



City Council Minutes
The City of Cortland
January 4, 2022

Council Meeting No. 1 of 2022
7:00 p.m. January 4, 2022
21 Court St., City Fire Hall & via Zoom

Public Hearing

A Public Hearing was opened at 7:02 p.m. regarding proposed changes in zoning for solar farms. No one was present to speak. The public hearing was closed at 7:04 p.m.

Call to Order and Roll Call

Mayor Steve called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m., and called the roll. The following Common Council Members were in attendance:

Wayne Schutt – First Ward Alderperson
Katy Silliman – Second Ward Alderperson
Mary Clare Pennello – Third Ward Alderperson
Patricia Lane – Fourth Ward Alderperson
Seth Thompson - Fifth Ward Alderperson
William Carpenter – Sixth Ward Alderperson
Troy Beckwith – Seventh Ward Alderperson
Thomas Michales – Eighth Ward Alderperson

Salute to the Flag

Moment of Silence/Reflection

Welcome

Fire Chief Friedman welcomed those in attendance to the fire station and made safety announcements.

Proclamations/Presentations

Swearing in of City Fire Police & Board of Engineers Officers

Kristen Gregory, Scott Fairbanks and Billie Sue Fairbanks were given the oath of office by Mayor Steve.

Recognize former City Officials for years of service

Mayor Steve thanked former Mayor Brian Tobin, and former Common Council Members Samantha Adams, Bruce Tytler, John Bennet and Jackie Chapman for their service and work on behalf of the City of Cortland.

Privilege of the Floor

Gerry Ruggiero congratulated newly elected officials. He stated that he had much to say about city business. There are issues that he said needed to be addressed including Cortland Downtown Partnership funds, legal cases involving the city, zoning issues and open meetings.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Steve stated that he is looking forward to working with the Council and city department heads. The next Council meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. January 18, 2022 at the city Water Department. He indicated that Council members will be able to see the upgraded facility.

Ward Reports

Ward 1: No report

Ward 2: Council Member Silliman said she is pleased that Council meetings are taking place at different city locations. She said there are problems with parking on the pavement and wrong way traffic especially on Clayton Ave. She has heard from constituents who are pleased that the Parker School project is moving forward.

Ward 3: Council Member Pennello said that she will work in a bi-partisan manner. She encourages her constituents to contact her.

Ward 4: Council Member Lane said she is honored to be part of the Council and will work to represent her ward and the city. She indicated that things are quiet in the ward while the college is on break.

Ward 5: Council Member Thompson said he has received building complaint calls and there are concerns about trash on front lawns. He added that the holiday lights that remain up are enjoyed.

Ward 6: Council Member Carpenter thanked the Code Department for their proactive work and good work ethic. He noted water, flooding and erosion issues in the ward, and thanked Mayor Steve for his assistance on these issues.

Ward 7: No report

Ward 8: Council Member Michales stated that this is his 18th year on the Council. He thanked returning Council Members and welcomed new Council Members. He said he has been impressed while working with Mayor Steve during the Mayor's first days in office and thanked him for his help with code issues.

Finance Report

Mayor Steve said that finance reports will be given the first meeting of each month and that work is being done to close out 2021 financials.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of December 21, 2021 were approved.

Motioned by: Council Member Silliman

Seconded by: Council Member Carpenter

Approved: Ayes – 8

Nays – 0

Resolution No. 1 of 2022 Appoint City Clerk

RESOLVED, that the Cortland Common Council does hereby affirm the Mayor’s appointment of Andrew Jewett to serve as City Clerk.

Motioned by: Council Member Beckwith

Seconded by: Council Member Carpenter

Approved: Ayes – 8

Nays – 0

Mr. Jewett was sworn in by Mayor Steve.

Resolution No. 2 of 2022 Appoint Corporation Counsel

RESOLVED, that the Cortland Common Council does hereby affirm the Mayor’s appointment of Arthur John Meldrim to serve as Corporation Counsel.

Motioned by: Council Member Beckwith

Seconded by: Council Member Michales

Approved: Ayes – 8

Nays – 0

Resolution No. 3 of 2022 Appoint Acting Mayor

RESOLVED, that Thomas Michales is hereby affirmed as Acting Mayor for the City of Cortland.

Motioned by: Council Member Pennello

Seconded by: Council Member Schutt

Discussion: The Mayor noted that Council Member Michaels helped him swear in new police officers, and that he is pleased to have the benefit of Mr. Michales’ 18 years of experience.

Approved: Ayes – 8

Nays – 0

Resolution No. 4 of 2022 Designate Bank Depositories for 2022

RESOLVED the following financial institutions are authorized for said purpose:

BANK NAME

NBT Bank

J. P Morgan Chase Bank N.A

M&T Bank

Tompkins Trust Company

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that collateral agreements, municipal funds protection and bank acknowledgements of the understanding of New York State Municipal and Finance Law be established with said banks during the term of this agreement which will be for a period not to exceed December 31st, 2024.

Motioned by: Council Member Carpenter

Seconded by: Council Member Beckwith

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Resolution No. 5 of 2022 Designate Signatories

RESOLVED, that the Cortland City Council does hereby authorize and approve the above-named individual(s) (Scott Steve, Mayor and Thomas Michales, Acting Mayor) to serve as signatories for the City of Cortland subject to applicable Charter and New York State laws.

Motioned by: Council Member Beckwith

Seconded by: Council Member Carpenter

Discussion: Council Member Beckwith asked for clarification that those previously authorized to serve as signatories would no longer have such authority. Mayor Steve confirmed that.

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Resolution No. 6 of 2022 Designate Official Newspapers

RESOLVED, that the Cortland Standard, published by the Cortland Standard Newspaper, 110 Main Street, Cortland, New York 13045, and The Cortland Area Tribune, PO Box 67, Dryden, NY 13053, be and hereby are designated as the official newspaper fairly representing the Cortland Common Council, for the period of January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2024.

Motioned by: Council Member Pennello

Seconded by: Council Member Schutt

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Resolution No. 7 of 2022 Reappoint Zoning Officer

RESOLVED, that that the Cortland Common Council does hereby affirm the Mayor’s appointment of Robert Rhea as the Zoning Officer.

Motioned by: Council Member Carpenter

Seconded by: Council Member Beckwith

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

Mr. Rhea was sworn in by Mayor Steve.

Resolution No. 8 of 2022 Appoint Members Zoning Board of Appeals

RESOLVED, that the Common Council doe hereby affirm the appointments of Kyle Davis of 39 Morning Side Drive, Cortland New York 13045 and Raymond Parker of 18 Hamlin Street, Cortland New York 13045 to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a term expiring December 31, 2025.

Motioned by: Council Member Carpenter

Seconded by: Council Member Michals

Discussion: Council Member Thompson inquired about the credentials of Mr. Davis, noting his application was not provided. Mayor Steve replied that Mr. Davis is an architect with knowledge of zoning issues.

Council Member Silliman asked about other board vacancies, indicating she has a constituent who is interested in serving. Mayor Steve encouraged Council Members to let him know if they have constituents who are interested in serving on boards.

Approved: Ayes – 8
 Nays – 0

Mr. Parker was sworn in by Mayor Steve. The Mayor thanked Mr. Parker for his years of service as City Clerk.

Resolution No. 9 of 2022 Amend 2022 Budget & Authorize the Encumbrance of funds from the 2021 Budget for Demolition of City Owned Property

RESOLVED the 2022 Cortland City Budget is hereby amended and \$14,000.00 from account # FX8340.540.00 is hereby encumbered and shall be transferred to account #FX8340.540.00.

Motioned by: Council Member Pennello

Seconded by: Council Member Schutt

Discussion: Council Member Beckwith asked if the work was put out to bid. Public Works Superintendent Nic Dovi responded that each aspect of the project was put out to bid. Mayor Steve gave further explanation and thanked Mr. Dovi for his work on the project.

Approved: Ayes – 8
 Nays – 0

Resolution No. 10 of 2022 MOU By and between the City of Cortland and the Cortland Police Benevolent Association

THEREFORE, it is agreed that the following permanent fixed schedule will be implemented on January 4, 2022 at 2000 hours, consistent with the shift bid presented to the Chief of Police and eliminate the position of mandatory desk officer:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Memorandum of Agreement to be executed on the date shown by each of their signatures below.

Motioned by: Council Member Carpenter

Seconded by: Council Member Schutt

Discussion: Mayor Steve explained that this was being done for the well-being of police officers, and that eliminating the desk officer position would put an additional officer in the field. Council Member Carpenter stated that this action was long overdue and reiterated the importance of it to the well-being of officers. Council Member Thompson stated that this action would provide for better policing for the community.

Approved: Ayes – 8
Nays – 0

The MOU was signed by Jeff Fitts as PBA Representative, Paul Sandy, Chief of Police, and Scott Steve, Mayor

Discussion Items

Future of Apex Industrial Site, 43-45-47, Cleveland Street

Mayor Steve said that he has had discussions on partnerships and plans for debris removal and cleanup, and wants to have an aggressive approach to get site control. He intends to have recommendations for testing and further plans soon.

Search for Finance Director

Mayor Steve noted the importance of filling this position, and said he has had conversations with potential candidates.

Setting a Public Hearing to establish zoning for cannabis dispensaries

Mayor Steve noted that there is an informational meeting scheduled the following day via zoom. Council Member Carpenter made a motion to set a public hearing on the matter. Council Member Pennello seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by a vote of 8-0.

Soliciting applicants & Filling vacancies for various Boards and Commissions

Mayor Steve told the Council he will accept recommendations from Council Members to fill board and commission vacancies.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m. on motion of Council Member Schutt, seconded by Council Member Carpenter, and approved by a vote of 8-0.

I, ANDREW T. JEWETT, CITY CLERK FOR THE CITY OF CORTLAND, NEW YORK, DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT SAID RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CORTLAND, HELD ON THE 4TH DAY IN JANUARY, 2022. I FURTHER CERTIFY THE FOREGOING RESOLUTIONS WERE PRESENTED TO THE MAYOR IN THE TIME REQUIRED FOR HIS CONCURRENCE IN ADOPTION OR REJECTION BY VETO POWER.

ANDREW T. JEWETT, CITY CLERK

SCOTT STEVE, MAYOR