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City Council Minutes May 6, 2003

The City of Cortland, New York

COUNCIL MEETING #8

May 6, 2003

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

City Hall

7:00PM

PRESENT: Mayor Mary E. Leonard
Alderman Faraoni, Tobin, Morey, Guido, Partigianoni, Quail, Testa and Hennessy

Staff present: Corporation Counsel, Mark Suben, City Clerk, William J. Wood, Director of Admin. & Finance Andrew Damiano, Chief Jim Nichols, Chief Barron, Jim Sponaule, and Asst. Chief Glover.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

PUBLIC COMMENT

Steve Muka of 73 Evergreen St. speaks with regard to the minute proposal. What would be eliminated would be the public comment, as far as he understands, the Mayor's report, the ward report, agenda items and resolution discussion, explanation, pros and cons, alternatives. In place it would have audio and visual for the public. He thinks it is great. It was stated that 20hrs. per week would be freed up. That is 40 hours per month. He did not feel that it should take that long to transcribe minutes so he had the last common council meeting transcribed by a professional secretary to see how long it would take her. The meeting was 2 hours long and it took her 6 hours to write up the minutes. She points out on the last page of the minutes why it took her so long. She had some suggestions on how to make it better. Six hours was a lot less time. The truth it seems is minutes are not that hard to create with the right personnel. He feels with a City of 18,000 should have detailed minutes. Mr. Muka elaborates on why minutes should be kept in this form. He has suggestions. Consider contracting out minutes if the Clerk's office does not have someone that is really good at it. There are people out there that can do it that aren't politically angled. The other thing would be to restructure the Clerk's office and do away with the part time figure head position. Have two people full time that can type and do transcription. The current \$80,000 payroll could be high. If you had two competent people they could cost one at \$20,000 one at \$30,000 plus benefits. You could save a third of a million dollars over the cost of ten years just with the restructure and have better service. A couple things there are no written minutes from January 21, 2003 at the library. The website is 3 months behind on the meeting minutes. The agenda for tonight was not on the website. To take away meeting minutes would only serve to distance government from the people. People are already blocked to speak during the body of the common council meeting even if a false statement is made or a member of the audience has expertise with a topic of discussion. When an agenda item is added, the public has zero input after the public comment section. Please keep the meeting minutes as they are and urge public attendance at the meeting.

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Al Rosato of 212 Central Ave. sees where the water board appointed Steve Broyles. He doesn't think he should be back on the board with all the trouble he caused. He caused all the big mess in Cortland. He hopes the Council will turn him down. If the Mayor doesn't turn him down he will not vote for her.

Pat Anderson of 5 Winter St. is concerned with the abandoned cars left on property. The police should ticket it. The police told her to call Pat and Mikes. They will tow the car and keep it 30 days, and if they don't come after it they will keep it. These people don't want the car. It is like dumping. She also wants more police protection on that street. Alderman Quail has received her message and he will contact her.

MINUTES of April 15, 2003

Alderman Morey suggests we don't approve the minutes because they are not complete. Clerk Wood explains there are two sets of minutes that should have been sent out.

BILLS

Alderman Quail has a question on the computer purchases and what departments they were for.

MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor takes the opportunity to thank Mr. Yaman for his extremely generous donation and allowing Yaman Beach to open at its regular time. Congratulates the Firefighter of the Year Carl Grantham for the rescue of the little boy last year. The winner of the Terry Bulger award was Tom Owen. The paid Firefighters had a very nice event. It was nice to be invited. There are a number of things that have to do with SUNY. Last week the SUNY student employee appreciation dinner was held. The Mayor spoke about the contribution that students make to our community working. There are a lot of students that have jobs in the community. A number of students with red t-shirts were cleaning up garbage in the Tompkins St. area. They are the volunteers from the communications study class and other volunteers who decided to do a thank you clean up.

Festivus was a success. They are going to continue to do that again next year. The young man that was in charge of this has been elected as the Student Government President. Spring Fling weekend did not result in any big problems. Officers did warn students and hopefully this kept students under control. Last Thursday the College Community Forum was held. It will be the last one for this semester. The Mayor hands out some legislation that Senator Shumer and Snowe are sponsoring to try and put monies into the hands of localities right away. They need to be signed and sent in. If there is a resolution to sponsor this, that would be helpful as well.

There has been discussion about railroad cars parked on tracks. We are working on this and hoping the pressure will get the railroad company to comply. We have had questions about flags in City Parks. Now that the nice weather is here, the flags will be up and everything will be looking nice. The City is also participating in a program SUNY Cortland has which will allow us to get the little cars called Nebs. We don't have to do anything except charge them up. The Police Officers will be using them. The Mayor needs some direction from the Council regarding the sports park that was proposed in Cortlandville. At the last meeting we decided to take some

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of the money that was set aside and use it for the budget this year. She would like it to be a cooperative effort between Cortlandville, the City, and the school district. Before she sends a letter in support of the program she wants to make sure that is what the Council wants her to do. Alderman Partigianoni is in agreement. The consensus is yes, they are in support. We need to schedule a work session regarding the feasibility study. She has received plans regarding the other fire station. The Council agrees to have the meeting at 5:30PM before the Council meeting, May 20, 2003.

WARD REPORTS

Ward 1 - Alderman Faraoni

The roads took an awful beating this year. He thanks the DPW for their hard work. They are working on them all the time. Edgemont Drive is very poorly lit. The pole is there. NIMO told us \$99.40 per year. He feels this is worth while.

RESOLUTION #71 of 2003 - to approve the lighting of Edgemont Drive using the pole that is currently there at a cost proposed by NIMO of \$99.40 per year.

By: Alderman Faraoni
Seconded: Alderman Hennessy

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Ward 2 - Alderman Tobin

I don't have a whole lot but a few items which are directed to Andy. He wants to see a copy of the Comptrollers report which should be finished and some type of amortization chart over the course of 20 years so we can find out. We need to know what this is going to cost people. Andy Damiano explains when the Architects tell us then he can come up with numbers for the Council. Alderman Tobin wants to know what nine million dollars will cost over 20 years. Andy can give guesses but that's all. He thinks we should send a resolution to Senator Schumer's Office in support of 201. Alderman Hennessy explains this has been discussed before and it is a bipartisan effort with Senator Olympia Snowe to try and get monies into the hands of municipalities. Alderman Morey wants to read through it.

RESOLUTION #72 – Recommend the adoption of S. 201, the State and Local Aid and Economic Stimulus Act of 2003. (Senator Schumer, Senator Snowe)

By: Alderman Tobin
Seconded: Alderman Hennessy

Approved: Ayes – 7
Nays – 0
Abstain – 1 (Morey)

Clerk Wood asks Alderman Morey how she voted. She wants to abstain. Alderman Partigianoni states Alderman Morey has a good point. The Mayor explains she happened to be

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in Syracuse today and picked up the packets. It is also asking that you fill them out individually. Alderman Morey states at the next meeting she will read through it and if she approves it she will note it for the minutes.

Ward 3 - Alderman Morey

She personally thanks Mr. Yaman. The repaving has started on Forrest, Ellwood, and Melvin. There will be a lot of work in the area. Traffic will probably be slow. Thanks the DPW for reseeding so the dust is not blowing near Otter Creek. Her daughter went to Festivus and she had a great time. Congratulates Matt for his effort and on being elected President. She shares her sentiment with the Mayor regarding the students cleaning up Tompkins St. They do a lot for the community. She attended the College Forum. That is a very good group. They are putting a lot of effort into it. She thanks Mike Preston. Signs were put on James St.

The Landscape Committee is meeting on Thurs. with NIMO at 4:30 in the parking lot here at City Hall. The part-time secretary packet. An outside source did the minutes in 6 hours, took 2 hours to watch a video so it only took her 4 hours. The City Clerk said last week it takes the Deputy Clerk 20 hours to do this. Clerk Wood states Rosanne is putting words in her mouth. He did not say that. Alderman Morey asks how long does it take. Clerk Wood states you will have to ask her. Alderman Morey asks if he is a Department Head. Clerk Wood states yes. The resolution that was in front of you was to reduce the amount of payroll in the Clerk's office by \$4,000. She is stumped on two issues. This was presented to us tonight. She is miffed that you as a Department Head can't give us answers to how long this would take. Clerk Wood states he is tired of her blatant political attacks. The Deputy does the minutes; I don't stand over her shoulder like any other department head and watch what she does and time how long she does it. She has a job to do and she does it. Alderman Morey states this is not a political attack. This is the money of the City of Cortland residents and her job is to look out for the people she represents and to make sure their money is spent wisely. If you think that is a political attack Mr. Wood then I would think very carefully about what your saying to me. That's not a political attack. That's watching how the money is going to be spent. You as a Department Head are sitting here telling me that you are not sure about that. Alderman Morey accuses Clerk Wood of not knowing what is going on in his department. He states he does know what is going on. The Mayor interjects. The point is noted.

Ward 4 - Alderman Guido

He thanks Mr. Yaman for his generous contribution. The community appreciates it as well. He acknowledges all the hard work that went into Festivus. He took is son. It was a great time. It speaks volumes for how much college students do for the community. He had a ward meeting with Jane Richards. He thanks her for that. He has been in contact with Suite Kote regarding the train cars. He was saying in the past they would normally park them somewhere near Binghamton. He has been in contact with them and wondered why they couldn't park them back there again. He states Suite Kote will be using the contents by June and then they would be out of the area. The Mayor asks if he has any complaints about odor. Alderman Guido states yes from one man. They are starting to emit an odor like tar now that the weather is warmer. He has neighbors directly around him are still concerned with the college and having a new president come in. President Clark had assured us that they weren't going to be building a high rise dorm on Davis field. Its one of the things when the new president comes in the

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summer we will try to make contact with him to see what Cortland State's plans are in regard to Chugger Davis Field.

Ward 5 - Alderman Quail

Thanks Jim (Yaman) for his generosity. He is disappointed with Alderman Guido for not bringing up the bungee run. Festivus was a good time. The reptile show had everyone mesmerized. He attended the Fireman's dinner. Congratulates all of them for their service. His next ward meeting will be Tuesday, at 7:00. He does not have a location yet. He is also in the process of "pick up the litter day". He has contacted the high school. He hopes to firm this up.

Ward 6 - Alderman Testa

He has had calls on the tankers, what was in them, how long they will stay. He had a ward meeting. It went very well. Spoke about the feasibility study. Pat O'Mara was his guest. He spoke about the trash and recycling. The trash is taken over to Tompkins County. He attended Festivus. His ward meeting will be at the end of the month.

Ward 7 - Alderman Partigianoni

The big item for him is on the agenda. He will reserve comments on this. He contacted the code office on a couple of issues. He attended the Fireman's dinner. This Saturday the volunteers are having their event. The other thing is the parking spaces on Franklin St.

Ward 8 - Alderman Hennessy

One thing she has noticed is there are fairly large potholes developing on the corner of Pendleton and Northcliffe and Pendleton and Jefferson. She will be having a ward meeting on May 27th at 7:00 here at City Hall. Marilyn Brown is coming to talk about the County budget and the new County Administrator.

AGENDA

RESOLUTION #73 of 2003 – to refer a zoning change requested by James Yaman on behalf of REROB, LLC to the County Planning Board, City Planning Board, and the ZBA for their review and recommendation.

Alderman Testa states this is a worthwhile project. This addresses one of the issues of the industrial land that's in the boundaries of the City being converted to business. He thinks it is a good program. Alderman Hennessy questions parcel number 10. There has been no proposal to change that. Mr. Yaman explains they have talked to the property owner, she has life use of the home but she is not interested in doing anything with the property. Alderman Quail asks if it would do a disservice to include that property in the zone change. Alderman Hennessy explains the owner of the property has to place the request.

By: Alderman Partigianoni
Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

Approved: Ayes -8

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Nays – 0

Item No. 6 – Consideration of the Mayor’s appointment of the following City of Cortland Boards to include an addition by Alderman Testa (Gonda Gebhardt).

RESOLUTION #74 of 2003 – approve the Mayor’s appointment of Howard Lieberman to the Planning Board.

By: Alderman Tobin
Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays 0

RESOLUTION #75 of 2003 – approve the Mayor’s appointment of Travis Gossett to the Water Advisory Board.

By: Alderman Hennessy
Seconded: Alderman Morey

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

RESOLUTION #76 of 2003 – approve the Mayor’s appointment of Steven Broyles, Ph. D. to the Water Advisory Board.

By: Alderman Hennessy
Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

Approved: Ayes – 6 (Quail, Hennessy, Partigianoni, Faraoni, Morey and Guido)
Nays – 2 (Testa, Tobin)

RESOLUTION #77 of 2003 – approve the Mayor’s appointment of Betsy Boyden to the Water Advisory Board.

By: Alderman Morey
Seconded: Alderman Partigianoni

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays - 0

RESOLUTION #78 of 2003 – approve the Mayor’s appointment of Keith Dayton to the Water Advisory Board.

By: Alderman Guido
Seconded: Alderman Hennessy

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

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RESOLUTION #79 of 2003 – approve the Mayor’s appointment of Fred Janke to the Water Advisory Board.

By: Alderman Tobin
Seconded: Alderman Partigianoni

Approved: Ayes – 6 (Tobin, Faraoni, Hennessy, Partigianoni, Testa, and Quail)
Nays – 2 (Guido, Morey)

RESOLUTION #80 of 2003 – approve the Mayor’s appointment of Gonda Gebhardt to the Water Advisory Board.

By: Alderman Testa
Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

Approved: Ayes - 8
Nays – 0

Item No. 2 is withdrawn.

RESOLUTION #81 of 2003 – authorizing the elimination of the parking restriction on Franklin Street on the west side for a distance of 368 feet north of its intersection with Central Ave.

By: Alderman Partigianoni
Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

RESOLUTION #82 of 2003 – approve the request submitted by the VFW to close a portion of Main Street from Court Street to Clayton Avenue on Memorial Day (May 26, 2003) from 10:00AM to Noon.

By: Alderman Hennessy
Seconded: Alderman Tobin

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Item No. 5 pulled.

On the motion of Alderman Morey, seconded by Alderman Hennessy, voted and carried,

RESOLVED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AND PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS.

On the motion of Alderman Guido, seconded by Alderman Morey, voted and carried,

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RESOLVED TO COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION.

Adjournment.

By: Alderman Quail
Seconded: Alderman Partigianoni

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

I, WILLIAM J. WOOD CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF CORTLAND, NEW YORK DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT SAID RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED AT A MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CORTLAND, HELD ON THE 6th DAY OF MAY 2003. I FURTHER CERTIFY THE FOREGOING RESOLUTIONS WERE PRESENTED TO THE MAYOR IN THE TIME REQUIRED.

WILLIAM J. WOOD – CITY CLERK
