

City Council Minutes

The City of Cortland

February 1, 2005

COUNCIL MEETING #3

February 1, 2005

Regular Business Meeting

City Hall

7:00 PM

PRESENT: Mayor Thomas Gallagher

Alderman Guido, Morey, Terwilliger, Faraoni, Quail, Feiszli,
Partigianoni and Michaels

Staff Present: Director of Admin. & Finance Andrew Damiano

Corporation Counsel Lawrence Knickerbocker and

City Clerk John O. Reagan

Mayor Gallagher calls the third Common Council meeting of the year to order at 7:04 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ray Dunnigan and Betsy Brewer representing the Cortland County SPCA are there to outline their fundraising efforts and their goal to establish a spay/neuter clinic. They acknowledge the 2004 grant receipt that has helped them, but more funds are needed. They wanted to thank Tom Michales for his support and to urge everyone to, who can, contribute to their fundraising programs. Betsy Brewer described their plans for renovating a donated garage on SPCA property to use as a spay/neuter clinic. They are grateful for the use of the Cortlandville Firehouse, but feel that it would be more efficient to use a building right on their property. It will also be used as a vet room. They are hoping to receive donations of time, money, work and materials to complete the clinic.

Suzanne Etherington was there to thank Lawrence Knickerbocker for his work in drafting an ordinance for the Landscape and Design Commission and welcomes anyone who is interested to attend their meeting which will be held at 4:00 PM on the 2nd Wednesday of the month in the Mayor's Conference Room in City Hall. This ordinance item will be a topic of discussion and she says it will be an agenda item in the near future.

MINUTES of the January 18, 2005 Meeting.

RESOLUTION #12 OF 2005 – Approve the minutes of January 18, 2005 with change noted.

By: Alderman Faraoni

Seconded: Alderman Partigianoni

Approved: Ayes – 8

Nays – 0

Bills were reviewed and received.

MAYOR'S REPORT

He met with the Leadership Cortland group. They have an exciting project that they are undertaking. They will be submitting a proposal for two Little League ball fields behind the Armory and Smith School. He attended the Celtic Fest dinner celebration at the 1890 House, the Community Health Partnership Program at Homer Avenue Methodist Church and toured the Homeville Museum in Homer with Ken Eaton. Ken explained the prospects of a small group of people planning to combine four other collectors into one building for a historical museum. He also attended the open house at BDC/IDA, Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitor's Bureau and Planning Department. He was interviewed by Kevin Mooney at WKRT regarding the Community Center. He had a Roundtable discussion with WCNY discussing how they can better serve the Cortland Community. As a point of interest, the Girl Scouts will be having their Sweet Sensations, a dessert and wine tasting event, at the Holiday Inn on February 3rd from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. Tickets are available. Also, Lime Hollow Nature Center will have a press conference and groundbreaking ceremony for their beautiful new log frame on February 5th at 11:30 a.m.

WARD REPORTS

Ward 1 – Alderman Faraoni

It's been quiet in the ward.

Ward 2 – Alderman Terwilliger

She received a call regarding a zoning issue on Homer Ave. and has spoken with Amy Bertini, who is looking into the matter. She is scheduling a Ward meeting for the end of March or the beginning of April when the weather gets warmer.

Ward 3 – Alderman Morey

She had a couple of calls. One was Broadway, regarding potholes. She also received a call about a streetlight that was out Groton Ave., but it was taken care of the next night. Other than that, everything has been quiet in the 3rd Ward.

Mayor noted that the City has purchased a spray patch machine and they are working with Suit Kote on two different types of emulsions to see what best suits the machines and works well. Moisture in the potholes is a problem.

Ward 4 – Alderman Guido

He has received calls regarding lights on Tompkins Street that have not been addressed yet, in fact, one that is on the corner of Tompkins and Pearl that's been out for 2 ½ months. He has talked with Mike Preston, who has contacted NIMO regarding those. He also contacted Amy Bertini regarding an issue. He attended the Celtic Fest dinner celebration at the 1890 House and had a very good time and is looking forward to the Celtic Fest this summer.

Ward 5 – Alderman Quail

He has a Ward meeting scheduled on Thursday, Feb. 17, 7:00-8:00 PM at the Elks Club. He also attended the Celtic Fest dinner celebration with other Aldermen and he noted that the group did a tremendous job of bringing talented entertainment. He thanked Lawrence Knickerbocker for his work with the Landscape and Design Commission. There is a pothole on Valley View Drive, he will speak with Chris Bistocchi regarding this.

Ward 6 – Alderman Feiszli

She held a Ward meeting and wished to thank Jim Partigianoni for his presence. They had a low turnout, but it was one of the nights of the record breaking cold. She also said there was a simultaneous meeting with Thoma Development that night and she contacted them for information regarding water revitalization. She spent some time reading it and noted that it is not directly related to the Tioughnioga River Trail. Her next Ward meeting will be on Thursday, Nov. 17 at 27 N. Church Street, at 7:00 PM. She also attended the Celtic Fest dinner celebration, it was great and the committee did a fantastic job. She believes that the festival will eventually become one of the largest and looked-forward-to events in Cortland. She also noted that Galestorm will be playing here this summer, their music was featured in the movie, "Titanic". She is looking forward to hearing them. She also attended the CCIC, City of Cortland City Improvement Corporation meeting. Among other things, this committee is responsible for issuing parking permits and the money is used to purchase signs for new storeowners and installing plantings downtown. They talked about the parking issues which have been coming up lately regarding downtown parking. Basically their interest is in long-term parking. Her concern is with the grant and the second floor being renovated for apartments that parking will become more of an issue than it is right now. She is going to push for parking permits in lots in the back of stores with regards to parking for tenants, store owners and store employees, opening up parking in downtown for shoppers. She is following the Government Evaluation Committee and their continued evaluation of County government and possible reorganization. The next meeting is going to be Wednesday, February 3 at 6:30 PM in Room 304 at the County Office Building. There will be a guest speaker and the public is invited to attend. On Sampson Street, she had been working with Counsel Knickerbocker, regarding a piece of property that has a building with a sunken foundation. Attempts have been made to contact the owner with no response. She has called the owner in Florida and the owner was nice and cooperative and things went beautifully. She says with her assistance, the owner will have the situation taken care of this Spring and the City does not have to get involved in it. On the evening of January 22 during the snowstorm regarding when secondary streets were going to be plowed and she called Chris Bistocchi of the DPW and he did a good job of explaining the plowing priorities and

that the secondary streets were plowed after the 2:00 AM curfew for street parking. She urged the public to assist with this. She also received thank you's from individuals afterwards and she wanted to pass that along to the DPW.

Ward 7 – Alderman Partigianoni

He attended the Celtic Fest dinner celebration and it was very nice. He attended the IDA Open House. That was very nice, also. He was the cat display light-switch operator at the SPCA fundraiser at the Water Works. That was a fun night. He had a meeting last night of the committee that was formed for the opening day of the Community Center. There were ideas presented regarding the Center. He wanted to remind everyone that it is a community center and that he hoped it would benefit the entire community. Today was a well attended Moving In Day at the Center and it was a very nice. He would like to recognize some individuals: Liz McCartney from the College who brought up some nice ideas, Barbara Ryan who was instrumental in all of this, was also there. The Center has a phone number, Road Runner was hooked up today, they have a stereo, two televisions, a refrigerator, furniture, office supplies and thank you to Dennis and Nina Musson, who donated a love seat and two chairs. The Center still needs some tables and chairs, they are planning classes. Also, he wants to nominate Susan Feiszli for her design skills in the office area. He had a call regarding a trash issue on Greenbush when someone moved out. DPW is going to take care of it tomorrow. John Rice in the Codes Office received three calls from Ward 7 regarding people shoveling snow on their walks right up to the crosswalk and not doing the crosswalk. He urged that the property owner to remember that if the crosswalk is there, to please shovel it. His Ward has crows. He had never seen so many before, there were thousands! It looked like a black cloud when he attempted to scare them away. He also received three calls that they were horrible on Church Street. He recommends that rather than have homeowners call him, that they should go out and make noise to scare them.

Ward 8 – Alderman Michales

He indicated that crows had been an issue in his area. He also attended the Celtic Celebration and noted that it was very well attended. The entertainment was wonderful with the singers and dancers. He also attended the SPCA Brite Lights Ceremony. The SPCA is looking for volunteers with building trades and electrical experience to assist them in their renovations to establish their spay/neuter clinic. He also attended the Community Center Planning Meeting last night and covered a lot of ground. It was well attended. It looks like the calendar for the next month is filled for a lot of the times. He feels that they are making a lot of progress with in that center. He also attended the Community Center Moving In Day ceremony. A lot of folks noted the progress that's been made, so far. Otherwise, the 8th Ward has been pretty quiet.

The Mayor made note that everyone had received their copy of the Proposed Capital Budget. A meeting has been scheduled for 5:00 PM, February 15 in the Cortland City Council Chamber, with the Department Heads. This will give everyone an opportunity to speak with them and ask questions regarding the Capital Budget proposal. There will be refreshments.

RESOLUTION #13 OF 2005 – Approve a resolution objecting to any reduction in funding for HUD’s Community Development Block Grant and other programs as proposed by President Bush. (Proposed by Alderman Feiszli, tabled on 01/18/05)

By: Alderman Partigianoni

Seconded: Alderman Terwilliger

Discussion ensued: The Mayor visited the website and felt that this was a very complicated issue and that it was very hard to understand. It was recommended that an individual vote would best suit this resolution. Thoma Development also has an opinion on this Block Grant Development issue. It is currently a proposal and has yet to go before the Congress and the Senate. It does have the potential to reduce the Block Grant program. Perhaps a letter should be drafted regarding this proposal issue and those who wish, could sign it.

Disapproved: Ayes – 3

Nays – 5

RESOLUTION #14 OF 2005 – Approve a resolution authorizing the introduction of a Retirement Incentive Program.

By: Alderman Guido

Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

Discussion ensued: It was noted that Mr. Damiano did a wonderful job putting this together. In his estimation, it looks like 8-12 people representing a number of departments may accept the offer, but 3 would make it feasible. He did not feel that that many police officers would be opting to take this incentive at this time. The Council expressed concerns in the continuity of job duties in the event that individuals opted for this incentive. They were assured that most jobs had enough people covering the duties, and it would not lead to a situation like the Deputy City Clerk position vacancy. Department heads were contacted regarding that issue within their various departments and none of the department heads objected to introducing the program.

Approved: Ayes – 8

Nays – 0

RESOLUTION #15 OF 2005 – Approve a resolution authorizing two Code Enforcement Officers to attend the Finger Lakes Building Officials Association Conference in March and two others to attend the Capital District Conference this summer. (Needed to obtain the required 24 hour in-service educational credits)

By: Alderman Morey
Seconded: Alderman Terwilliger

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Item No. 4 – Discussion regarding the use of the \$50,000 contractual payment made by Covanta Water which is to be used for a community project.

Dan Quail suggests that the well used building in Beaudry Park needs a lot of work and should be given consideration as Jim Sponaugle said it would not be sound enough to be used as a polling place. Much discussion ensued over this revelation and this will be looked into. An assessment was requested for this building by Alderman Morey. Mr. Damiano indicated that the \$50,000 will be encumbered and put in the Capital Fund and the Council can decide as they develop a plan for the Beaudry Park building or another decision for it's use.

RESOLUTION #16 OF 2005 – Approve a resolution confirming the Mayor's re-appointment of Nancy Hansen to the Planning Commission.

By: Alderman Morey
Seconded: Alderman Partigianoni
Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

A reminder to individuals not to plow across the road, they must stay within their own driveways or property. Reminders to everyone to take advantage of the SPCA spay/neuter clinics. A lot of calls from downtown merchants praising the fine snow removal efforts.

Adjournment

By: Alderman Quail

Seconded: Alderman Terwilliger

Approved: Ayes – 8

Nays – 0

I, JOHN O. REAGAN, CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF CORTLAND, NEW YORK, DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT SAID RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CORTLAND, HELD ON THE 1ST DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2005. I FURTHER CERTIFY THE FOREGOING RESOLUTIONS WERE PRESENTED TO THE MAYOR IN THE TIME REQUIRED.

JOHN O. REAGAN – CITY CLERK

MAYOR THOMAS GALLAGHER