

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF WATERTOWN
April 3, 2023
7:00 p.m.**

Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith Presiding

Present: Council Member Patrick J. Hickey
Council Member Clifford G. Olney III
Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce
Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero
Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith

Also Present: Kenneth A. Mix, City Manager
H. Todd Bullard, Interim City Attorney (via teleconference)

City staff present: Tina Bartlett-Bearup, Michael Delaney, Michael Lumbis, Brian Phelps, Matthew Timerman, Scott Weller, Jordan Northrop, Angel French

The City Manager presented the following reports to Council:

- Resolution No. 1 - Approving Revised Procurement Policy
- Resolution No. 2 - Approving the Use of Cooperative Purchasing Contracts for OMNIA Partners
- Resolution No. 3 - Approving the Use of Cooperative Purchasing Contracts for Sourcewell
- Resolution No. 4 - Approving the Use of Cooperative Purchasing Contracts for NCPA (National Cooperative Purchasing Alliance)
- Resolution No. 5 - Approving the Use of Cooperative Purchasing Contracts for NASPO ValuePoint
- Resolution No. 6 - Authorizing the Standardization of Various Equipment at the City of Watertown's Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Resolution No. 7 - Approving Employment Agreement Between the City of Watertown and Ann M. Saunders, City Clerk
- Resolution No. 8 - Approving the 2022-2025 Tentative Agreement Between the City of Watertown and the Watertown Professional Firefighters' Association
- Resolution No. 9 - Accepting Bid for Pratt and Sherman Streets Watermain Replacements Project - Edge Civil Corporation
- Resolution No. 10 - Accepting Bid for Water Main Pipe & Fittings – Ferguson Waterworks
- Resolution No. 11 - To Settle Proceeding to Review Real Property Assessment Challenge at 155 Commerce Park Dr Watertown, NY 13601 Parcel No. 8-50-102.000
- Resolution No. 12 - To Settle Proceeding to Review Real Property Assessment Challenge at 110 Commerce Park Dr Watertown, NY 13601 Parcel No. 8-50-101.401
- Resolution No. 13 - Approving the Professional Services Agreement with LaBella Associates, D.P.C. for Grant Writing Services
- Resolution No. 14 - Dedicating Land for Park Purposes – City of Watertown Tax Parcels No.12-26-101.100 and 12-26-104.000, and Town of Watertown Tax Parcel No. 83.18-1-3
- Resolution No. 15 - Approving the 2023 Youth and Young Adult Employment Training Program Contract Between the City of Watertown and the Jefferson-Lewis Local Workforce Development Area
- Resolution No. 16 - Accepting FEMA Fire Prevention & Safety Grant

- CDBG CARES Act Funding Request by the Anchor Recovery Center of NNY for the Frontline Employment Partnership Program

Complete Reports on file in the office of the City Clerk

Meeting opened with a moment of silence.

Pledge of Allegiance was given.

The reading of the minutes of the regular meeting of March 20, 2023 and work session of March 13, 2023, was dispensed and accepted as written by motion of Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero, seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

COMMUNICATIONS

A claim was received from KPH Healthcare Services, Inc, 520 East Main Street, Gouverneur, seeking reimbursement for damage, which was caused by a City Police vehicle, to the Kinney Drugs sign located at 905 Coffeen Street, on March 4, 2023.

Above claim has been referred to the Board of Audit.

Prior to the start of business, Mayor Smith introduced the new Manager of the City Golf Course, Jordan Northrop.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Robert (no last name given), resident of the City of Watertown, addressed the chair expressing concerns about the behavior of three of the sitting Council Members. In particular, he expressed displeasure with a comment that Council Member Ruggiero made at the February 6 meeting regarding the Mayor, and he stated it was disparaging and disrespectful to the position.

Jason Traynor, 424 Arsenal Street, spoke of concerns about the need for heavy investment in upgrades to the water system, as well as issues with street conditions and a need to protect City assets.

Tammy Higby, Olive Street, addressed Council mentioning the need to punch in a code in to access the bathrooms at the State Street Burger King. She also suggested Council speak with the State, County, Police and hospitals regarding the usage of drugs and the need for a solution. She added that drug use is one of the causes of homelessness.

Jonathan Phillips, 735 Mill Street, informed Council that a member of the City Police Department instructed him to pick up a syringe and he feels the department needs help with their response to drug issues. He expressed concerns about the actions of several of the Council Members. He also complained about street conditions.

Greg Maneeley, 1324 Richards Drive, spoke of his concerns about drainage in his neighborhood dating back to 1987. He read from correspondence with City staff promising to take care of the issue but noted that, in 30 years of letter writing, the problem has never been solved. He also mentioned that he wants

the leaves cleaned up in front of his house. He expressed concerns with comments made on social media not being addressed by Council Members. He argued that if money can be spent on pools and golf courses, the City should be able to address his 30-year drainage problem.

Ben Shoen, Academy Street, informed Council that he feels that infrastructure is the most important concern of City residents. He mentioned a recent incident involving a bus stuck on Court Street and questioned why the bump-out is so large. He also noted that the Court Street sidewalks already seem to be adequately wide and questioned the need to enlarge them further. Mr. Shoen also expressed concerns with a new type of curbing done by the DPW, listing Pawling Street and Thompson Boulevard as examples. He also noted that the new curbing shrinks the width of the street, and the City should consider the effect this will have on snow removal.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 1 - Approving Revised Procurement Policy

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS the City's Procurement Policy has been established and adopted by the City Council, and

WHEREAS on August 15, 2022, the City Council approved the latest revisions to the City's Procurement Policy, and

WHEREAS based on General Municipal Law, the City's Procurement Policy has been revised to include best practices language and the use of cooperative purchasing contracts.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby approves the revised procurement policy, a copy of which is attached and made part of this resolution.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Purchasing Manager Tina Bartlett-Bearup provided a summary of the changes to the policy. She noted that the changes are mostly regarding cooperative purchasing contracts and provided examples of how these contracts could have saved the City with recent purchases.

Council Member Olney inquired about the City's ability to work with design/build companies under cooperative agreements.

Mr. Mix pointed out that these contracts are mostly for equipment and not for services. He also noted that the use of design/build companies by the City is not allowed in New York State.

At the call of the chair, a vote was taken on the foregoing resolution and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 2 - Approving the Use of Cooperative Purchasing Contracts for OMNIA Partners

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS OMNIA Partners (formerly National IPA and TCN) (“OMNIA”) is a cooperative purchasing organization for local government purchasing with an extensive scope of competitively solicited local government contracts from suppliers through which it is able to streamline the purchasing process for local governments; and

WHEREAS the City of Watertown (“City”) has ongoing need for various contractors and suppliers in the City; and

WHEREAS the City seeks to “piggyback” OMNIA contracts in accordance with General Municipal Law § 103(16) in order to address various supply and construction and maintenance needs as such may from time to time arise; and

WHEREAS Purchasing Manager, Tina Bartlett-Bearup in consultation with various departments and legal counsel, has determined it is in the City’s best interest to utilize OMNIA bid contracts for procurement of various products, equipment and supplies as specified under the terms and conditions of a contract(s) awarded to OMNIA.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby authorizes the City to piggyback on such OMNIA contracts in order to provide a cost savings to the City and provide a tool to make the City’s governmental operations more effective and efficient; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager of the City Watertown is hereby authorized and directed to sign all contracts associated with this resolution and any Agreement on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 3 - Approving the Use of Cooperative Purchasing Contracts for Sourcewell

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS Sourcewell (formerly NJPA – National Joint Powers Alliance) is a cooperative purchasing organization for local government purchasing with an extensive scope of competitively solicited local government contracts from suppliers through which it is able to streamline the purchasing process for local governments; and

WHEREAS the City of Watertown (“City”) has ongoing need for various contractors and suppliers in the City; and

WHEREAS the City seeks to “piggyback” Sourcewell contracts in accordance with General Municipal Law § 103(16) in order to address various supply and construction and maintenance needs as such may from time to time arise; and

WHEREAS Purchasing Manager, Tina Bartlett-Bearup in consultation with various departments and legal counsel, has determined it is in the City’s best interest to utilize Sourcewell bid contracts for procurement of various products, equipment and supplies as specified under the terms and conditions of a contract(s) awarded to Sourcewell.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby authorizes the City to piggyback on such Sourcewell contracts in order to provide a cost savings to the City and provide a tool to make the City's governmental operations more effective and efficient; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager of the City Watertown is hereby authorized and directed to sign all contracts associated with this resolution and any Agreement on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 4 - Approving the Use of Cooperative Purchasing Contracts for NCPA (National Cooperative Purchasing Alliance)

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS NCPA (National Cooperative Purchasing Alliance) is a cooperative purchasing organization for local government purchasing with an extensive scope of competitively solicited local government contracts from suppliers through which it is able to streamline the purchasing process for local governments; and

WHEREAS the City of Watertown ("City") has ongoing need for various contractors and suppliers in the City; and

WHEREAS the City seeks to "piggyback" NCPA contracts in accordance with General Municipal Law § 103(16) in order to address various supply and construction and maintenance needs as such may from time to time arise; and

WHEREAS Purchasing Manager, Tina Bartlett-Bearup in consultation with various departments and legal counsel, has determined it is in the City's best interest to utilize NCPA bid contracts for procurement of various products, equipment and supplies as specified under the terms and conditions of a contract(s) awarded to NCPA.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby authorizes the City to piggyback on such NCPA contracts in order to provide a cost savings to the City and provide a tool to make the City's governmental operations more effective and efficient; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager of the City Watertown is hereby authorized and directed to sign all contracts associated with this resolution and any Agreement on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 5 - Approving the Use of Cooperative Purchasing Contracts for NASPO ValuePoint

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS NASPO ValuePoint is a cooperative purchasing organization for local government purchasing with an extensive scope of competitively solicited local government contracts from suppliers through which it is able to streamline the purchasing process for local governments; and

WHEREAS the City of Watertown (“City”) has ongoing need for various contractors and suppliers in the City; and

WHEREAS the City seeks to “piggyback” NASPO ValuePoint contracts in accordance with General Municipal Law § 103(16) in order to address various supply and construction and maintenance needs as such may from time to time arise; and

WHEREAS Purchasing Manager, Tina Bartlett-Bearup in consultation with various departments and legal counsel, has determined it is in the City’s best interest to utilize NASPO ValuePoint bid contracts for procurement of various products, equipment and supplies as specified under the terms and conditions of a contract(s) awarded to NASPO ValuePoint.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby authorizes the City to piggyback on such NASPO ValuePoint contracts in order to provide a cost savings to the City and provide a tool to make the City’s governmental operations more effective and efficient; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager of the City Watertown is hereby authorized and directed to sign all contracts associated with this resolution and any Agreement on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 6 - Authorizing the Standardization of Various Equipment at the City of Watertown’s Wastewater Treatment Plant

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS the City of Watertown owns and operates a Wastewater Treatment Plant located at 700 William T. Field Drive, Watertown, New York; and

WHEREAS the City Council deems it to be in the best interest of the citizens of the City of Watertown to authorize the standardization of certain equipment at the City of Watertown Wastewater Treatment Plant to minimize problems with respect to repair and maintenance of equipment and also to establish a proper and accessible inventory of spare parts.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York to hereby authorize the Purchasing Department of the City of Watertown to standardize the equipment on the “Equipment for Standardization” listing below and acquire such equipment as necessary.

Equipment for Standardization - Wastewater Treatment Plant

<u>Process/Operation</u>	<u>Equipment</u>	<u>Manufacturer</u>
Settling Tanks (3)	Chain	Connexus
	Wear strips & hardware	Guardian Environmental
	Sprockets	Guardian Environmental
	Flight shoes	Guardian Environmental
	Flights	Guardian Environmental

Support Brackets
Flight rails

Midway Industrial
Kaman Industry

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 7 - Approving Employment Agreement Between the City of Watertown and Ann M. Saunders, City Clerk

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS the Charter of the City of Watertown details the Power and Duties of the Watertown City Council, and

WHEREAS in accordance with §20, Paragraph 7, the Council has a duty to enter into a contract with an appointed City Clerk for a period of time, which may, by reason of its duration, bind a future Council to its terms. However, in no event shall any Council enter into any one contract with an appointed City Clerk for a period exceeding two years,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby approves the Employment Agreement between the City of Watertown and Ann M. Saunders, a copy of which is attached and made a part of this resolution, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Mayor Jeffrey M. Smith is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Employment Agreement on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea except Council Member Clifford G. Olney III who voted nay.

Resolution No. 8 - Approving the 2022-2025 Tentative Agreement Between the City of Watertown and the Watertown Professional Firefighters' Association

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS the 2020-2022 Employment Contract between the City of Watertown and the Watertown Professional Firefighters' Association expired on June 30, 2022, and

WHEREAS the parties have agreed to a Tentative Agreement which will cover the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown that it hereby ratifies the Tentative Agreement between the City of Watertown and the Watertown Professional Firefighter's Association, the terms of which will be incorporated into a new employment contract, and a copy of which is attached and made a part of this resolution.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Mayor Smith noted that the handwritten attachment to the resolution is the writing of the mediator and he questioned some of the items that he could not read. He summarized the terms of the agreement, noting that the salary increases were 4% starting July 1, 2022, 4% starting July 1, 2023 and 3.5% starting July 1, 2024 as well as an EMT stipend and adhering to the City's Travel Reimbursement Policy.

Mr. Mix confirmed for Council Member Ruggiero that the Fire union had already approved the terms of the agreement, and in response to Council Member Olney's inquiry of how the salary increases were determined, he responded that they were the result of negotiation.

At the call of the chair, a vote was taken on the foregoing resolution and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 9 - Accepting Bid for Pratt and Sherman Streets Watermain Replacements Project - Edge Civil Corporation

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS the City desires to construct and replace watermain and appurtenances located on Pratt and Sherman Streets, and

WHEREAS the Purchasing Department advertised and received five (5) sealed bids for the Pratt and Sherman Streets Watermain Replacements Project, and

WHEREAS on February 23, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. the bids received were publicly opened and read, and

WHEREAS Purchasing Manager, Tina Bartlett-Bearup reviewed the bids received with the Engineering Department and it is their recommendation that the City Council accept the lowest responsive responsible bid submitted by Edge Civil Corporation.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby accepts the bid received from Edge Civil Corporation in the amount of \$939,520.00, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager of the City Watertown is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 10 - Accepting Bid for Water Main Pipe & Fittings – Ferguson Waterworks

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS the City desires to purchase water main pipe and fittings for future projects as needed, and

WHEREAS the Purchasing Department advertised and received four (4) sealed bids for the Water Main Pipe and Fittings bid, and

WHEREAS on March 22, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. the bids received were publicly opened and read, and

WHEREAS Purchasing Manager, Tina Bartlett-Bearup reviewed the bids received with the Engineering Department and it is their recommendation that the City Council accept the lowest responsive responsible bid submitted by Ferguson Waterworks, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby accepts the bid received from Ferguson Waterworks in the amount of \$183,117.84, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager of the City Watertown is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Mayor Smith noted that the resolution was changed after the agenda was distributed because the lowest bidder did not meet all the specs of the bid, therefore, EJ Prescott was disqualified.

Council Member Ruggiero noted that the same company was approved last year for pipes, but then supply chain issues arose. She asked for an update.

Mr. Mix advised that they could not supply all the pipes because of the supply chain issues, however the issues affected all the distributors the same.

City Engineer Michael Delaney explained to Council that the City has received most of the pipes except for the 10-inch ones. He said he has reached out to other suppliers, and they are all having the same issue. He reviewed, for Council Member Olney, how the limited supply would affect the upcoming projects. He also responded to Council Member Olney's question about switching to PVC piping and he explained that he has looked at it, but PVC is currently not readily available either.

At the call of the chair, a vote was taken on the foregoing resolution and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 11 - To Settle Proceeding to Review Real Property Assessment Challenge at 155 Commerce Park Dr Watertown, NY 13601 Parcel No. 8-50-102.000

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS certain premises owned by Emmi Watertown LLC in the City of Watertown at 155 Commerce Park Drive, Parcel No.: 8-50-102.000 is assessed for the following tax year:

2021	Parcel #: 8-50-102.000	\$4,079,100
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and

WHEREAS Emmi Watertown LLC has heretofore duly instituted in the Supreme Court proceedings to review the assessment for tax year 2021, and

WHEREAS the parties have agreed that the assessment for the following years shall be reduced and set as:

2021	Parcel #: 8-50-102.000	\$3,000,000
2022	Parcel #: 8-50-102.000	\$4,079,100
2023	Parcel #: 8-50-102.000	\$3,300,000

and

WHEREAS Emmi Watertown LLC and the City agree to be bound to the provisions of RPTL §727 limiting the ability to challenge or change future assessments for tax years 2024, 2025 or 2026, and

WHEREAS a compromise and settlement of the aforesaid proceedings upon the above basis is deemed in the best interest of the Respondents,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York that the City attorneys of the City of Watertown be and are hereby authorized, empowered and directed to enter into a formal Stipulation & Order of the aforesaid proceedings with counsel for Emmi Watertown LLC on the following terms and conditions:

1. The total assessment of the subject property shall be set for the following years as follows:
2021 \$3,000,000
2. That the above adjustments will result in rebates for taxes paid in excess of the amounts that would have been due based on the adjusted assessments.
3. That an Order of the Supreme Court shall be made and entered settling the aforesaid proceedings to review said assessment without costs to either party as against the other and upon the terms and conditions set forth above, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Assessor and all other municipal officers, agents or employees be and they hereby are directed to do such acts and things as may be necessary to give full force and effect to the aforesaid settlement, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 12 - To Settle Proceeding to Review Real Property Assessment Challenge at 110 Commerce Park Dr Watertown, NY 13601 Parcel No. 8-50-101.401

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS certain premises owned by Waterberry Lodging Company in the City of Watertown at 110 Commerce Park Drive, Parcel No.: 8-50-101.401 is assessed for the following tax year:

2021	Parcel #: 8-50-101.401	\$4,546,800
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and

WHEREAS Waterberry Lodging Company has heretofore duly instituted in the Supreme Court proceedings to review the assessment for tax year 2021, and

WHEREAS the parties have agreed that the assessment for the following years shall be reduced and set as:

2021	Parcel #: 8-50-101.401	\$3,300,000
2022	Parcel #: 8-50-101.401	\$4,546,800

2023 Parcel #: 8-50-101.401 \$3,800,000
and

WHEREAS Waterberry Lodging Company and the City agree to be bound to the provisions of RPTL §727 limiting the ability to challenge or change future assessments for tax years 2024, 2025 or 2026, and

WHEREAS a compromise and settlement of the aforesaid proceedings upon the above basis is deemed in the best interest of the Respondents,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York that the City attorneys of the City of Watertown be and are hereby authorized, empowered and directed to enter into a formal Stipulation & Order of the aforesaid proceedings with counsel for Waterberry Lodging Company on the following terms and conditions:

4. The total assessment of the subject property shall be set for the following years as follows:
2021 \$3,300,000
5. That the above adjustments will result in rebates for taxes paid in excess of the amounts that would have been due based on the adjusted assessments.
6. That an Order of the Supreme Court shall be made and entered settling the aforesaid proceedings to review said assessment without costs to either party as against the other and upon the terms and conditions set forth above, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Assessor and all other municipal officers, agents or employees be and they hereby are directed to do such acts and things as may be necessary to give full force and effect to the aforesaid settlement, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 13 - Approving the Professional Services Agreement with LaBella Associates, D.P.C. for Grant Writing Services

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS the City Council of the City of Watertown desires to secure the services of a grant writer to assist the City with grant applications as funding opportunities arise, and

WHEREAS City Purchasing and Planning Staff recently issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to seek qualifications from individuals and firms who were interested in providing grant writing services for the City, and

WHEREAS five proposals were received and evaluated based on several criteria outlined in the RFP, and

WHEREAS after review of the proposals, Staff is recommending that the City Council accept the proposal from and enter into a contract with LaBella, Associates, D.P.C.,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby approves the Professional Services Agreement with LaBella Associates, D.P.C for Grant Writing Services, a copy of which is attached and made part of this resolution, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to execute the agreement on behalf of the City.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Council Member Olney mentioned that five proposals were received, and after staff review, this one was chosen as their recommendation. Referring back to when he put a resolution forward assigning a grant writer and received push back, he expressed concern with having to make a decision on this without having all the information on each proposal to base his decision on. He asked who on staff was on the decision committee.

Mr. Mix replied that it was the Planning Department.

Planning and Community Development Director Michael Lumbis responded to several questions from Council Member Olney, explaining the various proposals that were received, and how they eliminated some and came to the recommendation of LaBella Associates. He stressed that LaBella Associates has extensive experience with a planning background and there was a local office.

E. Hartley Bonisteel Schweitzer, representative from LaBella Associates, introduced herself and provided an overview of the services that her company would provide to the City. She assured Council Member Olney that project management and administration was included in LaBella Associates' proposal.

Council Members Pierce and Ruggiero both offered support for LaBella Associates and thanked Ms. Bonisteel Schweitzer.

Mayor Smith reminded Council that they are like a board of directors, which sets policy, and it is not their job to micromanage staff. He added that Council Members are more than welcome to look at the other proposals, but when Council asks staff for a recommendation then that is staff's job to do. Referring to the prior resolution that had been brought forward in the past, he said that he does not think anyone on Council was against the City having a grant writer, the issue was that the initiative had a specific person presented without comparison to other companies or going through the request for proposal process. Lastly, he said that individual Council Members cannot ask for specific grants unless it is the desire of the majority of Council and it comes through the City Manager.

At the call of the chair, a vote was taken on the foregoing resolution and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 14 - Dedicating Land for Park Purposes – City of Watertown Tax Parcels No.12-26-101.100 and 12-26-104.000, and Town of Watertown Tax Parcel No. 83.18-1-3

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS, the City Council originally approved the Asset Purchase Agreement for the former Watertown Golf Club on December 12, 2022, which included the purchase of 63.84 acres of land and related improvements consisting of City of Watertown Tax Parcels No. 12-26-101.100 and 12-26-104.000, and Town of Watertown Tax Parcel No. 83.18-1-3 (collectively, the “Golf Course Lands”), and

WHEREAS, a stated purpose for the purchase in the December 12, 2022 resolution was to expand John C. Thompson Park, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to resolutions adopted January 17, 2023, the City Council ratified the authorization to acquire the Golf Course Lands, which was identified as and reviewed by the City as a Type I Action pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act and 6 NYCRR Part 617 et seq (collectively herein, “SEQRA”); and

WHEREAS, the transfer of said Golf Course Lands occurred on January 27, 2023, and

WHEREAS, the City desires to officially designate the Golf Course Lands as parkland and deem same as a component of John C. Thompson Park (herein, the “Dedication”).

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City has identified the Dedication as a Type II Action pursuant to SEQRA, and specifically, 6 NYCRR Part 617.5(c)(39), for which no further SEQRA review is required or necessary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City hereby approves and authorizes the Dedication, which shall include City of Watertown Tax Parcels No. 12-26-101.100 and 12-26-104.000, and Town of Watertown Tax Parcel No. 83.18-1-3, such parcels being hereby dedicated for parkland purposes and are added to John C. Thompson Park; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council hereby directs the City Clerk to file this resolution within the City Clerk’s Office and the City Manager to update all official City maps and property registries to reflect the Dedication as authorized and approved herein.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Mr. Mix confirmed for Council Member Olney that once this land is declared as parkland, then an attempt to sell it must be approved by State Legislature. For Council Member Ruggiero, he explained that the new zoning ordinance classifies this parcel as open space, which is different from designating it as parkland. In response to Mayor Smith questioning whether the City could designate parkland for the parcel located in the Town of Watertown, Mr. Mix advised that it is not a matter of where the land is located as it is based on who owns the land.

At the call of the chair, a vote was taken on the foregoing resolution and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 15 - Approving the 2023 Youth and Young Adult Employment Training Program Contract Between the City of Watertown and the Jefferson-Lewis Local Workforce Development Area

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS the Jefferson County Department of Employment and Training and the Jefferson-Lewis Local Workforce Development Area would once again like to partner with the City of Watertown for the Summer Youth & Young Adult Employment Training Program, and

WHEREAS various departments of the City of Watertown can provide training opportunities for young people of the community, and

WHEREAS the City and Jefferson County Department of Employment and Training have cooperated in past years with this same program,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York, that it hereby authorizes the City's participation in the 2023 Summer Youth & Young Adult Employment Training Program, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Youth & Young Adult Employment Training Program Contract on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting yea.

Resolution No. 16 - Accepting FEMA Fire Prevention & Safety Grant

Introduced by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero

WHEREAS on February 22, 2022 City Council authorized the City of Watertown Fire Department to prepare an application for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Fire Prevention and Safety Grant Program for funding to purchase and install a LED sign at Fire Station #1 for the purpose of fire prevention and community risk reduction messaging, and

WHEREAS this grant application was for FEMA funding in the amount of \$47,619.04 with a required match of \$2,380.96 from the City, and

WHEREAS the City has received notification that the grant has been awarded in the amount of \$47,619.04,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Watertown hereby accepts the grant award in the amount of \$47,619.04 from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Fire Prevention and Safety Grant Program, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Fire Chief Matthew Timerman is hereby authorized and directed to execute any and all documents required to accept the grant on behalf of the City of Watertown.

Seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce

Prior to the vote on the foregoing resolution, Mayor Smith asked if this sign would comply with the City's sign ordinance.

Mr. Lumbis replied that it will depend on how the sign is designed, noting that the new sign ordinance has different size requirements. He advised that the design can be adjusted to meet the new ordinance. He also confirmed that the City is required to comply with its own sign ordinance per Section 310.24. He indicated that he would work with the Fire Chief to ensure that the sign will be in compliance.

Council Member Olney asked if there was an expanded list of the public service announcements that could be displayed on the sign. He also noted that there had been cuts to the Fire Department through the years which affected fire prevention and public education.

Fire Chief Matthew Timerman noted that the sign will assist in all public training efforts, and he listed the various types of messages that could be displayed on it.

Mayor Smith said he was happy that the City obtained the grant, but he thought the funds could be better used for in-person training.

At the call of the chair, a vote was taken on the foregoing resolution and carried with all voting yea.

STAFF REPORTS

CDBG CARES Act Funding Request by the Anchor Recovery Center of NNY for the Frontline Employment Partnership Program

Council Member Pierce asked if there are any other sources of funding lined up to continue this program.

Mr. Lumbis replied that they are pursuing other funding, but right now nothing is lined up.

NEW BUSINESS

Responding to Privilege of the Floor Comments

Mayor Smith stated that he would like to respond to some of the comments made during Privilege of the Floor. Regarding questions about the lack of maintenance of pools, Mayor Smith reminded the public that when he started on Council in 2000, the City was borrowing funds to purchase police cars and that was the financial hardship that the City was in at the time. He added the City only had so much money and it was not as if no one cared about the pools.

In terms of the issues on Richards Drive, he agreed with Mr. Maneeley, noting that the City has done some work to improve the situation but still has not taken care of all the problems. He added that the City is now under an order from the DEC to stop dumping into the wetlands. He noted that part of the issue is inflows from the Town of Watertown and suggested ideas to help with that.

Regarding the Court Street DRI project comments, Mayor Smith noted that the bump-outs are intended to improve pedestrian safety and encourage traffic calming. He also said that the pin-on curbing that was mentioned has been very effective and helps to direct water on the roads. He acknowledged that there are some issues with them but overall, they are beneficial. In response to the street narrowing comments, he said the Complete Street Committee reviews street projects and offers recommendations,

however, he has always requested that the residents on the street be notified of the improvements prior to finalizing the project design.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Council Member Hickey announced the following upcoming meetings and events: City Planning Commission on April 4; Tug Hill Commission Training at Turning Stone in Verona on April 5 and 6, and Garrett Loomis Seminar at JCC on April 8. He also mentioned the April 10 City Council Work Session has been rescheduled for April 24. At the end of his new business, he added that April is Autism Awareness Month.

Water Pollution

Council Member Hickey informed Council of some of the background information on the Federal Water Pollution Act of 1948 and the Clean Water Act of 1972, which established a Federal standard concerning the basic structure for regulating pollutant discharges in the waters of the United States. He added that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) offered new guidelines to set the standard for municipalities to improve water quality being discharged from municipal systems in 2012. He noted the issues facing Watertown are not new problems and he also reviewed data regarding recent discharges into the Black River, noting that they are permitted discharges which are not illegal but affect the environment.

Clean Drinking Water

Council Member Hickey advised that the EPA has proposed a National Primary Drinking Water Regulation Act and they anticipate the regulation will be finalized at the end of 2023. He noted the EPA is requesting a public comment period for the proposed rules that were published in the Federal Register on March 28, 2023.

Ogdensburg COPS Grant

Council Member Hickey informed Council that Ogdensburg is exploring a Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grant which will fund law enforcement to hire or rehire additional officers.

Elections Campaign Finance Update Webinar

Council Member Hickey advised the many individuals running for public office this year that the New York Board of Elections is hosting a campaign finance update webinar series beginning April 18. He indicated this was a three-hour training event and that a candidate can attend one of the 12 identical sessions, noting pre-registration is required.

Stormwater Separation Projects

Council Member Olney asked if there are any projects for this purpose in this year's budget.

Mr. Mix indicated that there are not many in this year, but there will be more in the upcoming proposed budget. He also advised that stormwater will eventually be required to be treated as well.

Council Member Olney noted that DANC approached the City in 2006 about this, seeking a solution, therefore, the problems have been known for years.

Shooting Near the Corner of Massey and Arsenal Streets

Council Member Olney indicated that he contacted the Police and DA about the property on the corner of Massey and Arsenal Streets where a recent shooting took place. He said that he did not receive much of a response from his request for information.

Drug Issues and Homelessness

Council Member Olney advised that he was informed that the bathrooms at Burger King had touchpads installed because people were using drugs in them. He noted that the Salvation Army homeless shelter may be closing soon and he expressed concern that, with the nicer weather coming up, that the homelessness population might start using the Butler Pavilion again.

Changes to Privilege of the Floor

Council Member Olney proposed changes to Privilege of the Floor so that Council Members could respond to people speaking at that portion of the meeting. He noted that the response could be limited to one minute. He asked the other Council Members to consider his proposal.

214 Hoard Street

Council Member Olney mentioned that he has been contacted by the neighbors of this property asking to purchase it from the City. He noted that it was supposed to be rehabilitated by Neighbors of Watertown so he would like to know the status.

Burlington Street City-Owned Property

Council Member Olney noted that there is an individual interested in buying a City-owned piece of property on Burlington Street and he has sent an email to staff about it but has not heard anything back.

Voting Sites Closed / Cost of Holding Elections Due to Jefferson County

Council Member Olney expressed his concerns with the Board of Elections' recent decision to close two voting sites in the City. He said he has talked to people that are not happy with having to go to different locations and he recommended that they delay this decision. Council Member Olney said he would like more information about the money that the City owes the County for holding elections. He said there is a contract or agreement that allows the County to bill the City, but the City has not paid for years. He mentioned that he was told the former City Attorney opined on this topic and he would like to see that. He wondered if this played a factor in their decision to close two voting sites.

Tattoo Restriction and Age Limit for Police Officers

Council Member Olney advised that the City should not reject a potential Police Officer because they have a tattoo or because they do not fall under the age limit. He said that he has spoken to Congressman Walczyk about this and noted that, because the City has so many openings in the Police Department, people should not be discouraged from applying.

Disparaging Comments/Social Media

Council Member Olney indicated that he has researched the American Civil Liberties Union about disparaging comments towards Council Members on social media and the public has that right, therefore he will no longer block people from his social media pages.

Court Street DRI Streetscape Project

Council Member Olney addressed Mr. Shoen's comments about the bump-outs and sidewalks along Court Street and the changes being made. He said he supports what the Planning Department is doing with this project and looks forward to its completion.

Richards Drive Drainage Issue

Council Member Olney thanked Mr. Maneeley for the history regarding the drainage issue and regarding Mr. Maneeley's issue with the leaves, he said the City should pick them up.

Golf Course Purchase

Council Member Olney stressed that he did not vote to buy this land in order to help two developers and he supported it for the future of the City, as well as for what could be done with the land. He advised that he looked at this purchase very carefully.

Cost of Holding Elections Due to Jefferson County

Mayor Smith informed Council that there is no contract in place and that the City does not pay the invoices because the County does not charge any other town or village for holding elections.

Mr. Mix provided some history on this issue and clarified what is stated in the NYS Election Law. He indicated that he would review everything and provide Council with more information.

214 Hoard Street (continued)

Council Member Pierce mentioned that she also had been contacted by the neighbors requesting to purchase this property. She recalled that she was not present, due to the birth of her child, during the meeting in which the prior decision regarding this property was made, but, at that time, it was the Mayor that supported selling the property to the neighbor.

Mayor Smith noted that he wanted to sell the property but the other three Council Members supported sending it through the NDC program.

Mr. Lumbis provided an update on the property, noting that it was not too late to sell it to the neighbors. He mentioned the City would need to demolish the house and clean up the property first. He added the other option is to continue to let it be redeveloped through the NDC program.

Mayor Smith and Council Member Pierce both expressed support for selling the property. Mayor Smith suggested that everyone look at it and then give direction to Mr. Lumbis next week.

Parking Issues on Mullin Street

Council Member Pierce said she has received complaints that parking on both sides of the street is causing safety concerns and wondered if there should be restrictions.

Mr. Mix said staff can look at it.

Golf Course

Council Member Pierce mentioned that she met with a group of longtime golfers of the Watertown Golf Club, and they provided several suggestions for making the golf course successful. She said that she will pass this information on to staff.

In response to Council Member Pierce's inquiry about the golf carts, Mr. Mix indicated that 40 carts were delivered today.

Voting Sites Closed

Council Member Pierce mentioned a claim made by Council Member Olney on his Facebook page that she was involved in the Jefferson County Board of Elections' decision to close two voting sites. She said that this is factually untrue, and she found out about it at the same time as the other Council Members.

A back-and-forth discussion occurred between Council Member Pierce and Council Member Olney regarding the accusations made.

Council Member Pierce noted she will be hosting a voter registration event at Watertown Housing Authority and will assist with absentee voting applications.

Community Office Hours

Council Member Pierce announced that she will be hosting her Community Office Hours event on Sunday, April 30 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Sacred Heart Church's Dostie Hall.

Golf Course Tournaments

Council Member Ruggiero welcomed Jordan Northrop to his new position as Golf Course Manager and mentioned that he had told her there are potentially three golf tournaments in the works.

Richards Drive Drainage Issue (continued)

Council Member Ruggiero mentioned that she had seen DPW crews out cleaning leaves from streets today. She also said that she was contacted by another resident in that neighborhood with the same complaints.

Work Session for April

Council Member Ruggiero mentioned that the work session had been rescheduled to April 24, but the Law and Order event is scheduled for that night. She suggested changing it to Tuesday, April 25.

Council agreed to this change.

Police Recruits

Council Member Ruggiero asked how many recruits were on the list and if it would fill all the vacancies.

Mr. Mix said he will provide Council with an update, but noted that the person in the Police Academy is from the old list. He added that a new Police Academy will need to start after the next hiring process.

Golf Course / Ornamental Golf Ball

Referring to the ornamental golf ball that was taken from the golf course and then put in front of Ives Hill Golf Club as an "April Fools" joke, Council Member Ruggiero asked if the golf ball was City-owned property.

Mr. Mix explained that it was discussed during a February meeting with Mr. Lundy, and he voiced his ambivalence about it because it was an illegal sign that never had a permit. He added that he might have said he did not really care about it, but he does not recall exactly what was decided about it. He pointed out that Parks and Recreation Superintendent Scott Weller, who was present at the meeting, was under the impression that the golf ball was going to stay, and that Parks and Recreation staff were going to paint it. Mr. Mix advised that it is part of the property and did not have to be separately listed in the asset purchase agreement, so it should have stayed with the property.

Discussion occurred about whether it was an illegal sign and Council Member Pierce asked if it could have been installed somewhere else on the property, such as in front of the clubhouse.

Mayor Smith commented that it is a structure which should have stayed on the property and the City should get it back.

Attorney Bullard advised that this topic should be discussed in executive session as opposed to the open meeting.

Mayor Smith questioned whether this would qualify as executive session material.

Attorney Bullard explained that it is in respect to the acquisition of property, noting that it is still in process.

A member of the press objected to this being executive session material and Mayor Smith informed the attorney, who was on videoconference, of this objection.

Council Member Ruggiero said that she wished Council had been informed of the discussion which occurred with Mr. Lundy during the February meeting regarding this golf ball.

Turning to a different topic regarding the golf course, Mayor Smith mentioned that the April 1 deadline within the asset purchase agreement had occurred and wanted to know the status of all the items to have been met by that date.

Mr. Mix advised that by April, Mr. Lundy was to remove all his personal items and return half of the golf carts and this has occurred.

Disinfection By-Products / Discharges Update

Mayor Smith asked for a summary of the EPA order that was received between 2012-2014 and for the Water Superintendent to provide an update on when the first order was brought to Council to look at. He discussed prior concerns with the combined sanitary/stormwater system.

Golf Course / Ornamental Golf Ball (continued)

Referring to the comments on social media by Council Member Olney that Mayor Smith and Council Member Pierce had been “punked” by the “April Fools” joke involving the ornamental golf ball, Mayor Smith asked for further explanation from Council Member Olney. He mentioned the definition of “punked” as being trick or deceived.

Council Member Olney replied that he explained what he meant by it on the Former Mayor Graham's blog and encouraged Mayor Smith to read his comments posted there.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the "April Fools" joke and the appropriateness of it, both on the part of developers' participation and Council Members reactions to it.

Attorney Bullard urged Council to enter into executive session to discuss it further.

Motion was made by Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero to move into Executive Session to discuss proposed, pending, or current litigation and contract negotiations as they relate to property acquisition.

Motion was seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

Council moved into Executive Session at 9:35 p.m.

Council reconvened at 10:25 p.m.

Mayor Smith stated that the City Attorney will address the issue of the golf ball sign with Mr. Lundy.

A D J O U R N M E N T

At the call of the chair, meeting was duly adjourned at 10:26 p.m. by motion of Council Member Lisa A. Ruggiero, seconded by Council Member Sarah V.C. Pierce and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

Ann M. Saunders
City Clerk