

**COUNCIL BUDGET SESSION  
CITY OF WATERTOWN  
MAY 12, 2008  
6:00 P.M.**

**MAYOR JEFFREY E. GRAHAM PRESIDING**

**PRESENT: COUNCIL MEMBER ROXANNE M. BURNS  
COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH M. BUTLER JR.  
COUNCIL MEMBER PETER L. CLOUGH  
COUNCIL MEMBER JEFFREY M. SMITH  
MAYOR GRAHAM**

**ALSO PRESENT: CITY MANAGER MARY M. CORRIVEAU  
CITY COMPTROLLER JAMES MILLS**

Mayor Graham opened the budget work session.

**Library- page 228**

Mrs. Corriveau briefly reviewed with Council the Library budget.

Mayor Graham inquired if the fee structure for Library fines is appropriate for today.

Barbara Wheeler, Library Director, said that the Library generates revenue from its fines at five cents a day. She added that she has discussed with Attorney Slye the possibility of taking violators to court. Currently, she said, the Library caps late fees at \$5.00.

Mrs. Corriveau suggested looking at what other libraries charge for late fees.

Council Member Smith asked what percentage of library patrons are from outside the City.

Mrs. Wheeler answered that approximately 45% of users live outside City limits.

Mayor Graham stated that there should be a Code stating that not returning books is a violation of law. He added that when someone applies for a Library card they are consenting to penalties and fees. He mentioned utilizing the practice of video rental businesses.

Council Member Burns commented that she would like staff to do some research on the issue. She added to Mayor Graham's statement suggesting that patrons have a credit card or debit card number on file at the Library and late fees will be charged to the card until the item is returned.

Council Member Butler recommended putting down a deposit when checking out an item and when it is returned, the deposit is refunded.

Mayor Graham mentioned making public the lists of those who owe more than \$50 in Library fees.

Council Member Smith asked if the Library contacts violators.

Mrs. Wheeler said they do.

Regarding the heating and air conditioning pumps, Mayor Graham inquired if analysis has been taken on the most efficient method of heating and cooling the Library.

Mrs. Wheeler said that is a good idea as they are always breaking down.

Council Member Clough inquired about the need for a \$35,000 security system for the parking lot.

Mrs. Wheeler told Council that the funds will be used for an interior digital system as well. She added that staff needs the capability to pull up camera images on any computer in the library in order to efficiently observe potential problems. Mrs. Wheeler mentioned that the need for cameras outside stems from vandalism, fights and thefts.

Council Member Smith asked how many bikes were stolen.

Mrs. Wheeler said three were taken from the bike rack even though they were locked.

Mayor Graham suggested coordinating the cameras with the City Hall parking lot as there is a lot of activity in that area.

Council Member Burns said monitoring the City Hall parking lot makes sense as well.

Council Member Butler asked on what position the Library lost funding.

Mrs. Wheeler replied that the book-shelfer position was cut but that the Library is finally full staffed this year.

Council Member Smith asked if the interior security cameras are running and when the fine arts display will be returned.

Mrs. Wheeler said they are not operating but hopes to have them up in July. The art display will be returned in July or August when the cameras are working, she said.

Mayor Graham and Council examined the custodial/laborer position (page 228.)

Mrs. Corriveau referred to page 298 to examine the five year plan and asked Council to examine the proposal for capital expenditures.

Mayor Graham summarized that he would like to see a law or revised statute for library fines.

Council Member Butler asked if other libraries in New York are faced with the same dilemmas and issues.

Mrs. Wheeler commented that it depends on the municipality. She added that in some places the police collect the fines.

Mayor Graham said he would like to get a copy of the list of those who owe more than \$100.

Council Member Butler asked what demographic has the majority of the late fees.

Mrs. Wheeler stated that mostly adults incur the fines.

Council Member Clough asked if many of the violators have moved.

Mrs. Wheeler replied that that is a problem and the library uses a collection agency when possible.

Council Member Smith commented that Council Member Burns' idea to charge a debit or credit card if a book is late or not returned is a good one.

Mayor Graham mentioned that not everyone has a debit/credit card.

Mrs. Wheeler reminded Council that a five year old can apply for a library card.

Council Member Burns said that parents have to sign for their child in that case.

Council Member Clough said that idea is worth looking into.

### **Information Technology – page 102**

Mrs. Corriveau reviewed the IT Department's budget with Council.

Peter Keenan, Information Technology Manager, discussed the need for server replacements.

Mayor Graham asked about the possibility of linking offices for ease in credit card payments.

Mr. Keenan said that has more to do with the issue of banking fees. He added that there is network capability for that feature.

Mr. Mills told Council that there can be expensive fees for municipalities with that service.

Mrs. Corriveau suggested looking at available options and at what other municipalities are paying.

Council Member Butler stated that someone from HSBC could talk to Council during a work session on the issue.

Mr. Keenan and Council discussed the Citrix software system and line items 410-460 on page 104.

Mrs. Corriveau and Council reviewed page 253.

Council Member Burns mentioned the expense of the Financial Management System slated for fiscal year 2012-2013.

Mr. Mills told Council that it would be a comprehensive system for utility billing and taxes.

Mayor Graham said he liked the idea of unified invoices to tell people what they owe the City all together. He added that he would rather not wait that long in this case. The Mayor also suggested looking at dog licenses and marriage licenses and integrating those fees as well.

Mayor Graham asked if dog licensing is entered through the computer.

Mrs. Lewis said the dog licensing process is computerized.

Mrs. Corriveau added that both dog licenses and marriage licenses are part of the state system and cannot be integrated.

Council Member Butler said the City has some catching up to do to make this convenient for the public and to make revenue for the City.

Mr. Mills told Council that he feels it is difficult to put forward a system that costs so much when there are other priorities for the City to consider.

Mayor Graham suggested looking at something during a work session after the budget is passed.

Mrs. Corriveau said that choosing a financial management system can easily be a year long project.

### **Police Department – page 108**

Mrs. Corriveau opened discussion on the Police budget.

Council Member Clough asked for a review from last meeting regarding dispatch.

Mrs. Corriveau said that the easiest way to explain is to look at pages 106 and 112. She continued to review with Council the cost services.

Mayor Graham commented that it would be better to break apart expenses which include rent, gas and phone service.

Council Member Burns asked about the new Dodge Durango.

Chief Joseph Goss told Council it was purchased last year during the current fiscal budget.

Mayor Graham asked who uses that vehicle.

Chief Goss said that either a lieutenant or patrol officer will use the vehicle.

Mayor Graham mentioned that he sees a lot of agencies using four wheel drive vehicles and that the gas mileage is atrocious on those automobiles. He added that for most of the year a front wheel drive vehicle will suffice.

Chief Goss replied that those vehicles are used for more serious calls. In order to save on fuel, he said that while officers are responding to calls, if the situation allows, they can turn off the patrol cars rather than let them idle.

Council Member Clough asked if the department has considered purchasing 4 cylinder vehicles.

Chief Goss said that they did have a problem with V-6 Chevy Impala motors due to the amount of idle time. He added that he does not know of a police package for 4 cylinder vehicles. Chief Goss said he would check with Purchasing Agent Robert Cleaver for information sent regarding hybrid cars such as the Toyota Prius.

Mayor Graham requested a copy of that information.

Council Member Clough asked how the Prius compares price-wise and if they would consider purchasing one.

Chief Goss said it is approximately \$24,000, however, it is not practical because of limited space. He added that at least a mid-sized car is needed and a full size car is ideal because it acts as an office for up to eight hours a day.

Council Member Smith said that regarding the four wheel drive vehicle, he agrees with the Mayor that the department should utilize a more efficient vehicle.

Mayor Graham asked Council for their thoughts on the School Resource Officer.

Council Member Clough replied that his thoughts have not changed and he is not in favor of the position.

Council Member Burns said that the department is in no position to hire new employees at this time. She added that she is not saying she does not support the idea but has concerns with the tax rate increase and is actually more concerned with next year's budget. Council Member Burns said Council should be looking for ways to trim the budget as much as possible.

Council Member Smith mentioned that he has heard comments on the value of the resource officer but the City cannot afford this individual at this time.

Council Member Clough suggested looking at the future budgets to get them under control first.

Council Member Butler wished to go on record as saying that he supports the school resource officer program. He added that as a parent of two children, he supports the \$25,000 cost to keep kids safe. Council Member Butler stated that this issue has been shown more support from the public than anything Council has talked about and Council is there to represent the people.

Mayor Graham said the consensus is that the position be deleted but that he supports the idea.

Chief Goss told Council he expects overtime costs to be \$225,000. The department budgeted for \$300,000, he said.

Council and staff discuss Police department overtime.

Council Member Smith stated that he sees both short and long term savings in energy costs for the City if windmills and hydro power were utilized.

Council Member Burns said she would like to cut the overtime budget somewhat. She added that Council has an obligation to be involved in the budget process but that it should not micromanage departments.

Mayor Graham suggested a possible adjustment in the cost of trash stickers if the cost of that service goes up.

Eugene Hayes, Supt. of Public Works, said refuse collection is an enterprise fund and as long as the City is covering all its costs, that is all it's supposed to do. He noted there will be additional patronage as new housing units are built.

Mrs. Corriveau stated that the City needs to be proactive in promoting its services and prices via advertising.

Council and staff further discussed taxation and overtime.

Mrs. Corriveau asks Council to review page 252.

Council and staff looked at page 253.

Chief Goss reminded Council that he will modify the police vehicle line.

Mrs. Corriveau directed Council to review the radio system item budgeted for 2008-2009. She added that this is a grant the City applied for.

Fire Chief Daniel Gaumont told Council that the actual amount of the grant is \$1.1 million with a funding match of 20 percent; 10 percent by the City and 10 percent by the County. He said that the equipment will be shared between the police and fire departments.

Council Member Smith said he feels as though this will benefit outside agencies more than City agencies.

Chief Goss said that most County departments are not on the high bands but the City is. He added that 75 new radios would be utilized by the departments.

Council Member Smith inquired who would pay for maintenance to the radios.

Mrs. Corriveau replied that if the equipment is dispatch related the City does not pay.

Council Member Smith remarked that if the City is the lead agency then that is the City's equipment.

Council Member Clough asked if the City will be charged for maintenance once the equipment is delivered.

Mrs. Corriveau said that she is not sure who will own it but in order to get the new system, an agency was required to apply.

Chief Gaumont told Council that due to new federal requirements all radio systems will have to be replaced by 2013 anyway and that the new system would meet those requirements.

### **Fire Department – page 110**

Council Member Smith stated that he recognizes the need for a decent digital camera for the department but questions why it must cost \$450 and not \$200-\$250.

Chief Gaumont replied that there are roughly 50 fire investigations per year and 75 percent of that cost is the warranty. He added that according to consumer reports, that is a mid-range camera.

Council Member Butler asked if that is such a good camera, why the need for the warranty.

Chief Gaumont corrected his earlier remark saying that \$75 of the \$450 cost is the warranty.

Mayor Graham and Council discussed the public address system.

Council Member Smith said he would like to see copies of reports on repairing the system.

Council discussed the water and river rescue equipment.

Council Member Butler stated that those are rarely used.

Chief Gaumont told Council that the City is publicizing the river for play and enjoyment so the department needs to be able to make a water rescue if needed.

Council Member Butler asked how many times the equipment has been in the water.

Chief Gaumont replied that the department trains for two weeks, twice a year.

Council Member Clough asked who did water rescues before the City received the boat grant.

Chief Gaumont said the department performed the rescues but they were not performed with the safety equipment currently on hand.

Council Member Smith asked how many thermal imaging cameras the department has now and why the need for two more.

Chief Gaumont said there are two cameras, but they are eight years old and have continuing maintenance problems. He added that the cameras are an integral part of fire suppression. The Chief said that construction of homes and buildings has changed over the years which has led to an increase in temperature and burn rate during fires making the structure failure rate much earlier. The cameras allow firefighters to see if a floor or roof is weakening.

Council Member Smith asked if this means the New York State building maintenance code has lessened over the years.

Chief Gaumont replied that less materials are being used to build a stronger building leading to a greater risk for firefighters. He also mentioned recent examples of death or injury to firefighters who were working without a thermal imaging camera.

Council Member Clough stated that it would be better to spread out replacements over a period of time. He also expressed his displeasure with the Chief's use of scare tactics when the topic of new equipment comes to the table.

Council Member Smith said he agreed with Council Member Clough's feelings and added that he knows the job is dangerous. He stated he thought his colleague's point was to stagger the purchase of the equipment for less of a financial impact.

Mrs. Corriveau told Council that equipment is the number one priority for the department if it needs to be replaced.

Council and staff discussed overtime figures and hiring for the department.

Chief Gaumont told Council they are looking at \$300,000 for next year's overtime.

Mayor Graham said he agrees with that figure.

Council concurred.

Council Member Smith asked about the new rescue vehicle.

Chief Gaumont said he hopes to do an inspection of it and pick it up May 20.

Mrs. Corriveau directed Council's attention to page 252 to review future projects.

Council and staff discussed new river rescue equipment budgeted for fiscal year 2011-2012.

Council Member Butler commented that the money spent on the cameras sounds like it will be put to good use but cannot imagine spending \$50,000 on equipment the City does not use.

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Council discussed when the next budget session will be held.

Council agrees on Tuesday, May 13, 2008 , 6pm-8pm in Council Chambers.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40p.m.

*Amanda C. Lewis*  
Deputy City Clerk