



City Council Minutes The City of Cortland

April 18, 2006

Council Meeting #8
April 18, 2006
Regular Business Session
City Hall
7:00 PM

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

Staff Present: Director of Admin. & Finance Andrew Damiano and
Corporation Counsel Lawrence Knickerbocker.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG.

Public Comment

Mike Dexter was present. He noted that lottery trees were available to City residents. He announced that lottery trees are available. Hopefully a lot of people will apply. Notice had been put in the paper and on the City's website. Applications were available for the two (2) species of trees, little leaf linden and an elm tree.

He alerted residents to the fact that the Water Board has had lanterns on the pillars along Broadway. It is an ongoing battle to keep them on the pillars and once again, some have been broken off the pillars. The Water Board has the lanterns and will repair them and rewire them. He asked that residents be vigilant and to speak up if they see someone tampering with the lanterns or to report it if they see damage going on.

He noted how emotional everyone was last Tuesday, as a result of the Clock Tower fire and that the symbol of that building, the clock, which Bud Ames had wound for so long. He thanked Bud Ames, who for thirty-four (34) years had climbed the stairs to wind the clock. He expressed his hopes that something could be placed on that corner to represent the City as the Clock Tower had.

Minutes of April 4, 2006

RESOLUTION #41 OF 2006 - Approve the minutes of April 4, 2006 as amended.

By: Alderman Feiszli
Seconded: Alderman Terwilliger

Approved: Ayes - 7
Nays - 0

Bills were reviewed and received.

Mayor's Report

He participated in the Superintendent's search for Cortland City Schools. Congratulations to Lawrence Spring. He also met with Bernie Thoma and Mike Anderson to discuss the Cortland Downtown Partnership Program as well as attended a lunch meeting at Cortlandville Fire Department with Chris Bistocchi. Senator Seward announced an increase in the Chips money and attended DEC meeting in Syracuse with Andy Damiano, Harvey Davis and Bruce Adams.

The fire at the Squires Building on Tuesday brought together in a cooperative manner many of the departments in the City. The Fire Department, Public Safety, DPW, Water Department, Police Department and many surrounding fire departments were on the scene around the clock. Their commitment for the safety and well-being of the businesses and people involved was exemplary. Six businesses and thirty-five residences were displaced because of this unfortunate event. Due to this unfortunate circumstance, the students who resided at the Squires Building were in all probability going to lose everything. A meeting was held at the YMCA with President Bitterbaum and several of his staff, the Red Cross, and the Cortland Downtown Partnership Director, Lloyd Purdy. With the combined efforts of everyone involved, the college students were relocated to the dormitories. Assistance was given through the Red Cross and offers by several business people to provide clothing and footwear. Marietta Corporation provided amenities for them. Arrangements for meals were also provided by the college.

Two meetings were held on Thursday, April 13th. The first meeting was with Garry VanGorder, Chamber of Commerce, Lloyd Purdy, Downtown Partnership director, Chief of Police, Code, Andy Damiano and I. We anticipated the relocation needs for the six businesses affected by the fire and what we could do to keep them in the downtown business district. From this meeting, an inventory list of available storefronts was put together. Garry VanGorder and Lloyd Purdy were to contact the business owners and request they attend a meeting on Monday, April 17th.

The second meeting was held with Bernie Thoma, Code, Chief of Police, Andy Damiano, and a representative from Contento and the Scanlon family. The meeting started off with our encouragement of the Scanlon's to rehab the current structure if it was within their financial means. Bernie Thoma then explained all the economic assistance through his office that was available to them including an engineering and architectural study of the building from a company in Syracuse that specializes in

rehabbing historical sites. After a lengthy discussion, the Scanlon's agreed to take advantage of the grant available for the engineering study. We encouraged the Scanlon's to hold a press conference at the time of their decision so that everybody in the community was aware of the reasons behind their decision. We also related to the Scanlon family that whatever decision they made, the City would stand behind them. We also advised the Scanlon's that it was our strong recommendation that this property be redeveloped to fit in aesthetically with the historical downtown business district. On Friday, April 14th, the engineering firm provided the information to the Scanlon family as to the cost and objectives for rehabbing the building. Based on this information, the Scanlon family made the extremely difficult decision to demolish the building.

On Monday, April 17th, a meeting was held with the displaced business owners with recommendations for possible locations within the downtown business district. Bernie Thoma explained that there was grant money available through the Micro Enterprise Program and that low-interest loans were available through the community development fund. The business owners were very receptive and appreciative of everyone involved to help relocate. At this point, it appears that Area 51, Volpe Nails, Mid City Shoe Repair, Pizza and More, and Bangles, Beads and Bling have made contacts or are currently relocated to another storefront in the downtown area. We will continue to work with the businesses and the property owner through this difficult time.

Alderman Cobb noted that she had received a call from a resident who was upset about the demolition of the Clock Tower building. Alderman DeCarlo commended the efforts of the Fire and the Police Departments, noting that no lives were lost and that businesses would be relocating. Alderman Feiszli also received calls regarding the rebuilding of the Clock Tower building. Alderman Quail noted that the Scanlon's came by their decision to demolish the building, hard. Alderman Feiszli noted that this was a very emotional decision and wondered if the clock tower could be rebuilt and she had thought that grants could be found. The Mayor reminded everyone that the City did not own the building, it was privately owned and the owner made the decision to take the building down based on his personal financial considerations. The City owned the clock. Alderman Michales extended thank you's to the Fire and Police Departments for alerting residents and saving lives.

Ward 1 - Alderman VanGorder

She commended the police and fire departments for the fact that no one was hurt during the Clock Tower fire. She noted that the City has faced a lot of adversity over the years and the City will bounce back from this, too. She received a couple of calls regarding the hospital's new no smoking policy. She spoke with hospital CEO Brian Mitteer and he has sent out an e-mail to all employees to not loiter or litter on private property while smoking. He also plans to come to her June 1 Ward meeting to answer questions regarding the hospital. The Community Clean Up Day is coming along very well. It is scheduled for Saturday, April 29 starting at the Armory from 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. Chris Gregory has gotten some students to volunteer from the High School. If anyone is interested in being a volunteer, please contact her or your alderman. She noted it should be a good day for the community.

Ward 2 - Alderman Terwilliger

She commended and extended thank you's to all of the agencies involved in the Clock Tower fire. She hopes that this fire emphasizes the need to relocate the fire department, which has been an ongoing issue. She feels that the City should be moving forward on this.

Ward 3 - Alderman Cobb

Alderman Cobb extended her thanks to all of the people and agencies who worked so hard during the Clock Tower fire and she was grateful that there was no loss of life. She also thanked everyone who attended her Ward meeting. She noted that she had received some calls regarding code issues and that there had been a coyote sighted on Broadway as well as deer.

She received a call from a citizen regarding concerns about the little malnourished boy found in the City and what could be done to prevent this from happening again. Alderman Cobb was unsure where to go with this and asked where she should direct this person. She was told by the Mayor that Child Protective Services and Social Services were the agencies to be contacted.

Ward 4 - Alderman DeCarlo

He noted that the streets and properties in his Ward are being cleaned up and the new street sweeper is out and the job it does is impressive. He noted that he has seen the sweeper twice, already.

Ward 5 - Alderman Quail

He has a Ward meeting scheduled for this Thursday, April 20, at the Cortland Youth Bureau at 6:30 p.m. They will be discussing and organizing for the April 29th Community Clean Up Day. He hopes to have at least ten (10) people.

He noted that he attended the SPCA Wine Tasting event and it was well attended and a big success. He extended congratulations to the Groton Avenue Dental Clinic regarding the article in the paper celebrating their one (1) year anniversary. This is a much needed service. A stop sign issue brought to his attention was taken care of on the corner of Argyle and South Main Streets.

Ward 6 - Alderman Feiszli

She received noted that she had received a thank you card from a resident regarding the bus station. She noted that the County plans to put up a new shelter there. The card went on to say that due to the attention the City has given the issue, beautiful new plantings have been done by Compagni's and the Morey's have sided their shelter and improved the lighting in the area. This resident uses the bus shelter on a weekly basis when she visits her daughter in New York City and wanted to thank everyone involved.

She was contacted by Jim Yaman who wanted someone to know that he has his people out painting the posts at Yaman Park. She thanked him for all that he does for the City. She thanked Alderman VanGorder for all her organizing efforts for the Community Clean Up Day and she thinks it's a wonderful idea. She needs more volunteers in her Ward and asked interested residents to please contact her.

Ward 7 - Report read by Alderman Feiszli for Alderman Partigianoni who was absent due to illness.

He had requested the Regional Traffic Engineer from Syracuse to review the synchronized traffic control issue at the corner of Church and Central Avenues. The Chief of Police, the Public Safety Officer and Alderman Partigianoni feel that these lights are very confusing and it is potentially a safety issue. He received a letter from Carol Deloff of the Cortland County Area of Aging thanking him and the Mayor for participating in their annual March for Meals campaign. He also attended the underage drinking forum last week at the Center of the Arts Building in Homer. It was well attended.

Alderman Feiszli noted that a few years ago, Cayuga and Onondaga County have both picked up a program that has been used effectively in twenty (20) states that's called the STTOP Program which reports teen driver's traffic stops to their parents. She thinks that this is a wonderful idea and has spoken to Chief Nichols. There are grants out there for the implementation of this program.

She noted that the 10th Annual Scholars Day is tomorrow, April 19 at 10:00 a.m. One of Cortland's own Dr. Diane Vecchio will deliver the keynote address. She has published a book, "Merchants, Midwives and Laboring Women - Italian Immigrants in Urban America" and she has received a state grant to conduct oral histories of immigrants and their children in Cortland.

The East End Community Center schedule of events. On April 19, Officer Nelson will be conducting the Personal Safety class. On April 23 at 3:00 p.m., Mary Ann Kane, the County Historian will speak about the history of the local Irish, Pat Kane, renowned Irish entertainer will be there and on May 5 Bess Coval will return with the International Dance Evening.

Ward 8 - Alderman Michales

He attended the CHIPS luncheon at the Cortlandville Fire Hall along with the Mayor and Senator Seward. He had a code issue, contacted the Code Office regarding this violation and a citation will be issued. He is still looking for Clean Up Day volunteers and if anyone is interested, please contact him.

Item No. 1 - Consideration of a request by Westlake Development, LLC to refer to their proposed zoning change from R-2 to GB for two properties on Cleveland Street to the City and County Planning Commissions for their review and recommendation.

This item is pulled from the agenda, because Westlake has not finalized all of the details on this yet.

Item No. 2 - Consideration of the confirmation of the Mayor's appointment of an Acting Mayor.

The Mayor asked that this agenda item be postponed until the next Council meeting. He would like to have all Council members present as this is an important issue to everyone.

RESOLUTION #42 OF 2006 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing year-end 2005 budget transfers and encumbrances.

By: Alderman DeCarlo
Seconded: Alderman VanGorder

Approved: Ayes - 7
Nays - 0

RESOLUTION #43 OF 2006 - Consideration of the confirmation of the following reappointment and appointments to the Board of Assessment Review:

Richard Bushnell - Reappointment
Anne Rongo - Reappointment
Peter Testa - Appointment

It was noted that these were five (5) year appointments. Alderman Feiszli stated that she has been asked by individuals how they can be appointed to some of the City's Commissions and Committees. The Mayor stated that there are frequent openings and that anyone who is interested in serving should contact his office.

By: Alderman VanGorder
Seconded: Alderman Michales

Approved: Ayes - 7
Nays - 0

RESOLUTION #44 OF 2006 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the following amendments to the 2006 General Fund Budget to accept grants awarded to the Police and Fire Departments:

A. Electronic Ticker and Accident Report Project - Increase Revenue Account No. A3391 by \$27,665 and appropriate said funds to Account No. A3120.206 (Police-Equipment).

B. Defibrillator Grant - Increase Account No. A3347 by \$10,000 and appropriate

said funds to Account A3410.405-01 (Fire Department-Tools & Equipment).

Both Aldermen Quail and Michales commended those who applied for and received these additional funds.

By: Alderman Quail
Seconded: Alderman DeCarlo

Approved: Ayes - 7
Nays - 0

RESOLUTION #45 OF 2006 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with Stub's Tree Service for tree removal services.

It was noted that once this was approved, the tree removal process would begin the next day. The Mayor noted that residents who wanted to have a tree that was in bad shape removed, needed to get on the list.

By: Alderman DeCarlo
Seconded: Alderman Cobb

Approved: Ayes - 7
Nays - 0

RESOLUTION #46 OF 2006 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the adoption of the National Incident Management System for all of the City's incident management efforts.

The Mayor noted that this was a very detailed proposal. Alderman Quail inquired where Council members fell under the various categories. Andy Damiano felt that they were under the last category. Alderman Terwilliger wanted to talk about the appointment of an Acting Mayor if the Council was going to act on this proposal. Andy Damiano noted that there was not much choice in the matter of adopting this System if they didn't want to lose funding. He went on to describe some of the various courses that must be taken and who should take them. He noted that Jim Sponaugle is taking courses and is trying to become a trainer. Alderman Quail asked if Mr. Sponaugle was planning to retire at the end of the year. Mr. Damiano noted that, yes, he was, but he is the current Safety Officer and others are going also. This system deals with Homeland Security issues and bird flu and some of the courses are online and others have to be taken in person.

Alderman Terwilliger noted that it was important to consider the confirmation of an Acting Mayor. Mayor Gallagher stated that he would like the entire Council present and he noted that he doesn't have an appointment.

By: Alderman Quail
Seconded: Alderman Terwilliger

Approved: Ayes - 7
Nays - 0

Adjournment

By: Alderman DeCarlo
Seconded: Alderman Michales

Approved: Ayes - 7
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 18TH DAY OF APRIL 2006. I FURTHER CERTIFY THE FOREGOING RESOLUTIONS WERE PRESENTED TO THE MAYOR IN THE TIME REQUIRED.

JOHN O. REAGAN - CITY CLERK

MAYOR THOMAS GALLAGHER