



City Council Minutes September 16, 2003
The City of Cortland, New York

COUNCIL MEETING #17

September 16, 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

PUBLIC COMMENT

Anne Doyle of 70 Lincoln Ave. speaks on behalf of a portion of her neighborhood with regard to the parties going on from the college kids. There is garbage all over the neighborhood, vandalism, speeding and the general condition of the street is poor. The street has nothing but dirt on it and they say they are not going to black top it. There is parking on the lawn and people living on the third floor in these houses. She has spoken to several officials and she expects the council to do something about it. Mr. Franco has responded positively.

Tova Starmer of 68 Lincoln Ave. explains she has called the police and it took an hour to get there. They were put on hold. The college issue needs to be addressed.

MINUTES of August 26th and September 2, 2003

RESOLUTION #135 of 2003 – Approve the amended minutes of August 26, 2003.

By: Alderman Hennessy

Seconded: Alderman Guido

Approved: Ayes – 8

Nays – 0

RESOLUTION #136 of 2003 – Approve the amended minutes of September 2, 2003.

By: Alderman Partigianoni

Seconded: Alderman Morey

Approved: Ayes – 8

Nays - 0

BILLS

Alderman Quail asks about ABL Contracting. Andy Damiano explains the bill is for a portion of the building security project. There will be a number of bills going to Jim Sponaugle but we will be reimbursed by the Court System at a later date. Alderman Quail would like a list. Andy explains the list is the same one which was distributed when the council approved the project.

MAYOR'S REPORT

The Celtic fest was this past weekend. It was very well attended. The more serious work has to do with the budget situation. I'm sure you all have seen and were horrified by the memo Andy sent out concerning the bill that we got and the change in the projected contribution that we would have to make to the pension fund. The Department Heads and staff are looking into every possible way they can preserve their staff and the services we provide. This is a very serious situation. If there are specific items you know you want to address, please address them with me during the budget preparation phase.

The Mayor met with President Bitterbaum at the college. He came down to meet with her and Andy and one of the topics was refurbishing properties in the City and the block grant projects for seniors. We want to make housing affordable for young professionals, new families, etc. The Chairman of the college council is involved in the financial world in NYC and happened to be in town, therefore the Mayor met with him as well as Garry VanGorder, Linda Armstrong, and a number of faculty and administrative people from the college.

The new librarian was visiting this week. She would like to update the council on what is going on over at the library.

The issues raised in the public comment portion of the meeting with regard to what is going on with the students are serious ones. The Mayor notes the number of arrests for noise and such were double this year as opposed to last year. The Mayor has received anonymous emails from students complaining about parking. This is a constant battle. The code office has been ticketing cars and the reaction from some of the students has been very hostile and aggressive. The college community forum will be meeting once again. The next thing to happen will be an open meeting for people to come and express their concerns and ideas.

WARD REPORTS

Ward 1 – Alderman Faraoni

He had a ward meeting with Tom Carmen speaking. They toured the new emergency facility. He praises Mr. Carmen and thanks him for his time.

Ward 2 – Alderman Tobin

He thanks Anne Doyle for her comments. The residence in question is 75 Lincoln Ave. and his owned by the Landlord that cares. There are 6 people living there. They are using the third floor. It was owned by a single family and his now being used illegally. We have serious problems in some of these neighborhoods. At the judicial level we need a proper prosecution. We need to get these cases into court. We need to have a proper judicial resolve. If we can't do that, what are we suppose to do, go to the Attorney General? We have cases pending and cases that haven't gotten there. The landlord that cares is a major player. Most of the students that come here are here for the education. The majority of problems are caused by by a minority of students.

He commends the people on the new zoning upgrade. He thinks there needs to be a resolution on the Super

Walmart issue, to have a building that size over our aquifer. He feels Walmart will have a devastating effect on the merchant's downtown. A brief discussion ensues.

Ward 3 – Alderman Morey

She will be on vacation next week. Alderman Faraoni will be taking her calls. She thanks Anne Doyle for coming. She is also concerned about the college. No one wants to walk down Lincoln or Maple Ave. The street is a mess. She doesn't know how those houses pass code. She has had calls from residents on the hill regarding parking, noise, trash, etc. She believes since moving prosecution to the County it should have freed up our legal department for prosecution of code offenses. What is the outcome of these prosecutions? We as a group have got to do something. James Street is a huge problem. The cars are sometimes parking on both sides of the hill. The Mayor urges residents to come to the college forum discussion.

Glenn St. did not get paved. She spoke with Chris Bistocchi and he stated that it wasn't as needy as some of the other streets in Cortland. It's hard to tell those residents that. She feels all these property owners deserve a fair shake. The other concern is Interfaith on Calvert St. Whenever they have a speaker there is no parking for them. The Interfaith asked if they could have a permanent or temporary parking spot in front of the building for their guest speaker. Public Safety was not in favor of this. We do make concessions in front of churches for funerals or weddings. Corp. Counsel Suben will look into this.

Ward 4 – Alderman Guido

Thanks the Code office for looking into issues on Tompkins St. The majority of the college students are here for learning. The students do have an obligation to behave while they are here. He called Mike Preston because there isn't a stop sign at the end of York Street where York goes into Warren. He also had a call regarding the paving on Delaware.

Ward 5 – Alderman Quail

He had his ward picnic on Sat. There were about 25 people. We discussed real estate taxes and Walmart, which they were against. The Fire Station was a priority. Leaf and brush pick-up was a concern. He has had anonymous emails with regard to parking. He will not respond to anonymous emails. Leave your name and number and he will respond. He asked if the Mayor will send out a notice when the next college meeting will be. The Mayor thinks it will be in October. He would also like to see the street rating information Chris Bistocchi is working on. He is concerned about the sandwich boards on Main St.

Ward 6 – Alderman Testa

The sixth ward seems to have the same problems. Brush pick-up is taking place. He sympathizes with the people in the second and third ward for the parties. He acted as a judge for the YWCA bake off. Everything was delicious and very well attended.

Ward 7 – Alderman Partigianoni

The small fry program gets underway on Friday at Dexter Park. The Hampton Inn opened. There is also a new business on 60 Pendleton St, Sherman Tire Co. He has had a few calls on manufactured homes. His wife Carol has been commissioned to be lay minister at St. Anthony's church.

Ward 8 – Alderman Hennessy

She attended the library board meeting last week. Kay Zaharis is moving forward. There will be a few changes. It all sounds very interesting. Signs and banners are up for the Pumpkinfest which is the first weekend in October. She has had several calls with regard to brush collection. People were not happy with the way it was run. We need to figure out another way for next year. People who are house proud do not like the brush in front of their homes. Alderman Quail wants to make people aware of the weather on Friday.

AGENDA

RESOLUTION #137 of 2003 – Authorize the acquisition of the property located at 17-21 Groton Avenue from Melvin and Phillip Simon.

By: Alderman Tobin
Seconded: Alderman Morey

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Alderman Faraoni would like Public Safety to rehear the concerns regarding the three parking spaces on Groton Ave. since more parking will now be available.

RESOLUTION #138 of 2003 – Authorize the Mayor to enter into a lease renewal agreement with HSBC Bank USA for their drive-in banking facility.

By: Alderman Hennessy
Seconded: Alderman Quail

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

RESOLUTION #139 of 2003 – Authorizing the mayor to enter into an agreement with the state of New York for the use and acquisition of certain parcel of land known as the Cortland Armory, located in the City of Cortland, County of Cortland.

By: Alderman Faraoni
Seconded: Alderman Morey

Alderman Quail asks if there is any documentation. The Mayor states not yet but the Executive Office Bureau of Land Management provided her with blueprints and such if anyone is interested in those. The acquisition of the property carries with it primarily the responsibility that we use it for the purposes permitted by law, which is not a fire station. We outlined a number of public purposes we intended to use this for. We are researching the uses of this building at this time. The Mayor notes you can use it for mental health reasons, recreation, highway maintenance, etc. Alderman Testa suggests we let the public know what it can and can't be used for.

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays - 0

Alderman Quail asks about the recent developments on the sales tax issue. The Mayor notes the only thing she knows is that it was an ad hoc committee. She hasn't seen anything in writing. No one has communicated with her or Andy on it. We have a signed contract.

The Council agrees to have a work session on the Code revisions on October 7th at 6:00PM. The Mayor has the minutes to the Public Safety Commission meeting. There wasn't a quorum and the council agrees to get clarification before voting on anything. The Public Safety Commission is a board that recommends. The board recommended the yield sign on Clayton Ave. and Stevenson Street be changed to a stop sign during their last meeting.

RESOLUTION #140 of 2003 – Approve the Public Safety recommendation that the yield sign on Clayton Ave. and Stevenson St. be changed to a stop sign.

By: Alderman Tobin
Seconded: Alderman Quail

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

RESOLUTION #141 of 2003 – Approve a stop sign be installed at York St. at Warren St.

By: Alderman Guido
Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Adjournment.

By: Alderman Quail
Seconded: Alderman Testa

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 16th DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2003. I FURTHER CERTIFY THE FOREGOING RESOLUTIONS WERE PRESENTED TO THE MAYOR IN THE TIME REQUIRED.

WILLIAM J. WOOD – CITY CLERK