



City Council Minutes
The City of Cortland
June 24, 2009

Council Meeting #12
June 24, 2009
Special Session
City Hall
4:00 PM

Present: Alderman VanGorder, Dye, Tobin, Feiszli, Hamilton and Michales

Mayor Gallagher calls the twelfth Common Council meeting of the year to order at 4:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

RESOLUTION #71 OF 2009 – Consideration of a Resolution to appoint Bryan Gazda as Director of Administration and Finance for the City of Cortland, New York contingent upon terms, conditions and benefits package for his employment in the position.

Alderman Dye noted that there was a good applicant pool and it's nice to know that they have gotten someone who is as interested in the City as the committee was as interested in him. He feels he is a good fit for the City. Mayor Gallagher noted that Mr. Gazda was willing to start June 25, 2009 without a contract in place. Mr. Gazda, Corporation Counsel Lawrence Knickerbocker and Interim Director of Administration and Finance Mazza will be sitting down next Wednesday to work out a contract. The salary was discussed at being \$100,000. Mr. Gazda has agreed that he would take \$95,000 up front, go through a six (6) month probationary period and then get the additional \$5,000 after the six (6) months. Mr. Gazda noted that he and his wife are aware of the residency requirement and are looking diligently for a home. He inquired about the Council's feelings if they were unable to find a suitable home, what their feelings were if they found a home slightly outside of the City limits. Alderman VanGorder feels very strongly, and she knows others feel this way as well, that he should reside in the City and that it should be in his contract. Alderman Feiszli asked how long Interim Director of Administration and Finance Mazza would be staying on in the transition. Mayor Gallagher noted that it would be up to the Council as to how long they would want to keep him on. Alderman Feiszli asked if the union contract negotiations had begun. Mayor Gallagher noted that they had not begun, but would have to begin soon. Mayor Gallagher felt that contract negotiations should not be part of the Director of Administration and Finance's job when the department heads reported directly to him. He felt it should be done by an outside agency. Interim Director of Administration and Finance Mazza has spoken with Mary Lou Conroe of Coughlan and Gerhardt who is a labor negotiations attorney. This depends upon what the Council

wants to do. They can hire this law firm to handle contracts, if they choose. Mayor Gallagher feels that the Director of Administration and Finance should be in on contract negotiations, but the actual negotiations should be handled by an outside agency. Mayor Gallagher noted that when the position was advertised; contract negotiations was not listed as one of the aspects of the position. Alderman Feiszli asked where the Council could obtain a copy of the letter listing the qualifications for the position. Mayor Gallagher noted that it was included in the Council packet previously. Alderman VanGorder asked if the Council would be able to see Mr. Gazda's contract for the Council's approval and they can make any changes they wish. Mr. Gazda noted that he would not be asking for any better health insurance coverage than what the City staff currently has. He also noted that he wouldn't ask for any additional vacation time other than what the staff currently has. Alderman Michales asked what length of contract Mr. Gazda was looking for. Mayor Gallagher noted that the City usually did a three (3) year contract. Alderman Feiszli stated that she felt the Council had not received any information on Mr. Gazda. Mayor Gallagher noted that this was the Mayor's appointment with the Council's approval. Mayor Gallagher went on to state that he brought three (3) other people in on the negotiations, which had never happened before. Alderman Feiszli asked who had set the salary at \$100,000. Mayor Gallagher noted that it had been placed in the advertisement and the salary figure had been established by the Committee that had met with a recommendation from the outgoing Director. Alderman Feiszli noted that her comments were nothing personal. She just always wanted to have sufficient information before making a decision. She asked Mr. Gazda to share his opinions of the City, so far. He declined to make comments on the financial situation of the City; he asked that he be able to be in the position for a few weeks before he gave his opinion. He noted that the City was a fine City. He had been reading Council meeting minutes to familiarize himself. He felt he was fiscally conservative. He also felt that he would be doing two (2) to three (3) year projections. He felt that anything longer than that would be subject to change and a lot of hard work would then go out the window. Alderman Feiszli asked for his opinion regarding policies and procedures. She noted that she had been looking at a vehicle use policy or a cell phone policy. She wanted to know if he had past experience with establishing policies. Mr. Gazda indicated that he had numerous experiences with writing policies. This included credit card policies, vehicle use, etc. Alderman Feiszli noted that one of the things that was badly in need of updating was a revision of the City Charter. She asked if he had been given a wish list of the things the City would like him to accomplish. It was noted that usually a wish list was given after the contract is signed. Mayor Gallagher noted that Mr. Gazda has been well informed regarding what is going on in the City. He sees many positive points. Mr. Gazda stated that he has worked with IDA's previously and put in a small industrial park in a past position. Alderman Michales asked for his input as to the state of the City once he has been in the position for awhile. Alderman VanGorder noted that perhaps a good time would be in the beginning of August, so he could give his opinion as to where the City is headed. Alderman Michales noted that he would be facing the budget process in short order. It was noted that perhaps a review of the current year's budget could be done to make sure that departments are not overspending. Mr. Gazda noted that he would begin reviewing expenditure reports for all of the departments and review the cash flow. Alderman Feiszli noted that one of the items in the Charter was that the Director of Administration

and Finance was to give the Council quarterly financial reports and she would find that very helpful. Mr. Gazda noted that in the past, he had put out monthly expenditure reports and a cash flow. These were called Treasurer's Reports. Alderman Michales noted that Mr. Gazda might have some new ideas to share on how to present or provide information to the Council.

By: Alderman Dye
Seconded: Alderman Tobin

Approved: Ayes – 5
Nays – 1 (Feiszli)

Adjournment

By: Alderman Tobin
Seconded: Alderman VanGorder

Approved: Ayes – 6
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 SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CORTLAND, HELD ON THE 24th DAY OF JUNE 2009. I FURTHER CERTIFY THE FOREGOING RESOLUTIONS WERE PRESENTED TO THE MAYOR IN THE TIME REQUIRED.

JOHN O. REAGAN – CITY CLERK

MAYOR THOMAS GALLAGHER