

**COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF WATERTOWN**

June 8, 2009

7:00 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

Presentation:

Dr. John Scott Foster, Executive Director of the Zoo, led Council and staff on a tour through the New York State Zoo at Thompson Park. Dr. Foster told Council that they are in the process of rebuilding exhibits that were damaged by the heavy snow and ice this past winter. Dr. Foster noted that the new otter exhibit is 80-85% complete and should be ready for display by the end of June.

Dr. Foster spoke about the history of the zoo and said that 45,000- 46,000 people visit the zoo each year; half of whom are from Jefferson County. He said that 40,000 people are taught through the zoo's educational outreach program as well.

He brought the tour to the new river otter exhibit and explained the design process. Tor Holbeck from Massachusetts designed and built the exhibit. Dr. Foster explained that it has been constructed so children can see the otters from their strollers and that there is an underwater viewing tank so visitors can see the otters swimming.

Dr. Foster noted that a fifth-grade class from Wiley had held classes at the zoo for a week and integrated aspects of the zoo into each lesson. He said that he is hoping for funding to be able to have classes held there more frequently.

Tala, one of the new wolf pups, was introduced to Council. Dr. Foster told Council that the pups are being hand-raised so they are comfortable with people.

Dr. Foster closed the presentation by thanking the City for their tireless effort in helping with the operations of the zoo, including covering the utilities, mowing and plowing. He noted that this zoo costs approximately \$600,000 to run while other zoos this size have costs near two-million dollars.

Budget Question

Mrs. Corriveau told Council that \$5,000 remained in the budget for the Empire Development Zone, but the EDZ is no longer using that funding. She said the Council has three options which include: leaving that money in the budget but not spending it, amending the budget and the tax rate, or moving it to the contingency fund. Council agreed to amend the budget and the tax rate.

Emergency Interconnect

Mrs. Corriveau said that an agreement is needed for an emergency interconnect between the City of Watertown and the Towns of Watertown and Hounsfield and the Village of Sackets Harbor. She noted that their grant expires on June 18, 2009, and they are willing to put \$15,000 on the table and in the future all they would be charged for is water, at the lowest tier. She added that the request is for service for the term of the bonds for a 40 year agreement.

Council Member Smith asked if this would have to be renegotiated if services were needed in non-emergencies.

Mrs. Corriveau said they would be. She also noted that she had just received a copy of this information today and that Mr. Pilon and Attorney Slye were also reviewing it.

Meeting ended at 8:25 p.m.

Amanda C. Lewis
Deputy City Clerk