

## PUBLIC SAFETY

Tuesday, March 17, 2020 – 5:30 p.m.

Police Training Room – Olean Municipal Building

Present: Members: Chairman Witte, Vice Chairman Dougherty, Alderman Gonzalez, Alderman Crawford, Alderman Smith, and Alderman Anastasia. Others: Mayor William Aiello; Nicholas DiCerbo, Jr., City Attorney; Fred Saradin, City Auditor; Bob Ring, Director of Public Works; Tim Richardson, Fire Chief; Jeff Rowley, Police Chief, and Tiffany Taylor, Managerial Confidential Administrative Secretary.

### 1. Roll Call

Alderman Witte called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and asked that the record show that all committee members were present except Alderman Panus, who was excused.

### 2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Committee Meetings (Tuesday, March 3, 2020)

A motion to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2020 meeting was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman Gonzalez. Voice vote ayes all. Motion carried.

### 3. Unfinished Business

None

### 4. New Referrals for Consideration

#### a. COVID-19 Update

Mayor Aiello explained that he has been doing his best to keep the Council informed, or at least in the loop, as things develop. He explained that this is a very fluid situation and every plan that the Governor puts into place puts more restrictions on the State. He explained that a new plan begins tomorrow morning, and there are some very big decisions for the City to make in terms of workforce. He explained that he will be meeting with staff tomorrow morning, and he is waiting for advice from the City's personnel legal counsel Hodgson Russ.

Mayor Aiello explained that starting tomorrow, the building will be closed to the public except for 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. He explained that only the Clerk's office will be accessible, and if someone needs to contact another department, they will be given the phone number to that department. He noted that if a face to face meeting needs to be done, that it will be done in room 119 in an attempt to keep everyone on the first floor, primarily in the lobby area and Clerk's office.

Mayor Aiello explained that two employees constructed a shield in the Clerk's office today to help minimize employee contact with the public. Employees have also been provided with a supply of masks and gloves to be used if they are making contact with the public.

Mayor Aiello explained that moving forward, the City will need to determine who is essential and who is non-essential, as well as who can work from home and who will be furloughed. He explained that every day, there is a new order from the Governor. He explained that seniors are being fed by the County's Meals on Wheels program, so they will get a meal if they call. He explained that the Senior Center is also being shut down, as well as the William O. Smith Recreation Center, the recreation program at St. John's and the Bartlett House.

Mayor Aiello explained that in the Municipal Building, all offices are to keep their doors shut, and employees are to minimize contact with each other and practice social distancing. He explained that the building is off limits to friends and family of employees, and courts have been shut down and are no longer in the building until further notice. He noted that there is no Court Security until the courts open back up, as they are paid for by the courts.

Mayor Aiello reiterated that this is a day to day situation, and new things are coming out daily. He explained that he met with the hospital today, and he has just been updated on what is going on over there. He explained that there is limited visitation, and someone is at the door to ask questions of anyone entering the hospital and to take temperatures before the public enters the building. He explained that he is not sure what other facilities, such as the Medical Group, are doing. He does know that they have asked that you don't just pop in if you are experiencing any symptoms, and rather call your doctor or the emergency room if you are experiencing signs. It is important to not just show up in order to limit exposure.

Mayor Aiello explained that Chief Richardson has put in an order for more supplies, such as hand sanitizer, cleaning materials, masks and gloves. He explained that the Police Chief and department are putting policies into place in order to limit public contact as much as possible, and they will not be going to places like they used to be. He explained that if possible, a report will be taken over the phone rather than in person.

Mayor Aiello explained that he has been meeting daily with Department Heads regarding calls that he has received from the Governor's Office. He explained that they have been talking about where they are going next with this, and the Governor's office currently has several things in motion. He explained that the new Executive Order requires that staff be reduced by 50% by either sending staff to work at home or furlough staff. He explained that the Executive Order and other information supplied are vague so far regarding what the City has to do.

Mayor Aiello explained that he has sent a flyer out regarding the school breakfasts and lunches and where they can be picked up. He explained that the Warming House is providing meals for

pickup for anyone who needs them. He attempted to reach out to Harvest Fields but he doesn't believe that they are doing meals anymore. He explained that restaurants are advertising takeout, and a lot of things are in motion and more are coming down the line.

Mayor Aiello asked if there are any positive cases that we are aware of in Cattaraugus County, and Chief Richardson explained that there are none as of the meeting held earlier this afternoon. Mayor Aiello explained that there are two positive cases in Allegany County.

Alderman Crawford explained that he hasn't tuned into the Governor's talks in a while, and he wonders if there is a timeline as to when test kits will start to be distributed to States, and to hospitals in our region. Mayor Aiello explained that the hospital told him that they are working with the Cattaraugus County Health Department, and there will probably not be any sort of drive up testing in this area unless it becomes a hot zone. He explained that a lot of resources are still being held in hot zones.

Alderman Anastasia asked if the County Health Department has any test kits now, and Mayor Aiello responded that at one point they had thirty, and the hospital had 50. It takes about three days to get results, and researches are working diligently to get the testing down to one day. He noted that right now test kits are in hot zones.

Alderman Anastasia thanked Mayor Aiello for keeping the Council updated, and asked if employees who are furloughed are still getting paid. Mayor Aiello explained that it is a question that he has to have answered still, and hopefully he will be able to get more information tomorrow.

Alderman Crawford asked if it would be prudent to transfer money out of contingency and put it into an emergency capital fund so that the Mayor has access to the funding in the case that he needs to access money in the next month or two. Mayor Aiello responded that a lot of communities have been going into State of Emergencies, and that is something that would change the requirement for notifications of meetings. He has discussed the City's cash flow with Mr. Saradin, and AIM money was just received. Mr. Saradin noted that about \$2 million was received last week. He explained that the City will soon receive a check for around \$850,000 from the County for back taxes and delinquent water and sewer bills. HE explained that three million in cash flow will be coming in by the end of the month.

Alderman Crawford explained that he didn't want any limitations that would negatively affect the City at this time. Mayor Aiello explained that he is working with Mr. DiCerbo on the advantages and disadvantages on declaring a State of Emergency now. He explained that he may do it in case things deteriorate quickly.

Alderman Crawford explained that he thinks that the biggest issue is the general uncertainty that everyone is dealing with right now. He explained that the Council all has to try to play a part to make things better. He explained that he has created a Facebook group to help businesses by allowing them to post changing hours of operation and to allow restaurants to post information regarding their transition to take out and delivery only. He explained that he feels that it is very important to help businesses at this time, because everyone is going to be strapped for cash. He explained that it will take a lot of work, and everyone will need to help.

Mayor Aiello explained that Tom Reed stopped by today, and some Federal Legislation out there would help businesses and individuals, if it is passed.

Alderman Anastasia explained that he hasn't heard much other than the latest developments from the Governor, and he thinks that it is starting to sink into the public, and the public is getting more concerned. HE explained that a lot of people have never lived through something like this before, and now that everything is starting to shut down, people are getting concerned and worried. Mayor Aiello noted that he did ask for clarification regarding restaurants and bars, and if that included private clubs such as the Elks and Pulaski Club. He explained that they are included in the shutdown as well. He explained that they can still do takeout and bars can still sell beverages.

Alderman Dougherty explained that he has not received too many phone calls from constituents, and that he has heard comments mostly from people he normally see. He explained that some people are in an extreme panic mode, and some people aren't worried at all. He noted that he has gotten phone calls from business owners, and he fears that what is going on will cripple the economy. He explained that business owners are the ones that are panicking the most.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that the one thing that he has heard from people is general frustration about the panic buying mentality that is going around. He explained that WalMart has toilet paper and it is instantly gone. He feels that Council members need to set an example as well as make sure to do nothing to create panic. He explained that a calm and keel demeanor is important.

Alderman Witte explained that it is important to keep everyone calm. She explained that there needs to be a way to tell people to give each other more space when they are in grocery stores, because people are still standing on top of each other. She explained that she delivers Meals on Wheels, but she was told that she can't deliver right now because she is over the age of 60. She explained that they will be losing a lot of staff for deliveries and it will be hard.

Alderman Witte explained that as far as the Medical Group goes, they are basically doing the same thing that the hospital is doing by asking people if they are sick and where they have been

when they enter the building. He explained that they are doing their best to keep sick and well people apart during their visits, as well as keeping those with symptoms away from the public. She explained that they are putting a plan in place and doing the best they can to keep people healthy.

Alderman Witte explained that she has received a call from a woman in her ward who suggested that local grocery stores open early for a couple hours for seniors, and he thinks that other communities are doing this. She does not think that this is a bad idea, particularly for those who are older and at risk. She explained that everyone needs to think twice before going into crowds.

Alderman Witte explained that she thinks that what the Council is doing is good, and that we are keeping each other informed and sharing information that we need to in order to stay calm and express that to constituents and the community. She explained that as community elected leaders, if we don't show calm, residents will not be able to be calm. She explained that she thinks that our State is doing a much better job than others, but that we are still a week or two behind the ball. We are still catching up.

Chief Rowley explained that his department is going to be making some changes to what they do and minimize calls that they go on. HE explained that if it is not essential for an officer to be there, that a report can be taken over the phone, He explained that people in the station are being eliminated and are going through the dispatcher. He explained that so far he has not lost any manpower, but that it will be a challenge if and when that happens.

Alderman Witte asked if the John Ash Community Center is available if people who aren't critical need to be moved from the hospital to elsewhere. She explained that it is a perfect location, as there are restrooms, a kitchen, a wide open space, and it is currently not being used. She explained that she did not know if the Health Department has had this conversation with the City yet. Mayor Aiello responded that they have not discussed this with the City yet, but this is certainly a possibility.

Mayor Aiello noted that he has pulled back all employee training until further notice, as he does not want employees traveling and going to trainings until this is under control.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that procedurally, next week the Council has a Regular Meeting. He would like to see the seating stay spread out, perhaps with a few tweaks. Mayor Aiello explained that an Executive Order from the Governor has suspended the Open Meetings Law, and the Council can meet without the public present. Mr. DiCerbo confirmed that the Council does not need to allow the public into the meetings at all.

Chief Richardson explained that each morning, he talks with emergency services to stay ahead of things and to put in “service tickets” with wish lists of items that the department would like. He explained that what the City receives is based on what’s available, and things need to be equally distributed. He explained that it is important that we stick with one voice for information and guidance on this ever involving situation. He noted that the City tries to put something out and three hours later it changes, so we need to stay flexible.

b. Discussion – School Street No Parking Signs (Witte)

Alderman Witte explained that for years this street situation was awkward because of Third Avenue meeting School Street at an angle. She explained that there is an apartment building on School Street with no parking on one side, but people park there every day anyways regardless of having parking behind the building for residents. She explained that people complain that those who park there do not get ticketed, and she wonders if signs need to be moved. She noted that she would like to hand this off to Chief Rowley to look at.

Chief Rowley explained that he went out to look at the situation and issued tickets to those who were parked in no parking areas. He noted that there may be possibly a loophole because of where signs are. He explained that when people call the Aldermen about parking issues, the best thing to do is have them immediately call the Police Department so an officer can look at the situation and have the vehicle ticketed while it is parked where it should not be.

c. YMCA School Zone

Mayor Aiello explained that he received a request from the YMCA to look at the area on Wayne Street where the daycare crosses to the main building. He explained that several times a day, children from the daycare are taken back and forth from the main building to the daycare building across the street. He explained that the other day, someone was on their phone and wasn’t paying attention and there was a near miss with children crossing on Tenth Street.

Mayor Aiello explained that he met with the YMCA and took a look at the area. HE explained that everyone went over this a few years ago, and he is trying to get everyone on board to put a sidewalk in there to make the area safer. Flashing lights like those on North Union Street are also considered. He noted that there are two school crossing signs in inventory from the Boardmanville area that could be used to show the speed of vehicles.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that the YMCA would like the push button crossings like those on North Union Street. Mr. Ring explained that it takes a while to do the research and collect data in order to get these devices. Alderman Gonzalez asked why the devices cannot be bought and put in by the City, and Mr. Ring explained that they have to be justified, and they cannot just be thrown in according to Federal Highway standards. He explained that the City needs to show

them that these devices are a need because they are still experimental and there is still a lot of research ongoing with them.

Alderman Dougherty explained that he understands why this is, because if stop signs are put in everywhere, people stop paying attention to them.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that since there are school speed zone signs a short distance up the street, he worries that putting this in here will affect the response to the one by the school. Alderman Crawford asked if a reduced speed is being asked for as well in this area, and Alderman Gonzalez noted that this would put an additional burden on the Police Department to enforce.

Alderman Witte asked if there would be a school zone from the middle school to the YMCA. Mr. Ring explained that he doesn't believe that this area could be a school zone, but it would rather be a reduced speed zone and higher fine zone.

Mayor Aiello explained that he would like to do the research and have justification for whatever is put in. He explained that he has talked about putting in sidewalk to Twelfth Street where the walk / don't walk signs are. He explained that he needs to have some data, so that the City can show why this is needed and if it is requested in other areas of the City, officials can show where data supports these beacons and where it doesn't.

Alderman Crawford explained that the YMCA is willing to put the investment into the sidewalk in front of their location parallel to the road, but he thinks that the City will need to do some research because Intandem is moving into the old call center, Mayor Aiello explained that he feels that InTandem and Dresser Rand will be receptive as well to putting in the sidewalk. He explained that right now, the call center is not in operation so it is pretty safe, but when cars are there again, there will need to be a short term fix and long term solution. He explained that the first thing the City needs to do is get the proper data.

#### d. Discussion – Water Treatment Plant Wall Project

Mr. Ring explained that a Capital Project is coming up, and the City will possibly be applying for grants. HE explained that there is most likely going to be another WIIA grant in August or September, so if the funding source is still in place, the City would like to apply. He explained that the south facing wall of the Water Plant is failing. He explained that it was built, and there were immediately problems with leakage. The City filed a lawsuit against the company who did the construction, but they ended up bankrupt. He explained that the City received a settlement and some injections were done, but the wall is still failing.

Mr. Ring explained that a chunk has fallen out of the wall that holds the water filters. He explained that the plant pumps water from the river and gets the big stuff out, and that the water then goes through the filters. He explained that the project will consist of the wall being replaced, and taking everything out since the filters have never been cleaned (this is recommended every 10 to 15 years).

Mr. Ring explained that this will be a four to five phase design project. He explained that the first step is to hire a consultant, as a preliminary design is needed prior to applying for the grant. He explained that he has worked with a consultant on a fee, and while they proposed \$95,000, after discussions they brought the fee down to \$57,000 with the condition that the remainder be written into the grant application.

Mr. Ring explained that he plans to pay out of the water budget to get the design report and preliminary design in order to apply for the WIIA grant in the fall. He explained that if the City is not awarded the funding, that he will try again next year, as it seems that the City has good luck with second year WIIA funding. He explained that if the City again does not receive the funding, that we will need to look into paying for this ourselves.

Alderman Witte asked if the damage is more extensive than where the crack is, and Mr. Ring explained that it is more extensive. HE explained that all the walls that are facing south are failing. He explained that he does not know if it is a freeze / thaw issue, but the consultant will do concrete sampling for evaluation. He apologized that he does not have photos tonight for the Council to see, but at some point he would like them to see the entire south wall portion that faces the river, as it is having major issues. He explained that there is sand coming through from the filter to the outside, and rebar is exposed. He explained that the City will go through with hydraulic cement and cover it up, but it is only a one or two year temporary fix that will deteriorate,

Alderman Witte explained that the Council should go to the water plant to see the issues firsthand.

Alderman Crawford asked what Mr. Ring is asking the Council for tonight. Mr. Ring responded that in three months, he does not want the Council to be surprised that he is applying for a grant with a \$600,000 match, and he wants the City to be committed to the project prior to applying for the grant.

Alderman Witte explained that the City has dodged this bullet for years.

Mr. Ring explained that the engineering firm to be used is Arcadis Engineering, who used to be Malcolm Pirnie.



e. Electricity Supply Contract

Mr. Ring explained that the City's electrical supply contract runs out in June, and the maximum amount of time that the City can sign with an energy supply company for is three years. He explained that electric costs are at an all-time low, and the County bid out their supplier and the suppliers rates are lower than they are three years ago. If the City contracts with this supplier, the estimated annual savings would be around \$15,000 over the course of the three year contract, not counting the LED conversion savings.

Mayor Aiello explained that a PL and Resolution will be on next week's agenda for a vote to approve the energy contract.

5. Approval of Committee Reports

None

6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman Crawford. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:15 p.m.