

City
Manager's

March 2007

Update

Report

ASSESSMENT:

2007 Tentative Roll - Impact notices were mailed out to every property owner in the City. The impact notices contained the tentative 2007 assessments and an estimate of tax liability based on last year's levy amounts.

Assessor Grievance Days - 545 reviews take place over 3 weeks, in contrast to 400 Assessor hearing last year..

Board of Assessment Review - 156 complaints filed with the Board of Assessment Review, compared to 211 last year

CIVIL SERVICE:

Certified List Police Officer - The Civil Service Commission met in February and established the list for Police Officer. There are 256 eligible candidates and agility tests will be scheduled in May or June.

COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE:

Self-Liquidating Debt Exclusion - The Office of the State Comptroller has approved the City's application to exclude 100% of the \$8,717,950 serial bond debt related to the City's hydro-electric facility. Section 123.000 of the Local Finance Law allows municipalities to apply for an exclusion of certain debt in determining its ability to contract for indebtedness (constitutional debt limit). The exclusion always expires October 1st of the fiscal year following the approval of the exclusion. Accordingly, the City must annually apply for this exclusion.

Bond Anticipation Note Issuance - The City issued Bond Anticipation Notes in the amount of \$5,555,000 on February 13th. The winning bidders were Sovereign Securities for \$3,000,000 at 3.95% and Roosevelt & Cross, Inc. for \$2,555,000 at 4.25%. Due to premiums received from the bidders the actual net interest cost for the issue is 3.71%. The notes will mature on February 27, 2008.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT:

North Shore Access – Work is progressing on the permitting process and the final design. Bid documents are being prepared, still plan to have this construction project out to bid in March 2007, for award in April. Construction to begin upon award.

Hole Brothers – Work is progressing on the design. Staff has met with design team to discuss revisions/changes to the design based on feedback from the River Committee. Summary documents were sent to SHPO for approval. Construction is still scheduled to take place in 2007.

J B Wise Parking Lot – The Department of State, Division of Coastal Resources granted the City permission to use the Department of Transportation's contractor short list for the design phase. The Request for Proposals is being finalized by the City's Engineering Department, and then will be forwarded to the first firm on the DOT list for proposals. Design costs will be submitted in March 2007 with preliminary construction costs due in May 2007. This project will be split in multiple phases with the first phase being ready for construction in summer 2008.

Grants – Currently working with the Department of State, Division of Coastal Resources to finalize our state contract for our 2005 EPF award, which covers the North Shore Access, Hole Brother, and the J B Wise Parking Lot reconstruction. Following the completion of the 2005 contract, Staff will proceed with the 2006 EPF contract.

Website Design – L & P Media was selected to redesign the City's website after an RFP and interview process. Contract negotiations are under way at the current time. Once the contract is approved work will begin, with the project slated to be completed in June 2007.

Wayfinding Signs – Clough-Harbour is finalizing the wayfinding sign plan. Once this is received the signs will be designed and then the construction will be bid out. Some signs in the Public Square area may have to wait for construction to be finalized before they can be placed.

Mural Arts Program – The Watertown Urban Mission has expressed an interest in having their wall facing their parking lot used for the mural program. Measurements and pictures of the wall, along with general descriptions of the wall and its location were sent to two mural programs for cost estimates. Once the cost estimates are received, a meeting will be scheduled with the Urban Mission's Board of Directors. The logo competition ended, and the committee asked one artist to redo his submission. The artist will submit two to three different renderings, from which the Downtown Awareness Grant Committee will choose.

LWRP – Behan Planning has received comments on the Policies section from the City and the Department of State, Division of Coastal Resources. Behan Planning will submit a preliminary draft of the LWRP for review at the local and state level, without the

necessary zoning information. The City will continue to pursue funding from the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) to rehab the City's zoning and bring it into compliance with the LWRP.

Advantage Watertown Committee – The committee has decided to undertake a Strategic Plan for the committee. Staff will present their preliminary findings on the strategic plan at the next meeting.

Upcoming Grant Applications – Main Street Grant (façade improvements and building renovations), Restore NY Grant (major projects), and 2007 EPF (water based or related projects).

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT:

State Street Reconstruction Project - Bids were opened on May 25, 2005 and construction began on this project on 7/5/05. The water main and water service work from Eastern Blvd. to Public Square was completed in November 2005, with the exception of the replacement of a 16" water main crossing at Monroe Avenue and Fairmont Avenue, which was completed in April 06. Progression of the project is dependent on the ability these National Grid and Verizon crews to relocate utilities in advance of the construction work. The current critical path for this is a section of a Verizon main duct bank located from High St. to Public Square. It is projected by Verizon to be cleared by 1 March 2007.

Sanitary sewer mainline and laterals are complete east of High Street. Storm sewer work is complete with the exception of some work along Rutland St. and Hamilton Street. This is scheduled to be completed in April 07. Street Reconstruction work is progressing from Eastern Blvd. to California Ave. Paving is to binder grade. The contractor has some sidewalk and landscape work remaining in that area. The contractor is scheduled to remobilize to the project in March 07. Substantial completion of this project is scheduled for the fall of 2007 with punch list items completed in the spring of 2008.

Streetscape/Public Square Reconstruction Project - Bids were opened on March 8, 2006 and Villager Construction was awarded the contract. A preconstruction meeting was held on April 6, 2006 and construction started in May 2006. Water main work is complete along the east, south and west side of the Square. Work continues along the north side. Lateral work is also underway. Two vaults have yet to be completed. Storm sewer and street reconstruction work is delayed until utility relocations can be completed by Verizon and National Grid.

Verizon has started the design process to relocate the duct systems that are in conflict with the construction. They are projecting that the design will be completed by

April 07. A new utility agreement will be developed to outline the relocation scope and the schedule of completion.

National Grid is currently evaluating a list of areas where their electric ducts are in conflict with the street reconstruction. The major areas are along the curb line from the American Corner along the north side of the Square to the intersection of Mill St. and City Center Drive, and along the curb line along the south side of the Square from Washington St. to Franklin St. They are working to develop costs, scope and schedule for the relocations. A new utility agreement will be developed to outline the relocation scope and the schedule of completion.

Sidewalk Program - The remaining 06-07 district work will be completed in April, May and June of 2007. Inspections are completed in the areas outlined in the 2007-2008 district. The public hearing was held on 5 Feb 07 for the 2007-2008 Special Assessment District. This work will commence in July 07.

Sherman Street/ Arsenal Street Intersection - Work on this project was substantially complete by October 27, 2005. The roadway and traffic signal system has been re-designed to allow for a left turn onto Sherman Street when traveling westbound on Arsenal Street. Final pavement work, installation of signal loops, and ADA compliant corner ramps will be programmed for completion by the DPW.

Anthony Street From Public Square To J.B. Wise Parking Lot - We are proceeding with the plan to have Villager perform the curb work within the current project limits, and include the design and construction of the remaining portion as part of the scope of the J.B. Wise project.

Western Blvd-Gaffney Drive Connector Road - Three meetings have been held with the owners of the Stateway Plaza. The proposed corridor was presented to the Council at the 11 Dec 06 Work Session. The detailed design work will be performed through a consultant. An RFP is being developed for consultant selection.

Ten Eyck Street Phase-I & II - Detailed design is projected to be complete in spring 07. Coordination w/ utilities along the project is required and possible relocations may delay the project start until they are completed.

Hydro Plant - The operations and maintenance agreement expires on 30 June 07. The agreement authorizes up to three two year extensions. Staff is currently working with contractor in the first two year extension Agreement.

DPW Project Support -

- Completed survey of a section along City Center Drive Retaining Wall to provide a design to DPW for work in spring 07.

- Initiated a structural investigation for the relocation of the sign shop in the Newell St. complex.

CSO Long Term Control Plan - The City held a meeting with the DEC on 18 May 2006 to restart the CSO LTCP process. DEC approved the Characterization, Monitoring and Modeling plan in September 2006. Stearns & Wheeler was selected as the consultant for the CSO computer modeling from submittals from the RFP. The Council approved the design services agreement at the 18 Dec 06 meeting. The first progress meeting with the consultant will be held in March 07.

DEC Sewer Extension Requirements - 6 NYCRR Subpart 750-2 requires DEC approval of sewer extensions with flows greater than 2500 gal/day or more than one connected lateral. Part of this approval is assurance from the City that adequate sewer capacity exists in the system. Developments with assurance letters submitted to the DEC: City Center Plaza, Towne Center, Pine Woods, Hampton Inn, Maple Park, Starwood, Leray Commons, Pleasant Acres, Columbia Development, Dorr Farm, and Eagle Ridge. Development with capacity under review: Liberty, Black River Development, Summit Woods, and Watertown Apts.

Iroquois Cosgrove Sewer Upgrade - Passero Associates was selected as the consultant for the design and was approved by the Council in January 07. Preliminary Plans were submitted on 21 Feb 07. The first progress meeting was held on 28 Feb 07.

J.B. Wise Parking Lot Reconstruction - An RFP is being sent to a consultant to develop a project proposal for design services. The consultant was selected using the LDSA short list for the City compiled from the NYSDOT Region 7 LDSA list. A scoping meeting will be scheduled to determine scope, schedule, and cost.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Personnel - Fire Captains **Todd DeMar and Matthew Timerman** have been selected to participate in the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program. This is a four year executive development program that selected individuals attend a two week training period and then within six months complete a work and course related research project. Only about 200 individuals nationwide are selected annually for this program. Fire Captains **Matthew Fiorentino and Christopher Hayman** attended the NY State First Line Officer/Supervisor's Class at the New York City Fire Academy. This is a New York State required training class for newly promoted fire officers. Fire Chief **Dan Gaumont** has authored a White Paper entitled "*Firefighter Life Safety Initiative #16,*" for the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation a not-for-profit corporation organized to promote firefighter life safety as a method of reducing firefighter deaths and injury throughout the world. The White Paper will be presented at an International Firefighter Life Safety Symposium in Novato, California, in March. **Chief Gaumont and Battalion Chief Lachenauer** attended a Department of Homeland Security Class (Incident Management/Unified Command for Terrorism and CBRNE Incidents). **Captain Todd DeMar** completed the first of four classes (Executive Development) of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer. **Captain James Holland** completed the New York State First Line Officer/Supervisor's Class.

Hazardous Materials Truck - The County Fire Coordinator's Office delivered the new vehicle to the City which will be housed at Fire Station #3

Grants - Department was notified that it has been awarded a National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) educational grant (\$5,000) to send five (5) personnel to the International Association of Fire Chiefs' Hazardous Materials Conference in Maryland at the end of May. the Department filed its application for the Assistance to Fire Fighters Fire Prevention Grant with the Federal Emergency Management Agency/Department of Homeland Security.

Mutual Aid - City fire fighters responded mutual aid with the new hazardous materials truck to a tractor trailer vehicle with a fuel tank leak at the rest area of Route 81 between exit 47 and 48 in December. In December we also responded mutual aid to the Town of Watertown for a reported structure fire at Wal-Mart on outer Arsenal Street. The Town of Watertown resources were tied up with an auto accident on Rt. 126 so City crews were the initial responding department, initiated incident command and determined the problem to be an overheated motor on the roof prior to the arrival of Town of Watertown resources. The department responded mutual aid to a structure fire in Black River with Engine 2, in December. City Fire personnel performed rapid intervention team duties while on scene and assisted with the fire cause origin investigation. In January, the Department responded mutual aid request from the Town of Watertown to a motor vehicle accident with entrapment on Rt. 81 at Exit 45.

FLOWER MEMORIAL LIBRARY:

Historic Restoration Project - Bids were received for the restoration work inside the Flower Memorial Library on January 24, 2007. The City Council approved the bids for Interior Decorative Restoration and Restoration and Repair of the Stained Glass at their meeting of February 20, 2007, contingent upon approval of a Bond Ordinance to support the funding for the contracts. The Bond Ordinance will be brought before the Council on March 5, 2007. The proposed project will consist of restoration of the interior of the dome, stained glass work, historic decorative painting, restoration of art work, marble cleaning, and woodwork refinishing in the original portion of the Library building.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:

GIS- In regards to Transmap data, the Cartegraph system is nearly fully functional and being used by both Engineering and DPW for pavement management. GPS data collection processes were streamlined last summer, reducing the amount of time spent in the office processing the data before it could be imported into the database. Approximately 8,000 point features and 7,000 geo-referenced photographs were captured and processed last summer. The majority of these features are street signs and street trees. Look into the possibility of maintaining the official tax maps in a geodatabase, so far over 100 changes have been made to the parcel map this year.

High Precision GPS System- Established an accurate correction file that allows us to match existing city data. Created a control system that can be used to check the accuracy of the GPS on any given day. Will be used to collect the locations of the City Monument System in the future, necessary to improve the accuracy of the tax maps.

KVS / Utility Billing System - Last month's meter readings reads were input via the new Equinox system.

Police Wireless – Frame relay connection from NJ disconnected and shut down. Converted and re-imaged 16 Police Data tablets for new data connection via Verizon wireless. ATM system disconnected and shut down.

Fiber – Completed terminations of fiber in Municipal Building providing a direct connection to ISP, this will eliminate 5 individual physical circuits and improve bandwidth. Connected telecommunications room to 2nd floor via fiber.

Network – Installed Storage area network, testing backup tape system on SAN and network. Final move of server equipment scheduled over the next two weeks. Ordered DSL circuit for Park Maintenance Building.

Telephone – Updated software versions on primary and backup systems. Moving T circuit from DPW Newell location to Ice-Arena to improved connectivity and bandwidth.



PLANNING DEPARTMENT:

Downtown Streetscape Project – During January, Staff submitted reimbursement requests to various State agencies totaling \$840,505.71 for this project. A presentation on the project status and on the proposed elimination of the speed tables was given to the Downtown Business Association Board of Directors. Staff continued to meet and work with representatives from Verizon and National Grid regarding the relocation of their utilities.

Black River Parks Project (BRPP) – The City's design firm for this project, Environmental Design and Research, P.C. (EDR), continues to progress on the design for riverfront improvements planned for the Abe Cooper site, the Veterans Memorial Riverwalk, Hole Brothers Park on Newell Street and at the Fairgrounds. Their work has included the development of conceptual site designs and details and a submission to the State Historic Preservation Office. They are also in the process of determining what

permitting may be required for the project. Designs should be finalized within the next few months with an anticipated fall completion date for the construction.

Street Tree Program – On January 31, 2007, the City received notification from the National Arbor Day Foundation that Watertown has been named a Tree City USA for 2006. This is the City's seventh straight year receiving this award that recognizes communities across the country that meet certain criteria and have exceptional community forestry programs.

Planning for the various spring tree planting projects is underway. The City will once again be working with the Watertown Noon Rotary Club to assist with their annual tree planting program. Rotary's project will take place at the Fairgrounds where approximately 50 trees will be planted. The City assists by selecting tree species and planting locations, by digging the holes and paying for a portion of the cost of the trees. **Rotary's annual tree planting project** will be conducted on Saturday, May 5, 2007.

Staff also began the development of plans for the **Department of Public Works' Annual Tree Planting Project**. The project involves the planting of approximately 100 trees at various locations throughout the City. Areas targeted for planting this year include Boyd Street, Ohio Street, Thompson Park, Green Street, Flower Avenue East, Orchard Street South, Meadow Street North, Mundy Street and various individual locations throughout the City requested by property owners. DPW's annual tree planting project will be conducted during the last week in April and first week in May.

Tree Watertown has also been discussing plans for **Arbor Day 2007**. This year's Arbor Day ceremony will be held on Friday, April 27, 2007. The location and time for the event will be finalized soon.

Roswell P. Flower Monument – Staff has been working with the Flower Monument Committee to devise a plan to provide additional protection to the monument and the granite eagles. Ideas under consideration include the installation of ornamental steel bollards, the installation of full depth granite bollards or the installation of a subsurface steel bollard that would be capped with granite. This has become an issue because of recent car accidents at the site.

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Police Academy - The 22 week police Academy is at the halfway point with the midterm exam being administered last week. All recruits passed and now looking forward to graduation.

DARE Program - Graduations have started with over fifty, fifth graders from IHC intermediate school being awarded certificates in February. In the next week or two approximately 380 certificates will be awarded to the fifth graders at Wiley School who have successfully completed the course. This course helps children to learn how to make good choices. It teaches them how to avoid peer pressure to use drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes. They also learn the health problems that the use of drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes has on the body. They learn to be aware of bullying and the consequences of it.

Patrol and Detectives – On February 5th, WPD patrols and Detectives were sent to the Best Western Hotel on Washington St. on a suspicious activity call. The investigation revealed that a 21 year old female had given birth in the room and the child died as a result of blunt force trauma. The female was charged with Murder 2nd degree. The diligence and thoroughness of the initial officers who arrived on the scene and the Detectives who followed up are responsible for bringing this case to a successful conclusion.

Grants - Sergeant Michael Mullins attended 4 days of training in Arlington Va. titled "Law Enforcement Grants Summit". This class provided information on how to: explore new and innovative funding opportunities; maximize and demonstrate positive outcomes; acquire mission critical technology and personnel; and manage your grants for results. We are hopeful that armed with this information we will be able to acquire grants for much needed equipment and training to benefit the Police Department and the citizens.

PUBLIC WORKS:

Snow Removal - To date one hundred seven inches (107") of snow has fallen on the City this season, 90% of which fell during the months of January and February. Snow removal operations are taking place around the clock. These snow removal operations include the sanding, plowing, and removal of snow from the City's streets, parking lots, sidewalks. Since the beginning of the season crews have logged a total of 8,425 man hours, 6,675 equipment hours, and have used 2,750 tons of salt performing these snow removal operations.



Algonquin Ave W Sanitary Sewer Main - Building and Grounds crews began the process of clearing and grubbing an area of approximately fifty feet (50') wide x one thousand one hundred feet (1100') long for the installation of a secondary sanitary sewer system.





Arena Ice Sheet Chiller Assembly Replacement - The second phase of this project includes the installation of a Reverse Osmosis System, which purifies the water. The purified water will increase the efficiency of the refrigeration system and qualifies NYSERDA incentives.



Vehicles and Equipment -

Replacement vehicles have been added to the fleet within the past couple of months. Vehicles received include the following: a 2006 Kubota B3030 HSDDC tractor (1-9), a 2006 New Holland TC30V4 tractor (3-2), a Sweep Star P48 powered lawn sweeper (3-34), and accepted the bid for a replacement vacuum style street sweeper.



Variable Message Boards- Public Works accepted delivery of two (2) variable message boards. The message boards will be used primarily as traffic safety warnings for active work zones; they may also be used for public information display purposes of City sponsored events.

Training - A CartêGraph User Group, hosted by the City of Milford, CT was held on January 24, 2007. The City of Milford's presentation showcased how their Engineering, Public Works and MIS departments worked together, using the CartêGraph software, to become compliant with NPDES regulations.

In February, a representative from URW America, Inc was on site to provide traffic control sign making training as it relates to use of the Department's new software and hardware. Also covered during this training was traffic control sign layout for both standard and custom signs to FHWA DOT specifications. This training was an important introduction to the Federal Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Device which will be adopted by New York State in September of 2007 at which time we will look at the phased replacement of many of our existing signs. Mr. Hayes has been asked to present the impact of this new legislation for New York State's "small cities" at a meeting at Cornell University in March at which time we will discuss and formulate a transition and implementation plan with other regional and district transportation professionals.



WATER DEPARTMENT:

Thompson Park Pump Station - The new pump station to supply water to Thompson Park and the upper Gotham Street area is nearly complete. We are still waiting for National Grid to install the gas service so the heat and emergency generator can be activated. National Grid started work on installation of the gas main extension a day or two before we started getting all of the snow, which shut down the job.

Administration - The Water Department billing office has installed software and the staff has received training to convert to a radio based meter reading system. The system will be phased in gradually to insure that it will be a more effective means of capturing water meter readings and of streamlining the water and sewer billing procedure.

The Superintendent recently attended a 3-day workshop with the City Comptroller on the principals of rate making and rate design. He has also been involved with the review of plans for the Summit Woods housing project, the Samaritan Medical Center's preliminary plans for expansion of their facilities, annual O & M and capital budget preparations, review of site plans as they relate to water supply, and continued involvement as the project coordinator on the restoration project at the Flower Memorial Library.

Water Treatment Plant - Chief Operator Brian Gaffney continues to work on various regulatory issues such as the disinfection by-products related studies. Mr. Gaffney has just completed revisions to a Water Distribution Site Evaluation Plan in collaboration with personnel from the New York State Department of Health.

In addition to routine and preventive maintenance duties, the water plant maintenance staff has begun upgrading the chemical feed system for fluoride. They are also in the process of coordinating electronic meter calibrations with the Development Authority of the North Country (DANC).

The water plant has been producing and delivering more water to the DANC water line as a result of Fort Drum having to shut down its' wells. Consumption on this line in October of 2006 averaged 0.48 million gallons per day (MGD). Consumption in successive months has been 0.87 MGD in November, 1.58 MGD in December, 1.51 MGD in January of 2007, and 1.71 MGD to date in February.

Water Distribution - Distribution and maintenance personnel have been busy this winter thawing several frozen water services and keeping the fire hydrants cleared of snow and properly inspected to ensure that they are operable if needed. Since January 1, 2007, crews have repaired 9 broken water mains. They also repaired the 6" cast iron service line to the Watertown High School and leaks on four smaller water services.



Successful location of leak and shut down of main.



Tightening the last bolts on the repair sleeves.