

**BUDGET SESSION
CITY OF WATERTOWN
May 7, 2003
6:00 P.M.**

MAYOR JOSEPH M. BUTLER PRESIDING

**PRESENT: COUNCILMAN PETER L. CLOUGH
 COUNCILMAN PAUL A. SIMMONS
 COUNCILMAN JEFFREY M. SMITH
 MAYOR BUTLER**

ABSENT: COUNCILWOMAN ROXANNE M. BURNS

ALSO PRESENT: CITY MANAGER MARY M. CORRIVEAU

**MANAGEMENT STAFF PRESENT: KEN MIX
 GARY PILON
 GENE HAYES
 PETER MONACO
 ROBERT PICHE
 DAN GAUMONT
 MILT SAYRE
 JAMES MILLS
 ROBERT CLEAVER
 PETER KEENAN
 ANN SCHWARTZ**

ALSO PRESENT: LIBRARY BOARD PRESIDENT JAYN GRAVES

The budget session began with a discussion of the Capital Budget.

A report on the Self-imposed Debt Cap was presented to the Council. Mrs. Corriveau and Mr. Mills reviewed the report and answered questions posed by Council members.

Mayor Butler asked how Watertown's 54% of debt capabilities compare with other municipalities of comparable size.

Mr. Mills will check into this and prepare a report for Council.

Mayor Butler referred to information from Binghamton that he had given out previously to Council members explaining that the report clearly outlines their fiscal conditions.

Mrs. Corriveau advised Council that as they reviewed the Capital Budget, they should keep in mind that there are a number of large projects driving the figures in the budget such as Bellew Avenue, State Street, Pearl Street Bridge and the DPW facility.

Page 192

Councilman Clough remarked that during discussions with the County, it has been stressed that the City is looking for federal grants for the airport whether or not the City remains responsible for the facility.

Mrs. Corriveau indicated that there is a 20-year tail on the capital projects at the airport and if the City closes it down, they would have to do a repay. However, that amount has not been looked into at this time.

Councilman Clough commented that he feels the County has been very cooperative and is aware of the fact that it is a regional facility.

Councilman Smith asked about the runway tank removal and questioned if this hadn't already been funded in the past.

Mr. Hayes explained that these are heating fuel tanks. The other project was removal of the fuel farm and contaminated soil.

Page 193

Councilman Smith asked if the spending for this had already been approved in January.

Mr. Hayes explained that the funding for the desiccant dehumidification system had been approved. However, this funding would allow for the air conditioning as well.

Page 194

Council agreed that this needs to be left in for now.

Councilman Clough asked about the status of Ogilvie.

Mrs. Corriveau will check with Mr. McWayne

Page 195

Mr. Hayes explained that these buildings will be kept and are in dire need of roof replacement.

Page 196

Councilman Clough asked if this was necessary for the teams that use the field.

Mr. Hayes explained that the Red & Black brought in the old press box. However, City Codes has since inspected it and finds it does not meet code. He explained that other teams use the field as well and everyone would be allowed to use the press box.

Page 197

Mrs. Corriveau explained that this was cut from the budget two years ago. The employees in the facilities have indicated that they would like to see the systems installed.

Page 198

Mrs. Corriveau explained that we have had continuous problems with the elevator. In addition, she mentioned that Mr. McWayne has indicated that it is very difficult to get replacement parts because of the age of the elevator as it was installed in 1963 when the building was constructed.

Page 199

Mr. Hayes answered questions posed by Council and explained that the spray pool upgrade will allow the City to connect both the water supply and return lines into the main pool filtration and re-circulation system, thus ensuring compliance with NYSDOH mandates.

Page 200

Council asked if the electrical expense for the County Courthouse project would be deducted from the City's commitment. Mrs. Corriveau said that it would be.

Page 201& Page 202

Mr. Mix answered questions concerning the river parks development and local waterfront revitalization program and the fact that the City has already been awarded the grant through the Environmental Protection Fund.

Page 203

Councilman Smith suggested that instead of doing all of the proposed paving, less paving should be done and the monies saved from that should be used for a thorough job of building the curbing and drainage system. Council members concurred.

Mr. Hayes will reword the project description.

Page 204

Discussion was held relative to looking into placing a left hand turn at this intersection.

Page 205

Councilman Clough asked Mr. Keenan if he was involved in this proposed purchase of software and hardware.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that all computer hardware and software needs for all City departments are channeled through Mr. Keenan.

Page 206

Mr. Keenan answered questions posed by Council concerning the telephone system proposal.

Councilman Clough asked about Gregg Systems wanting to be involved before.

Mr. Keenan explained that at that time, Gregg Systems was proposing a system that was 10 years old then. Now, they are proposing a new system and at this point they look like they could be a viable candidate.

Mr. Cleaver explained that he is proposing to utilize state contract whereby the vendors would be pre-qualified and would be the only ones allowed to bid. He stated that Gregg Systems has indicated they would be interested in going through the process to be pre-qualified.

Mr. Keenan explained that the system being proposed can be upgraded in the future and the VOIP would not be locked into one vendor.

Page 207

Mr. Keenan explained that one proposal from the needs assessment is to build a working relationship with the County for this project.

Page 208

Mr. Mills indicated that the years on this should be 15 instead of the 10 years printed.

Mr. Hayes and Mr. Monaco explained that once this refurbishment has been completed it would be like brand new.

Page 209

Chief Piche answered questioned concerning leasing vs. buying of police vehicles. He explained that they lease the unmarked cars because they are easier to turn back in at the end of the lease. However, marked vehicles have light bars, etc. that have to be removed. Mr. Hiller's car, which is a leased vehicle, is now in the Police Department's fleet. He explained that the four cars being replaced are: 2000 with 94,000 miles; 1998 with 99,000

miles, 1999 with 103,000 miles and 1999 with 80,000 miles. He also explained that they have never reached the point of trade-ins every two years, which has been his goal. As new cars come in, the older ones are shifted down from patrol to community policing, etc.

Page 210

Council decided to hold off on this purchase until it can be determined where the City is going with the airport. It was deleted for now.

Mrs. Corriveau indicated to Council that in the future, this truck may need to be replaced or have major repairs done to it.

Page 211

Mr. Hayes explained that a higher caliber mower was needed due to the increased utilization following improvements made to Multi-Purpose Field No. 1 and the addition of three multi-purpose playing fields at the fairgrounds for which the present unit is not capable of servicing.

Page 212

Mayor Butler asked Mr. Hayes to supply some information and literature on this piece of equipment.

Page 213

Chief Gaumont answered questions posed by Council concerning the aerial/tower ladder truck. He explained that deficiencies have been found in the City's frontline ladder truck, which is 17 years old. He said testing has shown cracks in the ladder. He also explained that this request is based on MMA's recommendations. He advised Council that lead-time for building the vehicle is about a year to a year and a half and no state contracts are available for these vehicles.

Councilman Smith suggested that the City work with neighboring departments to buy equipment collectively and lower costs to all. He also commented that there may not be a need for each fire department to have its own trucks.

Chief Gaumont responded that he had approached other departments about sharing services and equipment in the past, with no success.

Page 214

Chief Gaumont explained that he is trying for a grant for the upgrade of the fire radio network.

Page 215

No comments made.

Page 216

Mrs. Corriveau explained that there is \$0 amount listed for 10 years on this page. However, that amount will go up because the amount assumed by the City will have to be put in there. This will be addressed at Monday evening's meeting.

Page 217-220

Questions were raised concerning Main Avenue.

Mrs. Corriveau advised that Main Avenue is not in the street-paving program. She explained that a business owner on that street had put a request into Mr. Hiller. However, Engineering didn't receive a request to do design work for total street reconstruction.

Chief Piche explained that Lt. Wells had sent Mr. Simao a letter recommending no parking areas for 30' from the entrance and exit.

Mrs. Corriveau commented that she did not receive a copy of the letter. However, Mr. Simao had contacted her and still had some concerns.

Chief Piche indicated that no traffic counts had been done on Main Ave. as none had been requested.

Councilman Clough mentioned that the main concern is with vehicles coming in and out all of the time. Previously, Ni Mo vehicles left in the morning and came back in the afternoon.

Councilman Simmons asked about overlay costs for the street.

Mr. Hayes explained that if only an overlay was done, the properties would be flooded out. In addition, the overlay would not take care of the wavy effect on the roadway.

Mrs. Corriveau advised Council that reconstruction of Main Avenue could be designed and put in the 2004-05 budget if Council so desires. Council concurred.

Councilman Smith suggested that more curbing be put in and fewer streets be paved.

After discussion on curbing and the machine used, Council asked that Mr. Hayes supply information on the curbing machine to them.

Page 225-238

No comments made.

Page 242

Jayn Graves answered questioned posed by Council concerning the capital campaign funding. She explained that the library is requesting \$250,000 over a five year period from the City. This would go toward the \$1.5 million project.

Councilman Simmons asked about the special taxing district.

Ms. Graves explained that they haven't made any progress on this since last fall. She commented that the library is asking the City for the \$250,000 whether or not the special taxing district is completed or not. She explained that the library is starting the application and search process for a new director in June and hope to have one in place by September. She stated that the taxing district project couldn't start up until the new director is in place.

Councilman Simmons remarked that Council asked the board three years ago to do this and stated that it was a high priority.

Ms. Graves responded that she thinks Council will find that once a new director is in place, things will proceed speedily.

Mayor Butler commented that there was a committee in place and he is disappointed that the board will not proceed with this.

Ms. Graves responded that she would tell the board members of the Council's concerns. She also commented that without an official startup of the campaign, the library has already raised \$100,000 toward the project.

Mayor Butler asked if Ms. Graves was optimistic about raising the \$1.5 million without money from the City of Watertown taxpayers.

Ms. Graves responded that the City needs to be a key partner in the campaign.

Councilman Simmons stated that he would hope Ms. Graves would reinforce to the board members how important Council feels the taxing district is.

Councilman Smith asked if Jefferson County was being asked to support the campaign.

Ms. Graves responded that they would ask everyone to support it and would put the County on the list.

Councilman Clough asked if the Town of Watertown was being asked.

Ms. Graves responded that this was an excellent suggestion. She advised that they have not done any formal asking yet, except to the City.

Mrs. Corriveau advised that over the years there have not been a lot of capital budget requests from the library. They have a good plan for moving forward. They have looked at the needs and have a plan for much needed repairs. She suggested that Council take a walk through the facility to see what is being proposed. She commended Mrs. Schwartz and Ms. Graves for putting this effort into the project.

Councilman Clough remarked that three years ago, Mr. Hodosy was directed to move forward with the taxing district proposal. It was promised then and still it is not in place.

Ms. Graves responded that a lot of things have had to be placed on the back burner. However, while the taxing district is going to be done, she doesn't want to tell Council it will be done by June. She also commented that she believes the board members share Council's frustration.

Page 244

Council deleted the proposal to widen the library's driveway.

Council moved the \$1,100 to install the interior door alarms at the library to the operating budget.

Page 245

Mrs. Schwartz explained that the surveillance system would be in different sections throughout the entire library.

Budget session closed at 8:22 p.m.

Donna M. Dutton
City Clerk