



City Council Minutes  
The City of Cortland

October 17, 2006

Council Meeting #18  
October 17, 2006  
Regular Business Session  
City Hall  
7:00 PM

Present: Alderman VanGorder, Terwilliger, Cobb, DeCarlo,  
Quail, Feiszli, Partigianoni and Michales

Staff Present: Corporation Counsel Lawrence Knickerbocker and  
City Clerk John O. Reagan

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG.

Public Comment

Kay Zaharis from the Cortland City Library was present to make an announcement regarding statistics on Library usage. She also asked if the 2007 City Budget was out. The Mayor indicated that the 2007 Preliminary Budget had been filed in the City Clerk's Office, the Council had just received their copies and they will not be working on the budget until the next Council session.

The young people who were coming to make a presentation had not yet arrived and the Mayor proceeded with the meeting.

Minutes of October 3, 2006

**RESOLUTION #109** OF 2006 - Approve the minutes of October 3, 2006.

By: Alderman DeCarlo  
Seconded: Alderman Partigianoni

Approved: Ayes - 8  
Nays - 0

Bills were reviewed and received.

There was discussion regarding City's ability to recoup monies spent on the feline care expenses from the Wheeler Avenue property. The Mayor and Corporation Counsel indicated that they believed that the owners of the property had sufficient funds to reimburse the City and would be pursuing that through criminal court.

### Mayor's Report

Attended the Works Career Center Disability Awareness lunch at the Holiday Inn and attended the South End strategic plan meeting at Randall School. He attended Round Table at SUNY Cortland. He also met with the new CEO's of Marietta Corporation as well as attending the VIP reception at SUNY Main Street.

He attended Tom Michales Ward meeting. He attended the 40 Below kick-off. He also did a radio interview with WXHC.

### Public Comment (continued)

The individuals arrived for the presentation regarding the recent events at the Skate Board Park. New equipment was received for the park from Missouri. They thanked Reality Check for the recent donation enabling the Committee to purchase the new equipment for the skate park. The committee also worked for five (5) years to raise funds to make additional purchases of equipment.

#### Ward 1 - Alderman VanGorder

She has received a few calls regarding code issues and she is also continuing work on the Wheeler Avenue cat house issues.

#### Ward 2 - Alderman Terwilliger

She attended the Public Safety Commission meeting last week. They talked about the odd even parking on Jewett and Grace Streets. The request was denied. She was appreciative to the gentlemen on the committee for listening to the problems of the constituents in that area. She will continue to work on their problems and will try to come up with some more ideas to alleviate their parking problems for single family houses on those streets. Other than that, the Ward has been quiet.

#### Ward 3 - Alderman Cobb

She thanked all of the volunteers who came out to help with the Otter Creek clean up project. It was a great success. She also thanked the Soil and Water Conservation Department for all of the work they did throughout the County to make whole project a success. She thanked Coffeemia for donating their coffee for the volunteers. She felt that this was a good start and she urged everyone to keep working toward the common goal to try to find out where all the water is coming from. Other than that the Ward has been pretty quiet. She did have one complaint and she is working on that.

#### Ward 4 - Alderman DeCarlo

His Ward has been quiet. He did make it down to the Pumpkinfest and had a good time.

Alderman Cobb noted that she, too, attended the festival and noted that it was very crowded. She wondered if the location could be expanded to include Court Street. She felt it might be necessary.

#### Ward 5 - Alderman Quail

He attended the South End Strategic Plan session. The session was by Ann Hodgkin and Cindy Teeter. New issues were brought to light and they hoped to redefine and bring more greenery and vibrancy into the South End. He is having a Ward meeting next Thursday, October 26 at Randall School Library. Part of the meeting will deal with fire safety and part, he hopes to get the Power Point presentation from Cindy Teeter and share that with the rest of the Ward. Other than a few code issues that he is dealing with, the Ward has been relatively quiet. He noted that they do have some piles of leaves accumulating.

#### Ward 6 - Alderman Feiszli

She attended the National Disability Awareness Luncheon with Mayor Gallagher. She learned as an employer; that because of a disability, an employee may have to work harder and the project may take longer, but the end product is that the employee tends to remain on the job longer and the quality of work is superior. The keynote speaker gave many examples of the benefits of hiring the disabled. Afterwards she spoke with a representative of ACCESS Independence and she felt that the Planning Commission and the City might benefit from meeting with them to discuss public buildings and issues of accessibility. She attended a session of Cortland Downtown Partnership and many people were recognized for their involvement in helping downtown be a better place to live, shop and to work. She spoke with Kathy Gallagher about some ideas that she had regarding students who were available and projects that they could work on. She is looking at some thing in her Ward that they could work on.

She received a response from the railroad in regards to cleaning up their debris with the railroad ties and they should be cleaned up shortly. She was also told that the Chief of Police with the railroad is going to get together with the Cortland police to handle the trespassing and vandalism with the properties that boarder the tracks of the railroad. She had an issue with rodents because of junk around a residence in her Ward and the Code Department issued a violation. It was taken care of and the neighbors also called, indicating it was taken care of. She thanked the Code Department for their prompt response.

She has received a tentative list of streets in her Ward that are scheduled for mill and fill in 2007 and it will depend largely on the cost of asphalt. If anyone would like to know what streets are listed, please call her. She also asked that constituents call her at her

office rather than at her house and she will be changing that on the City website. The City has informed that the proposed bus shelter has been purchased and they are awaiting delivery. There is an agreement that will be signed stating that if the bus company should move that the shelter will belong to the County. The Mobil station that is across from the Holiday Inn is closed right now and going through some renovations. She believed that this still had to be approved by DOT, but they are moving the convenience store to the opposite end and enlarging it. They are also adding a drive-thru for the car wash and a doughnut shop. It will be closed for a period of time.

#### Ward 7 - Alderman Partigianoni

He also attended the Disability Awareness Banquet. The guest speaker was quite impressive. They honored two (2) employees and two (2) employers. The Mayor read a proclamation. He returned yesterday from his vacation, but he noted that he had been in touch via telephone and email. Throughout his travels through several states, he was irritated by the huge differential in the price of gas compared to Cortland, New York. In three (3) states, he gassed up from \$1.97 to \$1.99 and \$2.01 to \$2.08. Upon his return home, it's \$2.65. He isn't sure people in this area have a lot of recourse. The Mayor noted that the Attorney General's office had been contacted in this regard and it was found that it is not price gouging.

It was announced that the Autism Awareness Seminar at the East End Community Center last week was attended by about fifty-five (55) people. There was a lot of interest in this session and there was a lot of audience participation.

Tomorrow night, is the second annual Carol L. Folmer Award event which will be held at Tinelli's Hathaway House. Friday, October 27, is Fun Night at the Community Center. It begins at 6:00 PM. The other event is Sunday, 4:00 PM. The Cortland Interfaith Sponsoring Committee ceremony will take place at God's Lighthouse of Praise Church at 98 Port Watson Street. This group is an affiliate of a national church network and many groups will be taking part in this.

#### Ward 8 - Alderman Michales

He attended the Kick Off of the 40 and Under Club last week as well as the Disability Awareness Luncheon at the Holiday Inn. Senator Seward presented monetary grants to various organizations last Wednesday. He thanked the Executive Director of the SPCA as well as Asst. Fire Chief Glover and Zoning Officer Amy Bertini for being guest speakers at the his Ward meeting last week. He thanked the Mayor for being there. He attended the Pumpkinfest as one of the judges last Saturday. It is the largest festival he has seen to this point and it was great. He introduced Mike Dexter and gave him the opportunity to address the Council.

Mike Dexter noted that he and Steve Broyles spent three (3) hours on Saturday planting red bud and ginko trees at the Water Works on behalf of the Landscape and Design Commission with funds that were donated by National Grid. He went there tonight and one (1) of the trees has been uprooted already. Once again, he is very disappointed.

Luckily it wasn't broken, and can be replanted. They did this on their own time to try to beautify the Water Works. He wanted everyone to know that this will not be tolerated.

**RESOLUTION #110** OF 2006 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with Thoma Development for program administration and delivery services for the FY2006 Community Development Block Grant program and the FY 2006 HOME Grant program.

Bernie Thoma noted that this would be two (2) separate contracts.

By: Alderman DeCarlo  
Seconded: Alderman Partigianoni

Approved: Ayes - 8  
Nays - 0

**RESOLUTION #111** OF 2006 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the submission of an application for a grant from the Governor's Office for Small Cities in support of Cortland Plastics International.

Bernie Thoma noted that the \$350,000 will come to the City as a grant and they are proposing that half of it be made available as a loan to the company, which they will pay back to the City and the other half of it would be available as deferred payment loan that would eventually be forgiven if they met their job creation goals. That still has to be formally approved by the State. So that may not be the exact breakdown, but it is his feeling that it will be some type of grant/loan. Alderman Michales asked who oversees the number of jobs created. Bernie Thoma noted that there is a process for Thoma to follow which is mandated by the Governor's Office and it will be overseen by the City. It was noted that the whole company operation would be located in Cortland, this is not a branch of a larger corporation with other company sites.

By: Alderman VanGorder  
Seconded: Alderman Quail

Approved: Ayes - 8  
Nays - 0

**RESOLUTION #112** OF 2006 - Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the resubmission of a grant application to the Shared Municipal Services Incentive Fund in support of the generator project at the Armory Building.

It was asked if the City was fully responsible for this. Bernie Thoma noted that the City was partnering with the school and they would be the co-applicant. He noted that the State will fund 90% of the cost, the City already has \$100,000 toward the project and they are asking for the remainder. The price has gone up since they applied last year. Last year they asked for \$200,000, but since talking with the engineers this year, the cost of copper has gone up, so the estimate is now \$243,000, so that is why the request is for \$143,000. It is within the limits and if the grant is received, the City will have all

the money it needs for this project. This money will be used for the electrical and mechanical work to hook the generator up to the Armory and the school building.

By: Alderman Partigianoni  
Seconded: Alderman VanGorder

Approved: Ayes - 8  
Nays - 0

Item No. 4 - Discussion regarding funding for the East End Community Center.

Alderman Partigianoni noted that the bad news was that there was no funding, at this time, for the East End Community Center. The good news was that there was a possibility that funding might become available. He noted that almost two (2) years ago, the Police Outreach Program and Senator Seward's Office released a grant for \$32,000 and the City matched that and hence, they were there at the Community Center. Those funds were only in place for one (1) year. It was hoped that more funds would be coming, but they have not come. They have been without funds since February 1. He has been waiting patiently for funds. He has been asked by several Council members as to what the original agreement was. Senator Seward's office funded the Police Outreach Program and the City funds financed the Community Center. So when you think about it, whether the funds arrived or not, the City had to come up with the matching funds to keep the Center open. The Mayor noted that they had almost been guaranteed by the Senator that they will be getting the grant. Alderman Partigianoni didn't know if the grant would cover everything and he wasn't sure if the City would have to come up with matching funds. Ces Scott noted that the City would have to come up with some percentage of matching funds.

It was asked how much money was spent a month to keep the Center operating. The Mayor noted it cost about \$1,000 a month. Ces Scott noted that since February 1, 2006, the Youth Bureau had been covering the expense of the Center to keep it open. She discussed some changes in the funding of grants. She noted that there is a tremendous amount of activity at the Center and they have applied for other grants and have just found out that they did not receive one (1) of the grants. She is frustrated and now she is asking if they don't receive any grants, will the City absorb the minimal costs just to keep the doors of the Center open. There are no staffing costs involved. She noted that there is a tremendous response to the programs that have been presented there and she feels that they are meeting the needs of the community. She asks that the Council consider supplying the funds to keep the Center open while they continue to pursue grants.

Alderman Partigianoni noted that even if funds were received, the Council still had to consider an amount of money for matching funds. He wanted everyone to know that they weren't just idly sitting by; they were in constant contact with Senator Seward's office. The Senator has a good opinion of the Center and wants to keep it open. The expense to keep the Center open is about \$11,579 a year.

Alderman Feiszli noted that she was all in favor of the original grant, but her major concern was, what was happening now. She was also concerned that they were using another facility, when they already had City facilities that they were paying utilities for and perhaps they could look at some existing facilities as opposed to paying rent for someone else's property. She asked that they consider this. Alderman Partigianoni spoke with Bernie Thoma and found out that there is no grant money for opening up a center that is not City owned. Bernie Thoma noted that it is easier to find funding for renovating or capital costs for a City owned property. Alderman Quail had hoped that this would become a self-sustaining organization and perhaps they could charge a minimal fee for programs. Ces Scott also noted that there was not funding available for handicapped accessibility to the building because the City didn't own the building.

Alderman Partigianoni noted that he had a whole folder of information and support for the Center. Several Council members felt that groups and organizations could pay a fee to use the building. It was also noted that there were no grants for sustaining a Center, just for building or renovating one, so that would have to be considered and budgeted for. The Mayor reminded them of the original intent of the grant for the Community Center and that was to put the police down in that area. Then the Community Center took on a life of its own because of that and it grew out of that original grant and now there is no way to sustain it.

### **Adjournment**

By: Alderman Quail  
Seconded: Alderman Cobb

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 17<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF OCTOBER 2006. I FURTHER CERTIFY THE FOREGOING RESOLUTIONS WERE PRESENTED TO THE MAYOR IN THE TIME REQUIRED.**

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**JOHN O. REAGAN, CITY CLERK**

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**MAYOR THOMAS GALLAGHER**