



City Council Minutes
The City of Cortland
September 21, 2021

Council Meeting #18
September 21, 2021
Via City Hall
7:00 PM

Present: Mayor Brian Tobin, Councilperson John Bennett, Sam Adams, Bruce Tytler, Katy Silliman, Tom Michales, Jackie Chapman, Troy Beckwith

Excused: Councilperson Bill Carpenter

Staff Present: Corporation Counsel Ric VanDonsel, City Clerk Raymond A. Parker, Chief Paul Sandy, Chief Wayne Friedman, Confidential Secretary Devon Rainbow

Regular Session:

Mayor Tobin called the eight-tenth Common Council meeting of the year to order at 7:04 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comments:

Dr. Gigi Peterson – Has concerns with the college employees and students returning and not being tested properly or being fully vaccinated.

Christella Yonta – United Way is holding their 26th annual day of caring. There will be many groups of people around the City doing projects to help the community.

Proclamations

- Disability Employment Awareness Month (October)
- Anti- bullying Awareness Month (October)
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October)
- Domestic Violence Month (October)

Mayor's Report:

The Mayor asked for an Executive session at the end for personnel matters. Mayor Tobin shared the press release regarding the recent lawsuit against the City.

Resolution #237 of 2021 – Resolution to approve minutes from September 7, 2021 meeting.

Motioned by: Councilperson Bennett
Seconded by: Councilperson Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 7

Nays – 0

Item #1 – Discussion and update regarding the City’s proposed purchase of the Parker School.

- Update from meeting
- Possible time line for action

Mayor Tobin shared the power point that was presented back in 2019. Kelly Tobin, Lindy Glennon, Bethann Wieder, Bob Haight, Beau Harbin, Christine Gregory, Janet Griffin, and Ann homer all spoke on the importance of this project and the many benefits it will bring to our community. The time line includes the City purchase of the school and possibly move in and start utilizing part of the building in the fall of 2022. There will be a public hearing next Council meeting.

Resolution #238 of 2021 – Resolution to approve the special event application along with all other required permits for “Cortland for Reproductive Choice” on October 2, 2021 from 12:30PM – 2PM on Main St corners of Clinton Ave and Groton Ave.

Motioned by: Councilperson Silliman
Seconded by: Councilperson Carpenter

Approved: Ayes – 7
Nays – 0

Resolution #239 of 2021 – Resolution authorizing the Mayor to sign an agreement with Direct Energy of New York, New York for supply of natural gas for 12 months, contingent on review by Corporation Counsel. Supply covers all City of Cortland accounts.

Motioned by: Councilperson Tytler
Seconded by: Councilperson Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 7
Nays – 0

Resolution #240 of 2021 – Resolution of a Local Law to amend the charter by adding a three-way stop at the intersection of the CESD entry and Valley View Drive.

Motioned by: Councilperson Chapman
Seconded by: Councilperson Adams

Approved: Ayes – 7
Nays – 0

Resolution #241 of 2021 – Resolution of a Local Law expanding the Police Commission from 3 to 5 members.

Motioned by: Councilperson Tytler
Seconded by: Councilperson Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 7

Nays – 0

Resolution #242 of 2021 – Resolution to lift the hiring freeze for Cortland City Police to fill a vacancy created by a Crossing Guard who has just submitted her plan to retire on September 24, 2021.

Motioned by: Councilperson Silliman
Seconded by: Councilperson Chapman

Approved: Ayes – 7
Nays – 0

Resolution #243 of 2021 – Resolution for the Cortland City Police Department to hire a substitute crossing guard to replace the substitute crossing guard who will now fill a full-time vacancy created by the aforementioned retirement.

Motioned by: Councilperson Silliman
Seconded by: Councilperson Bennett

Approved: Ayes – 7
Nays – 0

Resolution #244 of 2021 – Resolution to transfer \$96,932 from General Fund Account A1990 540000 – ‘Contingencies’ to General Fund Account A1680 540500 - ‘Data Processing Equipment’ to fund the replacement of the City’s IT infrastructure.

Motioned by: Councilperson Bennett
Seconded by: Councilperson Adams

Approved: Ayes – 7
Nays – 0

Item #9 – Consideration of a Resolution to Cancel the Loan Agreement with Cortland Rural Cemetery, Inc. and Forego Collection of all Advances and Accrued Interest made Thereon:

Whereas: in December 2018 the City and the Cortland Entered in an installment loan agreement when in the City would advance the Cemetery funds to sustain operations, and

Whereas: In January 2019 the City advanced \$8,000 to the Cemetery, and

Whereas: Pursuant to the installment agreement the City is not to receive any repayments during the first ten years of the advance, and

Whereas: the City is to receive the full amount of the loan plus interest on December 18, 2028, and

Whereas: The Board of the Cemetery has decided that it is in the best interest of the Cemetery all assets to Forest Lawn Incorporated, and

Whereas: As a condition precedent to the transferred Forest Lawn, Inc. is requiring that all indebtedness to the City be cancelled, and

Whereas: the Common Council of the City deems it in the best interest of the City and its residents to fully cooperate with the Cortland Rural Cemetery as it undertakes such actions that enhances the financial and operational sustainability.

Therefore be it resolved that the City is forgiving all advances and accrued interest there under owed to the City by the Cortland Rural Cemetery, Inc.

A motion was made to table this item for the Council meeting on October 5, 2021. Council wishes to have the gate open at the top of the hill for people to be able to access and walk during the daytime.

Motioned by: Councilperson Tytler
Seconded by: Councilperson Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 7
Nays – 0

Item #10 – Consideration of a Resolution to adopt funding priorities for the American Rescue Plan funds.

A motion was made to table this item for the October 5, 2021 meeting.

Motioned by: Councilperson Tytler
Seconded by: Councilperson Chapman

Approved: Ayes – 7
Nays – 0

Item #11 – Discussion and set a date for a public hearing regarding the rezoning of a piece of property on River St.

A date was set for October 5, 2021.

Item #12 – Discussion on the opportunity for the city to collaborate with the County Planner to determine new ward boundaries, based upon the recently completed 2020 Census. This can include changing boundaries, and potentially the number of council members.

Councilpersons do not wish to reduce the number of members or wards. They are open to the idea of reevaluating the boundaries.

Item #13 – Discussion on the SPCA contract.
There is a 5% increase from the previous year.

Item #14 – Discussion regarding the City's trash collection program- current contract expires December, 2021.

There is a potential to extend the current contract for a year while the City gathers information and financial numbers to make a decision on how to proceed with City trash and recycling collection program.

Item #15 – Discussion regarding the dumpster corral in the Groton Avenue/Orchard Street parking lot.

The idea is to have less dumpsters in a specific area, have a user fee and have the City pick up the trash. There are concerns with the dumpsters on Haskell Place as well. The dumpsters are taking up public parking spaces.

Resolution #245 of 2021 – Resolution to move the dumpsters from Haskell Place adjacent to the Groton Ave parking lot next to Orchard St. and refund money paid for the parking spots that were used.

Motioned by: Councilperson Beckwith
Seconded by: Councilperson Bennett

Approved: Ayes – 7
Nays – 0

Item #16 – Discussion regarding the State Comptroller Audit, and further recommendations/solutions to undertake.

Council addressed concerns with staff and their hours compared to those under union contracts. They have recently passed a Credit Card usage policy, vehicle usage policy is being reviewed and updated.

Item #17 – Discussion: Set a date for a public Hearing regarding the abandonment of a portion of Alvena Avenue.

A date was set for October 5, 2021.

Item #19 – Discussion to eliminate Health Insurance coverage for City Councilpersons and families.

This was already discussed and voted on back in 2019. No current Councilpersons have the City insurance.

Resolution #246 of 2021 – Resolution to allocate up to \$2,000.00 for City Hall landscape/clean up.

Motioned by: Councilperson Beckwith
Seconded by: Councilperson Silliman

Approved: Ayes – 7
Nays – 0

A motion was made to enter into Executive Session regarding personnel matters

Motioned by: Councilperson Bennett
Seconded by: Councilperson Beckwith

Approved: Ayes – 7
Nays – 0

A motion was made to exit out of Executive Session

Motioned by: Councilperson Bennett
Seconded by: Councilperson Beckwith

Approved: Ayes – 7
Nays – 0

Adjournment

Motioned by: Councilperson Silliman
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 21ST DAY IN SEPTEMBER 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.

RAYMOND A. PARKER, CITY CLERK

MAYOR BRIAN TOBIN