



City Council Minutes The City of Cortland

March 7, 2006

Council Meeting #5
March 7, 2006
Regular Business Session
City Hall
7:00 PM

Present: Alderman VanGorder, Terwilliger, Cobb, DeCarlo,
Quail, Feiszli, Partigianoni and Michales

Staff Present: Director of Admin. & Finance Andrew Damiano,
Corporation Counsel Lawrence Knickerbocker and
City Clerk John O. Reagan

Mayor Gallagher calls the fifth Common Council meeting of the year to order at 7:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG.

Public Comment

None

Minutes of February 21, 2006

RESOLUTION #26 OF 2006 - Approve the minutes of February 21, 2006.

By: Alderman VanGorder
Seconded: Alderman DeCarlo

Approved: Ayes - 8
Nays - 0

Bills were reviewed and received.

Mayor's Report

He attended the Awards Ceremony at the Youth Bureau for the young men who assisted Officer Neillson, a United Way meeting and the Business after Hours at the Sports Complex. He met with the County Real Property director to review the county

tax structure. He conducted a swearing in ceremony for Eric Verfuss as Captain and Dustin Contri, the new Firefighter. He attended the NYCOM meeting in Albany with City Clerk John Reagan. He also welcomed Cortland Job Shadow students to City Hall last week as well as met with Thoma to finalize Parking Lot plans.

He was a guest speaker at the Morning Breakfast Rotary. He attended CMH News Conference – name change Cortland Regional Medical Center, the Roundtable at SUNY Cortland and the Press Conference on Brockway Museum at the old AB Brown Building where the Grimm family donated \$375,000 to make that happen. He participated in the United Way Auction on Saturday and he handed out copies of the electronic recycling and noted that the electronic recycling schedule is for the second Saturday of each month.

Ward 1 - Alderman VanGorder

She is having a meeting on Thursday of the Ward Beautification Committee for anyone in the Ward who would like to participate. She also attended the Youth Bureau ceremony to honor the young people who assisted the police officer. She attended the subcommittee meeting that Carol Tytler has put together on flooding issues in the County and in the City. It is a trouble shooting thing and she feels that is a good idea. She has a couple of code issues that she is working on and she has called several different City departments. She noted that each time she called, Department Heads were very helpful. As a new member of the Council, she was impressed with the response and helpfulness she received from the Department Heads. She attended two (2) Cortland State Men's basketball games this weekend and she was surprised at the level of basketball at Cortland State. They made it into the NCAA tournament and won the first round. She suggested that next year everyone who likes basketball should consider attending.

Ward 2 - Alderman Terwilliger

She received a call regarding the pick up of recyclables in her Ward. She also asked to add an agenda item for March 21, which is a discussion regarding the proposed Wal Mart construction and the protection of the City's aquifer. The City has yet to take a position on this and feels that individuals and other interested parties should attend the next Council session to discuss this.

Ward 3 - Alderman Cobb

She wanted announce that on March 8 there would be a crow sound alert starting at 6:00 pm in Ward 3 and it would also occur on Thursday and Friday. It is being done to drive the crows out of the area. She received another call this evening about deer in the Ward. The Mayor noted that they were not the Water Works deer, but deer that crossed 281 from outside of the fenced in area. Alderman Cobb stated that the individual that contacted her had noticed gaps in the fencing surrounding the Water Works and felt that was where the deer were coming from. She is also still working on a couple of code issues. She also attended the Youth Center ceremony to honor the local young people.

Ward 4 - Alderman DeCarlo

He was unable to attend the Youth Bureau ceremony, but wished to extend his appreciation of the young people involved. His Ward was quiet this week.

Ward 5 - Alderman Quail

He has some traffic issues on Sunnyhill. There are some speeding issues and most people are not responding to the stop sign up there. He received a letter and passed that along to Andy Damiano. He also attended the Youth Bureau ceremony honoring the young people. He noted that the four (4) young people and their act of heroism was definitely above the norm and he was proud of the young people. He noted that the synchronism skating club took second place in the Cicero competition this past weekend. His daughter received three (3) medals. He wished to congratulate the team and noted that they worked very hard for such a young group of girls.

Ward 6 - Alderman Feiszli

She received a concern from a resident who lives by Yaman Park regarding couples parking in the area after the park has closed (around 10:00 pm). She wanted the police to be aware of the problem. She did receive a few calls regarding unkempt properties and she turned them over to the Code Office and they were taken care of. She received a call regarding recyclables being strewn across the yard and curb and that was reported to DPW. She also received a call asking when East Main Street would be paved and the DPW said they would try to fit it in when next year when North Main was being resurfaced. It has been nearly a year since the flood of April 2005 and many areas of the City including the 6th Ward had flooded streets and basements and now that spring is approaching, she is sure many are concerned in regard to it happening again. At the last subcommittee meeting that she and Alderman VanGorder attended of the Cortland County Legislature, they discussed ways to prevent flooding in the City as well as the County. As a result, an informational meeting was set up for March 30 at 6:30 pm at the County Office Building. This will be a workshop for homeowners who are interested in learning more in how to protect their homes from flooding and groundwater infiltration. So far they have a local contractor and representatives from DEC and Soil & Water Conservation attending. They will discuss how to cope with living in flood prone areas and give realistic ideas of how to waterproof people's homes to reduce the impact of flooding.

Ward 7 - Alderman Partigianoni

He attended the news conference announcing the purchase of AB Brown's. He extended his personal thanks to everyone responsible for this. It is exciting. Elaine and Peter Grimm donated \$375,000 towards the project. The Brown property is for Brockway trucks, but he wanted to note that in addition to the Brockway trucks it will house Mr. Eaton's antique military collection, antique fire trucks and tractors of yesterday, farm machinery and antique clocks. This is a dream come true. He attended the NYSASA Spring Council meeting at the Hotel Regency in Binghamton this past weekend. He serves on the New York State Council and he is the representative

for Cortland County. On Saturday night the men and women's Hall of Fame Banquet was held on Saturday night at the Cortland American Legion and five (5) new members were inducted. They were Nita Neff, Helen Hart, Dave Boyle, Jim Robinson and Jim Wiffle from Specialty Trophy. It's always a nice event.

Last night at the Community Center, they held their fourth (4th) family geology session. The presentation featured Tom Gath from Cortland High School and Anita Wright from the Cortland County Historical Society. On March 9, at 5:00 pm, the Health Living Partnership of the Cortland County Health Department will hold an informational cancer screening program for anyone interested at the Community Center. On March 22, they will be hosting another fingerprinting session. This is free and open to the public at the Community Center. On March 8 on Channel Access 2 at 11:30 am, there will be the third (3rd) broadcast of the First One Hundred Years of the Lebanese in Cortland County in case anyone has missed it.

He did receive a couple of calls regarding crows. There wasn't very many, but he did his Partigianoni service: he banged two (2) pans together and they flew away.

Ward 8 - Alderman Michales

He noted that possibly after Wednesday and Thursday of this week, they might all be receiving calls regarding crows. He also attended the award ceremony at the Youth Bureau honoring the youths that assisted Officer Neillson. On March 2 he was a guest speaker at the Community Roundtable at Cortland State. They talked about the City's policy regarding wildlife management. They discussed crows, deer, rabbits, skunks, chipmunks, woodchucks and it was a very informative meeting. He attended the genealogy seminar and noted that there was a good sized crowd in attendance. He received a call during the week of February 21 regarding why newspapers were placed on the back porches of certain residents. He asked the City Police to follow up on that and their reply this week was that it was a twelve year old girl who had just started a new paper route and she had gotten her addresses and instructions mixed up. He also received a complaint from the tenants that reside at 57 Church Street over their cars being ticketed for being parked in the street. It is an issue that he will have the Code Office address. It appears that the landlord has more tenants with cars than he has actual parking spaces available. He had been paying for their tickets up until recently. The tenants are concerned regarding the tickets.

He wanted to remind everyone that there is a Ward meeting on March 8 at 7:00 pm at the BOCES Center for Career Development on Port Watson. The topic will be flooding. The guest speaker will be Brenda DeRusso from the Office of Emergency Management. A mailing has gone out to residents in the Kellogg Road area and a lot of them have called him to drop off e-mail addresses and phone numbers in regards to an early warning system and he is in the process of putting that together. He did receive a call regarding the Code Office addressing some of the issues on their list regarding signage as well as site plan review problems. They meet on a regular basis, but he would like them to get together with the Council periodically to keep them updated on what they are working on.

Item No. 1 - Presentation by Ken Teter on the Parking Lot Improvements Project and consideration of authorization to proceed.

Alderman Feiszli noted that she has spoken with Corporation Counsel regarding her abstention from this as she has a couple of projects in the area that are directly affected by it and may be a conflict of interest.

Mr. Teeter handed out some information which is attached to the minutes of this meeting. He gave a background overview of the development of the project. Initially the committee process which was established to undertake this project was very effective. There were two (2) very good working and cooperative meetings with good input and everyone involved participated. This information had been given to one committee member, Linda Kline, who has been very helpful in presenting it to the Historic and the Landscape Commissions. The Planning Commission has received information, as well. Access to Independence has also received information regarding accessibility.

It was felt that the Downtown is a very important element of this project. They wanted to enhance the street appeal, so you will note that there are many improvements along the visible route. The enhancement is primarily landscaping and trees, shrubs and groundcovers. They were selected to meet the needs of any given lot. They were concerned about visibility, safety and access to egress as well as pedestrian movement. In conjunction to that we were able to incorporate improvements, but there is a limited budget and they were focusing only on the four (4) lots, but they brought to the Committee's attention that this was one (1) step in the improvements to the Downtown Area and it's important to keep in mind how these lots function with Downtown. Main Street is very pretty now and well lit. They are trying to connect the whole downtown in to one unit. Signage was created to be attractive and distinctive as it's important that a driver identify where to park. He noted that pedestrian traffic in some lots takes people in back of Main Street buildings and he wants to enhance and upgrade the backs of stores and businesses that have frontage on Main Street.

The basics of the improvements in any given lot, is pavement improvement and sealing and restriping. In some lots, the circulation will be changing as well as the landscaping and curbing and landscaped islands and poles and signage. He then proceeded to walk the Council through each lot describing traffic flow, entryways, landscaping islands, etc.

RESOLUTION #27 OF 2006 - Consideration of a Resolution giving authorization to proceed with the Downtown Parking Lot Improvements Project.

Alderman Partigianoni inquired if repaving was being done in any of the lots and Mr. Teter indicated that it was not being done in all of the lots mentioned, but it was noted that Haskell Place and Orchard Street were being repaved. Alderman Quail wondered if the curbing and islands would prevent the DPW from effective snow removal. It was noted that Chris Bistocchi was on the committee and was an active participant in the planning and snow removal was planned. Alderman Partigianoni inquired if there was enough room for trees in Recreation Lots. Mr. Teter described how the lot parking

spaces were laid out providing for space for plantings. It was noted that decent sized trees would be planted and some of the cost would be offset by the receipt of the grant and they were planting hardy species and more mature sizes of plantings.

By: Alderman DeCarlo
Seconded: Alderman Terwilliger

Approved: Ayes - 7
Nays - 0
Abstained - 1 (Alderman Feiszli)

RESOLUTION #28 OF 2006 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the submission of a Community Development Block Grant application.

Linda Armstrong was present to discuss the application and to answer questions. It was noted that last year's application was approved. They looked at the qualified structures, the need and they plan to run the program just as the one is being run now. They have a weighted system to determine which structures will be selected. They will require credit checks on owners and that the taxes be paid and the need based on the amount of sub-standardness and the incomes of the tenants. Hopefully the tenants with the lowest income and the structures with the most low income tenants in them will be assisted under the program. The budget is pretty much as it was. There is a slight difference. They had \$330,000 in 2005 and this year it is \$228,000 because of increases in program costs. They will probably do fewer units than originally proposed because the cost of rehabilitation materials has gone up significantly. Thoma is asking for two (2) things: authorization to submit and authorization for the Mayor to enter into an agreement with the State in the event that the grant is awarded to the City. Ms. Armstrong was asked to describe what constituted the administration costs and the program costs.

By: Alderman Quail
Seconded: Alderman Partigianoni

Approved: Ayes - 8
Nays - 0

RESOLUTION #29 OF 2006 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the submission of an application for funding from the HOME Program; and the appropriation of Community Development Program Income funding in support of the program.

Linda Armstrong presented a description of this program indicating that this was the fourth (4th) time they have run this program to facilitate home ownership to low to moderate income individuals who are first time home buyers. Alderman Michales inquired if they had worked with the Habitat for Humanity group. Ms. Armstrong noted that they had met with them, but funds were not available, but contact would be made again. It was noted that the cap per unit would be \$25,000 from the HOME grant, but the program income would be able to add a bit more for any construction related overruns if needed.

By: Alderman VanGorder
Seconded: Alderman Feiszli

Approved: Ayes - 8
Nays - 0

RESOLUTION #30 OF 2006 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the closure of Main Street, from Groton Avenue to Court Street, and from Court Street to Port Watson Street, in order to hold the Central NY Mustang & Ford Club's "Cruise Nite" on May 14, 2006, from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm (Court Street traffic to remain intact).

It was noted that the club had been agreeable to changing their date. Alderman Feiszli noted that she was all in favor of the club and their request, but the second date that was chosen is Mothers' Day and that is the busiest day of the year for downtown restaurants. She has spoken with downtown restaurant owners and none of them are happy about this change in the date and the time is not good, either. It was inquired which restaurants were actually open on Sunday, other than the Community and what was the busiest service time on a Sunday. There was some further discussion regarding the issue. Alderman Partigianoni inquired how many people attended this. The Mayor noted that last year there were in excess of ninety (90) cars and a couple of thousand people. He noted that the event is growing and they are expecting a bigger turnout this year, but the weather is always a factor.

By: Alderman Quail
Seconded: Alderman Terwilliger

Approved: Ayes - 6
Nays - 2 (Aldermen Feiszli & Partigianoni)

RESOLUTION #31 OF 2006 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into a collective bargaining agreement with the Cortland Crossing Guards Association for the period January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2007.

It was noted that the total impact was minimal and that there was room for it in the budget.

By: Alderman Partigianoni
Seconded: Alderman Terwilliger

Approved: Ayes - 8
Nays - 0

Item No. 6 - Discussion regarding the sale of the property located at 12 Winter Street.

There was some discussion regarding the one bid that was received and that was publicized but not accepted. That now put that individual at a disadvantage as others have now contacted the City with offers after the sealed bidding process had been

completed. He is at a competitive disadvantage and it was suggested that the City should go to another sealed bid process and directly notify those people that are interested, that they have to submit a sealed bid. It was noted that in all fairness to the only person that placed a bid, he would be contacted and informed of the other offers that the City received. It was noted that Habitat for Humanity was also interested in the property, but more information was needed on their intentions. They will be contacted to verify their level of interest and asked to submit correspondence clarifying their position.

Item was tabled due to lack of information from all of the interested parties.

ADJOURNMENT

By: Alderman Terwilliger
Seconded: Alderman Quail

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 7TH DAY OF MARCH 2006. I FURTHER CERTIFY THE FOREGOING RESOLUTIONS WERE PRESENTED TO THE MAYOR IN THE TIME REQUIRED.

JOHN O. REAGAN - CITY CLERK

MAYOR THOMAS GALLAGHER