

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2019 – 6:30 p.m.

COUNCIL CHAMBERS – OLEAN MUNICIPAL BUILDING

IN ATTENDANCE WERE: ALDERMEN CRAWFORD, WITTE, ANDREANO, GONZALEZ, DOUGHERTY, SMITH, AND GEORGE. OTHERS: LENS MARTIAL, CITY CLERK; NICHOLAS DICERBO, JR., CITY ATTORNEY; BOB RING, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS; KERI STEPHEN, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM COORDINATOR; JEFF ROWLEY, POLICE CHIEF, AND TIFFANY TAYLOR, MANAGERIAL CONFIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY.

Alderman Crawford called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and asked that the record show that all Aldermen were present.

1. Discussion – Dog Licensing

Alderman Crawford explained that this issue was discussed a couple of weeks ago, and since he has met with Mr. DiCerbo to discuss different options to improve the trend of only 500 dogs being licensed annually. He explained that the New York State Agriculture and Markets Law requires that the City provide annual dog licenses. He explained that he is not sure if a dog census will provide the return that they are looking for.

Alderman Crawford explained that other communities talk about the lack of dog licensing being a point of service issue. He explained that it can be a hassle to come to the Municipal Building to renew your license, including having to provide a vaccination certificate if the previously provided certificate is still valid for another two years. He explained that other communities have partnered with local veterinarians for the licensing, and that he has reached out to some of the local veterinarians to discuss this possibility. He added that renewing licenses online, while uploading a PDF of the rabies vaccination, could be an option as well.

Alderman Crawford explained that although licenses must be done annually, that a multiyear payment could be considered to align with a three year rabies vaccine. He explained that this will save from the hassle of having to renew the license each year. Alderman Crawford explained that he would like to consider this when the Mayor returns and have further discussion with the Council.

2. PL #78-19: (Aiello) To authorize the Mayor to sign and submit an application to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation under the Urban and Community Forestry Grants Program Round 15 in connection with the City of Olean Tree Inventory and Community Forest Management Plan Project.

Ms. Stephen explained that the Department of Environmental Conservation recently announced that there is \$1.24 million available statewide for three different types of projects: an educational program, tree planting or a tree inventory, and a community forestry management plan. She explained that the City doesn't have anything in terms of an inventory since the 1986 which is in paper form. Mr. Stephen explained that if the City is awarded this funding, that an inventory can be completed and further funding can be applied for for a management plan for the trees in the right-of-ways, on City properties and in parks.

Ms. Stephen explained that this is highly competitive funding, and that the City applied last year and missed the funding by only half a point. She explained that her office will do its best and will work with the City Forester to attempt to obtain this funding.

Alderman Crawford asked if a consultant is needed to apply for this funding, and Ms. Stephen explained that the grant application is being written completely in house, and in addition, there is no match or application fee for the funding. Alderman Witte asked if it would take some time to find out the results, and Ms. Stephen explained that the deadline for the application is December 4, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. She noted that the announcements are to be made in May of 2020, and if awarded the funding, this would be a two year project.

A motion to approve PL #78-19 was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman George. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to tonight's Regular Meeting for Resolution.

3. PL #79-19: (Aiello) To approve the following Downtown Property Improvement Program (DPIP) application for financial assistance as recommended by the Revolving Loan Fund Committee: DPIP #70-03, in an amount not to exceed \$22,000.

Ms. Stephen explained that last Thursday, the City Loan Fund Committee met and reviewed an application for financial assistance. She explained that this is for an existing business to upgrade ceilings, walls, bathrooms, windows and doors in a commercial building. She noted that the business had a previous loan with the City, but that it has been paid off and all payments were made on time.

Alderman Crawford asked what the term on the loan is, and Ms. Stephen replied that the loan has a 20% deferred portion, and that it is a seven year loan at prime rate.

A motion to approve PL #79-19 was made by Alderman Andreano, seconded by Alderman Dougherty. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Referred to tonight's Regular Meeting for Resolution.

4. PL #80-19: (Aiello) To authorize the execution of a Host Community Agreement between the City of Olean and CDS Monarch, Inc. for the properties located at 422 East State Street and 115 Fulton Street.

Mr. DiCerbo explained that the Host Agreement is for CDS, a not-for-profit, to pay City taxes for services that they believe that the City renders to them. He explained that they are not obligated to do so, but that they will pay according to the assessed value. He explained that the property can be reassessed, and that CDS can challenge the assessment if they wish. He explained that this is a good agreement for the City.

Alderman Crawford noted that what is before the Council is not whether or not the Council agrees with or supports the Project, but rather whether or not to accept an agreement that would net the City the taxes on the properties regardless of the property owner's not-for-profit status.

Ray Wetherbee of CDS Housing presented a brochure to the Council and explained that his company has been around for around 40 years, and their goal is to provide support services and housing for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. He explained that they are looking to develop affordable and supportive housing, and will be partnering with Directions in Independent Living to provide on-site support services. He explained that good, safe, high-quality affordable housing will be provided to the people in the City of Olean.

Alderman Crawford asked what the breakdown between affordable housing and disabled housing will be, and Mr. Wetherbee explained that it will be a split of 20% disabled and 80% affordable. He explained that the entire building will be accessible, as he has heard of a great need for accessible housing in the City.

Alderman Andreano asked if they have done Host Agreements with other municipalities, and Mr. Wetherbee responded that they have also been done with Webster and Elmira. Alderman Andreano asked what the trade-off is, and Mr. Wetherbee explained that they understand that City resources will be used (such as when the street is plowed); however, they do not feel that they should pay County or School taxes.

Alderman Dougherty explained that he loves the Host Agreement, and Alderman Crawford explained that he would be happy to see the extra money. Alderman Witte explained that she feels that more companies should do Host Agreements. She noted a concern that this type of housing could lead to more empty houses and more blight throughout the City.

Mr. Wetherbee explained that a Market Analysis was completed, as it was required by both the State and secure commitment lenders and investors. He explained that they had to show that there is a need for this type of housing in the City; otherwise, they would not be here. He explained that this is a beautiful building along the gateway into the City into which they plan to make a \$14 million investment. He explained that the affordable housing is not for Section 8 housing, but for people who don't qualify for Section 8 but can't afford market rate housing.

Alderman Crawford explained that based on the current assessments, the City is set to see an estimated \$3,000 from this agreement. He noted that the assessment could increase when the

project is finished, therefore increasing the yearly payment per the agreement. Mr. DiCerbo noted that the company would be able to grieve the assessment if they so choose.

Alderman Smith explained that he is a shareholder and will therefore abstain from this vote.

A motion to approve PL #80-19 was made by Alderman Dougherty, seconded by Alderman Gonzalez. Voice vote, ayes all except Alderman Smith, who abstained. Motion carried. Referred to Regular Meeting for Resolution

5. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Andreano. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:50 p.m.