

**COUNCIL BUDGET REVIEW SESSION
CITY OF WATERTOWN
May 4, 2006
6:00 P.M.**

MAYOR JEFFREY E. GRAHAM PRESIDING

PRESENT: **COUNCILMAN STEPHEN J. BRADLEY
COUNCILMAN PETER L. CLOUGH
COUNCILMAN TIMOTHY R. LABOUF
COUNCILMAN JEFFREY M. SMITH
MAYOR GRAHAM**

ALSO PRESENT: **CITY MANAGER MARY M. CORRIVEAU
ATTORNEY ROBERT J. SLYE**

Sidewalks – Page 260

Council began the session with a discussion pertaining to sidewalks.

Mr. Mix explained the memo that he had presented to Council regarding the use of CDBG Program Income for the sidewalk program. Council was advised that the amount of funds would be about \$41,000. However, Mr. Mix also explained that once this money is used, the funds would not be replenished very often. Mr. Mix and Mrs. Corriveau explained the procedure that has to be in place to use these funds. Surveys have to be done in an area to see if they are income eligible. The survey has to be 100% participation and therefore, just sending a survey form in the mail has proven to be ineffective. In the past, staff has had to go door to door to collect this data. Council was also advised that participants have to submit proof of income, including tax forms, W2 forms and bank statements.

Councilman Smith asked if the program guidelines would allow for paying certain percentages depending on individual eligibility. Mr. Mix will research the requirements and will have an answer for Monday night's meeting.

Councilman LaBouf responded that he would like to have the surveys conducted on Hoard Street.

Mrs. Corriveau questioned if she lived on South Massey Street and the survey was being done on Hoard Street, would that mean she would have to pay the cost in full.

Mayor Graham remarked that when this program was re-proposed, it was done so on the basis that the public was clamoring for it. Council then decided to support the program. Now there is clamoring to subsidize the costs. Mayor Graham stated that either the City pays for the program or we don't. He remarked that there is a lot of staff work involved

in this and he doesn't believe that everyone is going to be willing to submit all their financial records.

Councilman Smith remarked that Council went through this before and once the sidewalks were completed, the program was well received. He also remarked that the program allows people to pay for this over a 10-year period, instead of within 30 days as it had been in the past. With the 10-year payback, the City is mitigating some of the costs right now.

Councilman Clough responded that his comments and questions about this program are not a result of phone calls from residents. Rather, he was referring to answers to questions that he had asked previously concerning that fact that there should be funds available to help defray the cost for fixed income residents.

Councilman Smith also advised Council that previously they had looked at the reconstruction projects such as State Street in an effort to charge property owners for the bad blocks, which would have had to be replaced even if the reconstruction hadn't come through. However, since federal highway funds were being utilized, this could not be done. He commented that when doing reconstruction with City funds, the blocks should be inspected and the property owner should be charged for the bad ones.

Mayor Graham responded that ultimately, this would be a somewhat problematic procedure. He also suggested getting rid of the "crazy quilt" billing for the sidewalk program and questioned what the difference would be if the City paid 40% of 100% of the program. It would only mean that more money would be put in the City's fund to do it. He commented that he is not sure that this program will pass again.

Streets-Page 261-268

Council discussed the reconstruction of Sterling Street and questioned how the streets were selected.

Mr. Hayes explained that Sterling Street had been selected by the former City Engineer, Mr. Liu. He was looking at the intersection based on safety concerns that had been expressed by the day care center.

Councilman Smith commented that he feels that all streets listed on page 267 and 268 should be curbed and suggested not doing Sterling Street and using that money to do the curbing on these streets.

Discussion was held relative to certain problems on various streets listed and the need for curbing.

Mr. Hauk explained that milling and paving is great if there is a good base. However, some streets have serious sub base problems. Mr. Hauk also advised Council that the Sterling Street design is almost complete.

Mrs. Corriveau advised Council that the streets listed on 267-268 are being done with CHIPS state funding which pays for materials and overtime, as well as outside trucking.

Mr. Hayes explained to Council that they plan on doing curbing on the streets that can be curbed.

Discussion was held relative to the condition of Factory Street. Council was advised that Factory Street is scheduled for 2009-10.

Council concurred that Sterling Street should be completed in the upcoming budget year.

Storm Sewers – Page 264

Council raised the question of charging these costs to the sewer fund as they felt that even though it is for storm sewers, it is for the purpose of dealing with the increased sanitary sewer capacity as a result of building in that area.

Mr. Pilon explained that certain statutes would not allow the City to do that.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that as a result of this project, the City is building general fund asset.

The charges for outside users were discussed. Mrs. Corriveau explained that they are in negotiations now.

5- Year Plan Page 270-272

Mrs. Corriveau asked that Council review these pages.

Councilman Clough remarked that he wanted it noted that while he might not comment on these proposals listed on these pages, it doesn't mean that he wants to purchase a rescue truck next year.

Mrs. Corriveau explained in reviewing these items, it doesn't mean that Council is authorizing them. In fact, some of these things might change in next year's budget.

Arsenal Street Corridor

Mr. Pilon explained that he was meeting with NYS DOT concerning a weak portion in the Arsenal Street water line. He has asked them to look at incorporating a 12" line inside the City portion of the project from Ponderosa to Haney Street. He will keep Council informed.

Wastewater Plant – Page 290-291

Council reviewed these pages.

Councilman Smith asked why the City didn't capture the excess methane gas, store it and reuse it. He said that in the past the concern had been about storage. However, that is not a big problem anymore. He remarked that there would be initial capital costs. However, there would also be long-term savings.

Mr. White advised Council that he had met with NYSERTA and they had taken a tour of the facilities and looked at these various things. Mr. White is waiting for a report on their findings. He explained that NYSTERTA offers low interest loans and will pay for up to 50% of the design costs and will pick up extra costs associated with equipment purchases.

Discussion was held relative to energy costs. Mrs. Corriveau advised that representatives from a western New York company had contacted her concerning the possibility of participating in an energy purchasing aggregation plan. She will keep Council informed.

Work Session

Mrs. Corriveau advised Council of what is on the agenda for Monday evening's work session; that being fences, rummage sales and budget.

Councilman Clough remarked that he would like to have the ordinance prepared to adopt rummage sale legislation at the next regular Council meeting.

Council agreed to begin Monday's work session at 6:00 p.m.

The budget session ended at 8:55 p.m.

Donna M. Dutton

City Clerk