

**BUDGET SESSION
CITY COUNCIL
MAY 19, 2003
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 MARY M. CORRIVEAU**

MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL: **DANIEL GAUMONT
MILTON SAYRE
GENE HAYES
PETER MONACO
JAMES MILLS
GARY PILON**

Mayor Butler opened the budget session.

Mrs. Corriveau distributed the budget update memo to Council. She advised that the City of Watertown had the highest percentage of debt limit exhausted in New York State in 2000 and was third, only behind the Cities of Buffalo and Rochester in 2001. She explained that based on our current capital expenditures, our debt limit exhausted at the end of 2003 will drop from 67.59% to 60.

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Mayor Butler suggested that Council begin with this section outlining the general fund summary. He discussed the sales tax estimates and the fact that any more income being generated in the future from the sales tax is purely speculation at this point.

Councilwoman Burns commented that she isn't going to second-guess the fee estimates that have been listed since the departments heads have a much better handle on this than Council does. She asked Mr. Hayes if he sees the bus revenues increasing this year.

Mr. Hayes responded that increased revenues would be due to ridership increase at this point. The department may look at restructuring the fare system as well, which would also increase revenues.

Councilman Simmons referred to the A2660 account on page 12 concerning the Sale of Real Property. He asked if the amount of \$30,000 in the 2002-03 budget was a profit.

Mr. Mills explained stated that this is a profit as it is the excess over and above the taxes owed on those sales.

Councilwoman Burns referred to the A2135 account on page 6 concerning the Refuse and Garbage Totes.

Mr. Hayes explained that they could be selling a lot more if they weren't limited under a single price to single residential units. He said if the department could be given some latitude, they could sell them for a slight discount in greater quantities to a number of state homes in the City. In addition, they could sell the large ones to small commercial establishments in the City. He said that it is necessary to get the word out better.

Councilman Smith asked how long it would take to expand the program to commercials.

Mr. Hayes explained that it would only take authorization from the Council.

Councilman Smith responded that the City should offer the 90-gallon totes to the small commercials.

Mayor Butler responded that this is something to consider.

Page 17-Expenditures

Mayor Butler asked about the expenditures proposed for the Law Account.

Mrs. Corriveau referred to details of the account on pages 36 & 37. She explained that Bond Schoneck & King are helping with foreclosures and the brownfields project. Mrs. Corriveau explained that she and Mr. Mix met with the environmental attorney from Bond Schoneck & King and representatives from Black Clawson concerning the eventual transfer of the property to the City. Mr. Mix has been given authority to see the brownfields grant carried through.

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Mrs. Corriveau advised Council that the A1990 Contingent account should read projected salary increases for Fire, Police, Management and IBEW.

Mayor Butler remarked that Council should do better for Management this year. He stated that he feels they are getting short changed as compared to the rest of the City employees. He stated that 1% or 2% doesn't seem fair when the other City employees have received much more. In addition, Management pays more for health insurance.

Referring to A6310 CAPC, Councilman Simmons asked if the City wasn't supposed to increase this amount by \$5,000 each year.

Mrs. Corriveau explained because of a tight budget year, she didn't think we had the money to increase the amount. She explained that she had contacted Mrs. Gault and explained the situation and that Mrs. Gault didn't seem to object and was pleased that they were still in the budget

Councilman Clough remarked that Mr. Hiller had made a verbal agreement to increase this amount by \$5,000 and he would ask that Council increase the amount by \$5,000 to \$35,000 this year. Council concurred.

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Mrs. Corriveau advised Council that there would be a \$5,852 reduction in the City Manager's salary as well as the removal of the \$2,000 line item in the City Manager's budget for department vehicle expense.

Councilman Smith remarked that there should also be a reduction in the salary for the Assistant to the City Manager.

Mrs. Corriveau handed out the current job description for that position and it was agreed that Council would discuss it at tomorrow's budget session.

Page 99- Publicity

Mayor Butler explained that the Miss NYS Pageant has again requested \$4,000 which comes out of the publicity account.

Council concurred to give \$4,000 to the pageant from the publicity account.

Page 175 – Bed Tax

Mayor Butler referred to the brochure which was prepared by the Chamber. He explained that the Chamber has asked for \$10,000 from the City's bed tax fund to pay for this brochure.

Councilman Clough asked if the City was paying for destination marketing why they would pay for this brochure. He also commented that it doesn't make sense that the City has to pay the entire cost of the brochure.

Councilman Smith referred to the small number of items in the brochure that are in Watertown, remarking that out of the 60 attractions only 8 were in the City. Yet, the Chamber expects the City to fund the entire brochure costs.

Mayor Butler suggested that Ms. Delmonico be invited to attend tomorrow's budget session to answer questions concerning this. He did agree, however, that it wasn't fair that Jefferson County and other municipalities had not be asked to help pay for the

brochure. Council members concurred that it would not be necessary to invite Ms. Delmonico to the budget session. It was agreed by Council that they would not fund this brochure, as it is more about the County than the City. In addition, they asked that a letter be sent to the Chamber explaining that the Council would consider it in the future, if a more regional approach for paying for the brochure were undertaken by the Chamber.

Page 78- Fire Department

Mayor Butler asked Chief Gaumont if he was satisfied with the amount in the budget for over time.

Chief Gaumont explained that they tried to use the worst-case scenario when estimating overtime. He explained that five members of the department will be retiring and four new members are in training.

In answering questions concerning the possibility of refurbishing the truck as opposed to purchasing a new one, Chief Gaumont explained that only the manufacturer of the vehicle can refurbish it, so it could not go out for bid. The price would be around \$500,00 and would give us 7 to 10 more years of use. Cost of a new one is \$750,000.

Police Department

Councilman Smith asked that job titles and descriptions for each employee in the Police Department be prepared for tomorrow budget session.

Councilwoman Burns suggested a brief description of the duties such as for training officer and community police officer.

Councilman Clough questioned why Council would need job descriptions if they are going over the budget.

Mrs. Corriveau stated that she would put together a report for Council outlining the actual functions of the positions.

Page 99 – Economic Development

Mayor Butler opened the discussion outlining the recent meeting with the Trust. He explained that there is concern that if the position were moved in-house at City Hall, it would be delegated to planning. He commented that the Trust wanted to make sure that the position would be delegated to marketing downtown. He also explained that the Trust board said that if the position came under them, it would have to become self-sufficient after two years and had suggested that perhaps a BID district could be developed in the future to help fund the position.

Councilwoman Burns referred to a memo from the Downtown Board, which she had presented to the Council whereby the board thinks there is merit to having the position in City Hall under the supervision of the City Manager.

Councilman Simmons responded that this position would need to market the community and he would rather have the position under the Trust. He stated that if it was in-house at City Hall he fears the position duties would shift.

Mrs. Corriveau commented that her concern is that it would only be a two-year position and the individual would have to find funding to support the position. She also commented that potential candidates might be wary of taking a job that has no funding assurances past two years. She explained that she can see some benefits of having it at the Trust as if it was at the City, it would have to go through Civil Service. However, she also stated that she believes there is a need to have the developer not be a part of a development agency in an effort to give more objectivity to the position.

Councilman Smith remarked that Ogdensburg has their EDZ coordinator in-house and suggested that these duties could be combined with the downtown developer's duties since the EDZ sunsets in 2004.

Councilman Simmons questioned why this would be brought into the City now when it doesn't sunset until 2004 and the paperwork required to administer the zone continues for the next ten years. He also commented that the Empire Zone is more than just downtown. He stated that one person couldn't do both jobs. In addition, the Town of Watertown is involved and would have to agree to it.

Mayor Butler asked Mrs. Corriveau if it would handicap her to hire a person not knowing if the person was going to assume the Empire Zone coordinator role.

Mrs. Corriveau stated that she would have to speak with Mrs. MacAtee about the duties. She will also check with Ogdensburg to see how their system works.

Mayor Butler responded that the best the Council can do is to decide on the downtown development director at this point.

Councilman Clough remarked that the position should be kept in-house and should either be a City Manager's appointment or the City Council's appointment.

Mrs. Corriveau reminded Council that per City Charter the only two appointments the Council has are City Manager and City Clerk. The other appointments are by the City Manager.

Councilman Clough responded that he felt the Council should have input on the qualifications for the position.

Mrs. Corriveau will supply the Council with Mr. Schelling's draft of the position description and qualifications.

Cost Estimates on Vehicles

Council referred to the report prepared by Mr. Hayes concerning cost estimates to make vehicles in the bone yard road worthy to be used on the sidewalk project.

Mr. Hayes explained that the object of these costs was only to make them road worthy, not necessarily safe. He explained that none of these costs are for bodywork and some vehicles may have holes in the floorboards. The two pickups he requested could have been used to hold equipment. E-5 as listed on the sheet can't hold equipment. He said 1-75,7-1A and E-5 could be equal to two utility trucks with 11-10A being a backup if something breaks down.

Councilman Smith remarked that he would leave the decision to Mr. Hayes as to which vehicles would be used. However, this amount is a lot less than buying new vehicles.

Mr. Hayes commented that Council had his recommendation last week when he suggested purchasing two new pickups for \$6,500 a year. He stated that while they probably will get these other vehicles on the road, they might not last more than one week. They weren't mothballed but pulled from the fleet. Therefore, they could be a continuing problem.

Mayor Butler suggested a compromise approach whereby the city purchases one new pickup this year and rent or repair the rest.

Councilman Clough commented that we don't really know where the sidewalk program is going to go as private contractors may take care of the problem.

Mrs. Corriveau advised Council that when City employees are put in City vehicles, she wants to make sure that they are going to be in safe vehicles. She stated that she wants assurances that Council wants the same thing.

Council members assured her that they felt the same way.

Councilwoman Burns referred to the Chevy full size van that was replaced by a used Dodge Caravan during the 2002 budget. She asked if it was being used more.

Mr. Pilon explained that the Caravan is being used more because the other van was not a good vehicle. He explained it is being used for surveying crews as well as by Peter Keenan and Bob Cleaver when they attend seminars. He stated that while it is not used on a daily basis, it is used often.

Councilman Smith remarked that he counted 8 dump trucks at 9:30 and questioned if all are being used every day.

Mr. Hayes stated that they are all being used once construction season starts up.

Council asked about rental charges for dump trucks and also about using trucks from the county or other towns.

Mr. Monaco explained that the rental fees are \$55.00 an hour. Also, he stated that it is impossible to get vehicles from the county or the towns during construction season.

Sidewalks

Mrs. Corriveau advised Council that Mr. Hayes wanted to make sure that after the last meeting, they understood the costs of the sidewalk installation as it related to random and continuous installation.

Mr. Hayes said that it would be unlikely that we would replace every block in the City, as it would be more likely it would be done randomly. He stated that continuous price would be the best they could do. However, most of the work will not be continuous, but rather random and therefore the continuous numbers won't be used and the price would be based on the random price. He stated that he didn't feel the contractor's comparison sheet should have been referred to in the resolution.

Mayor Butler responded that Council said they would pick up the cost of engineering inspections and at that time, he had also indicated that there would not be too many that were going 60' or more and what Council agreed on would keep the price competitive.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that they just didn't want Council to think the cost would be \$100,000 and have it turn out to be \$200,000, as this may mean the City will absorb more of the costs.

Councilman Clough remarked if one block is replaced at one location and two are replaced two houses down, the crews would plan so much pouring per day and it would be continuous whether or not the blocks sit next to each other.

Mr. Hayes explained that it wouldn't be a continuous run.

Councilman Simmons asked if there had been any problems with the union.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that she had spoken with the union reps and she needed to get them a packet and an agreement to protect their rights.

Councilman Clough asked about the backfilling of positions and if the part time labor positions filling the DPW positions could be charged to the sidewalk project instead of the higher salary of the individuals being moved into the sidewalk program from DPW.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that it couldn't be done that way. The person actually doing the work has to be charged to the program.

Councilman Smith asked Mr. Pilon how the inspections were going.

Mr. Pilon remarked that none have been done.

Councilman Smith stated that he was referring to the people who had been cited.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that a crew working for Engineering would be going out to do it.

Mr. Pilon explained that they are planning on hiring a retired DPW sidewalk supervisor to do the inspections. Civil Service is working on it now. He explained that the owners had 45 days to get in their appeals. The City plans on getting back to the owners around July 1st.

Councilman Smith asked if Engineering is doing inspections before the pours that the private contractors are doing.

Mr. Pilon stated that they do, if the contractor lets the department know when they are going to pour. He stated that the media needs to get the word out that a permit is required to put in a sidewalk.

Donna M. Dutton

City Clerk