



City Council Minutes
The City of Cortland

March 15, 2005

COUNCIL MEETING #6
March 15, 2005
Regular Business Meeting
City Hall
7:00 PM

PRESENT: Alderman Faraoni, Terwilliger, Morey, Guido,
Quail, Feiszli, Partigianoni and Michales

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one was present

MINUTES of March 8, 2005

RESOLUTION #28 OF 2005 – Approve the minutes of March 8, 2005 with changes.

By: Alderman Partigianoni
Seconded: Alderman Morey

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Bills were reviewed and received.

MAYOR'S REPORT

A letter was received from the Cortland Regional Sports Council's Michelle Phelps thanking the Council for supporting their request for city funding to promote sporting events in Cortland.

A meeting was held with Thoma Development and they sent out an RFP for an architectural firm for the Downtown Revitalization Program and they should be announcing who the architect will be to assist applicants through their projects.

WARD REPORTS

Ward 1 – Alderman Faraoni

On Wednesday he attended the talk that Mary Ann Kane gave on the History of the East End of Cortland at the Adult Community Center in the old Durkee's Building and found it to be very informative.

On Saturday he also attended the 19th Annual St. Joseph's dinner/dance, which was well attended and it was a good time for everyone. Proceeds benefit Rural Services, Loaves and Fishes and the Campus Ministry of SUNY Cortland. Everything is quiet in the First Ward.

Ward 2 – Alderman Terwilliger

The Second Ward has been quiet, as well. There will be a Ward meeting on Sunday, April 10 at 6 PM. Location to be announced at the next meeting.

Ward 3 – Alderman Morey

The Third Ward has been quiet. She did speak with Chris Bistocchi regarding the snowplow. He explained that he had his wish list, so to speak, which he prioritized. He realized that the street sweeper was a high priority, but also wants the Council to realize that the grader is so old now that he can't even get parts for it anymore. At some point that will have to be considered. He is also willing to take any used

equipment from any department. She informed him that the Council would certainly consider that.

The Mayor told her that the topic was discussed at the Staff Meeting and it looks like there might be some swapping of equipment amongst the departments.

Alderman Morey indicated that Mr. Bistocchi doesn't mind taking used equipment.

Ward 4 – Alderman Guido

All is quiet in the Fourth Ward.

Ward 5 – Alderman Quail

All is quiet in the Fifth Ward.

Ward 6 – Alderman Feiszli

Things are quiet in the Sixth Ward. She attended the East End Community Tour with Barbara Lifton and she is continually impressed with the amount of people who show up there and the enthusiasm. She also attended the regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners. There are a few issues. They are still waiting for the concrete to cure over at headquarters. It should be a couple of more weeks.

Ward 7 – Alderman Partigianoni

He missed the St. Joseph's dinner/dance sponsored by St. Anthony's. He had to be in Regency in Binghamton, New York because of the Hall of Fame Induction Ceremonies, also. He apologized for missing the event. The DPW held their monthly meeting and one of the main topics was the potholes. They are extremely busy filling the potholes. He felt that this was one of the worst years in his recollection for the roads, what with the freezing and thawing. He had some calls because the recycling truck had some mechanical problems and they were over a day late last week. He referred to the article that Pat wrote on Saturday. The list of streets mentioned wasn't complete. The History of the East End at the Community Center was well attended and well received. Over seventy (70) people attended. Mary Ann Kane's presentation

really covered the era between 1792 up until the 1900's. Which most people felt was excellent. Several commented that they would like to have another session – Part II. Plans are in the works for that. She stopped at around 1920 and will continue from there. There was a tape made for those who were unable to attend and it will be shown on Time Warner at 10:30 AM on March 16 and at 8:30 PM on March 17 and at 10:30 AM Monday, March 21 and 8:30 PM on Tuesday, March 22. He put some sheets out for anyone who wants the schedule. Yesterday they did something rather unique at the Community Center, Cooperative Extension through Cornell put on a free tax service for people who had signed up. Barbara Lifton was there on Friday and about forty (40) people attended. Also there are announcement sheets for the free open to the public computer classes given by Jeff Cavanaugh of Odyssey Computers at the East End Community Center. They begin April 5. Call the Youth Bureau for reservations. There is also information regarding a course that will cover computer basics, internet basics, internet basics continued and security basics. It's a four (4) week course from 7:00 to 8:00 PM, one session per week and the first seven (7) people signed up will be accommodated. There will be seven (7) people in each class. On March 26 at the Community Center starting at 8:30 AM, a Boat Smart Boating Course presented by the Ithaca Sail and Power Squadron. This is a beginners course for boating education. Completion of this one day course satisfies New York State's mandatory DWC educational requirements. To register call Leon Hamilton.

Ward 8 – Alderman Michales

He also attended the visit with Barbara Lifton at the Community Center. There was a good sized crowd there. He also would like to continue to recognize new businesses in the 8th Ward. He extended his welcome to the Blue Bird Antique Shop which is owned and operated by Pat and Debbie Hutchings. The grand opening was this past weekend, which was well attended. They have a fine line of antiques and collectibles, located on the corner of Port Watson and Hyatt Streets. He also received a call regarding some snow build-up on Hyatt Street and it's believed that it's in the DPW's work schedule and will be taken care of in the next day or so. He also announced that he had a Ward meeting scheduled for April 20 and it's been rescheduled until April 27. It will be a combined 8th Ward and 5th Ward meeting to discuss the Neighborhood Watch Program in detail and to express some concerns, especially about Bartlett St. They will also be discussing Habitat for Humanities

new house project which is planned to begin in April and they will be touring the Community Center. A complete agenda will be available in the first part of April. He also attended the History of the East End program and understands there will be another presentation.

Thomas Michales birthday was noted by the Mayor and Council. Alderman Partigianoni recognized Duke Glover for all of his hard work at the Community Center and everyone is grateful for that.

RESOLUTION #29 OF 2005 – Approve a resolution authorizing the submission of a FY2005 Community Development Block Grant application.

The Mayor indicated that this was unique. Normally block grant applications have been for targeted areas. This is the first time that it's been a citywide program for income properties.

Linda Armstrong from Thoma Development was there to answer more questions and give more information. It will provide assistance to income properties where at least 51% of the tenants are low to moderate in income. Maximum funding levels have been established. It would be \$10,000 per unit or \$24,000 per structure, whichever is greater. For this particular program, at this point, they have decided to do single family through four (4) unit income properties. They have tentative approval from HUD to use the money left on a block grant to have a tiny pilot program. They are waiting for approval and with that program they will probably do about eight (8) units for about \$90,000 and that will be run a little differently. That will be run as a zero (0) percent loan. The financing for this program, if they get the money, will be 50/50. Fifty (50) percent of the money will be a grant and the other fifty (50) percent will be a zero (0) percent loan. That's a little bit different than the first program. They might not get the money for the small pilot program, so if people opt to wait to get a better deal, she hopes that they get it, but she doesn't know. She thinks it will be first come, first served on this money. Because the interest is so great, there will be a point system for this program, if it's funded. They sent out one hundred seventy-eight (178) applications in the course of two weeks and they have gotten eight-two (82) back already. The weighted point system allows the properties that have the highest degree of deficiency and worst conditions to get the greatest number of points. A greater number of points will be given if a dwelling has a greater number of units

that are occupied by low to moderate income households. The idea is to provide funding for properties that have deficiencies and have the greatest number of low income people residing in them. The application goes in on April 4. There are still three (3) weeks to write. Some things are not really nailed down, but this was the last Council meeting before the deadline.

By: Alderman Guido
Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

RESOLUTION #30 OF 2005 – Approval of a resolution authorizing the Mayor to submit an application to the New York State Department of State Quality Communities Program for the Main Street Program Development Project.

No discussion ensued.

Motion: Alderman Partigianoni
Seconded: Alderman Morey

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Item #3 – Discussion regarding the allocation of space at City Hall

The Mayor said that the City has been in discussion with the County regarding a proposal to move the City Court to the County Courthouse. The City is looking for authorization to go out and hire an architect to analyze the situation and make best use of the space.

Alderman Morey brought up that a facilities study was done on the rearranging of City Hall, questioning why that couldn't be used and what might the cost be for such a project. Mr. Damiano indicated that the study would be available to the architect, but the study didn't address the court facility being moved out of the building. The recommendation of that study was to move the Police Department and the entire first two

floors of this building. The Council Chambers would remain as is and the area freed up would be a wing of City Hall and the area behind the Council Chambers. We could possibly move some of the operations currently on the floor below, up to this floor and perhaps 50% of the floor below us could be occupied by the Police Department. It needs to be determined if the floor below us could continue to be used to serve the public while keeping the integrity, safety and security of the public and separate the police operation from the normal operations of serving the public. The firm, C & S Engineering of Syracuse, which provided the study, has developed a rough estimate of the costs, perhaps \$10,000 or less. The City will solicit three quotes from architects. Alderman Terwilliger stated that the Council received three (3) scenarios from the study firm. Mr. Damiano said that none of the scenarios included moving the City Court to the County Courthouse. The proposal was recently received from the County. Is the move over there a reality? Scott Steve, County Legislative Chairperson, said a study was done for them. It indicated that the Dept. of Motor Vehicles was their problem and they were looking to move that department. If that happens, space will be reorganized, the magnetometer would be installed and City Court would move over there. After the cost of the moving, there would be a 2.5 million dollar taxpayer savings in a ten year period. The County can't move forward with their plan, if they don't know what the City's plans are. He felt that this option was the most beneficial to the city and county taxpayers. The County has done their architectural study, but has not received authorization from the Legislature to proceed. They are waiting to see if the City of Cortland agrees. The City has yet to determine if the move would be beneficial. The biggest space requirement comes from the Police Department. The City needs to determine how best to utilize it's space, because of the configuration of the building and it's need for public access, yet a section that needs to be secure and confidential. The City needs professional help to determine that. The Council would need to authorize Mayor Gallagher and Dir. of Adm. & Finance Damiano to put this out to bid and then enter into an agreement with an engineering or architectural firm not to exceed \$10,000. The Council requests a work session to hear the plans and proposals. It is also thought that the Police Station may need more room than what may be available on the second floor. There are other thoughts for separating the access to the Police Department on the second floor and other departmental moves. The City also doesn't want to spend more money than it has to. The work session will be April 5 at 5:30 PM and Scott Steve will be there.

There is some urgency to making a decision on this move as the County Legislature has a timeline they are looking to follow. Alderman Morey would like to have a special session to discuss the County's plans, review proposals and hold off on the resolution until after, in order to have real numbers. They will review the quotes, how much it's going to cost and get information regarding the move and proposals. The Council wants specifics on departments, people, costs, etc., so they can give direction and boundaries. Alderman Partigianoni questions the previous proposal of moving the Fire Department and then moving departments into that space, which was going to be something of a 3.8 million dollar project as compared to the \$10,000 study.

RESOLUTION #31 OF 2005 – Motion to table the resolution to enter into an agreement with an architectural or engineering firm to perform a feasibility study of City Hall floor space

By: Alderman Michales
Seconded: Alderman Terwilliger

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

RESOLVED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS A PERSONNEL MATTER.

On the Motion of Alderman Quail, seconded by Alderman Guido, voted and carried.

RESOLVED TO COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION AND INTO THE REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING.

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 15TH DAY OF MARCH 2005. I FURTHER CERTIFY THE FOREGOING RESOLUTIONS WERE PRESENTED TO THE MAYOR IN THE TIME REQUIRED.

JOHN O. REAGAN – CITY CLERK

MAYOR THOMAS GALLAGHER