



City Council Minutes  
The City of Cortland  
February 16, 2021

Council Meeting #4  
February 16, 2021  
Via Zoom  
7:00 PM

Present: Mayor Brian Tobin, Councilperson Kat McCarthy, Bruce Tytler, John Bennett, Jackie Chapman (out at 8:50PM, back in at 9:04PM), Troy Beckwith (in at 7:20PM), Thomas Michales, Katy Silliman

Excused: Councilperson William Carpenter

Staff Present: Corporation Counsel Ric VanDonsel, Director of Finance Mack Cook, Police Chief Catalano, Fire Chief Friedman, City Clerk Raymond A. Parker, Confidential Secretary Devon Rainbow

**Regular Session:**

Mayor Tobin called the fourth Common Council meeting of the year to order at 7:00 PM.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Public Comments:**

James Knight – Voiced his concern for the response to the house party with over 100 students. He feels that the college president is not taking this serious enough and they are disrespecting our City.

Fred Pierce – Stated that the college is disciplining the students and are working very hard to control students off campus. They work with the City PD and SUNY PD on a regular basis. They are testing students 2x a week now.

**Resolution #36 of 2021** – Resolution to approve minutes from February 2, 2021 meeting.

Motioned by: Councilperson Tytler  
Seconded by: Councilperson Chapman

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Mayor Tobin asked to add 4 agenda items and have Executive session at the end for contractual matters and personnel.**

**Item #1** – Presentation by Family and Children Counseling Services and Cortland Area Community That Cares on community actions to fight illicit drugs in the Cortland community.

- Mental health needs are at an all-time high
  - Suicide mortality for 10 -19 year olds in Cortland County is at 8.9 compared to NYS at 3.2
  - Indicated reports of child abuse/maltreatment stands at 38.8 compared to 16.8 for NYS
  - The CCHD Current Health Assessment lists mental health and substance use as the top two under-addressed health needs in our community.
- An overwhelmed, underfunded support system that is depending more and more on competitive grant funding to provide services;
- A 40% state-wide staffing gap in professionals trained in providing these services;
- A pandemic of despair among our residents;
- Competing values between state and local agencies as to how to address these problems.

As a community, we need to:

- More funding
- A public health approach - reframing this issue. It is not about individuals but about societal failure to meet needs
- Trauma & mental health connection to addiction
- We need leadership - please get involved
- Sequential Intercept Mapping (SIM) Workshops (late spring/summer 2021 - more to come!)

**Resolution #37 of 2021** – Resolution to approve the subordination of a City mortgage on 45 Floral Avenue to facilitate the refinance of an existing mortgage pursuant to the recommendation of the City’s Loan Review Committee.

Motioned by: Councilperson Silliman  
Seconded by: Councilperson Bennett

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Item #3** – Consideration of a Resolution to authorize the Mayor to enter into a one-year Option to Lease agreement with Davis Hill Development, LLC for the lease of City property located in the Rosen Park parcel for purpose of a feasibility assessment of constructing a solar array on said properties. (Mack Cook)

**This item was removed from the agenda**

**Item #4** – Consideration of a Resolution to authorize the Mayor to enter into a one-year Option to Lease agreement with Davis Hill Development, LLC for the lease of City property located in the Noss Park parcel for purpose of a feasibility assessment of constructing a solar array on said properties. (Mack Cook)

**This item was removed from the agenda**

**Item #3b** – Presentation on the EO203 survey response.

Mary Cannito-Coville went over the results of the survey. There are many things that our Officers are doing but the community is unaware of it. There are some things that need work and possibly more training. Everyone was pleased with the results and looks forward to making some positive changes.

**Resolution #38 of 2021** – Resolution to lift the hiring freeze for the Fire Department.

Motioned by: Councilperson Bennett

Seconded by: Councilperson Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 6  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #39 of 2021** – Resolution to promote a Firefighter to Captain.

Motioned by: Councilperson Bennett  
Seconded by: Councilperson Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 6  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #40 of 2021** – Resolution to hire a new Firefighter effective March 11, 2021.

Motioned by: Councilperson Bennett  
Seconded by: Councilperson Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 6  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #41 of 2021** – Resolution authorizing the Fire Department to apply for a FEMA SAFER Grant for the funding of four additional firefighters/code enforcement personnel to augment staffing. This grant is a Zero percent City match for three years with no commitment to maintain said staffing after the period of performance. The total grant application is \$1,166,387.52.

Motioned by: Councilperson Beckwith  
Seconded by: Councilperson McCarthy

Approved: Ayes – 6  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #42 of 2021** – Resolution to allow the Mayor to sign a letter of intent to develop a fast charging station for electric vehicles in the downtown core.

Motioned by: Councilperson McCarthy  
Seconded by: Councilperson Bennett

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Item #7** – Discussion and potential resolution supporting the town of Cortlandville’s objection to an expansion of mining in the town’s portion of the City aquifer. (Mayor Tobin)

Council supports extending the public notice from 30 days to 60 days.

**Resolution #43 of 2021** – Resolution supporting the town of Cortlandville’s objection to an expansion of mining in the town’s portion of the City aquifer.

Motioned by: Councilperson Silliman  
Seconded by: Councilperson Tytler

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Item #8** – Discussion on concerns raised by neighbors on the proposed solar development in the town of Cortlandville off of Blue Creek Road. (Mayor Tobin)

Kat McCarthy has been discussing concerns with the residence that will be affected by this. Their concerns are with the water runoff and flooding issues, wild life habitat, chemicals and the visual look it would have. They ask that the City help fight and not support the project.

**Item #9** – Discussion regarding the comptroller's report and the City's response.

The response was shared with Council members. Contact the Mayor to discuss any questions or concerns.

**Item #10** – Covid-19 update

There are concerns with the students and their behavior recently. The City PD and University PD are working together to watch over the houses that have been reported having large gatherings.

**A motion was made to enter into Executive Session**

Motioned by: Councilperson Bennett  
Seconded by: Councilperson Chapman

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**A motion was made to exit out of Executive Session**

Motioned by: Councilperson Bennett  
Seconded by: Councilperson Chapman

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #44 of 2021** – Resolution lift the hiring freeze for Police Department.

Motioned by: Councilperson Bennett  
Seconded by: Councilperson Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Resolution #45 of 2021** – Resolution to hire a new Police Officer.

Motioned by: Councilperson Bennett

Seconded by: Councilperson Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**Adjournment**

Motioned by: Councilperson McCarthy

Seconded by: Councilperson Tytler

Approved: Ayes – 7  
Nays – 0

**I, RAYMOND A. PARKER, 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 16<sup>th</sup> DAY IN FEBRUARY 2021. 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.**

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**RAYMOND A. PARKER, CITY CLERK**

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**MAYOR BRIAN TOBIN**