

Journal of Proceedings

OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OLEAN, N.Y.

January 2, 2020

COMMON COUNCIL CHAMBERS COUNTY OF CATTARAUGUS STATE OF NEW YORK

The Annual Meeting of the Olean Common Council of the City of Olean was held on Tuesday, January 2, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT: *Alderman Witte, Alderman Elect Panus. Alderman Gonzalez, Alderman Elect Dougherty, Alderman Crawford, and Alderman Elect Anastasia.*

ABESENT: *Alderman Elect Smith*

OFFICIALS: *William Aiello, Mayor; Lens Martial, City Clerk; Nicholas DiCerbo, Jr., City Attorney; Fred Saradin, City Auditor; Keri Kerper, Community Development Program Coordinator; Bob Ring, Director of Public Works; Gregg Piechota, City Auditor; Kris Shewairy, Youth and Recreation Coordinator; Bob Bell, Fire Chief; Jeff Rowley, Police Chief; Tiffany Taylor, Managerial Confidential Administrative Secretary, and Hon. Judge Daniel Palumbo.*

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Aiello. The meeting was opened with prayer by Father David Tourville of St. Mary's Basilica,, followed by the pledge to the flag.

OATH OF OFFICE – ALDERMEN

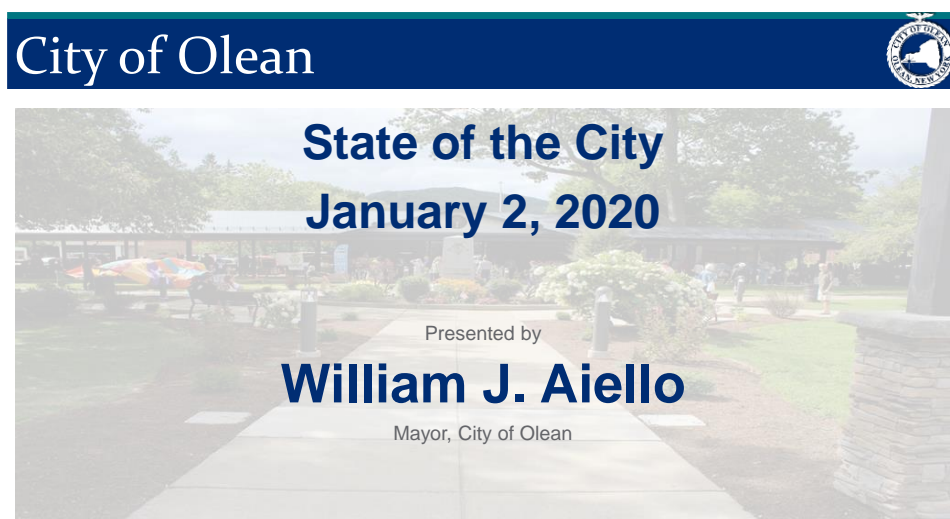
Judge Palumbo proceeded with the Oath of Office to the elected and reelected Aldermen, Jason Panus, Kevin Dougherty, and Dave Anastasia.

ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Mayor Aiello asked for a nomination for Council President.

Alderman Gonzalez was nominated by Alderman Dougherty, seconded by Alderman Panus. Alderman Witte was nominated by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Anastasia.. Absent any additional nominations, voice vote for Alderman Gonzalez: Alderman Panus, Alderman Gonzalez and Alderman Dougherty. For Alderman Witte: Alderman Witte, Alderman Crawford, and Alderman Anastasia. Election of Council President postponed at the direction of the City Attorney.

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS



It is my pleasure to welcome Father David Tourville of St. Mary of the Angels Basilica, Judge Daniel Palumbo, my wife Patty, my family and friends, members of the media, members of the Common Council, our Department Heads and City Employees. Most of all,

welcome to you in the audience in the Council Chambers and those of you who are watching at home.

We also have a few honored guests with us here tonight: Adam Jester, former Council President and Alderman for Ward 7, Jerry LeFeber, former Alderman for Ward 1 and Rick Smith former Council President and current Cattaraugus County Legislator.

It's been a great year for our City, and so much of that has to do with the dedication of our Common Council and our City employees. It is an honor for me to work with them to drive our great City forward. We hit obstacles along the way, but when we do, their collective problem-solving abilities and creativity give Olean the momentum to plow through any hurdles—such as aging infrastructure, blight, brownfields, and tight budgets.

We have come a long way and it's because we work together, make necessary compromises and persist until projects are completed.

My granddaughter read me *The Little Engine That Could* the other day. There are some similarities between that little engine—and our community.



Let me explain and watch the time line on the screen. It is amazing what our community has accomplished--we should all be very proud.

In 2014 the City started construction on our North Union Street transformation and we received a Green Innovation grant. In 2015, phase one of the construction was completed and in October 2016 we were able to cut the ribbon on the newly refurbished street with new water, electric and gas lines.

Before I came into office the brownfield sites off Buffalo Street and Homer Hill went through an extensive clean-up and the City was the recipient of \$1 million dollars in Restore NY grant funds from Empire State Development to assist with redevelopment. Discussions of development started, a hotel and solar farms were mentioned. Last year the City was able to pass through the \$1 million Restore New York Funds to the grantee and in 2019 the city applied for and received \$416,000 in funding to aid the HK Olean Hotel Project. In addition we cut the ribbon at the Homeridae Solar Farm on Homer Street which will help the City reduce electric expense.

In December 2014, we broke ground on the Bradner Stadium Field House, one of the final projects in the decade long restoration of the facility. In May of 2015, days before the Olean Oilers season opener, we were able to dedicate the new building.

In 2014 the URA sold 110-116 West State Street to Jeff Belt who started a detailed renovation of the buildings. This past summer the Tri-County Arts Council relocated to 110 West State Street, bringing a gallery and art facilities to our downtown district.

Early in 2015 we formed the Blight Task Force, which included the department heads, the Codes Supervisor, the City's IT specialist, and the Council President. We looked at the problems that cripple our neighborhoods and we started to work on solutions. That year we were able to demolish a couple of houses on Wayne Street. The next year Cattaraugus

County deeded us 13 additional houses that were up for the tax auction. We took possession of them, so they would not end up in the hands of slum lords.

The blight task force worked to secure, inventory and winterize the houses. The group decided which houses could be saved and which houses should be demolished. In addition our Community Development Office worked with the task force to apply for a \$100,000 LISC Zombie Grant which the City received. Receiving this grant was instrumental in our fight against blight. In 2017 we were able to hire a part-time Zombie Coordinator under the grant. In addition the Common Council amended the City's Code to add a new Property Maintenance and Residential Occupancy Code--another arrow in our quiver in our fight against blight.

The City also worked with the Cattaraugus County Land Bank since it was organized in 2016 and in 2018 our Community Development and Codes Offices partnered with the Land Bank to demo 15 properties. This year an additional 23 properties were demolished, including two blighted properties demoed to make way for an entrance to Franchot Park.

And the fight against blight will not stop soon---in 2019 the City applied for and was awarded \$100,000 in the LISC 2.0 grant program. This will allow us to continue our efforts in cleaning-up our neighborhoods.

In 2015 the City opted to be in compliance with the consent order of the DEC to upgrade our Waste Water Treatment Plant. Construction on the \$23 million project began and during that year the City was able to secure grants and interest free loans to help with the project.

This year, I am proud to say, the project is nearly completed.

The City also received a grant to revitalize North Third Street in 2015 and within a year—the beautiful street in the Oak Hill Historic District was restored.

In 2015 the Common Council adopted a new water policy that addressed many issues that existed when collecting payment of water and sewer bills. One problem, in particular--quarterly billing--was very unpopular with our residents. In 2016, the City was able issue monthly water bills.

In 2016 we decided to look at the City's Parking Policy. It was decided that we would offer free 2 hours parking on the street. In addition the Common Council changed the local law to allow booting of cars, in an effort to collect on the unpaid tickets which at that point in time was well over \$200,000.

Lincoln Square got its start in 2016 when the city received a grant from the Western New York Regional Economic Council. It was a nice start. The next year we received additional funding from Senator Catharine Young and Cattaraugus County. In August we cut the ribbon on our new facility and received numerous compliments.

In 2016 a grant package was finalized to enable the City to refurbish the William O. Smith Recreation Center. In April 2017, after the skating season was completed and the Home Show had wrapped-up, the construction vehicles moved in. In September the \$3.3 million project was completed and the Ice Rink started the first of three in the row banner years. In addition in 2019, the youth and recreation program started a roller skating program utilizing the rink during the summer months.

In September 2017 the City was notified that the proposal that was submitted to the Governor's office for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative was selected to receive \$10 million to rebuild downtown Olean. Meetings were conducted over the next year and in 2018 the qualified projects were announced. The city received close to \$5.5 million dollars for public works projects that will help complete the downtown streetscape project. This past year we signed the contracts for these projects.

In 2017 Marianne and Erick Laine announced that, through the Cattaraugus Region Community Foundation, they would support an upgrade to the entrance at Oak Hill Park. In 2018 the project was completed and the new entrance was dedicated to the Laines.

In 2018 the City's Community Development Office applied for and received two grants from KaBoom! Keurig Dr. Pepper to build Trailhead Parklet on Whitney Avenue and to upgrade King Street Park. Both projects were completed in 2019.

In 2018 the Urban Renewal Agency named Savarino as the preferred developer of the former Siegel Shoe Store and the Manufacturer Hanover Building. The building was allocated \$2 million of the DRI money to renovate and stabilize the building. This past year in 2019 the building qualified for an additional \$500,000 from the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation and an additional \$200,000 from Empire State Development for a roof stabilization project. The project is expected to take place this spring prior to the building being transferred to the developer.

In 2018 the City received funds to implement a Microenterprise Assistance Program and has been working with Olean Business Development to implement the program. This past year the funds were successfully dispersed to three unique business start-ups and two existing businesses in downtown Olean.

This year, in 2019, the city received \$300,000 in grants to work on the airport runway.

Last year the City applied for, but did not receive a grant to upgrade the water line on Washington Street. The project was important to the safety and welfare of our residents and the council decided to finance the project.

The City reapplied for the grant this year—like the little engine that could—we thought we could and tried again. We were successful this time and are looking forward to this project.

A few of the other projects that were initiated during this time period include:

- *Upgrades to York St and Prospect Avenue;*
- *Completion of the t hangar at the airport;*
- *Upgrades to more than 25 streets;*
- *Installation of New Play Ground Equipment in Homer Hill; and*
- *The Common Council adopted Form Based code.*

The little engine had determination and optimism....just like our staff...

Every item on this timeline was a group project for our staff: Professionalism and Interdepartmental cooperation are vital elements in the City's success in obtaining grants and following-through with the necessary paper work. The excellent work of our Office of Community Development and the DPW Administrative Staff is commendable.

Members from the City's IT department, water department, sewer department, streets and parks department, Codes office, the City's electricians and engineers also assist in the projects when necessary. They too have done a phenomenal job and should be commended for their dedication.

It is a group effort---commitment and dedication are instrumental to the advancement of our great City of Olean.

A presentation slide for the City Auditor Office. The slide has a dark blue header with the text "City Auditor Office" in white. To the right of the header is a circular seal of the City of Olean. The main body of the slide is light blue with a faint background image of a city at night. A white-bordered box in the center contains a bulleted list of achievements.

City Auditor Office

- Taxes Increased 1 Percent-Within Tax Cap
- Added to the Fund Balance
- Clean Audit Report
- Sales Tax Revenue Increased \$200,000
- Minimal Health Care Cost Increase

Switching gears to the current year, the City continues to operate within the tax cap. During 2019 taxes rose 1 percent, and we were able to add to the fund balance of the General fund, keeping us well above the balances suggested by the New York State Comptroller.

The City received a clean report from the independent auditors, our sales tax revenue increased by over \$200,000 from the prior year and our health care insurance increase is a mere .5 percent due to our good experience and utilization use.

City Clerk's Office

Revenue collected:

• Parking Lots:

\$35,000

• Parking Tickets:

\$65,000

• Vital Records:

\$41,500

Marriage Licenses:

150 (net revenue \$3,375)

The City Clerk's office collected \$35,000 in revenue from our parking lots over the past year. Parking ticket revenue was \$65,000. Revenue from dog licensing was almost \$9,000. Revenue from vital records included \$41,500 from births, deaths and copies of marriage certificates. 150 marriage certificates were issued for a net total of \$3,375 in revenue. And as Mayor I officiated 25 marriages in my office—one of the honors and great pleasures of being Olean's Mayor.

City Assessor's Office

Home sales:

• 135 "Arms Length" Sales

• Average price \$75,000 (an increase of \$5,000)

First increase in taxable value in 5 years due to increased development.

The City Assessor's Office reports that we had 135 "arms length" home sales in 2019 with the average home sale price of \$75,000, an increase of \$5,000 over last year. In addition, with increased development, the City realized the first increase in taxable value in 5 years.

The Assessor also reports that since the 2009 re-evaluation the City has worked to maintain the residential Assessment ratio, which is an indication of the level of assessment for residential real property in our city, to within about 5% of 100% of Market Value. This ensures that we are maintaining a fair and equitable assessment roll.

Department of Public Works



- Improved 8 Streets
- Upgraded York and South Union Street Intersection
- Installed Generator Back-ups for Martha Avenue and Fourth Street Pump Stations
- Extended the life of 1,200 feet of sanitary sewer

Olean's Department of Public Works was able to use CHIPS funding to mill, pave and make ramp improvements to 8 streets as well as reconstruct the York and South Union Street intersection to make safer ADA crossings, crosswalks and signage.

In addition, generator back-ups have been installed at the Martha Avenue and Fourth Street Pump Stations and approximately 1,200 feet of sanitary sewer was upgraded with the installation of sewer lining.

Police Department



- Received \$56,000 Grant to Implement Body Worn Camera Program
- Implemented Defensive Tactics Program to Minimize Injuries
- Continued Parking Compliance Program
- Successful OCSD Special Patrol Officers Program.
- Participated with CARES to Educate Children About Substance Abuse
- Participated in Shop With a Cop

The Olean Police Department continues to keep the City safe, to minimize the local drug activities and to provide the level of service that the people of Olean deserve. This year the police department was awarded a \$56,000 federal grant for the implementation of a Body Worn Camera Program.

The Department implemented a defensive tactics program for officers to help minimize injuries to officers and the public. And the department will continue the robust ticketing, scoffing, and booting program which increases both compliance as well as revenues.


It was also the first full school year of the new program of putting Special Patrol Officers in the Olean City Schools. This program, funded by the Olean City School District continues to be successful.

The department participated in a program with CARES in which officers interacted with children to discuss substance abuse. The Program was well received by the public. In addition Officers handed out coupons for free slurpees to children doing good deeds this summer.

The department also took part in the Shop with a Cop Program—which was a great success. A generous donation from Wal-Mart allowed Olean's Officers to help out more children this year.

The Police Department's commitment to our community was displayed this year in a number of events: they fielded their first Corporate Cup team, participated in the Annual Special Olympics Torch Run and took part in the Special Olympics Athletes fundraiser hosted by Appleby's.

Olean Fire Department



Fire Department Responded to:

- Structural Fires 43
- Other Fires 84
- Rescue Calls 52
- Service Calls 223
- Haz-Mat Calls 59
- Alarms 220
- EMS Assists 1,079
- Total Calls 1,760

Codes Office

Permits	
Issued:	272
Revenue	\$37,500
Valuation	\$3.4 million
Inspections	
Total	2,065
Demolitions	
Houses	
City	4
Land Bank	5
Private	5
Garages	
City	2
Private	7
Total Demolitions	23

The Fire Department responded to a total of 1,760 calls. There were 43 structural fires nine of which were notable and required a second alarm or higher. The department responded to 84 other fires, 52 rescue calls, 223 service calls, 59 haz-mat calls and 220 automatic alarms. During 2019 the department had 1, 079 EMS assists.

The Fire Department conducted 110 Fire Safety Inspections in 2019.

About 1,200 local students from pre-K to 5th grade received fire education and take home materials from the Olean Fire Department. In addition, numerous students, scouts and other organizations stopped by the station to receive fire and first aid education. The department also participated in several off site displays at the Olean General Hospital, YMCA and Mercy Flight.

The department also wears pink in October for Breast Cancer Awareness and sponsors the 4th of July Fireworks.

The new landlord inspection law was implemented in 2019 and it has been very beneficial to our community. The new law allows our Codes inspectors into dwelling units. This was not previously allowed. And the law gives our Code Enforcement Office more power to have buildings and units brought back to minimum standards. Houses have been updated and repaired because of this law and the Codes office will continue to bring blight properties back into compliance.

This year there were 671 property maintenance complaints which resulted in 1,210 inspections. In total the Codes office completed 2, 065 inspections.

The Codes Office issued 372 permits totaling about \$37,500 during the year with a valuation of about \$3.4 million.

And on the blight front the office reports that 23 structures were demolished. Of those The City was directly involved in 10, the land bank in 5 and private entities completed the other 5.

Youth and Recreation



- Concerts in the park--17
- Summer Recreation Participants--325
- Weekly Participants in Roller Skating Program--50
- Admissions for ice skating--9,000
- Participants in the 12 Ice Skating Days of Christmas--3,000
- Weekly attend the St. John's Youth Center--100+
- Rec. Center used for numerous events
- Youth Basketball leagues had 4 girls teams and 6 boys teams
- Senior Center added Line Dancing and Ice Bocce

Olean’s Youth and Recreation Department worked hard to provide residents of all ages a quality of life that cannot be surpassed. Some highlights are on the screen:

- There were 17 Concerts in the Park.

- *Summer Recreation Program had 325 registered participants.*
- *Newly instituted Roller Skating program averaged 50 weekly participants.*
- *Great season for the Ice Skating program with almost 9,000 admissions.*
- *12 Ice Skating Days of Christmas offered 17 sessions and had over 3,000 people attending.*
- *Youth basketball league had 4 girls' teams and 6 boys' teams.*
- *Over 100 students weekly attended the St. Johns Youth Center.*
- *The William O. Smith Recreation Center revenues and activities are at an all time high.*
- *And the John Ash Community Center continued to host the Program for seniors. The program started a Line Dancing Class and an Ice Bocce program.*



This year we were fortunate enough to have a marketing/events coordinator plan a number of activities at the Bartlett House including the psychic fairs, the ever popular Victorian Christmas, and events during StrOlean including attractions such as local author Elaine Snyder and Caricature artist Eric Jones. The House was rented for a number of events and was opened for photo sessions for Prom and Bridal pictures. The Bartlett House received excellent press in the Olean Times Herald during the year, and is selling a Historical Olean calendar at 6 locations in the City. There is also a marketing brochure available.

This new year is its 30th year anniversary as Historical Fannie Bartlett House and Olean Point Museum. And to celebrate, a number of special events have been scheduled including an Antique Appraisal Day, Sarah Johnson Victorian Tea, Doll Show, 2 Psychic Fairs, lawn sale, and Pie on the Porch. In April, The Olean Theater Workshop will portray important turn of the century people of Olean. And to top it off, a Charter Bus Tour from the Buffalo area is scheduled to visit in June.

The Bartlett House is a perfect example of the amazing volunteer network we have in Olean. The rooms in the house and the gardens on the property are maintained by volunteers. Every room in the facility is decorated for the Holidays. In the summer all the gardens are painstakingly weeded and groomed. In addition the Life Skills class from Olean High School decorate the fence around the house.

But volunteerism does not stop at the Bartlett house.



When the City received the Green Initiatives, we had water gardens installed that allowed rain water to go directly to the water table and bypass the wastewater treatment plant. Olean residents were not initially happy with the gardens. But we are very fortunate – very early on--after the project was completed, a number of citizens signed on to the Olean Beautification Committee and were charged with beautifying North Union Street. They have done a great job. They are responsible for the planters on the street that offer a beautiful array of colors as well as the tulips, daffodils and roses in the median.

The gardens along the street also needed to be tended. It is a lot of work and the City does not have the manpower to adequately maintain the gardens. But what we do have is a very dedicated group of volunteers who weed and keep-up the gardens along the Street. Since we cannot use pesticides, it is a very time consuming and challenging task, and our volunteers do an excellent job.

Volunteers also tend to the gardens in Lincoln Park and clean the gardens along North Fourth Street along the entrance of Oak Hill Park. A number of classes from Olean High School do a spring cleaning of Oak Hill Park every year, and last but not least-- Lila Ervay's Litter Control Group efficiently clears litter from our streets—a chore that is never ending and very time consuming.

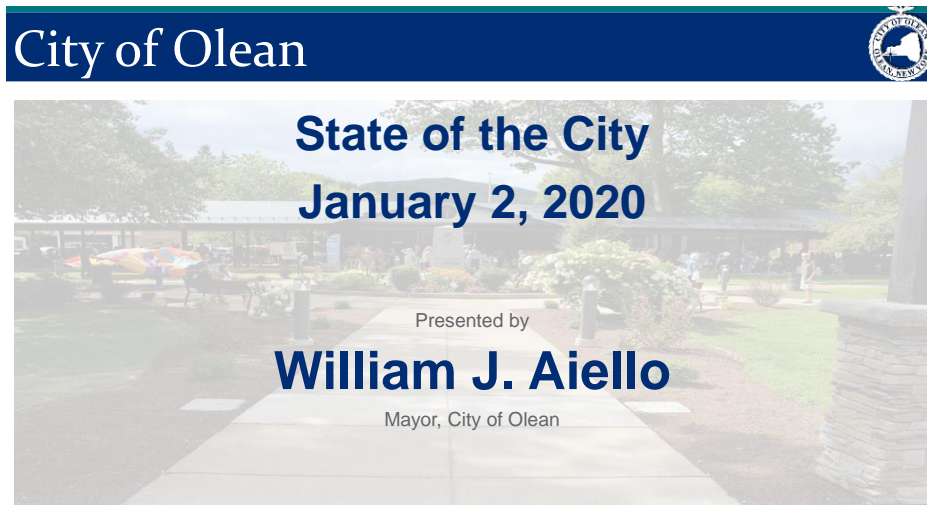
We also have groups that help the City maintain facilities. This year a number of improvements to the Senior Center were paid for by the Junior and Senior Leagues and BonaResponds volunteers painted the pavilion in Gargoyle Park.



The King Street Park Build Day was an extraordinary event which proved that community spirit was alive and well in Olean, NY. The grant our Community Development department received for a project spearheaded by former council member Kelly Andreano, included a stipulation—the new playground equipment had to be built by volunteers.

We were never nervous that no one would show up—this is Olean—and we had excellent participation: Captain Jim Bennet’s Platoon, members of the City’s Department of Public Works, Community Development, and Codes, the City Attorney, BonaResponds, a number of the City’s Alderman, and countless members from the community at large were on hand to donate their time, talents and energy to the young people of our community.

It was an amazing event—proving that Olean is the little City that could. We don’t just think we can—we prove we can, over and over and over again.



There are a few items of interest in the new year: we are anticipating a Tax cap of 1.7 percent and will work to stay within that boundary.

In addition we will be negotiating with a number of the collective bargaining units in 2020.

The Police Department will be facing new challenges in the upcoming year. Two Legislative changes will drastically change how the department will operate. The “Bail Reform” will basically eliminate money bail and pretrial detention for nearly all misdemeanor and nonviolent felony cases. Police will be required to give arrested parties appearance tickets then immediately release them. Those that will be held for arraignment by the Court will also most likely be released under the least restrictive conditions. This change will undoubtedly have unintended negative consequences not only for law enforcement but the public as well.

Secondly, Discovery Reform. This will require that any and all materials relating to every arrest be turned over to the defense within 15 days without it even being requested. This is a significant change that is a very labor intensive, time consuming requirement and will present significant problems for every police department and District Attorney’s office in the state.

The department is not adequately staffed to handle this new requirement and the Chief will request a new position in the 2020 – 2021 budget to handle the requirements set forth in this new legislative change. This is another unfunded mandate from the State.

In conclusion—Olean like every other city and town and village faces new and old challenges—but here we are—after two centuries—a vibrant city—looking back with pride and forward with optimism and great expectations to continue to be what we have always been—a safe, friendly, caring and welcoming community in the foothills of the Appalachians and in the center of the Enchanted Mountains.

Thank you and Happy New Year.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alderman Crawford, Seconded by Alderman Dougherty to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:05 p.m.

City Clerk Lens Martial

Mayor William Aiello

I hereby approve the foregoing minutes
Dated:

STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF CATTARAUGUS
CITY OF OLEAN

I, Lens Martial, City Clerk of the City of Olean, do hereby certify that the foregoing minutes of the Common Council of the City of Olean is the true and correct copy of the whole thereof.

City Clerk Lens Martial