

PUBLIC SAFETY

Tuesday, May 5, 2020 – 5:30 p.m.

Council Chambers – Olean Municipal Building

Present: Members: Chairman Witte, Vice Chairman Dougherty, Alderman Panus, Alderman Gonzalez, Alderman Crawford, Alderman DaPolito, and Alderman Anastasia. Others: Mayor William Aiello; 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.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Committee Meetings (Tuesday, March 17, 2020)

A motion to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2020 meeting was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman Crawford. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

3. Unfinished Business

None

4. New Referrals for Consideration

a. Discussion - COVID-19 Update

Mayor Aiello explained that he sent the Council a PowerPoint that the Governor had done, that included a lot of information for when businesses begin to reopen. He explained that the issue is, that we are lumped in with Erie and Niagara counties, so we need to keep pushing elected officials to separate our county from theirs. He explained that we would be able to open safely prior to them. He explained that in order to open safely, there is a checklist, but if you have a setback you need to start over. He noted that on May 15th more direction may be received.

Mayor Aiello explained that he has been getting calls from people who have indicated that the National Little League told them that little league can begin May 11th. He explained that we are not doing anything in Olean and not allowing this until the Governor says that the pause is off.

Mayor Aiello explained that a lot is going on, and that there have been a lot of cancellations of events here in Olean. He explained that this is a revenue lost for us, too. He explained that today was a brutal call from the Governor's office because some people are having a difficult time with unemployment. He explained that there are stories upon stories of people who have

not received any money for more than a month. He explained that the problem with unemployment is that people are not putting in the correct information, and that is creating a firestorm. He explained that people haven't been paid in eight weeks and are trying to contact unemployment daily while their cars are getting repossessed. They keep hearing that things are being fixed and they're going to get better, but they aren't.

Mayor Aiello explained that his granddaughter was trying to get unemployment, and received a call that she was okay and to certify on Sunday. When she went to certify, the system notified her that her application was incomplete, and the number she was given to call cut off after a message to wait for a representative was received. He explained that this is an issue all over New York State.

Mayor Aiello explained that there is a tracker on the County website, as well as on the Governor's website and NYCOM's website, which includes numbers of those tested, those infected, and those quarantined. He noted that NYCOM will be doing a town hall meeting on Thursday at 11 a.m. for Cattaraugus and Chautauqua counties. He will send the Zoom meeting information to any alderman who is interested in joining.

Mayor Aiello explained that there are daily calls with Tom Reed's office and the Governor's office, and the hospital has a weekly call. He explained that he is very disappointed in the county, because they have been or are putting together a twelve point plan for reopening, and no one from Olean was asked to participate in the process. He explained that no businesses were asked to participate, although they were polled for information. He noted that this committee was put together to aid the reopening out of Crystal Havers' office. He explained that he has voiced his displeasure with the legislatures about this, and he will be getting together with the CEO Alliance soon. He explained that we will just move forward and put our own plan together for Olean. It is disheartening that we were not included. He explained that there will be life after Coronavirus, it just depends how that life will look.

Alderman Witte asked if Kathy Hochul has contacted us at all, and Mayor Aiello responded that she hasn't. Alderman Witte suggested that he talk to her office to see if she could explain why we have been lumped in with Erie County. She explained that the local doctors are upset that we were grouped in with them, and they want elective surgery to be open. The hospital is losing money every day and the economy is hurting.

Mayor Aiello explained that he will be working with our elected officials to get the word to them that we want to be open. He explained that as he gets more information he will share it with the Council. He noted that he does not know if it would be wise or prudent to put together a resolution from the Council, and Alderman Witte added with all of their names on it.

Alderman Witte explained that she received a call from a constituent who was having issues with unemployment. She explained that it is very confusing. Mayor Aiello explained that it is standard to have to recertify every week, even prior to the pandemic. He explained that the system is very busy and there are many incomplete filings. He explained that there is not enough staff to handle this, and 300 people were trained quickly, with most of them working from home. Alderman Witte explained that this issue is happening all over the county.

Alderman Witte asked, as far as the City, if most people are back to work or if we are still at fifty percent. Mayor Aiello explained that he has brought all full time employees back that work in the municipal building, but it is not open to the public yet, and everyone is social distancing. He explained that with what happened with the ransomware, he wanted to eliminate people logging in through the VPN. He explained that most of DPW staff is back, and that DPW workers are considered essential. He explained that the rest will be back by May 11th.

Mayor Aiello noted that the Council will notice that potholes began being filled today, as the blacktop plant in Cuba opened up. Major streets such as Front Street and State Street are being done first. He explained that when the plant in Olean opens on the 11th two full crews will be out for repairs.

Alderman Anastasia explained that he heard a rumor that there are refrigerator trucks parked at the DPW barn in Allegany for COVID bodies. Mayor Aiello explained that it is not a rumor, and Chief Rowley explained that that's what they are for. He explained that there is someone stationed there 24 hours a day while the vehicles are there, and he does not think that they are occupied. Alderman Witte explained that she heard that municipalities will be taking overflow, as the funeral homes in Buffalo are overloaded.

Mayor Aiello explained that he has been trying to send to the Council what he feels is pertinent information, and he is trying not to send everything because a lot is redundant. He explained that he will be keeping them in the loop as things come out. He explained that the Governor's call has been held at 11:30 a.m. lately and that he can provide the information to the Council so that they can participate. Alderman Gonzalez asked if this is the same call that is on YouTube and CNN, and Mayor Aiello responded that it is.

Alderman Crawford asked if May 15th is the start of the state opening, and Mayor Aiello explained that is the day that the pause executive order is supposed to expire. Alderman Crawford asked if that means that it is not necessarily for this region, and Mayor Aiello explained that it is not. Alderman Gonzalez noted that we will definitely not open May 15th. Mayor Aiello explained that you have to meet so much criteria. Alderman Gonzalez asked what in New York will open on May 15th, and Mayor Aiello responded that nothing will. He explained that schools are closed through the end of the school year now. Alderman Witte noted that

central New York may start opening sooner than we will, and Mayor Aiello explained that he believes that construction will be the first to open. Alderman DaPolito added that essential manufacturing is a part of Phase I as well, and finance is a part of Phase II.

b. Discussion – Ransomware

Alderman Witte explained that last week when she left the meeting, she was more confused than when she was sitting there listening to everything, and she would like an update and clarification. She asked if we know how much the company wants us to pay. Mayor Aiello explained that the City paid \$75,000 to Monster Cloud, and he sent the Council a copy of the report. Alderman Gonzalez asked if this is the company that we hired to fix the situation, and Mayor Aiello explained that these are the people that we hired to recover the files.

Alderman Witte explained that with ransomware there is an amount that you need to pay to get the files back, and Mayor Aiello explained that we paid Monster Cloud \$75,000 to recover our data. Alderman Crawford asked if they act as an intermediary to get our data back from the hackers. Mayor Aiello read a portion of the report that explained their work, and Alderman Gonzalez explained that read that too, but there's something about the phrase "as soon as the wire transfer is complete" that makes it seem like we are paying the ransom. He asked if the company that we are working with is reputable.

Chief Rowley explained that Monster Cloud is a third party vendor that was hired in order to minimize our risk of dealing directly with the people that caused the issue. He explained that we do not know how, and they don't tell us how or what they did or didn't do to recover the information. He explained that the company is in business to take care of issues like this, and there is a guarantee that we get all some or all of our money back if they cannot get our data back. He explained that this puts security in our investment, and we don't deal directly with the ransom people.

Chief Rowley explained that we vetted the company out the best that we could, and that we spoke with the Feds and our insurance company for information. He explained that an initial fee was charged to examine the situation, which we paid, and they examined the situation and determined that for a cost of \$75,000 they should be able to recover the data. He explained that we paid this amount and that almost all of the data has been recovered, and we are back in business. He noted that they will probably never tell us if they fixed this themselves, or if they paid a ransom.

Alderman DaPolito explained that the ransom could have been \$25,000. Chief Rowley explained that not only did they minimize the risk of the City paying the ransom and never getting the data back, they also find loopholes and help the IT Department scan the system. He explained

that this is complicated beyond his knowledge, but the email that the mayor sent out thoroughly explains it.

Chief Rowley continued that the good news is that we are back up and running. He explained that we are still entering old reports that were done by hand, but all of the sensitive data was recovered so while the money was painful to spend, it was not wasted. Alderman Witte explained that she feels that we are working with the dealer on the corner, and Chief Rowley explained that this is actually a much more reputable way of doing business.

Alderman DaPolito asked who is to say that they aren't the ransom company, and Chief Rowley explained that the only thing that we were concerned about is that they are a US-based company. He explained that they are and they do not do business outside of the United States. He explained that one of the founders is the ex-deputy director of the FBI, so these are legitimate people.

Mayor Aiello explained that the other good thing is that we reached out to them; they did not contact our IT Department first. Alderman DaPolito asked if we had a choice of who to go to, and Mayor Aiello explained that the Sheriff's Department gave us the names of several vendors. However, when Mr. Volz in the IT Department checked into them, they were not data recovery specialists. Chief Rowley explained that some companies are specific to do negotiations with the ransom people, and we did not want to do that. He explained that this company did everything that we needed done.

Alderman Crawford asked if this was one of the preferred vendors that the FBI suggested, and Chief Rowley explained that Mr. Volz found the company online. He explained that the FBI had heard of them, and had no cases involving the company. He explained that we did the best that we could to minimize our risk.

Alderman Witte asked if they notified us what would need to be done in order to prevent this from happening again. Chief Rowley explained that is what we are working on now. He explained that the information is recovered, and he believes that the IT Department is still working with the company. He explained that they are supposed to try to tell us, although they may never know exactly, where the weaknesses lie, and how to better prevent these situations in the future.

Alderman Witte asked how much insurance will cover of the cost, and Mayor Aiello explained that he met with Dan Butler from the insurance company, and he felt that most of the cost will be recoverable by the insurance. He explained that he thinks that we will receive \$74,000, which accounts for our \$1,000 deductible. Alderman Crawford asked when we would know this for sure, and Mayor Aiello explained that when we get the final report from Monster Cloud, we will submit it to the insurance company to find out. He explained that we do know for sure that

there is \$25,000 for data recovery in the policy so we will get at least that, but that Mr. Bulter feels that we will receive a substantial amount more.

Alderman Witte thanked Mayor Aiello for the update, explaining that it cleared up a lot of the questions that she had. Alderman Crawford asked if we received a letter from the ransom people, and Mayor Aiello explained that we did. Alderman Crawford asked if Mayor Aiello would update the Council on the holes that were plugged, and Mayor Aiello responded that he will.

Alderman Dougherty asked if providing the report to the Council would compromise the security of the system, in the case that the company is tracking our email server. If we explained where the holes are plugged, will it help them drill a new hole? Mayor Aiello responded that there is always that chance, He noted that he is working with the insurance company to update coverage for this for the City.

c. First Street Crossing

Alderman Dougherty explained that Alderman Crawford reached out to him because he was approached by a resident about the crossing of First Street across State Street. He explained that he has tried to cross the street there, and that it is difficult because of the roundabout.

Alderman Crawford explained that a constituent that lives on North First Street approached him about his concern with this intersection. He explained that there have been a number of accidents and near miss accidents, and since 7 Eleven is a hot spot he was concerned about people coming from eastbound on West State Street going up the hill. He explained that there is a shortened visual distance for people crossing on the crosswalk there, and drivers come quickly up the hill. He explained that the constituent has requested a bright yellow pedestrian sign to make drivers more aware.

Alderman Witte asked if there is anything there right now, and Alderman Panus explained that he thought that we had a yield for pedestrians sign in the middle of the road. Alderman Dougherty explained that it has not been there since the North Union Street Project.

Alderman Panus explained that he thinks that something should be there, because he has seen a lot of issues with traffic and pedestrians at this intersection. Alderman Witte explained that there is a similar issue in front of the hospital, and that a lot of situations in the City are like this. Mayor Aiello explained that it is an issue with driver attention. Alderman Gonzalez explained that you can put in as many signs as you want, but that it doesn't mean that people are going to look at them.

Mr. Ring explained that the City has funding as a part of the DRI to improve the street from the intersection of Union and State to Seventh Street, although this project will probably not occur until 2022 or 223. He explained that the intersection improvements will include a bump out and signs. He noted that street design is a large part of the problem.

Alderman Witte explained that she just went through the underpass on Front Street, and a little girl ran across the street and didn't even stop to look. She explained that pedestrians need to take responsibility too.

Alderman Anastasia asked if a PL needs to be put in for a sign. Alderman Crawford explained that he received an email from the Police Chief indicating that he is okay with the concept. Chief Rowley explained that especially eastbound, the sidewalk is not as visible. He explained that he does not feel that this is a bad idea. Alderman Crawford asked if this is a hold over until we get to the DRI project, and Mr. Ring explained that it is a low cost first step. He does not know how effective it would be, but it would not hurt.

Alderman Crawford asked if a formal PL is needed, and Mr. Ring explained that he does not know if his department logs these type of signs. Alderman Gonzalez explained that we are not changing the traffic law, and Mr. Ring noted that signs like these have been put up before without a PL and Resolution. Mayor Aiello explained that he will check with the City Attorney.

Alderman Witte asked Chief Rowley about the recent scamming around the City and country. Chief Rowley explained that basically, we all have to be cognizant of what is going on, and skeptical of our fellow man, He explained that things are not always what they appear to be, and if you feel that something is not right, you should call the Police Department. He explained that new scams are coming out faster than we can write them down. Mayor Aiello explained that one scam call comes up on the caller ID as the Olean Police Department. Chief Rowley explained that you can get online and do things like that, and unfortunately older people that sometimes have savings fall for it. Chief Rowley explained that the Police Department will never call you and tell you that they need bail for someone, the arrested person would speak to you themselves.

5. Approval of Committee Reports

None

6. Adjournment

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