

**COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
CITY OF WATERTOWN  
August 11, 2008  
7:00 P.M.**

**MAYOR JEFFREY E. GRAHAM PRESIDING**

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

**ALSO PRESENT: CITY MANAGER MARY M. CORRIVEAU  
DANC REPRESENTATIVE ELIZABETH FIPPS  
DANC REPRESENTATIVE & CHAIR THOMAS HEFFERON**

**ABSENT: COUNCIL MEMBER PETER L. CLOUGH**

Mayor Graham opened the work session and welcomed and thanked Mrs. Fipps and Mr. Hefferon for meeting with Council.

Mr. Hefferon explained that DANC has a \$25 million budget, with about \$112 million in assets and over 50 employees. He advised that DANC 's business includes the landfill, waste water and water lines as well as 500 miles of fiber optic line which has a budget of over \$4 million per year. In addition, DANC has a community development fund which loans money to businesses and housing projects.

Mayor Graham remarked that the issues that interact with the City are landfill tipping fees and flow control issues. He commented that DANC has a lucrative undertaking with the landfill. He asked if it was the intent of DANC that the revenue should accrue to lower the tipping fees for the landfill users.

Mr. Hefferon responded that DANC is currently discussing that as well as other issues such as the possibility of building large greenhouses for the massive growing of tomatoes since the machinery used to burn the methane for electricity can be used to warm greenhouses. He also explained that one project which should be online within 60 days would use methane created at the landfill to produce electricity. The project should produce about \$1 million annually.

Mrs. Fipps commented that using the revenues to lower tipping fees might not be the best option. She advised that DANC has hired a consultant to determine what should be done with this revenue.

Mayor Graham questioned the need to hire a third party to decide. He suggested that the various representatives on the board go back to their prospective bodies and ask what they would like to see done with the money.

Mrs. Fipps agreed that representatives should do this as any recommendations would have to be made at the August board meeting.

Council Member Smith remarked that it would be nice to pass the revenues on to the residents of the City and the County by reducing the tipping fees.

Council Member Burns asked if there had been any discussions about using the money for such things as new or enhanced programs.

Mr. Hefferon explained that the proposal was tabled to put the revenue into community development. He also advised that some members of the board would like to leave the money in a landfill fund and not use it for community development.

Mayor Graham remarked that DANC is a state agency that is getting into all sorts of things and expressed his concerns with it becoming a totally parallel government to what is supposed to be running things. He also questioned if a state agency can really do community development for such a large area.

Council Member Butler asked if DANC was getting more benefit to the area by using the monies for housing. He commented that while it would be hard to measure the benefits of the developments, there definitely are benefits for the area.

Mrs. Corriveau questioned if the commercial haulers would pass the tipping fee reduction on to their customers.

Discussion was held concerning the water and sewer agreements between DANC and the City.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that the sewer contract is still under discussion.

Council Member Smith asked Mrs. Fipps and Mr. Hefferon what input they had on the board in regards to this contract.

Mrs. Fipps responded that they do not get involved in the negotiations, but do vote on the contract when it comes before the board.

Mayor Graham explained that Council would like to get rid of the volume related tiers.

Council Member Smith commented that property owners hooked into the DANC main along Route 3 should not pay a lower rate than residents who live inside the City.

Mayor Graham responded that they are paying more at the end because of maintenance and distribution costs. However, he would like to see it sold as a commodity since the City can not subsidize migration by providing improvements to outside residents.

Council Member Smith remarked that there is only one person in the City who can understand the rate for the sewage coming from Fort Drum line and that is Sewage Treatment Plant Supervisor Mike Sligar.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that the formula was designed to protect the City when it was designed 22 years ago.

Mr. Hefferon advised that there was a 1999 letter from then City Manager, Jerry Hiller stating that the other users on the line would pay the same rate as the Army pays.

Discussion was held concerning the need to back out collection system and distribution system costs when applicable.

Mayor Graham commented that he views it as an integrated system as collection and distribution could not exist alone.

Council Member Smith remarked that if the system is stressed, outside users don't pay the costs for capital repairs or improvements.

Council Member Burns summed up this portion of the meeting by stating that the Council has made it clear that they want to move in the direction of simplification for the way water and sewer rates are charged.

Discussion was held concerning housing and community development.

Mayor Graham remarked that everyone worked together and he thinks the housing is in good shape.

Mrs. Corriveau responded that the three brigades will be here this fall and then we will see the housing issue clearer.

Mayor Graham commented that the infill housing was a good idea and would like to see that type of thing continue.

Council Member Burns remarked that not only did it increase housing; it also eliminated blight in an area.

Council Member Butler asked how DANC could facilitate alternative energy projects for the City.

Discussion was held concerning ways that this could be undertaken through the use of grant funding.

Council Member Butler asked that JCC be involved as well.

Mrs. Corriveau advised that DANC and the City had worked together on the water-sewer capacity study.

Discussion was held concerning public transportation.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that St. Lawrence County has applied for a grant to transport people from their County to Watertown. She commented that she would like to look into the Fort Drum system's utilization rate on the base. If it is not being utilized there, would they use it to go off base?

Council Member Smith asked about the former City's landfill site and commented that there would still be a lot of methane in it. He asked if someone could study that.

Mrs. Corriveau responded that the City did look at it and they were told that there was not enough methane at the time. She will check to see if a report was done on it.

Mayor Graham thanked them for attending and all agreed that there should be more of these meetings.

*Donna M. Dutton*  
City Clerk