

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

February 28, 2007

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Mayor Nelson called the meeting to order and asked the Clerk to call the roll:

PRESENT: Mayor Nelson, Councillors Ericksen, Flynn, Hannan and LaMacchia

ABSENT: Councillors LaRose and Morley

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

1. Ogdensburg Border Patrol Agents' Parsons and Morgan, made a presentation on Border Patrol National Strategy in securing northern New York State's borders.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Nelson moved that the claims as enumerated in Warrant #4-2007 in the amount of \$550,010.87, and Library Warrant #4-2007 in the amount of \$20,164.27 and CD Block Grant Warrant #4-2007 in the amount of \$63,108.74 and Capital Projects Warrant #4-2007 in the amount of \$102,954.01 as audited, be and the same are ordered paid and Councillor Flynn seconded the motion.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

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ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

1. Councillor LaMacchia moved a resolution authorizing the City Manager to adjust the local cash contribution of the Empire Zone's 2006-2007 program year, and Councillor Hannan seconded to wit:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO AMEND AN
APPLICATION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE FUNDING
FOR THE OGDENSBURG EMPIRE ZONE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the City of Ogdensburg is a New York State designated Empire Zone - a program which offers business incentives to new or expanding businesses that invest in the Zone and create new jobs for area residents; and

WHEREAS, the Ogdensburg City Council previously authorized the City Manager submit a grant application in the amount of \$42,800 in State funds for the administration of the Ogdensburg Empire Zones Program from July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007 and authorized the required \$42,800 local match; and,

WHEREAS, the original application identified a local cash contribution of \$17,734 and a local in-kind contribution of \$25,066; and,

WHEREAS, the State has advised that at least 50% of the local share be in cash;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City Council hereby commits \$21,400 in cash and \$21,400 in in-kind services to match the State's administrative funding of \$42,800 for the 2006-2007 Empire Zone Program year; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that local matching funds in the amount of \$42,800, as noted in the attached budget, are hereby authorized and committed; and,

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the additional cash contribution (\$3,666) of the total \$21,400 be appropriated from the approved 2007 Department of Planning & Development operational budget.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

2. Mayor Nelson moved a resolution calling for public notice and public hearing on March 12, 2007 and March 26, 2007 for the purpose of obtaining public input into the matter of the on-going community development program, and Councillor Ericksen seconded to wit:

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL
TO PROVIDE FOR PUBLIC NOTICE AND PUBLIC HEARING

WHEREAS, the City of Ogdensburg is contemplating the submission of a grant application to the NYS Governor's Office for Small Cities grants, and

WHEREAS, the City Council and staff of the Office of Planning and Development are desirous of obtaining public input into the matter of the on-going community development program of the City,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council shall hold public hearings in the matter of the on-going community development program to be held in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, Ogdensburg, New York on the 12th day of March, 2007 and the 26th day of March, 2007 at 7:00 p.m., and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Clerk give notice of such public hearings by publication in the official newspaper at least seven (7) days before the hearing dates setting forth the time and place of the hearing.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

3. Mayor Nelson moved a resolution to adjust the City Manager's salary and Councillor Ericksen seconded to wit:

RESOLUTION TO ADJUST THE SALARY
OF THE CITY MANAGER

WHEREAS, the City Council has completed an evaluation of the City Manager's job performance for the past year, and

WHEREAS, City Manager Arthur Sciorra has satisfactorily met or exceeded the standards of performance, and

WHEREAS, the City Council deems it appropriate and equitable to adjust the annual salary of the City Manager for his job performance,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the salary of the City Manager is hereby adjusted, effective immediately, and retroactive to February 1, 2007, and through the period January 31, 2008, shall be increased by 3.25%.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Comptroller is hereby authorized to transfer funds from the Contingency Account to accomplish this budget amendment.

Councillor Flynn stated that he found it disgraceful that Council promised City Manager Arthur Sciorra a \$2,500. salary increase upon a successful August, 2006 evaluation and didn't fulfill that promise.

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Mayor Nelson explained that the August review didn't get done because of tough budget issues. Mayor Nelson added that Council did not feel it was the right time to give the City Manager a raise in face of possible staff layoffs.

Councillor Hannan stated that no promise of additional salary was made, just an obligation to review the City Manager's performance.

Councillor Ericksen stated that 2006 was a hectic year and Art's evaluation was not the first to be completed late.

Councillor LaMacchia said Mr. Sciorra has done a remarkable job, is a good communicator and team player.

Mayor Nelson added that Art Sciorra is very involved in our community and he was very impressed by how well he interacted with other municipal officials in his field at the NYCOM meeting in Albany.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

NEW BUSINESS

1. Councillor LaMacchia stated that it was a proud moment for the Ogdensburg Boys Basketball Team when they received the Glenn Bissell Sportsmanship Award from the Basketball Officials Association. Councillor LaMacchia also congratulated Adam Lesperance who received the Betty Ahlfeld Award, and Mike Baker who received the Section 10 Joe Jukoski Award.

Councillor Ericksen stated that the Girl's Basketball Team has also had a successful season.

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Councillor Hannan stated that Eric Kidwell was one of the four finalists for the Joe Jukoski Award and congratulated his father, Brian Kidwell (the Journal Reporter covering this meeting).

2. Mayor Nelson stated that the New York State Department of Labor Office lease with BOCES, will expire this year and he doesn't want to lose this service. City Manager Arthur Sciorra suggested that we could offer them temporary space in the basement at City Hall. Mayor Nelson stated that he would like to talk to them and see what options they have.

3. Mayor Nelson and City Manager Arthur Sciorra recapped the recent NYCOM Conference.

Mayor Nelson stated that he met State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli who advised that the State Budget is expected to be passed on time, by April 1. Mayor Nelson added that the Comptroller's Office made a very impressive presentation, which included initiatives on pension reform and increased revenue sharing.

City Manager Arthur Sciorra said he attended an Economic Development Strategy session. Mr. Sciorra outlined the following issues that were discussed at this session:

- New Brownfield Reform – This will make Brownfield program more useable and easier to access;
- Address the energy cost issues for upstate New York as one of the competitiveness for Economic Development;
- Improving the ability to use tax increment financing as an Economic Development tool;

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-Unfunded mandates which are passed on to us through the cost of providing services, such as Police and Fire Services at the Airport and the State rental inspections.

Mr. Sciorra added that the City of Ogdensburg is very fortunate to have our Mayor as a member of the NYCOM Executive Committee representing us.

Mayor Nelson added that at the last Council meeting we were asked to write a letter to the Governor and our legislators regarding the Civil Confinement Unit. Mayor Nelson stated that he met with our legislative leaders and the Commissioner of Mental Health at the NYCOM session. Mayor Nelson said the meeting with the Commissioner was very encouraging, and many of our issues and concerns were discussed. Mayor Nelson noted that the Governor and Legislative leaders have come to an agreement on the Civil Confinement Law and there will be an announcement on that law in the next few days. Mayor Nelson said the meeting was a very positive and informative meeting and added that the Commissioner will be visiting Ogdensburg.

4. Councillor Hannan questioned if there were any updates on moving the Social Security Office to the old Ford Street Post Office. Mayor Nelson said the Social Security Office is completing an RFP (request for proposals). Director of Planning and Development, Martin Murphy said this will be a long process.

5. Councillor LaMacchia requested an update on the Community Center project. City Manager Arthur Sciorra said the construction is proceeding according to the December schedule.

6. Councillor LaMacchia requested an update on the demolition of the City-owned structures.

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City Manager Arthur Sciorra said we are awaiting the Restore New York contract to be signed, which will authorize spending the money to demolish the buildings.

Director of Planning and Development, Martin Murphy, stated the demolition crew will mobilize on the small buildings within a week. Mr. Murphy said the demolition of the Clickner and Montgomery building bids have been received and reviewed, and he expects to present a resolution at the next Council meeting looking for authorization to award the contract. Mr. Murphy added that the order to proceed with the demolition won't occur until we actually execute the State Assistance contract for the Restore New York money. Mr. Murphy said we should receive that contract by the end of March and the bids for the demolition are good for sixty days.

Councillor LaMacchia questioned if having or not having ice on the nearby river will be a factor. Mr. Murphy said that ice could be helpful, but the contractor has to make provisions to prevent anything from falling into the river. Mr. Murphy added that, coincidentally, the contractor who received the awards for the single family demolitions was also one of the bidders for the Clickner/Montgomery building demolition and, if awarded, is already mobilized.

Mayor Nelson said the Restore New York funds are available for 2007 projects. Councillor LaMacchia asked if this will have anything to do with the Maple City Trail and bridge work. Mayor Nelson said no, we've already been approved for those funds.

7. Councillor Flynn asked Police Chief Andy Wells if four wheeler machines and snowmobiles are allowed on City streets. Police Chief Wells responded that they are not authorized on City streets as per Vehicle and Traffic Laws, and added that there are also registration issues.

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8. Mayor Nelson reminded Council of the open house at the Bridgeview SVP facility on Saturday from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm.

9. Mayor Nelson read a Girl Scout Proclamation naming the week of March 11-17, 2007 as Girl Scout Week. (A copy of the proclamation follows these minutes.)

On a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.