

**JOINT WORK SESSION
WATERTOWN
CITY COUNCIL/TOWN BOARD
November 29, 2007
7:00 P.M.**

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

**COUNCILMAN-ELECT JOSEPH BUTLER, JR.
CITY MANAGER MARY M. CORRIVEAU**

TOWN BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

**COUNCILMAN PAUL V. DESORMO
COUNCILMAN STEPHEN L. RICH
COUNCILMAN DAVID W. PROSSER
COUNCILWOMAN SUSAN DANDROW
SUPERVISOR JOEL R. BARTLETT**

ALSO PRESENT:

**COUNCILMAN-ELECT EDWARD SMITH
TOWN CLERK CATHERINE M. RICH**

Mayor Graham welcomed everyone to the joint meeting to discuss the shared government shared initiative grant application.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that the application is due on December 14th. She advised that the group, if they decided there was not enough time to apply this year, they could discuss possible initiatives for next year.

Supervisor Bartlett commented that the Town and City have opportunities to work together. He stated that he would support any initiative for extending the bus service and would be willing to search for grant opportunities to help the City with this endeavor. He remarked that the City and Town have worked together with the repaving of Hunt Street and with the water and sewer agreements. He explained that the Town and City staff have assisted each other with water and sewer emergencies in the past.

Mrs. Corriveau referred to the report for the grant and explained that there were four city and town consolidations being studied this year.

Councilwoman Dandrow commented that there would be a fight if the Town and City were consolidated.

Mayor Graham discussed the various land uses in the Town and City and commented that the problem with consolidation is that there needs to be like use of property. He referred to Summit Woods where there is like use with part of the housing project in the City and the other half in the Town.

Supervisor Bartlett commented that it has been the Town's goal to attract business growth to the Washington Street corridor. He also discussed a previous annexation of land along Route 81. He stated that the Town Board received many complaints about allowing the land to be annexed into the City. However, as a result of the annexation there has been major development in that area.

Councilman Smith referred to the bus service extension and stated that City Council doesn't want the City taxpayers to pay for the people going out to the Town businesses.

Councilwoman Dandrow responded that the Town Board doesn't want Town taxpayers to subsidize the Citibus.

Councilman Smith explained that the people being transported to the Town would be shopping in the businesses that are in the Town.

Councilwoman Dandrow responded that if the Town helps the City, they would be subsidizing the City. She commented that it is the City taxpayer using the service.

Councilman Smith remarked that Councilwoman Dandrow's statement was absolutely false. He referred to the water issue and asked where the Town would get their water if the City decided not to sell it to them.

Councilwoman Dandrow responded that they would buy it someplace else.

Supervisor Bartlett suggested that having covered bus stops in the Town might be a way to assist the City with extending the bus service.

Mrs. Corriveau commented that the State has indicated that they will put some bus stops in the City. However, she is not sure where they would be placed on Arsenal Street. She explained that Jefferson County has been charged by the State to develop a County wide transportation plan. This plan, while probably not providing service for the entire County would provide service where there are large numbers of people and large numbers of businesses that people want to go to.

Councilman Clough asked when the County plan meetings would start.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that she only knows that there is a meeting scheduled. Kathy Webster and Ken Mix will be attending from the City.

Councilwoman Dandrow asked how the Centro bus service in Syracuse works.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that Centro is not a City system, but is privately owned.

Councilman Desormo suggested that businesses on Public Square might be hurt by extending the service.

Mrs. Corriveau advised that BOCES have indicated that they would like the bus service to extend out to them. She also advised that a survey will begin next week whereby businesses in the Town will be surveyed about the possibility of extending the bus service. A copy of the result will be sent to Supervisor Bartlett.

Councilman Rich commented that the extension of the bus service would benefit everybody. However, the term subsidy is not the right word for what we all would like to do.

Councilman Clough remarked that the whole idea is to reach a common ground. He also commented that each board represents their own constituents. He stated that we need to break down some of these barriers.

Supervisor Bartlett responded that he and Councilman Clough have been discussing the bus issue for quite some time. He also commented that he had suggested soliciting businesses to help subsidize the City's costs. He suggested that a joint letter be sent to every business out there.

Mayor Graham responded that this would show how important the extension would be to them.

Councilman Smith advised that the Salmon Run Mall had given money to the City in the past. However, Attorney Slye determined that it wasn't legal to do so.

Councilman Prosser suggested that the Town could help out by requesting that developers provide access for public transportation with covered bus stops.

Councilman Rich commented that when he read through the information on the grant, he read it as a consolidation of services.

Mrs. Corriveau responded that this is correct and is not for expansion of services.

Supervisor Bartlett asked if there were any federal funds available.

Mrs. Corriveau remarked that while she doesn't know at this time, with the growth of Fort Drum there is always opportunity to look into it at the federal level.

Councilman-Elect Butler referred to the packet commenting that there are examples of shared initiatives listed there. He also asked why the Town has so many water districts.

Supervisor Bartlett explained that by law they have to have separate ones because they are their own taxing entity. They can be combined only when the debt service is level.

Mrs. Corriveau asked if there would be a possibility that the City could do the Town's water billing for them. She explained that the City is automated.

Town Clerk Rich, who presently does the Town's billing, indicated that the Town is also automated. She also commented that this is something that could be looked into and discussed.

Supervisor Bartlett commented that DANC has wanted to take over those operations in the Town for years. However, it would have been more expensive for the Town. He also advised that there are 9 employees in the Public Works Dept. with two licensed for Water. He also commented that if the water billing that the City sends to the Town now could be done on a quarterly basis, it would be a great help.

Councilman Smith used fire departments as an example of how consolidation could be a good thing. He explained that in many of the towns and villages there is duplication of equipment because of imaginary boundaries. He also referred to the fire service at Summit Woods where in one side of the City, the City will respond and the other side will have to wait for the Town Fire Dept. to respond. He mentioned that garbage pickup on each side would be different as well. Councilman Smith referred to the problem between the school districts regarding students living at Starwood Apartments but not being allowed to attend Starbuck School in Watertown. He commented that all of these problems are because of imaginary boundaries.

Councilman Desormo responded that mutual aide does cover the fire departments.

Councilman Bradley commented that he ran a County committee concerning the fire departments receiving money and not sharing equipment.

Councilman Rich responded that fire departments are not a Town Board decision.

Councilman-Elect Butler commented that extending the Citibus service is a good step. However, there is a bigger issue. He asked if a volunteer fire department could meet the needs of the Town in view of all of the development.

Councilman Desormo commented that he believes that it will have to change to a paid department at some point.

Supervisor Bartlett advised that the Board of Fire Commissioners is looking at constructing a new facility on the new road between Arsenal and Coffeen Streets. The facility would have dorm rooms which would house fire students at JCC. In return for

free lodging, the students would commit so many hours of manning the fire department. He also commented that the Town of Watertown is called third to assist the City of Watertown with a fire. He advised that Fort Drum is called first.

Mrs. Corriveau advised that this is because they look for the next paid force.

Councilman Desormo commented that the City and Town depend on the water from the Black River. He stated that he knows there are aqua flows in the Town that could probably supply cleaner water that wouldn't have to be processed as much.

Mrs. Corriveau responded that the Black River has been cleaned up considerably with the installation of sewage treatment facilities.

Councilman LaBouf referred back to the bus issue and remarked that the Town residents could use the service to come into the City to shop.

Councilwoman Dandrow responded that she is against paying for City residents to use the service and it should be open to everyone.

Councilman Prosser commented that most of the grants issued were for doing assessments and we need to come up with one viable area.

Councilwoman Dandrow suggested that they might be able to consolidate the assessor and health department.

Councilman Smith commented that there has been discussion to put a new sheet of ice in the Town. He suggested that it be put in at the Fairgrounds.

Mayor Graham recapped the areas discussed this evening: bus service, assessor, water department billing & maintenance of the system.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that under law, the City can put in spec water lines. However, the Town can't unless they have customers. She also commented that there are benefits to having a combined water system.

Mayor Graham stated that the bus issue should be pursued, even though it might not fit into this grant.

Mrs. Corriveau responded that staff would investigate this.

Councilman Clough commented that every year the issue is water. He stated that he feels this needs to be looked at for the grant. He also commented that the Town and City have worked together on the Empire Zone.

Mayor Graham advised that to strike a deal with BOCES would guarantee a number of riders.

Councilwoman Dandrow suggested extending the survey to include Northland Estates and the Lettiere Tract.

There was a consensus of the City Council and the Town Board to focus the application on water and sewer consolidation.

Councilman-Elect Butler advised that we need to speak with people who have already done consolidations.

Councilman Desormo remarked that if the City takes over the billing, the Town constituents will say that their rates should be lower.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that the grant would be written by Michael Lumbis. However, he would need input from the Town, as well.

Mayor Graham stated that we don't want to lose the momentum to apply for this grant.

Mrs. Corriveau advised that it would require resolutions by both boards prior to December 14th.

The following resolution was offered by the Town Board:

INTRODUCED BY SUPERVISOR JOEL BARTLETT

RESOLVED that the City of Watertown is designated as lead agent for the Shared Municipal Services grant application for a feasibility study of a unified water and sewer district utilizing the City of Watertown and the six Town Water Districts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Supervisor is hereby authorized to represent the Town of Watertown in this study.

SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN SUSAN DANDROW AND CARRIED WITH ALL VOTING IN FAVOR THEREOF.

City Council will have a resolution before them at Monday's meeting.

Mayor Graham asked if there was anything that the City could do about the town's water tower on Route 81.

It was agreed that the tower should say "Welcome to Watertown".

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Donna M. Dutton
City Clerk

