



City Council Minutes The City of Cortland June 21, 2016

Council Meeting #11

June 21, 2016

25 Court Street

6:45 PM

Present: Mayor Brian Tobin, Aldermen John Bennett, Michelle Mastropolo, Gary Thomas, Katy Silliman, Bill Carpenter, Carlos Ferrer, Adam Megivern, Thomas Michales

Staff Present: Corporation Counsel Richard VanDonsel, Police Chief Catalano, Superintendent of WWTP Bruce Adams, Director of Administration and Finance Mack Cook, Corporation Counsel Ric VanDonsel, City Clerk Raymond A. Parker, and Confidential Secretary to the Mayor Devon Rainbow

Public Hearing:

Alderman Silliman gave a quick overview of the proposed revisions to chapter 220. The idea is to make these changes to cover the problems that are seen on properties around the City. They want to encourage people to take care of their homes. There will be no fee for building permits and no increase to property tax for doing upkeep on your property.

Mayor Brian Tobin opened the first public hearing on revisions to Chapter 220 of the City Code pertaining to Property Maintenance at 6:55PM.

Connie Sorrells – Thanks the committee for their time and effort on this matter, however she feels that there are a few things that should be looked at closer. Not all the citizens of the City are afraid of their assessment going up. Some people just simply cannot afford to do the work that needs to be done on their homes. It can be very costly to hire someone to come do the work that needs to be done on some of these homes. An idea would be to look into helping the homeowners financially by offering nonrestrictive funding or possibly low interest loans.

Ann Doyle – She agrees with what Connie has said. A lot of the people that own these homes are older people and cannot do the work themselves and need to hire someone to help. She is constantly in contact with the code office and feels that if we all work together to solve this, the outcome will be better.

Dolores Heller – Her neighborhood needs help and feels that the absentee landlords and property managers need to be held responsible for maintaining and the upkeep of their properties.

The public hearing was closed at 7:04PM.

Public Hearing:

Mayor Brian Tobin opened the second public hearing to restrict parking on the South side of Prospect Terrace from Calvert Street to the first driveway heading east approximately 75ft at 7:05PM.

Beau Harbin – He lives on West Court St. and has noticed a difference since the signs have been put up. He feels it is a much safer area now.

Angela Thurlow – She agrees with Beau, however her concern is with the traffic coming off Calvert St. and going down James St. The cars tend to use the middle of the street and are going very fast when going around the bend.

The public hearing was closed at 7:08PM

REGULAR SESSION:

Mayor Brian Tobin called the Eleventh Common Council meeting of the year to order at 7:11 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Public Comments:

Tom Gobel – Congratulations to the Mayor and his wife on their new baby. He has concerns with homeless people sleeping in the bus stops.

Ward Reports:

Ward 1 – There have been some concerns with people speeding on West Main St. Many people are commenting on what a wonderful job the new garbage haulers are doing.

Ward 2 – There was a ward meeting on June 12 with few attendees. Katy plans on having another meeting in July. She would like to get feedback from people regarding a mini grant that is available to help improve the neighborhood. She attended the Wickwire Pool grand opening and it was beautiful. Everyone did a great job on the project. There have been concerns with the process for getting things fixed in the City. Katy is going to look into a form to help make the City more functional and attractive.

Ward 3 – There have been concerns with the upkeep at the Waterworks. There are a few improvements that can be done fairly cheap to help. There have been some plants stolen off people's porches.

Ward 4 – He attended the Wickwire Pool grand opening. It is beautiful and John McNerney has done a great job. The Safe Routes to School by Barry School has been pushed back till the fall. The Zombie Law was passed. This will help with all the vacant buildings around the City. With the new law, the banks or anyone responsible for the property will be fined \$500.00 per day if the work is not done by the deadline.

Ward 5 – There have been some complaints regarding barking dogs on Lansing Ave. Thank you Bill Carr for his assistance with this matter. There will be a joint Ward meeting Monday at 6PM at Randall School.

Ward 6 – There have been some problems between neighbors on Rickard St. that he is working on. The NYSEG building on Charles St. should be done with their cleanup work by the end of summer. There have been concerns with the road conditions on an easement between Easy Street and DelVecchio rental property. The County Highway department is looking into repairing this. The issues from Euclid Ave. have calmed down thanks to the Deputy Chief Paul Sandy. There are a lot of people walking their dogs at Yaman Park and not cleaning up after them. We might have to look into more signage letting people know that dogs are not allowed in the park.

Ward 7 – There have been some concerns on the property maintenance of some areas. Hopefully the new law will help with this issue. DPW has been doing a great job working on some of the roads. He understands there is a process to repairing the roads and it takes time. There was a poll out to vote for a new playground at Dexter Park. This has now been sent to the schools to look at and give their input. Ward 7 meetings are always the first Wednesday of each month at the Community Center.

Ward 8 – The Zombie law is a step in the right direction. He attended the Memorial Day services and Wickwire Pool grand opening. They were both great events. Thank you to the Police Department for their help regarding a homeless man that had been sleeping in the bus stop and needed assistance. The Franklin St. debris site has plans to make renovations. He is hoping to talk about it at the Ward meeting. There have been a lot of mattresses put out on the curbs. We need to remind people that these are not recyclable. The downtown music series is starting back up.

Mayors Report – There are a lot of events going on in the City. We encourage people to come out and check them out. The City website has a list of the many events going on. There was a Vigil held in the court house park for the shooting that happened in Orlando. Over 200 people came to show their support. Paving around the City is progressing along. Wickwire Pool looks amazing and had a great turn out for its first weekend being open. Over 1300 people on Saturday and over 800 people on Sunday came out to see the pool. Last week his wife had a baby and the staff at Cortland Regional Medical Center were professional and treated them very well. Many thanks to Mark Webster and his staff for the job they do.

Proclamation: Mayor Tobin read the proclamation on the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Anniversary events will be at 26 North Main St. July 12 (11AM-1PM), 19 (11AM-1PM) and the 26 (11AM-2PM). To RSVP by July 8, 2016: call 607-753-7363.

RESOLUTION #137 of 2016 - Resolution to approve the May 17, 2016 Common Council Minutes as presented.

Motion By: Alderman Bennett
Seconded By: Alderman Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 8
 Nays – 0

Mayor Brian Tobin asked that, with Council’s permission, there be an executive session at the end of the meeting for contract litigations and rental contracts. All members were in approval.

Item #1 - Report on criminal justice from District Attorney Mark Suben.

There have been 6 homicides from December 2014 - November 2015. Drugs are a problem around the community. In some cases a plea bargain is done at the victims’ families’ request, and sometimes it’s the State that gives them a plea bargain going into prison. Regardless, the City does the best they can do by responding to calls and gathering the best evidence they can. The conviction rate is over 90% and the trial conviction rate is over 80%.

Resolution #138 of 2016 - Resolution to reappoint C. Jane Snell to the Cortland Housing Authority Board for a 5 year term.

Motion By: Alderman Bennett
Seconded By: Alderman Thomas

Approved: Ayes – 8
 Nays – 0

Resolution #139 of 2016 – Resolution to waive the \$300 fee for food vendors participating in Cortland Downtown Partnership’s Taste of Downtown on July 9, 2016.

Motion By: Alderman Silliman
Seconded By: Alderman Michales

Approved: Ayes – 7
 Nays – 0
 Abstention – 1 (Alderman Megivern)

Resolution #140 of 2016 – Resolution to approve a sound device permit for live music to be played at the corner of Main St. and Court St., and north of the Main St. and Clayton Ave. corner for the Taste of Downtown event on July 9, 2016 (Post Office area). Cortland Downtown Partnership is a non-profit organization and exempt from the sound permit fee.

Motion By: Alderman Silliman
Seconded By: Alderman Carpenter

Approved: Ayes— 7
 Nays— 0
 Abstention – 1 (Alderman Megivern)

Resolution #141 of 2016 - Resolution to award the Tree Removal Contract to Carter’s Tree Service for the amount of \$9,450.00.

This was a sealed bid. Nick Dovi explained that they go out and asses the trees annually and determine what ones need to be removed. National Grid takes a portion of them down and the City bids out the other ones to be taken down. They continue to plant new trees throughout the City. They do send out letters letting people know if one of their trees is on the list to be taken down to confirm it’s ok.

Motion By: Alderman Bennett
 Seconded By: Alderman Carpenter

Approved: Ayes – 8
 Nays – 0

Resolution #142 of 2016 – Resolution to accept, recognize and appropriate the following donations.

Donation	Amount	Event/Project	Budget Line
Ted & Judith Testa	\$50.00	James Yaman	A-7110.5206
Barb & Joan Poskanzer	\$50.00	James Yaman	A-7110.5206
Various Donors	\$4,347.99	Fire Fighter For a Day Camp	A-7550.5405
Hitchcock Hose Company 6 Cortland	\$250.00	Movie Under the Stars	A-7550.5400
Professional Fire Fighters Association	\$250.00	Movie Under the Stars	A-7550.5405
Total Donations	\$4,947.99		

Donation	Amount	Event/Project	Budget Line
Ellen & David Tucker	\$1,000.00	Wickwire Pool	Wickwire Pool Trust Fund
Ray & Donna Franco	\$1,000.00	Wickwire Pool	Wickwire Pool Trust Fund
McNeil Development Co, LLC	\$2,000.00	Wickwire Pool	Wickwire Pool Trust Fund
Barbara Ryan	\$100.00	Scholarship	Jim Partigianoni Trust Fund
Total Donations	\$4,100.00		

Thank you to all that donated!

Motioned By: Alderman Bennett
 Seconded By: Alderman Michales

Approved: Ayes – 8

Nays – 0

Resolution #143 of 2016 – Resolution designating the position of Operator of Record as the department sub-head for the Wastewater Department and setting the base salary for the position to \$74,000 per year.

Bruce explained he is a wonderful employee that is very devoted/committed to his job.

Motion By: Alderman Silliman
Seconded By: Alderman Carpenter

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Resolution #144 of 2016 – a Resolution to temporarily lift the hiring freeze in order to fill the vacant position of Operator Trainee

Motion By: Alderman Silliman
Seconded By: Alderman Thomas

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Resolution #145 of 2016 – Resolution to appropriate \$871.25 proceeds from the sale of seven vehicles from City Police Impound Lot, which have been classified as abandoned, to Account A3120.206.00 for the purchase of a new police vehicles for 2016 & 2017.

Motion By: Alderman Carpenter
Seconded By: Alderman Bennett

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Resolution #146 of 2016 — Resolution to abolish the job title of Management Confidential Secretary to Corporation Counsel at the request of Cortland County Civil Service.

Motioned By: Alderman Silliman
Seconded By: Alderman Carpenter

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Resolution #147 of 2016 — Resolution to do a SEQR on the Spiegle Wilcox Community Stage in the Courthouse Park.

This is the first step in the process of the project. More will be coming at a later date.

Motioned By: Alderman Bennett
 Seconded By: Alderman Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 8
 Nays – 0

Item #12 – Discussion on a proposal to install 15 additional cameras on Main Street between William Street and Orchard Street, as a continuation of the video network of the Cortland City Police, Initiated in 2012 as a tool to keep our community safe.

Deputy Chief Paul Sandy explained this will also include Central Ave. In 2012 there was a proposal for the cameras to be placed on Main St. These are to help the Police with crime and evidence. This all started with a brutal attack on Main St. that almost killed a man. The current ones that are on Main St. have helped in many cases. The Police try to be more proactive against crime in the City. Crimes have increased but the man power at the station has not. The cameras will give 24 hour coverage on the downtown area. The desk officer chooses what cameras to watch from the station. Many of the businesses are in favor of the cameras and are ok with them being put on their buildings. The cost of this proposal is \$88,000.00 as opposed to \$100,000.00 to solely use officers on foot or bikes. By putting a couple cameras on one pole and pointing them in different directions it saves more money. The cameras will not pan side to side. The cameras not only help detect people but help deter people. The department has \$50,000.00 now to put towards the project.

It was asked by Council if the project could be broken up into 2-3 years to help with the budget and if it would be cheaper to get cameras that pan side to side? Last time this topic came up, the citizens had a lot of concerns.

It was explained that it is best to go forth with the plan as presented otherwise they would have to go back and reassess the placement of the cameras and try to decide what ones not to get. If you get the panning cameras, you may miss something on the other side while panning. You would be playing with Murphy's Law either way.

Alderman Carpenter motioned to appropriate the \$50,000.00 to Deputy Chief Sandy for the proposed cameras. Alderman Ferrer seconded it.

Corporation Counsel explained that because it was presented tonight as a discussion only, it should wait and be added at the next Council meeting as an agenda item to be voted on. This will give constituents time to contact their Alderman with comments, questions and/or concerns.

Alderman Carpenter and Alderman Ferrer rescinded their motions.

MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion By: Alderman Silliman
 Seconded By: Alderman Thomas

Approved: Ayes – 8

Nays – 0

MOTION TO COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion By: Alderman Silliman
Seconded By: Alderman Thomas

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

ADJOURNMENT

Motion By: Alderman Thomas
Seconded By: Alderman Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

I, RAYMOND A. PARKER, CITY CLERK FOR 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 21ST DAY OF JUNE, 2016. 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.

RAYMOND A. PARKER, CITY CLERK

MAYOR BRIAN TOBIN