

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF WATERTOWN
November 27, 2006
7:00 P.M.**

MAYOR PRO TEM PETER L. CLOUGH PRESIDING

(Mayor Graham arrived at 7:50 p.m.)

PRESENT: **COUNCILMAN STEPHEN J. BRADLEY
COUNCILMAN TIMOTHY R. LABOUF
COUNCILMAN JEFFREY M. SMITH
COUNCILMAN PETER L. CLOUGH
MAYOR GRAHAM**

ALSO PRESENT: **CITY MANAGER MARY M. CORRIVEAU**

Presentations:

Water Department Meter Presentation – Gary Pilon, Water Superintendent

Mr. Pilon presented to Council a brief overview of the water meters used by the City in the last century. He explained the various upgrades that have been recommended by consulting firms and engineers over the years. As technology progresses, he added, the current remote-reading meter that the City has been installing is no longer being manufactured. In its place is the Pro-Read system which can be read by a “touch pad” or by a transmitter. Mr. Pilon told Council that the City has purchased 100 wall unit radio transmitters that will convert existing meters to radio reading capability. In addition, he added, 100 E-Coder meters and the hand-held radio reading equipment and software to interface with it have also been purchased.

Councilman Clough asked if the black boxes found on the sides of City homes will eventually be obsolete.

Mr. Pilon replied that is what the plan is eventually, but that it is a few years off. He added that the most recent estimate for an E-Coder residential meter with an integral radio transmitter is \$223.00. Mr. Pilon told Council the cost for the Pro-Read meter is slightly over \$100.00 with an additional \$100.00 to add a radio transmitting unit.

Mrs. Corriveau pointed out to Council that to replace every meter in the City is not something that can be done immediately but this is the direction the City is heading. She added that the City is in the process of a water meter changeover resulting in more efficient meter reading but the price tag of \$1.8 million to do the whole City at once is prohibitive.

Councilman Smith asked if instead of having a transition box (the Pro-Read meter) why not just start installing the E-Coder.

Mr. Pilon replied that the various boxes are spread all over the City and not conveniently clustered.

Councilman Clough asked if the City could consider making this a capital project.

Mr. Pilon said he was not sure the City could bond for that because it would be considered maintenance. He reminded Council that the old meters, currently on most homes in the City, are not available anymore. With the move to the new meters which possess radio transmitting capabilities, meter readers will be able to increase their daily coverage area by gaining meter information electronically without the use of field sheets.

Mr. Pilon added that the intention is to put the newest system on new construction throughout the City. He added that a possible proposal will be brought before Council to not charge the owner of a multi-unit building for the first meter but some type of fee will be proposed for subsequent meters needed. Mr. Pilon said a presentation will be done in the future to show Council how other communities make use of this plan.

Councilman Bradley stated that when he researched water rates in other cities he noticed that all city residents paid some type of water maintenance charge and suggested looking in that direction.

2006 Paving Update – Eugene Hayes, Superintendent of Public Works

Mr. Hayes and staff members, Josh Carlson and Matt Owen presented to Council an update of the paving projects in 2006. Mr. Hayes reviewed several aspects of these projects involving man hours spent, materials used, work submitted to CHIPS, and different paving methods used which include standard street paving, pin-on curbing, surface milling and paving, heat planing and chip coat, and shim courses. He added that the new GIS system (a camera system that records pavement conditions on City roadways) has more than doubled the City's operational efficiency.

Councilman LaBouf asked about the life of the shim course on Huntington Street.

Mr. Hayes replied that it is probably about 10-15 years but there was some concern with drainage.

Councilman Smith inquired about how long heat planing will last and the cost per linear foot for concrete.

Mr. Hayes said heat planing lasts approximately 7-10 years. He added that concrete costs \$80.00 a cubic yard and the cost of curbing is \$11.00 per linear foot.

Mayor Graham asked if the City is doing enough paving each year to compensate for deterioration.

Mr. Hayes replied that as more cars pass over the roadways there is more wear and tear, so there is not enough paving being done annually to compensate. He added that there is already rutting being seen on Coffeen Street.

Mayor Graham stated that as a crossroads for the County the roads suffer more wear and it is obvious to reorder paving priorities.

Councilman LaBouf told Council he has been told by some citizens that better signage on Interstate 81 would head-off some tractor trailer traffic and reduce wear to the roads.

Mr. Hayes replied that it would be better to defer to the Department of Transportation on that issue.

Mrs. Corriveau reminded Council that federal funding for projects is given to the City because federal highways run through the City.

Councilman Bradley inquired if Ten Eyck Street is on the paving plan for this coming year.

Mrs. Corriveau said the issue on that street is utilities.

Mr. Owen, the GIS Cartographer, presented to Council a computerized aerial view of the City's roadways. He explained that every 105 feet of roadway is evaluated by a computer.

Councilman Smith asked what the meanings of the colors are on the aerial view.

Mr. Owen replied that those represent the overall condition index where green means the roadway is good and orange or red means the roadway is in poor shape.

Mrs. Corriveau pointed out that staff wanted to show Council why this information is a helpful tool used to formulate the paving plan for the 2007 budget.

City Charges Levied on County Tax – James Mills, City Comptroller

Mrs. Corriveau reviewed with Council a report prepared by Mr. Mills regarding additional City charges to the County tax. She pointed out that the City Charter allows an additional amount be added to the County tax levied within the City to cover expenses of the City including preparing tax bills and collecting the tax and to partially meet the City's obligation to pay for delinquent County taxes from the annual tax sale.

She added that the City has had to utilize less City funds to make the County whole for the City's share of the County levy because of the increase in participation from the

community at recent tax sale auctions. The report also stated that sales tax revenues for the current fiscal year are up approximately 5% compared to budget projections which would provide enough revenue to reduce this additional charge to zero and not negatively affect this year's budget. In addition, it is recommended that the City Council set the additional amount to be added to the County tax rate calculation at zero.

2006 Autumn Cleanup Program – Eugene Hayes, Superintendent of Public Works

Mrs. Corriveau commented that the weather was not cooperative the day that was planned.

Jefferson Street Playground – Mary Corriveau, City Manager

Mrs. Corriveau thanked Council for following through on that project. She commented that she has seen and heard from residents that children are enjoying their new play area.

Mrs. Corriveau reminded Council they have the 2006 Annual Report on Local Governments from the Office of the State Comptroller.

Mrs. Corriveau also reminded Council about the upcoming community meetings including the Summit Woods Development, Neighborhood Meeting on November 28 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers and the Black River Parks Project Public Meeting on December 7, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Work Session ended at 8:55 p.m.

Amanda C. Lewis
Deputy City Clerk