



City Council Minutes
The City of Cortland

December 20, 2005

Council Meeting #23
December 20, 2005
Regular Business Session
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

Public Hearing: Proposed Local Law No. 2 - The adoption of a local law which creates the position of Superintendent of the Water Department.

No Comments
Public Hearing Closed

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one was present to speak

Minutes of December 6, 2005

RESOLUTION #140 OF 2005 - Approve the minutes of December 6, 2005 as amended.

By: Alderman Morey
Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

Approved: Ayes - 8
Nays - 0

Bills were no bills to receive.

MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor attended Downtown Partnership Organization meeting. Boards are forming nicely and they will soon be going out to look for an executive director. He attended the Hampton Christmas Day with Santa. A special thank you to them, they gave away about one thousand gifts to children in attendance as well as Christmas trees to needy families. He wished to give them much credit. He attended the BDC/IDA meeting and also met with BDC and potential new business for the community. He attended the Youth Bureau Christmas party.

He met with students at Parker School that were winners of the CARE program. He attended retirement party for John Lutz as well as attending the PBA dinner at Corey Union. He swore in Derrick Reynolds as a new firefighter today. Senator Seward was there and he handed out \$295,000 in various grants for fire department, 1890 House and Cortland Sports Complex. Some fire departments got defibrillators, communications equipment and a heat sensor. From there he attended East End Community Center Roundtable with Senator Seward to discuss the Byrne grant funding.

Ward 1 - Alderman Faraoni

Since this is his last meeting, he would like to thank his Ward for allowing him to serve them for the past four (4) years. He also thanked all of the departments that he worked with and the department heads and he also thanked Mayor Gallagher, Andy Damiano and the Council, noting that they worked together and became friends.

Ward 2 - Alderman Terwilliger

Things have been quiet and snowy in the Ward. She wished everyone a Happy Holiday.

Ward 3 - Alderman Morey

She inquired if any money was allocated for crows. She asked that the request be placed on the agenda for tonight. She received a couple of calls. James Street, the side that the cemetery is on, there are a lot of crows roosting there and something has to be done. She thanked all of the residents in the third Ward. It's been her pleasure to serve and she thanked the Council, the Mayor, Mr. Damiano, and Corporation Counsel. She has enjoyed being an Alderman, it has been a privilege and she thanked all of the department heads and all of the City employees. She thinks that they do an excellent job and she knows that they have gone above and beyond every time that she has asked any of them to assist in any issues that have concerned the third Ward. She also wished Amy Cobb and the next Council the best of luck.

Ward 4 - Alderman Guido

Things have been quiet in the Ward. He thanked all of the City employees for the professional job that they do. He thanked the people of the fourth Ward, and wished

good luck to Nick DeCarlo and the next Council and the Mayor, Mr. Damiano, Mr. Knickerbocker and everyone.

Ward 5 - Alderman Quail

He has had some crows reported, so he thanked Alderman Morey for placing that issue on the agenda. The other day that it snowed, Valley View Drive, was somewhat of a disaster. That was a real challenge. He complemented all of the people on the Holiday Decorating Committee and also in the City; he felt that there were some tremendous decorations. He was glad to see the cleanup progress being made on the Wickwire Building. He thanked Counsel Knickerbocker for his research on 12 Winter Street. It has been a real challenge. He will also be bringing in a list of street lights that are being left on. He also told Aldermen Faraoni, Morey and Guido, that it had been a pleasure to work with them over the past four (4) years. They may have had some differences, but they always worked as a team. He felt that was important. He noted that they always kept the bigger picture in focus, that the Council has improved the quality of life in the City and that they have dealt with a number of controversial issues, but maintained their focus and the Council made good decisions. He is proud of the Council's accomplishments in that time and would compare it favorably against any previous Council's accomplishments. He cherished the friendships that were made and hoped that they would keep in touch. He also asked that the Council approve the purchase of a plaque so that the names of Council members who had served ten (10) plus years, could be placed on that. He appreciates the commitment that they have made to the City. He notes that there are three (3) of them.

Ward 6 - Alderman Feiszli

She thanked the Code Office for taking care of a couple of issues. One was an issue of garbage being piled up on a porch and another one was two (2) abandoned vehicles on a residential lot. Another issue she has asked Code to look at was the growing number of Pods, those storage containers that are around the City. She has two (2) that she knows of on Grant Street and the openings of the last Pod is right on the edge of the sidewalk. Last week there was a truck parked partially on the sidewalk and that was when children were walking to school. She hopes that by working with the Code Office and with Corporation Counsel, they can come up with some type of ordinance for that. She hasn't received any call regarding crows, but has received some regarding skunks. Those have been received from the Morningside Drive and Yaman Park area. She contacted the Police Department and the trapper could find a place to place the traps. One particular house just reeked of the skunk smell. There is a recipe to get rid of that odor and if anyone would like that, just contact her office for the recipe. She also contacted DPW. She received a call regarding a concern about a bottleneck of trees and debris and she has requested that DPW remove them before the spring thaw.

Ward 7 - Alderman Partigianoni

There was a Community that Cares Meeting held at the Youth Bureau by Chairman Joanne Wickman. He is also belatedly announcing that the Youth Girls' Basketball

League played Saturday morning at the County Office Building. They play three (3) games every Saturday morning before packed houses of parents and grandparents. He urged everyone to take in one of these games. He has been in contact with the DPW three (3) times because of calls that he had received and his observations. It has been a tough winter so far and the ice is difficult to deal with. They assured him that they were aware of the fact and are working to alleviate the ice problem. He attended the meeting with Sen. Seward and the Mayor at the East End Community Center and several City officials. It was pretty much a progress report of the Community Center's operations over the last year and reviewing their achievements and their plans for the future. He felt that they were well received. He received a call on Friday from Jim Yaman. He donated two (2) sets of publications. One (1) is the First Hundred Years in America of the Lebanese Community and the other one (1) is a second edition called, "Other Voices". It tells of the Lebanese in the communities, who made their names known and were very successful. There's Jim Yaman, biggest real estate dealer in the County. Mr. Calale of Homer, four (4) time Mayor of Homer, the Sopps, the Ferris', Abdallahs, who had the largest dairy; Isafs, the Joseph's, and Hage. He may have missed some, but those are the main ones. One of the things of interest was that they started in Solon and they had their own little one room schoolhouse and then they migrated to the South End on Railway Avenue, where a lot of them worked at Wickwire's and Crescent. Jim Yaman was pretty proud when he told him that seventeen (17) people lived on South Avenue and fifteen (15) received degrees and most of their mothers and fathers didn't speak very good English. The reason he is bringing this up is that these will be available for loan down at the Community Center. There is also another publication from Dr. Joseph. There was also a Memories of Migration which Dr. DelVecchio presented in July and he is working on another like event.

Ward 8 - Alderman Michales

Last week Superior missed some blue bins on Hyatt Street. That was quickly resolved the same day. He also attended Sen. Seward's presentation along with the Mayor at the Armory. He witnessed the distribution of various grants to area fire departments. He wanted to make a note to those Alderpersons who will be leaving. It has been a pleasure serving with them and they will be missed. He wished them luck and asked them to stay in touch.

Item No. 1 - The prize presentations for the Holiday Decorating Contest.

The Mayor took the opportunity to thank Butch Hyde for kicking this off again and he wanted to give credit to everyone who spent time decorating their houses. Mr. Hyde noted that it was a successful contest. There were eight (8) ward winners and one (1) overall winner.

- Ward 1 - Quintin and Maria Wooldridge
- Ward 2 - Ed Evans
- Ward 3 - Richard and Deb Petrucco
- Ward 4 - Leon Harvey
- Ward 5 - Sam and Elsie Ferro

Ward 6 - Richard and Judy Dugas
Ward 7 - Dennis and Anita Musson
Ward 8 - Bob and Charleen Goodale

Mr. Hyde congratulated all of them for participating in the contest. The Committee worked hard and finally determined a winner. Debbie Rainbow from Stone Travel was present to award the grand prize and that was awarded to Sam and Elsie Ferro. Mr. Hyde invited everyone to come down town to celebrate New Year's Eve on Main Street. Alderman Faraoni noted that choosing a winner in his Ward was a difficult decision and he noted honorable mentions went to Tim and Monika Wadsworth and Ralph Smith. Alderman Morey had an honorable mention in the third Ward, the Picciano's and she thanked Mike Dexter for his hard work in decorating the Water Works. She also congratulated Richard and Beb Petrucco and she will deliver a gift to them. Alderman Michales pointed out that it was a hard decision to judge. The second place winners were Brian Miles and Terry Miller and an honorable mention went to Chris and Jane Bistocchi. He thanked them and everyone who participated. Alderman Partigianoni, didn't pick second and third places. He didn't pick runners up because he had so many last year and they were all so close this year. Alderman Quail plans to take pictures of his winners and have them mounted on plaques as gifts for them. He thanked everyone for participating.

The Mayor noted that two items would be added to tonight's agenda. One being the proposed acquisition of 12 Winter Street and one the crow issue.

RESOLUTION #141 OF 2005 - Consideration of the adoption of Local Law No. 2 of 2005 which creates the position of Superintendent of the Water Department.

The Mayor stated that this is about a position, not a person. This is the first step in the reorganization of the Water Department, which will help improve the coordination between the Water Department and DPW. It's noted that the outside crew that's in the Water Department, should be moved to the DPW, which will allow them to work more closely in the summer and also make them more available in the winter so that they can be used as a resource to plow snow. This is the first step in reorganization and consolidation for greater efficiency. Alderman Partigianoni noted that it is a restructuring. The whole community will benefit once the restructuring takes place. Alderman Terwilliger asked what the criteria for the position would be. The Mayor gave her a copy of the Civil Service job description. Alderman Partigianoni did find fault that the job description had not been provided to them prior to this evening. Alderman Morey asked that since he had been working closely on this over the past two (2) years, had anything changed? She asked if they decided about creating a department head when we took over the Water Board and that department head was to mirror the other department heads. Was any of this information new? Alderman Terwilliger felt that it was difficult to make a decision when they were just given the information this evening. Alderman Partigianoni noted that it was a new job description which they should have had earlier than five o'clock this afternoon.

By: Alderman Partigianoni
Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

Approved: Alderman Faraoni - Aye
Alderman Terwilliger - Nay
Alderman Morey - Aye
Alderman Guido - Aye
Alderman Quail - Aye
Alderman Feiszli - Nay
Alderman Partigianoni - Nay
Alderman Michales - Aye

Approved: Ayes - 5
Nays - 3

RESOLUTION #142 OF 2005 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the submission of a grant application to the New York State Department of State Quality Communities Program for Environmental Protection Funds.

Linda Armstrong was present to make the presentation for Thoma Development. Wes Pettee had put the application together. She was aware that Alderman Feiszli had contacted Mr. Pettee. This is to seek funding for a new comprehensive land use plan. All they are asking for is the adoption of the resolution which commits to a 10% match for the funds and this is a project they put together. She showed some examples from other cities. It isn't just land use planning, there will be some other issues; infrastructure, transportation, economy, etc. The most important component of this is an action plan matrix which will be a summary of all the issues that are raised and discussed, what the time frame is, etc. They are committing to a \$6,000 match. It could be cash or any combination thereof. The ultimate goal of this is to get the public involved in getting a vision of the City's future. Another goal is in grant writing, whether or not you are successful depends so much on whether you are consistent with adoptive plans. Most funding sources want to know that you are not shooting from the hip. They want to know that you have identified this issue and you are looking to resolve or address that particular issue. Grant writing success depends on this. This process will also help other agencies. The actual program is land use planning, environmental protection funds that are administered by the Department of State. This will identify the issues, the funding sources and what the specific issues are that need to be dealt with. That's what plans do. It doesn't go any farther than identification, but there could be some recommendations. This is part of the process to find funding for issues that have been identified and this will put the City in a little bit better place when the grant sources become available. Every municipality should do one of these. An economically stressed community pays a lesser percentage of 10% and the City is economically stressed. Wes Pettee had worked in Norwich and did a comprehensive plan. We are applying for \$54,000 and the \$6,000 can be a match. The comprehensive grant would be for the whole City. The more input and participation from the public the better.

By: Alderman Quail
Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

Approved: Ayes - 8
Nays - 0

RESOLUTION #143 OF 2005 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the creation of two police officer positions, but leaving them vacant and unfunded until the City receives notification that a vacancy is forthcoming (expedites the hiring process).

Alderman Morey noted that this was a good idea that came out of the work session. Alderman Partigianoni noted that this was similar to what's being done for the fire department.

By: Alderman Morey
Seconded: Alderman Michales

Approved: Ayes - 8
Nays - 0

RESOLUTION #144 OF 2005 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with SEIU Local 200 United for the period January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2008.

By: Alderman Faraoni
Seconded: Alderman Terwilliger

Approved: Ayes - 8
Nays - 0

RESOLUTION #145 OF 2005 - Approve a Resolution authorizing the Mayor and Corporation Counsel to prepare and execute the documents necessary to effectuate the acquisition of the property located at 12 Winter Street at no cost.

Mr. Damiano stated that the Planning Commission, at their meeting tonight, voted unanimously to recommend that the Council proceed with this. It was noted that Corporation Counsel did a lot of work to make this happen. Alderman Partigianoni noted that this worked pretty good with the Crandall Street acquisition, but he did note that on this property, there were back taxes owed in the amount of about \$20,000. When these taxes are not paid, the City has to assume the school tax. He said that not only did the City lose \$20,000 in taxes, but also incurred the cost of the school taxes. Mr. Damiano stated that the school taxes were included in the \$20,000 figure. Alderman Partigianoni noted that there could possibly be as many as one hundred (100) homes in the City in this situation.

By: Alderman Quail
Seconded: Alderman Guido

Approved: Ayes - 8
Nays - 0

RESOLUTION #146 OF 2005 - Approve a Resolution authorizing the following budget transfer in the 2006 General Fund Budget to fund a program to address the crow problem: Transfer \$1,000.00 from Account #A1990.400 (Contingencies) to Account #A3120.415-01 (Police - Professional Services).

Alderman Morey noted that for the four (4) years that she had been on the Council, they had allocated funds and she wondered if there were any noisemakers left. Mr. Damiano thought that the stock was pretty depleted. He thought a working number for these was about \$1,000. These noisemakers seem to work. It was noted that the crows are congregating in the Cemetery which seemed to be a good place as opposed to the Court House. Alderman Morey noted that the crows roost in lit areas that are not densely populated with trees and the reason for this is that the natural predator is the owl and they will not roost in a densely wooded area. Alderman Michales felt that the money might be better utilized if the City used electronic deterrents instead. Alderman Morey asked that they allocate the \$1,000 now and let the new Council decide how to best spend it on crow eradication.

By: Alderman Morey
Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

Approved: Ayes - 8
Nays - 0

The Mayor took this opportunity to read a letter to each of the three (3) outgoing Councilpersons. He thanked them for their service and dedication to the City. He wished everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Adjournment

By: Alderman Morey
Seconded: Alderman Faraoni

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 20TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2005. I FURTHER CERTIFY THE FOREGOING RESOLUTIONS WERE PRESENTED TO THE MAYOR IN THE TIME REQUIRED.

JOHN O. REAGAN – CITY CLERK

MAYOR THOMAS GALLAGHER