

**COUNCIL BUDGET SESSION  
CITY OF WATERTOWN  
MAY 15, 2007  
6:00 P.M.**

**MAYOR JEFFREY E. GRAHAM PRESIDING**

**PRESENT:** COUNCILMAN STEPHEN J. BRADLEY (arrived after meeting started)  
COUNCILMAN PETER L. CLOUGH  
COUNCILMAN TIMOTHY R. LABOUF  
COUNCILMAN JEFFREY M. SMITH  
MAYOR GRAHAM

**ALSO PRESENT:** CITY MANAGER MARY M. CORRIVEAU  
CITY COMPTROLLER JAMES MILLS

Mayor Graham opened the budget session.

Council received communications from the Jefferson Co. Historical Society outlining their plans and from the Watertown Teen Center outlining their concerns and requesting the City's help.

**West Main Overpass**

Councilman LaBouf referred to the fact that this overpass is in deteriorating condition and nothing has been done since he first mentioned it last year.

Mrs. Corriveau advised that she had called the railroad inspector last month and has not heard anything back. She explained that it truly is a repair project that needs to be taken on by CFX.

Mayor Graham commented that the overpass goes over a roadway and that would seem to make it a safety issue. He suggested that the City take a look at it.

Mr. Hauk explained that the concrete that covers the reinforcement is falling away and could possibly fall on motorists.

Mayor Graham commented that NYS DOT has expertise in the safety of bridges and asked if they could look at it.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that she had contacted NYS DOT and they sent a letter to CFX. In addition, they gave her the name of the individual whom she phoned last month.

Councilman Clough suggested that the City Attorney send a letter to CFX.

Councilman LaBouf suggested having a meeting with CFX.

Mayor Graham remarked that if an individual property owner had a safety issue such as this, the City would not tolerate it.

Councilman Clough remarked that this concern has been going on for about 1 to 3 years. He said he recalled correspondence received that indicated an engineer had looked at it and determined that it was stable.

Mayor Graham remarked that it is a structure in the City and we have Codes dealing with safety concerns.

### **Engineering Department**

Council began discussion on whether or not to authorize a CE II position in the Engineering Department and how that position would be funded.

Mrs. Corriveau presented Council with a report which outlined the calculation of property tax rate with the increased being funded through fund balance, tax levy or franchise fees.

Councilman Smith remarked that he has reservations about increasing staff.

Mr. Hauk reviewed the positions of CE I and CE II and reiterated his explanation of what each position would involve. He also explained that an appointment of a CE II and not the CE I would not solve the problem the department has with fulfilling the requirements that have to be done with permits and federal/state regulations and it would result in having to contract with a professional engineer to do the work.

Mrs. Corriveau advised Council that the City may see a demand decrease in two years from now. However, there may be retirements at that point.

Councilman LaBouf commented that he liked option #3 which includes the CE II being funded through Fund Balance.

Councilman Smith commented that the City's fund balance should be used for cash flow. It helps make the lean times not as harsh.

Councilman LaBouf responded that this amount would not cut into the fund that much.

Mayor Graham asked the Council members for a vote on authorizing the CE II position.

Councilman Smith said no.

Councilman LaBouf said yes.

Councilman Clough said he still wanted a consultant instead of the CE II and referred to the five –year plan.

At this time, Councilman Bradley had not been in attendance at the meeting. He was contacted by phone and said yes and suggested adding it into the tax levy. He then came into the meeting.

Councilman Clough remarked that he would not vote for the budget if this is added to the tax levy. He also asked where the money would come from next year if the fund balance was used this year.

Councilman LaBouf remarked that he understood the five-year plan and the fund balance. However, the streets are in deplorable condition and the City Engineer needs the staff.

Councilman Clough remarked that at the time he pushed for Breen Avenue, Engineering said that they would get the job done. Now everyone else is pushing for it and now we need a CE II. He asked how long it would take to have a CE II start work.

Mr. Hauk commented that it would probably be late August or September.

Mrs. Corriveau advised Council that if the City is moving Breen Avenue to 2008-09, they would spend about \$222,000 on design if let out to a consultant. Over the next two years, if a CE II was hired the cost would be around \$229,000. She also explained that there are more costs associated with bonding.

Councilman Bradley asked about the utilities being on board if Breen Avenue is done.

Mr. Hauk explained that most of those utilities are overhead.

Discussion was held concerning franchise fees and the fact that these fees are spread out over all cable users, not just property owners.

Mayor Graham asked for the Council's vote on funding the position.

When the franchise fee option was voted on as follows:

Councilman Bradley in favor.

Councilman Clough didn't want the CE II position.

Councilman LaBouf opposed to the franchise fee option.

Councilman Smith in favor.

Mayor Graham opposed to the franchise fee option

The change in tax rate to -25.81%

Councilman Bradley in favor.

Councilman Clough didn't want the CE II position.

Councilman LaBouf in favor.  
Councilman Smith in favor.

After the foregoing roll call vote, Councilman Clough stated that he would support the franchise fee in an effort to not affect the tax rate.

Mayor Graham again asked for the roll call vote concerning funding the position through the franchise fee.

Councilman Bradley in favor.  
Councilman Clough in favor.  
Councilman LaBouf opposed.  
Councilman Smith in favor.  
Mayor Graham opposed.

Budget session ended at 7:12 pm.

Donna M. Dutton  
City Clerk