



## City Council Minutes The City of Cortland

August 16, 2005

Council Meeting #15  
August 16, 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 and  
City Clerk John O. Reagan

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

MINUTES of August 2, 2005

**RESOLUTION #89** OF 2005 - Approve the minutes of August 2, 2005.

By: Alderman Partigianoni  
Seconded: Alderman Quail

Approved: Ayes - 8  
Nays - 0

Bills were reviewed and received.

### MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor extended congratulations to Thoma Development on their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and noted that he attended the BDC/IDA meeting.

He noted a special thank you to McNeil & Company for installing the cables for the banners on Main Street and also thanked the Brockway Truck committee for the wonderful job in pulling together one of the biggest crowds we've had on Main Street in years for this type of event.

He met with Barbara Lifton, Downtown Business Association, Chamber and Thoma Development to discuss the formation of a Cortland Downtown Partnership, combining the Downtown Business Association and Cortland City Improvement Corporation. He also met with Barbara Lifton and toured the Armory facility to give her an insight as to the upgrading and improvements that are necessary, and requested that she apply for assistance to help us with this program.

He held a press conference regarding the South Main Street concerns amongst the neighbors. Councilman Partigianoni and Councilman Quail will cover this in their ward reports. He also met with members of Greek Peak and several financial institutions to discuss the multi-million dollar construction project and their plans for expansion.

He sent letter of request to Congressman Boehlert for assistance in rehabbing the Armory as an emergency center and to rehab the generator provided us by the Cortland Memorial Hospital. This will include rehabbing the generator, and if everything works out, we will be cooperating with the Cortland City Schools to include Smith School as a possible emergency shelter. He noted that there will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony Friday, August 19<sup>th</sup> for Audio Consultants at their new location at 9 Church Street and that SUNY Cortland will have their ribbon-cutting ceremony Monday, August 22<sup>nd</sup> at 3:00 o'clock at the Glass Tower Hall.

He also reminded everyone to mark their calendars for August 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> for the annual Celtic Fest.

Ward 1 - Alderman Faraoni

There was a little problem in the Ward and he thanked Doug Withey and his men who took care of the problem. Other than that, it's been quiet.

Ward 2 - Alderman Terwilliger

She would like to add an agenda item for the next session; a discussion of codes issues regarding dumpsters and waste containers in the city and residential neighborhoods. The Lincoln and Maple Association meeting is going on right now at the Burch Building to discuss the return of the students to the neighborhoods. She will have a report from tonight's gathering at the next council meeting and hopes to be at their next meeting. There were some tree issues that were taken care of. She also received a call regarding blue bags. She wondered if they were more flimsy than the previous ones. Andy Damiano explained that when these items were put out to bid, they were thoroughly specked out and had to meet certain criteria. He wondered if the extremely hot weather had anything to do with the failure of some bags.

Ward 3 - Alderman Morey

She met with Jeff Guido and Police Chief Nichols last Wednesday to discuss 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Ward issues re: speeding on Broadway. When she got home she got two (2) calls regarding issues on Broadway that were not related. The first was she had received two (2) requests to have the Yield sign on the corner of Otter Creek and Broadway changed to a Stop sign. There have been a lot of near misses there and there is a lot of foot traffic crossing the street there and there is no crosswalk. She would like to have Public Safety put this on their agenda. The second call was about Broadway and the Bike Route. The concern here was that holes on this route were being filled with dirt instead of repaving. It was stated that it had been taken care of as of today. It was also brought up that the brush needed trimming on the college side. Alderman Morey said she would make a phone call regarding this.

#### Ward 4 - Alderman Guido

He extended congratulations to Thoma Development and their twenty-five (25) years of service. He also took his sons to the Brockway Truck show and there were more people and trucks than ever and it was a great show. He also reminded everyone of the upcoming Celtic Festival and urged everyone to go.

There was a meeting last Wednesday night at the Water Works with Chief Nichols and members of the Public Safety Committee. Some of the issues that were brought up were speeding and loud motorcycles and signage. Chief Nichols brought up adding more police officers in the area and this should be looked at. The Chief mentioned six (6) more officers. Alderman Morey stated that at one point a police car sat at the Waterworks for eight (8) hours a day and just wrote tickets. That can't be done anymore. It was asked that if residents could pinpoint the time or which days there are issues and give this to the police. The police will have a presence during those times. Alderman Partigianoni said that Chief Nichols had asked residents in his Ward to try to get plate numbers and report them. Alderman Morey stated that if residents couldn't get plate numbers, narrowing down the times of heavy traffic and speeding, would help the police.

#### Ward 5 - Alderman Quail

He doesn't have a speeding problem in his Ward due to the speed control bumps on South Main Street. Next year he will have that same problem. He also extended congratulations to Thoma Development. He noted that they did a tremendous amount of work to obtain grants and to develop projects for the City. He asked that an item be added to the agenda. It was the September 10 closing of Frederick Street from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm for a neighborhood party. Members of the Police and Fire Departments were to be invited. There has been a focus on the South Main Street area over the past several weeks. It's good to see a lot of things happening in that area. Through a huge team effort between Chief Nichols, Sargeant Carpenter, the Youth Bureau with the support of the Mayor and Senator Seward, a lot of energy has been put into the Neighborhood Watch Program and they are also trying to start a youth neighborhood group and this Frederick Street party is a nice get young people acquainted with the officers. There have also been several arrests in the area recently and hopefully things will improve. He is planning a 5<sup>th</sup> Ward Party on September 17 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at Beaudry Park. Everyone is invited, please bring a dish to pass and he will provide hamburgers and hot dogs. He has a handicapped constituent and would like to bring something to the Animal Committee. This individual uses a cane and when he walks his dog he used to take them to the park in the morning to let

them run, but he can't now. He would like to be able to take his dogs off the leash. Perhaps we need to find an area for a dog park. The community should perhaps have a door to door canvas by the SPCA regarding dog licenses and there is also the feral cat problem. Alderman Morey says there isn't enough money in the budget allotted for this. Money now is being used for the spay/neuter program and that doesn't cover much. Alderman Quail also noted that the constituent also stated that the other problem he had was that when walking his dogs on the street that other dogs (pit bulls) on leashes were lunging at his dogs. So there is a problem that should be looked into.

He also announced that there was a new store on South Main Street. A & J Fitness Supplements next to King Sub. He spoke with the owners, Amy and John Riato, and is happy to see a store move into this location.

#### Ward 6 - Alderman Feiszli

She wanted to note a speeding issue on Locust Ave. She asked that the monitor be put there and that did decrease the problem. She also inquired as to how much these speed monitors cost and can they have a camera on them which photographs license plates. Alderman Morey noted that there was no software purchased with the County's monitor that is currently being placed around the City to monitor speed. The Police Department borrows the unit from the County. It was also noted that cameras can be mounted on various traffic lights and the Council asked that more information be provided in regards to this. There is also a light at the corner of Delaware, as well as other intersections, like Albright and Elm Street intersections, that are being run.

There was a meeting regarding Kennedy Parkway and she will give more information about this at the next Council meeting. She also will have information regarding the Otter and Dry Creeks regarding the funding for retaining walls. This is being worked on as well as the easements.

#### Ward 7 - Alderman Partigianoni

He noted the recent headlines on the front page of the tonight's paper. He received a call from a concerned resident which prompted him to contact Chief Nichols. The problems in the area have gone down considerably, but he feels that residents should still be careful about locking up, but noted that Cortland is a safe place to live. He went to the awards presentation and outing of the Central Cortland Youth Bureau Little League Champion Orioles. It was fun and he extended his congratulations to them. He asked that residents please come forward with their nominations for the Mayor's certificates for beautiful yards and gardens at residences throughout the City. He would like to have them do this before Labor Day. He has had some nominations and so hasn't Alderman Michales and they are looking for more. The Dietcher's were noted, but there are many more out there. He also acknowledged a nice letter that the Mayor had received from Bill Hay on behalf of the residents on Venette Street, thanking the Mayor for his work to alleviate the train smell. He also asked that the public mark their calendars for the Sunday, August 21 presentation by Diane Vecchio entitled, "Memories of Migration". Diane and her guests will make this presentation at 4:00 p.m. A big crowd is expected. Vince has kindly volunteered to record that session.

#### Ward 8 - Alderman Michales

He wished to thank the residents in the Ward for working to clean up issues in their neighborhood. With the support of Chief Nichols, the police presence has been stepped up in several problem areas and he would like to thank the police department for their quick response in addressing these residents' concerns. He held a Ward meeting on August 3 and it was well attended with many concerns being addressed. County Legislator Marilyn Brown gave an update on County issues and the Neighborhood Watch is going well.

They did a neighborhood walk through the following week and they found some code issues that will be forwarded to the Code Office. He thanked Chief Nichols for assisting and noted that a ticket was issued on the walk-through for illegal parking. He noted that he would like the State to yellow stripe the No Parking zones on Port Watson Street, so that they would be more noted. He also attended the Thoma Development 25<sup>th</sup> year anniversary celebration. He wanted to congratulate them and wish them the best of luck in the next twenty-five years. He also has been attending the downtown lunchtime music series on Main Street. He thanked Dave McNeil and Karina of the Blue Frog Café for sponsoring the series and for their hard work in putting on this program and to help promote downtown businesses, as well. He also thanked Paul Janos of Woodcrest Drive for volunteering to paint the fire hydrant in front of his house. Please note that August 20<sup>th</sup> is the last chicken BBQ that the Youth Bureau will sponsor this year. Please stop by and help out our youth.

It was noted that if anyone was interested in painting their fire hydrant, they should contact the City and paint and brushes will be provided.

**RESOLUTION #90** OF 2005 - Approve a resolution to amend the 2005 General Fund Budget recognizing a State grant in the amount of \$29,380 in Account No. A3391 and appropriating said funds to Account No. A3120.206 (Police Department Operating Equipment).

Alderman Quail asked if anyone had been down to see this and noted that it now takes minutes instead of hours.

By: Alderman Terwilliger  
Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

Approved: Ayes - 8  
Nays - 0

**RESOLUTION #91** OF 2005 - Approve a resolution to amend the 2005 General Fund Budget recognizing a County grant in the amount of \$70,000 in Account No. 2262 and appropriating said funds to Account No. A3410.420.1 (Fire Department Special Ops Equipment - Hazmat).

Alderman Quail and the Council extended thank you's to the County. Alderman Feiszli noted that it was being used countywide and Alderman Michales said that it was quite a list of equipment.

By: Alderman Faraoni  
Seconded: Alderman Guido

Approved:           Ayes - 8  
                      Nays - 0

**ITEM #3** - Discussion regarding the formal recognition of the Animal Committee.

It was noted that they were unsure of what they were recognizing. Alderman Faraoni gave some background on the original Animal Committee. It was noted that it was an informally organized advisory committee to the Council. Alderman Quail asks if it could be recognized. Alderman Morey wanted to know if it was being recognized as one of the City's Commissions. Alderman Michales would like it to be recognized and perhaps taken one step further and turned into a Commission. He would like to see the size and scope of this committee increase to the point where they are addressing animal issues other than exotic pets. It was noted that there seemed to be mostly problems with dogs and feral cats and perhaps the committee could be expanded from exotic pets. It was noted that the SPCA was currently paid to handle that area. Alderman Quail would like to see that all dogs in the City are licensed and feels that less than 50% of the dogs are currently licensed. Alderman Morey questioned if there would be additional costs. Alderman Terwilliger felt that if the committee was representing the City they should be recognized. Andy Damiano stated that it should be done by resolution, if that's what they wished to do. Alderman Michales noted that one of the topics of the previous work session was a definition of exotic pet. Alderman Feiszli asked if the City charter could be changed to include the definition of exotic pets, as it didn't seem that birds should fall under this. It was also noted that there have been at least four (4) violent dog incidents reported recently and there is concern regarding certain breeds of dogs. Alderman Morey doesn't feel that there should be attacks made on specific breeds. Alderman Partigianoni asked what did the Council want from the committee and that they should be better defined. Alderman Quail noted that he would like to see better management of the City's animal population. He asked if they should continue to be an advisory board or if they should become a commission. As the committee now stands, it includes the President, Chris Farkus, Ray Dunigan, Sara Noble, Rosann Morey and Alex Faraoni.

Alderman Morey noted that the committee started with feral cats and then the issue was so great that people walked out of the sessions and this was disheartening. The SPCA had opinions on controlling the feral cat population and others did, too. Some ideas were too expensive. Then there was the dog licensing and that money was to go to offset the expense of the SPCA. Andy Damiano noted that the small amount of licensing money was put into the General Fund. It was noted that a phone dog survey had been one idea, but that, too, was expensive. Exotic pets can be filtered by the Committee, but big problems can't be solved without big money. Alderman Faraoni suggested that maybe there should be two (2) committees: a dog and cat committee and an exotic animal committee. It was felt that the committee needed to be defined and that more research needed to be done. Perhaps Neighborhood Watch could become involved. Maybe there should be two (2) different committees. It was decided that this discussion would be tabled and Alderman Michales would come back with further information. Alderman Morey would like to be included in this process. She noted that there is a lot involved with this issue. Discussion tabled.

**RESOLUTION #92 OF 2005** - Approval of a resolution to close Frederick Street for a Neighborhood Party on September 10, 2005 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., inviting representatives from the City Police and City Fire representatives.

Alderman Morey noted that this was a record year for neighborhood parties and she felt that this showed a real sense of community. Alderman Feiszli noted that it was a good opportunity for neighbors to get to know each other and it was another positive offshoot of the Neighborhood Watch program.

By: Alderman Morey  
Seconded: Alderman Partigianoni

Approved: Ayes - 8  
Nays - 0

**RESOLUTION #93 OF 2005** - Approve a resolution to hire two (2) firefighters in time for them to attend the Basic Firefighter Training School which commences on September 12, 2005.

Three (3) vacancies would be occurring within the firefighter's ranks due to retirements which were expected to take effect prior to the end of 2005. The basic Fall Firefighter course originally scheduled by the NYS Fire Academy at Montour Falls was cancelled. The City of Binghamton Fire Department NYS 229 hour Basic Firefighter Course commencing on Sept. 12, 2005 was a rare opportunity for our new employees to attain their mandatory training and be ready to fill the upcoming vacancies shortly after the new year. It was noted that there would be somewhat of a fiscal burden on the Fire Department budget in the short term, but if the Council didn't act now, they would wind up covering overtime which could exceed the cost of overlapping the positions. It was asked of Andy Damiano what the savings were for each of the three (3) retirements over the new positions and he noted that it was about \$25,000 to \$30,000 each.

By: Alderman Guido  
Seconded: Alderman Quail

Approved: Ayes - 8  
Nays - 0

### **Adjournment**

By: Alderman Michales  
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**

**16<sup>ST</sup> DAY OF AUGUST 2005. I FURTHER CERTIFY THE FOREGOING RESOLUTIONS WERE PRESENTED TO THE MAYOR IN THE TIME REQUIRED.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**JOHN O. REAGAN-CITY CLERK**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**MAYOR THOMAS GALLAGHER**