYOR IN THE TIME REQUIRED FOR HIS CONCURRENCE IN ADOPTION OR REJECTION BY VETO POWER.**

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JUDITH CHAMBERLIN, CITY CLERK

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MAYOR TOBIN