

A meeting of the Common Council was held on December 4, 2001 at 7:15 PM in the Common Council Chambers at City Hall, 25 Court Street, Cortland, New York.

PRESENT: Mayor Bruce Tytler
Council Members, Tobin, Abdulla, Strangeway, Hansen, Hyde, and Hennessy
City Clerk, William J. Wood
Deputy City Clerk, Jodi M. McLyman
Corporation Counsel, James J. Baranello
Director of Admin. & Finance, Andrew J. Damiano

EXCUSED: Council Member Smith, Lissberger

7:15 PM Mayor Tytler opened the Public Hearing on the Wastewater Treatment Plant's Proposed 2002 Budget.

There was no one to speak; therefore the public hearing was closed.

7:20 PM Mayor Tytler opened the Public Hearing on the Proposed 2002 General Fund Budget.

Steve Muka asks if some money could be put in the budget for public skating at the Courthouse Park. As taxes are going up he feels people are going to need a reason to live here in Cortland and it would be nice. He thinks about 15,000 people drive down Port Watson Street daily. He feels the merchants downtown would also benefit. Council Member Hyde has some volunteers to help. It might also be good advertising and a worthwhile activity.

Andrew Damiano states he thought John McNerney estimated about \$1,400. to build a shelter and supplies. Corporation Counsel was concerned about the liability issue so he went to Homer to see what the Village does. The Village does not take part in the skating rink. The property belongs to the church and the fire department maintains and creates the rink. That municipality is not directly engaged in sponsoring that activity. The liability is huge and we need to talk to a NYMIR representative regarding this. The liability would be similar to the skateboard park liability. This could be investigated.

Steve Muka explains the SPCA also came to the Council this year asking for \$1,500. He feels this was a worthwhile program and it's the right thing to do to give them the \$1,500. All the other communities did chip in. The \$1,500. was going to a fund to take care of medical problems for animals in the future.

There was no one further to speak; therefore the public hearing was closed at 7:30 PM.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM followed by a salute to the flag.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tom Michaels of 22 Williams Street speaks with regard to the bird problem, which has been an issue for four or five years. We are looking for some kind of a resolution to this the problem. This is very prominent in the 8th ward as well as the 5th ward. He is disturbed it has taken over four years to come up with a solution.

Hank Zajd of 28 William Street speaks regarding the crow population in Cortland. It is continuously growing. He has spoken with Council Member Hennessy. She has informed him of some action that could be taken. They keep growing every year. If we don't do something now we are going to be like Auburn, which has over 10,000 every night. They are everywhere throughout the 8th ward. The cars and house are covered with droppings. It's very annoying to hose off your car every morning. They come during the winter and roost at night. There is a professor at Cornell who is doing research on crows. His dog won't go out at night. They attack other birds. A great horned owl is the only bird that will scare them away but will be overwhelmed by the volume of them. This is a small flock and if we don't do something it will get bigger. We need to disperse them.

Mayor Tytler states this is not a new problem. What does the Cornell Professor say about this? Mr. Zajd states that crows are intelligent and the Professor did not have much to offer. At one time there was a starling population problem, which were destroyed by water, when they eventually froze to death.

The crows seem to congregate over at the Senior Citizens. They did some work on the building with tar and such on the roof, and the smell seemed to drive them away. When the smell was gone the birds came back.

MINUTES

On the motion of Council Member Hennessy, seconded by Council Member Strangeway, voted and carried,

RESOLVED THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 13, 2001 BE APPROVED FOR FILING.

On the motion of Council Member Strangeway, seconded by Council Member Abdulla, voted and carried,

RESOLVED THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 20, 2001 BE APPROVED FOR FILING.

MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor is hoping to get a representative from the Grow Cortland Committee to make a presentation at the next Council Meeting.

We are still working with the County and the Sheriff's Department for the booking services. It looks like it will be a lengthy process but we are still working on it. The Mayor thanks everyone for the Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony especially the Fire Department who gave Santa a lift to the Showmobile.

The Mayor requests at the end of the meeting they resume into Executive Session for a personnel matter.

Ward 1 – Council Member Smith

Excused.

Ward 2 – Council Member Tobin

He also has had a number of calls regarding crows. He thinks loud noises will scare them away as well as the laser pointer.

Ward 3 – Council Member Abdulla

No report.

Ward 4 – Council Member Lissberger

Excused.

Ward 5 – Council Member Strangeway

The crows are a terrible problem. She keeps a light on at night and points it into the trees. The time to stop them is when they first start to roost. The light definitely helps. The noise also works. A brief discussion ensues on how to rid the birds.

Ward 6 – Council Member Hansen

Judging for the holiday decorating contest will take place between the 14th and the 17th of December. Anyone whose home is entered will need to make sure their lights are on between 5:00 PM and 8:00 PM. The awards will be presented at the Council Meeting on the 18th. Eight awards (one in each ward) will be given and one award for best in all. Anyone can enter. The next ward meeting will be next Wednesday at the Grange at 7:00 PM. The City reapportionment committee is meeting tonight after the council meeting. They are disturbed the County took the action of deciding what the reapportionment is without telling us they were meeting.

Ward 7 – Council Member Hyde

Council Member Hyde asks if an item can be added to the agenda. Mr. Johnny Stevens has approached him to decorate the World War I Memorial and Courthouse Park in red, white, and blue ribbon.

On the motion of Council Member Hansen, seconded by Council Member Tobin, voted and carried,

RESOLVED TO ALLOW COUNCIL MEMBER HYDE TO PLACE A CHRISTMAS TREE IN COUTHOUSE AND PARK AND DECORATE THE TREE AND THE COLUMNS WITH RED, WHITE, AND BLUE RIBBONS.

Ward 8 – Council Member Hennessy

The crows are a big problem. To say there is only one thousand is an understatement. She has one quote from Sweeney's Pest Control. It would likely be a few hundred dollars. They use

noisemakers and you have to be specially licensed to use this. She would like Council approval to do this. Despite what the County says, this has to be a health issue. Labor per night is about \$50.00. A brief discussion ensues. Council Member Hennessy will notify the neighbors with a flier and by the Cortland Standard. The Council agrees to appropriate \$500.00 to this cause. A suggestion was made by Mr. Zajd to not leave any garbage around before the noisemakers start.

On the motion of Council Member Hennessy, seconded by Council Member Abdulla, voted and carried,

RESOLVED TO APPROPRIATE \$500.00 FROM THE BUILDING AND GROUNDS CONTRACTUAL LINE FOR PEST ELIMINATION SERVICES.

AGENDA

Item No 1 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the Youth Bureau's use of land located at the Water Board facilities for a cross-country ski program.

On the motion of Council Member Hennessy, seconded by Council Member Abdulla, voted and carried,

RESOLUTION APPROVED AUTHORIZING THE YOUTH BUREAU'S USE OF LAND LOCATED AT THE WATER BOARD FACILITIES FOR A CROSS-COUNTRY SKI PROGRAM.

Item No. 2 – Consideration of a Resolution authorizing amendments to Chapter 16, Article II of the Code of Ordinances relating to Taxicabs and Taxicab Drivers.

On the motion of Council Member Hansen, seconded by Council Member Hennessy, voted and carried,

RESOLUTION APPROVED AUTHORIZING AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 16, ARTICLE II OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES RELATING TO TAXICABS AND TAXICAB DRIVERS.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On the motion of Council Member Abdulla, seconded by Council Member Hansen, voted and carried,

RESOLVED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:05 PM TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL MATTERS.

On the motion of Council Member Hansen, seconded by Council Member Abdulla, voted and carried,

RESOLVED TO COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 9:15 PM.

On the motion of Council Member Strangeway, seconded by Council Member Hennessy, voted and carried,

RESOLVED TO GO INTO THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING.

On the motion of Council Member Hyde, seconded by Council Member Abdulla, voted and carried,

RESOLVED THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED AT 9:15 PM.

MAYOR

CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolutions were presented to the Mayor in the time required and were approved by him.