



## City Council Minutes The City of Cortland April 4, 2017

Council Meeting #7  
**April 4, 2017**  
25 Court Street  
6:30 PM

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

Excused: Alderman Carlos Ferrer

Staff Present: Police Chief Catalano, Director of Administration and Finance Mack Cook, Fire Chief Charles Glover, City Clerk Raymond A. Parker, Corporation Counsel Ric VanDonsel, and Confidential Secretary to the Mayor Devon Rainbow

### **6:30PM - Public Hearing on the City's proposal to seek authorization to impose a Occupancy Tax to fund infrastructure development, construction, rehabilitation, promotion of economic development and destination tourism.**

Mayor Tobin opened the public hearing at 6:30PM

Jamie Hage – Works as a Group Sales Manager at Greek Peak Mountain Resort. They have a new logo, website and brochures to help bring people into the community. Surrounding Counties currently have a 5% occupancy tax. Often they work with hotels in the City to accommodate large businesses with over booking. The additional tax increase will negatively affect the business. Greek Peak added a 4% resort fee and recently increased it to 8%. They have had to reduce other prices at the resort to make up for that increase. The Sports Counsel does a great job of bringing in large sporting events. These overnight sporting events bring a lot of people into the hotels and this increase could cause the City to lose some of these events. There are areas on either side of the City that are close enough to make people rather stay there due to lower rates. The increase in tax would force hotels to lower their rate to stay competitive to surrounding Cities.

Theresa Wilson – Worked in the hotel business for 25 years. She is representing the Comfort Inn, Holiday Inn Express and Quality Inn. Currently the average room rate is \$101.65. With the tax increase it will jump to \$104.08 and \$113 room will jump to \$116.50. A lot of the hotel rentals are family members coming to visit constituents of the City. Many major Businesses in the County contract with the hotels when they have visitors coming into the City. When people are traveling and looking for a room to stay in, they ask about the taxes they are being charged. If they don't

agree or like the tax rates they will keep going to the next City. We could lose some major Sporting tournaments that are out for bid due to the extra taxes being charged.

Jim Dempsey – Is representing his Board of Directors. He feels that the hotels are supporting the City. The increase of 3% for the City on top of the 5% for County and 8% State, makes the City less competitive. He wonders if there is another way to get the funding needed without increasing the taxes. There are other options out there such as the Business Improvement Company and the possibility of doing the projects in phases.

Mayor Tobin closed the public hearing at 6:49PM.

Alderman Michales questioned what the percentage was that the hotels pay 3<sup>rd</sup> parties such as Expedia to book rooms. It was answered to be about 20% of the proceeds go to them. At times they feel this helps with businesses to get heads in beds. It is cheaper to book a room directly from the Hotel then go through a 3<sup>rd</sup> party. Only 3 hotels are pet friendly in the City of Cortland. Those hotels are likely to charge more for a rental of a room with a pet.

**6:50PM - Public Hearing to amend City Code Chapter 100, Building Construction and Fire Prevention to include Signage for the use of Pre-Engineered Trusses in Construction.**

Mayor Tobin opened the public hearing at 6:56PM

No one was signed up to speak.

Mayor Tobin closed the public hearing at 6:58PM.

**REGULAR SESSION:**

Mayor Brian Tobin called the seventh Common Council meeting of the year to order at 7:00 PM.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**Public Comments:**

David Alexander – Explained that this is his 4<sup>th</sup> year as Cortlandville Town Justice. He is a Cortland County Judge candidate as Judge Ames is retiring this year. September 12<sup>th</sup> is the primary vote date. He graduated from McGraw and ran a farm for many years. He and his wife raised 4 children in Cortland County and are all active members of the community. The Judge spends 65% in family court matters, 25% in criminal court, and 10% in surrogate court matters. He currently is experienced in all these areas. He is attending all the City, Town and Village meetings to help people get familiar with him and have the opportunity to ask questions.

Chief Catalano – Distributed his annual report to Council members.

**Ward Reports:**

Ward 1 – Has received a lot of calls for pot holes. Some are very deep.

Ward 2 – Has received call regarding pot holes and some curbs are needed on Pleasant St, Clayton Ave and West Court St. There has been some increase in noise late at night. Please keep in mind

that it is hard for people to tell the difference from yelling for help and yelling because you're having fun. The BIG Event is coming up, remember to submit your applications.

Ward 3 – Has received lots of calls regarding pot holes and parking issues. It has also been noticed that there are no lines turning right off Court St going on to Church St. There have been a couple close accidents in this area. We need to paint lines on the road so vehicles know how wide to turn to avoid an accident.

Ward 4 – Attended the Coffee with a Cop event that Officer Jesse Abbott put on. It was a great event that was well attended by many citizens and officers. He attended a NYCOM conference on Zombie Laws that was very informative. Also, the Beaudry Park Easter Egg event is this weekend. It is a great event that children love to attend.

Ward 5 – Ward 5 and Ward 8 meeting is Wednesday at Randall School.

Ward 7 – Ward meeting is Wednesday at 7PM at 90 Central Ave. April 12 at 7PM is the debate on Onondaga County Municipal consolidation.

Ward 8 – Drug issues will be talked about at the joint Ward meeting.

**Mayors Report:**

The 2-way Main St study meeting was last night. The City is interested in starting the negotiating process for the sales tax contract with the County to have the 2018 budget ready to go by November.

Mayor Tobin Read a Proclamation for April is Fair Housing Month and a Proclamation for Donate Life Month.

Alderman Mastropolo talked about the importance of being an organ donor. People can sign up to be a donor at the DMV or County Clerk's Office. A donor saved her life 2 years ago. There are over 10,000 people on the list in New York for needing an organ.

**Resolution #77 of 2017** - Resolution to approve the March 21, 2017 Common Council Minutes as presented.

Motion By: Alderman Thomas

Seconded By: Alderman Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 7

Nays – 0

**Mayor Tobin asked for an executive session at the end for 2 personnel issues.**

**Alderman Bennett asked to add two additional items at the beginning of the agenda.**

**Resolution #78 of 2017** – Resolution to authorize the Mayor to enter into a contract agreement with Jessica Flores-Adams and Amy Adams to operate Yaman Park Concession Stand from May 27, 2017-September 27, 2017.

Motion By: Alderman Silliman  
Seconded By: Alderman Bennett

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #79 of 2017** – Resolution to approve the special event application for Toys for Tots Ride on Sunday June 11, 2017 from 8AM-6:30PM. The ride will start on Court St.

Motion By: Alderman Silliman  
Seconded By: Alderman Thomas

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #80 of 2017** – Resolution to waive the application fees for Toys for Tots Ride.

Motion By: Alderman Thomas  
Seconded By: Alderman Bennett

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #81 of 2017** – Resolution to approve the special event application for Kicking Child Abuse to the Curb on April 19, 2017 from 12PM-4PM at 55 Tompkins St.

The sorority is having a Kickball event with food and a DJ to raise money for the cause.

Motioned By: Alderman Carpenter  
Seconded By: Alderman Bennett

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #82 of 2017** – Resolution to waive the application fees for Kicking Child Abuse to the Curb.

Motioned By: Alderman Bennett  
Seconded By: Alderman Carpenter

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #83 of 2017** – Resolution to approve the special event application for Taste of Downtown on July 8, 2017 from 12PM-4PM.

Motioned By: Alderman Thomas  
Seconded By: Alderman Michales

Approved: Ayes – 6  
Abstention – 1 (Alderman Megivern)  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #84 of 2017** – Resolution to waive the application fees for Taste of Downtown.

Motioned By: Alderman Thomas  
Seconded By: Alderman Bennett

Approved: Ayes – 6  
Abstention – 1 (Alderman Megivern)  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #85 of 2017** – Resolution to approve the special event application for Cortland’s Main Street Music Series from July 7, 14, 21, 28, 2017 12:00PM-11:00PM.

Motioned By: Alderman Silliman  
Seconded By: Alderman Carpenter

Approved: Ayes – 6  
Abstention – 1 (Alderman Megivern)  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #86 of 2017** – Resolution to waive the application fees for Cortland’s Main Street Music Series.

Motioned By: Alderman Carpenter  
Seconded By: Alderman Michales

Approved: Ayes – 6  
Abstention – 1 (Alderman Megivern)  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #87 of 2017** – Resolution to waive the open container ordinance for the Cortland’s Main Street Music Series.

Motioned By: Alderman Carpenter  
Seconded By: Alderman Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 6

Abstention – 1 (Alderman Megivern)  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #88 of 2017** – Resolution to approve the special event application for Arts and Wine Festival on August 5, 2017 from 10AM-5PM in Courthouse Park.

Motioned By: Alderman Thomas  
Seconded By: Alderman Mastropolo

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #89 of 2017** – Resolution to waive the application fees for Arts and Wine festival.

Motioned By: Alderman Thomas  
Seconded By: Alderman Carpenter

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #90 of 2017** – Resolution to waive the open container ordinance for the Arts and Wine Festival on August 5, 2017.

Motioned By: Alderman Bennett  
Seconded By: Alderman Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #91 of 2017** – Resolution to approve the special event application for the Halloween Parade and Trick-or-Treating on Thursday, October 26, 2017 starting at 5:00PM.

Motioned By: Alderman Silliman  
Seconded By: Alderman Bennett

Approved: Ayes – 6  
Abstention – 1 (Alderman Megivern)  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #92 of 2017** – Resolution to waive the application fees for the Halloween Parade and Trick-or-Treating.

Motioned By: Alderman Bennett  
Seconded By: Alderman Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 6  
Abstention – 1 (Alderman Megivern)

Nays – 0

**Resolution #93 of 2017** – Resolution to approve the special event application for First Light on December 31, 2017 from 9:00PM Sunday December 31, 2017 to 1:00AM on Monday January 1, 2018.

Motioned By: Alderman Carpenter

Seconded By: Alderman Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 6  
 Abstention – 1 (Alderman Megivern)  
 Nays – 0

**Resolution #94 of 2017** – Resolution to waive the application fees for First Light.

Motioned By: Alderman Carpenter

Seconded By: Alderman Thomas

Approved: Ayes – 6  
 Abstention – 1 (Alderman Megivern)  
 Nays – 0

**Resolution #95 of 2017** – Resolution to amend the City 2016 budget to include the \$200,000 SUNY Impact Aid awarded to the City in the 2016-2017 State Budget.

Motioned By: Alderman Bennett

Seconded By: Alderman Thomas

Approved: Ayes – 7  
 Nays – 0

**Item #17** – Discussion on Food Trucks in the City.

There are food trucks that currently participate in events and do events on private properties. Alderman Megivern would like to form a committee to draft up some regulations for food trucks since there is nothing in our current Local Laws. There are concerns that need to be addressed for local businesses that are paying City taxes. Aldermen Carpenter, Thomas, Mastropolo and Megivern have volunteered to be on this Committee.

**Item #18** – Discussion and Consideration of a Resolution to reinstate the suspension of building permit fees through December 31, 2017 for residential maintenance and improvements of projects of \$20,000 or less as done in Resolution #72 of 2016.

Chief Knickerbocker explained that this has been working very well with residents of the City. Many people have come in to take advantage of this and he believes it should continue. People will still need a permit to do the work, they will not have to pay the fee for the permit.

**Resolution #96 of 2017** – Resolution to reinstate the suspension of building permit fees through December 31, 2017 for residential maintenance and improvements of projects of \$20,000 or less.

Motioned By: Alderman Thomas  
Seconded By: Alderman Michales

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Mayor Tobin asked to add an agenda item.**

**Resolution #97 of 2017** – Resolution to approve the special event application for Believers Chapel Cortland Easter Egg Hunt on April 15, 2017 in Court house Park from 11AM-4PM.

This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year for this event and has not come to Council in the past for approval. When an event comes to John McNerney, he evaluates the details and then decides if the event needs to go to Council for approval.

Motioned By: Alderman Carpenter  
Seconded By: Alderman Bennett

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Enter into Executive Session**

Motioned By: Alderman Bennett  
Seconded By: Alderman Thomas

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Come out of Executive Session**

Motioned By: Alderman Bennett  
Seconded By: Alderman Thomas

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motioned By: Alderman Thomas  
Seconded By: Alderman Carpenter

Approved: Ayes – 7



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 4<sup>th</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 2017. 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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**RAYMOND A. PARKER, CITY CLERK**

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**MAYOR BRIAN TOBIN**