

**ADJOURNED COUNCIL MEETING
AND
BUDGET SESSION
CITY OF WATERTOWN
April 25, 2002
6:00 P.M.**

MAYOR JOSEPH M. BUTLER PRESIDING

PRESENT: COUNCILWOMAN ROXANNE M. BURNS
COUNCILMAN PETER L. CLOUGH
COUNCILMAN PAUL A. SIMMONS
COUNCILMAN JEFFREY M. SMITH
MAYOR BUTLER

ALSO PRESENT: CITY MANAGER JERRY C. HILLER
ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER MARY M. CORRIVEAU

MAYOR BUTLER OPENED THE ADJOURNED MEETING

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMAN CLOUGH TO MOVE INTO
EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS CSEA CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS.**

**MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN SIMMONS AND CARRIED
WITH ALL VOTING IN FAVOR THEREOF.**

Council moved into Executive Session at 6:07 p.m.

Council reconvened at 6:20 p.m.

**AT THE CALL OF THE CHAIR MEETING WAS DULY ADJOURNED AT 6:20
P.M. BY MOTION OF COUNCILMAN CLOUGH, SECONDED BY
COUNCILMAN SIMMONS AND CARRIED WITH ALL VOTING IN FAVOR
THEREOF.**

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Council moved into Budget session.

JCJDC

Mayor Butler explained that he had spoken with Mr. Edmonson and it was discussed that if needed, the City would pay JCJDC on a fee for service basis in the future. Councilman

Simmons questioned why there would be a fee associated with the service and questioned if other municipalities have to pay for the service.

There was Council consensus to cut the \$25,000 for JCJDC from the budget.

CAPC

Councilman Clough stated that he would get back to Council on this.

Library

Councilwoman Burns explained that there was an informal consensus among the library board members to work with the new numbers. She explained that the further delay would just be to give the Council more specifics as to the areas that would be most appropriate for the cuts.

Cell Phones

Councilman Clough remarked that he still wants to see cell phones cut across the board.

Training & Travel

Councilman Clough questioned the \$112,000 for education and training throughout the various departments. He stated that he would prefer to set a figure (\$50,000 or \$60,000) and have Mr. Hiller be in charge of authorizing expenditures for all departments.

After much discussion on the issue, Mayor Butler suggested that Mr. Hiller be given a chance to see if the figure could be reduced.

Mr. Hiller explained that there are three types of training – 1) Mandated 2) Essential 3) Optional. He stated that he would like the opportunity to go back to staff and look at the training costs.

Answering questions posed by Council concerning the tracking of travel and training costs, Mrs. Corriveau explained that there are other things besides these items in the .450 accounts. She will prepare an analysis of the .450 accounts for the Council.

Pg.73-Municipal Building

Council asked about the gas expense.

Mr. McWayne explained that this is for natural gas to heat the building. He stated that the new boiler system has been put in and we don't know what the gas expense will be.

Councilman Simmons commented that the new boiler was put in to save money.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that the figure dropped from \$25,300 this year to \$20,000 in the proposed budget. This is a projected savings of 21%.

Mr. Hiller explained that we would be able to estimate the figures better next year after another heating season.

Councilman Clough asked about the custodian and laborer positions in this budget. He asked about combining these positions with the positions in the library.

Mayor Butler remarked that this is an area where there has been conversation with the library.

Mr. Hiller stated that this was done in 1997 and the library felt that it was unsuccessful.

Telephone Contracts

Councilman Clough asked if the telephone contract was for City Hall. It was explained that it is and is for the maintenance of the equipment.

Councilman Clough asked about the status of the telephones themselves.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that this is in the capital budget.

Mr. Hiller stated that they are hoping that the Homeland Defense Bill will give the City funding for some of the expense.

Councilman Smith commented that for the past three years, the Council has asked about not having so many carriers. He asked if the City had looked into a phone system with one carrier.

Mr. Hiller stated that, as far as he knew, Mr. Cleaver had done comparisons and plans. He stated that Mr. Cleaver would be at the next meeting to address any questions Council might have about this.

Councilman Clough commented that if we were contracting with one company, it would seem logical that we would get a better rate if all the city facilities were with the same one.

Mrs. Corriveau stated that the capital project provides for that. She explained that Mr. Cleaver and Mr. Keenan have been working on this.

Councilman Clough reiterated his questions pertaining to why all city facilities can't be on the same system with one carrier.

Mr. Hiller stated that with the exception of Police and Fire, they are.

Mrs. Corriveau stated that 95% of the departments are all on one carrier. One bill comes in for those departments. Police are on with the County. Fire entered into an agreement with a carrier when the Emma Flower Taylor Station was built and the Airport is on Township Telephone because that is the carrier for Dexter.

Pg. 204 City Court Facility Improvements

Mr. Hiller presented the proposed plans to Council. He explained that it would involve tearing down partition walls, updating the look of the courtroom and would provide for a new judge's bench, jury box and witness stand. The public seating would also be replaced along with the jury seating. New wall coverings and carpeting would be installed.

Councilman Clough asked how much reimbursement we would receive from the Court system.

Mr. McCauley explained that the City would only receive reimbursement for the interest on the loan.

Mr. Hiller explained the security audit that had been conducted and commented that the Court system had been fair with the City on what their requests were.

Councilman Simmons stated that he would have trouble approving a new judge's bench and witness stand.

Pg. 89-91 Bureau of Code Enforcement

Councilman Clough questioned the cell phones.

Mrs. Corriveau stated that the employees are on the road all the time and need them.

Councilman Clough suggested that they use radios.

Mr. McWayne explained that the radios needed to be replaced and it would have been more expensive than purchasing cell phones.

Councilman Clough responded that the expense would have been once, without monthly fees.

Mr. Hiller advised Council that the memos on the cell phones have been submitted to his office and he will get them out to Council so they can have the information for over the weekend.

Answering questions concerning the tire disposal fees, Mr. McWayne explained that when DPW cleans up a property, Codes is charged for the disposal of any tires. If there is a property owner, the charge is placed on the tax bill.

Councilman Clough asked why there wasn't any workers' comp amount in the Codes budget.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that worker's comp is based on the experience and history in each specific department. None is found in Codes because there hasn't been any history of comp for that department.

Returning to the cell phone discussion, Councilman Clough asked if the phones have long distance capability. It was explained that they do and that the bills are checked.

DPW

Mayor Butler asked what the impact would be on road maintenance if the six vacancies were not filled.

Mr. Hayes supplied the Council with reports showing the breakdown of employees in each section under DPW. He also distributed a report showing the category classifications and descriptions of standard winter weather operation response.

Mr. Hayes explained, in detail, the impact the vacancies would have on his department. He explained that demolition requests would take longer to act upon, a fewer number of streets would have work done on them and therefore the street inventory would not be maintained to the extent that it has been in the past. He stated that while it might not be something that would be noticeable immediately, over time it would take its toll. He also explained that with the private lateral legislation enacted by Council, it has the potential for doubling DPW's areas of obligation. He explained that the vacancies would jeopardize the ability to carry on a sustained snow plowing operation during a continuous storm. Mr. Hayes explained that by a continuous storm, he means one where it continues to snow every day for a week to ten days – not necessarily a blizzard or an ice storm.

Mayor Butler asked about the possibility of reorganizing Public Works. He explained that some members of Council feel that there should be less administration and fewer maintenance supervisors. He asked what the impact would be if that happened.

Mr. Hayes explained the duties of the supervisors and the crew chiefs. He explained that crew chiefs are working foremen and that supervisors have several projects to oversee in the course of a day.

Councilman Smith commented that he feels that there are too many supervisors and too few people doing the actual work. He stated that he wants to start from the top and work his way down to the bottom. He stated that he wants fewer supervisors instead of fewer workers. He stated that he would like to see a restructuring of DPW so it can be merged with Engineering.

Councilman Clough asked about the three people assigned to Thompson Park and if they could be put into DPW and then have DPW responsible for what they do in the park.

Mr. Hayes described the various duties in the park and the fact that while the three could be assigned to snow plowing operations in the winter, there would need to be supervision of the part-time employees in the park during the summer months.

Councilman Simmons asked why a crew chief couldn't handle three or four groups.

Mr. Hayes explained that a crew chief is a working foreman and is just one of the men working on specific projects.

Councilman Smith questioned Mr. Hayes relative to his experience with work in the private sector and the difference in the number of supervisors. Mr. Hayes answered his questions indicating that while his private sector work in an oil field was impossible to compare to DPW, the fact remains that they also had a number of supervisors.

Councilman Simmons asked if the department would run if half of the supervisors were gone and the six vacancies were filled.

Mr. Hayes commented that those supervisors have 28 years of experience.

Councilman Smith responded that DPW has a lot of top-heaviness and some of the supervisors could oversee 30 individuals instead of 15.

Mr. Hayes stated that the numbers on paper are one thing. However, they won't work in practice. He stated that the people in the supervisory positions have experience in several aspects of the department and if Council gets rid of them, DPW will be severely impacted.

Councilman Clough remarked that every one of the supervisors was a laborer at one time. He also remarked that he realized that it was Mr. Hayes' job to protect his department from cuts.

Mr. Hayes responded that his job is to protect the safety and welfare of the citizens of Watertown.

After more discussion as to whether or not Council wanted DPW cut by \$180,000 or by more, Mayor Butler concluded the discussion by asking what individual members wanted to do.

Councilman Smith asked that DPW & Engineering look into the possibility of merging and restructuring DPW from the top to the bottom.

Councilman Simmons stated that \$180,000 is not enough to help with the tax rate. He stated that Council would have to look a lot deeper in each department.

Councilwoman Burns commented that perhaps Mr. Hayes and Mr. Hiller could sit down and provide the Council with more information. She stated she would like to know what impact taking the three positions out of the park would have.

Councilman Clough commented that Council needs to give Mr. Hayes some guidance and set a time limit on moving the three from the park.

Councilwoman Burns responded that she couldn't agree with that until she was sure that there would be no impact on the quality of life issues.

Mayor Butler polled the Council and there was a consensus of four that the vacant positions wouldn't be filled; restructuring of the department would be undertaken; looking into combining DPW and Engineering would be undertaken; and a 20% limit would be put on the number of administrative staff within the DPW.

Mr. Hiller stated that he understands the debate. He stated that they would like flexibility to suggest reductions or eliminations of services. Discussion was held relative to this being completed for Council's consideration by May 6th.

Mrs. Corriveau reminded Council that the meeting of May 6th would be extremely busy as there are five public hearings scheduled and suggested that this report be available for Council before the first budget meeting that week.

Mayor Butler asked Mr. Hayes if he had any ideas for additional cuts in DPW.

Mr. Hayes stated that he did and that he had brought them with him this evening.

Council decided that they would review Mr. Hayes' ideas with the reorganization report.

Council reviewed pages 53-57.

Councilman Clough asked Mr. Hayes to look again at the figures in the budget to see if more cuts could be made. He asked about the figures for training and certification.

Mr. Hayes explained that these figures cover costs incurred for software training on the specialized programs used in the department, as well as for training for the mechanics.

Councilman Clough asked why the IT Manager couldn't do the training.

Mrs. Corriveau explained to him that the IT Manager is not a trainer and these software packages are specific to the department.

Council reviewed pages 58-60.

Council members raised questions concerning the Annual Tree Replacement line item.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that the funds from the Ni Mo grant that will be carried over into the upcoming budget year will be for the .140 account which is for payroll costs associated with watering and trimming the trees. Mrs. Corriveau also explained that the \$15,000 in the budget is taxpayer dollars to buy more trees. She also explained that if Council wishes, Mr. Lumbis would work up a plan to stretch out the treeing plantings over a longer period of time. Council will come back to this issue in another budget session.

Council reviewed pg. 62-69.

Councilman Clough asked if the City was still pursuing joint DPW with the County.

Mr. Hiller stated that in the capital budget, they were.

Councilman Clough questioned what the .440 account “Fees, Non-Employee” meant.

Mrs. Corriveau responded that professional services we receive are paid from this account.

Councilman Clough asked if the \$20,000 for catch basins and grates were for the streets that were being done this year.

Mr. Hayes responded that these are just for regular use.

Recreation Administration – Pg. 109-110

Councilman Smith posed questions concerning selling advertisement at the arena. He suggested that the various user groups sell the advertising as fund raising activities and then split the revenues with the City.

Mr. St. Croix stated that this should include all organizations that use the facility. He stated that advertising revenue has already increased and did so with very little effort.

Mr. Hiller commented that the idea has merit. However, the entities that would be involved need to be contacted first and staff needs to take a look at the proposal.

Councilman Clough asked about the .450 account for seminars and professional courses.

Mr. St. Croix explained that he is attending JLI this year which is \$800. The balance is for employee training such as First Aid courses, etc.

Thompson Park – Pg. 112-113

Councilman Smith asked that \$11,000 be cut from the Conservancy Funding line item.

Councilman Clough remarked that he would rather wait until the restructuring of DPW had been looked into.

Council reviewed pg. 115-119.

Councilman Clough asked about the building rental fee of \$10,500 on page 118.

Mr. McCauley and Mrs. Corriveau explained that the City entered into a contract, which runs to the length of the Fair board's mortgage.

Councilman Clough stated that he wanted to know the terms of the contract. A report concerning this will be supplied to Council.

Council was advised that the Fair board pays the City \$4,500 for fair week. For that they receive electric, water/sewer and inkind services which involves the services of City employees.

Mr. Hayes stated that the fair board would also be paying \$7,000 to the City to be the electrical contractor. This \$7,000 will be new revenue.

Councilman Clough asked about the coin light timer for the basketball courts.

Mr. Hayes stated that they estimated the payback time to be about three years.

Council reviewed pg.120-130.

Following the budget review, Councilman Smith remarked that he had told Council last year that the City would be in a budget crisis. He stated that he wants to see the DPW reorganized and would be open to any suggestions that anyone might have. He stated that he wants to cut the Deputy Fire Chief position and the Police Captain position.

Councilman Clough remarked that these things should be discussed with department heads.

Councilman Simmons stated that Council is looking at many different management positions and Council should have the conversation with department heads.

Mayor Butler commented that the recommendations he made on the 22nd still have not been completely acted upon so he would rather wait until that is done and also until the police study has been reviewed prior to any additional cuts in positions being discussed.

Councilman Smith responded that Council has only five weeks in which to make the necessary cuts.

Mayor Butler remarked that Council would be looking at the Police budget next.

The next budget session is Monday, April 29th at 6:00 p.m.

Donna M. Dutton, City Clerk