

**MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING  
JULY 14, 2015**

A meeting of the Common Council of the City of Oneida, NY was held on the fourteenth day of July, 2015 at 6:35 o'clock P.M. in Council Chambers, Oneida Municipal Building, 109 N. Main Street, Oneida, NY.

Meeting was called to order by Mayor Alden M. Smith

**PRESENT:** Councilors Brahim Zogby, Michael Bowe, James Chamberlain, and Thomas Simchik

**ABSENT:** Councilor Erwin Smith, Councilor Helen Acker

**ALSO PRESENT:** City Clerk Susan Pulverenti  
Director of Planning and Development Cassie Rose  
Kallet Civic Center President Tom Downes  
Kallet Civic Center Executive Director Kerry Ann Kennedy  
Members of the Kallet Civic Center Board of Directors  
Public Safety Commissioner Mike Kaiser

Mayor Smith opened the meeting by explaining that this meeting is a Special Meeting work session with the Kallet Civic Center Board of Directors. Councilor Zogby requested that a petition regarding the solar project, which was presented to him by residents from his Ward, be received and placed on file. Mayor Smith asked for a motion to waive the rule and accept the petition. The Mayor said he would share the petition with the Council for their review in advance of the discussion at the next Council meeting.

**WAIVE RULE TO ACCEPT AGENDA ITEMS**

**RESOLUTION 15-165**

Moved by Councilor  
Seconded by Councilor

**RESOLVED**, that per Resolution 08-180 adopted by the Common Council on August 19, 2008, the provisions of the procedure to accept agenda items is hereby waived.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 (Acker, Smith)

**MOTION CARRIED**

**PETITION – SOLAR PROJECT**

**RESOLUTION 15-166**

Moved by Councilor Zogby  
Seconded by Councilor Bowe

**RESOLVED**, that a petition from residents of the First Ward involving the proposed solar energy project be hereby received and placed on file.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 (Acker, Smith)

**MOTION CARRIED**

*Discussion with the Greater Oneida Kallet Civic Center Board of Directors*

Kallet President, Tom Downes said that the Kallet Board asked to have this work session to discuss the status and procedures of the Kallet, to be transparent and to involve the Council. The Kallet Board members and Council introduced themselves to each other. Mr. Downes said that the Kallet's programming has expanded, and there are a lot of positives, though they are not without challenges. He said they are currently working on a formal strategic plan. Mr. Downes invited the Council to attend their monthly board meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of the month and asked that they let him know ahead of time that they will be coming. He provided a background of the Kallet and thanked the Council for taking time for this meeting.

Kallet Board Member Patti Meakin passed out the Kallet's Business Plan from April 2015 to April 2017, which included their vision, mission, objective, strategy and action plans, adding that it is not set in stone; it is still a work in progress. She also provided the Mayor and Council with colored graphs outlining the past, current and projected rentals, revenue, and utility and wage expenses (2012-2016). Ms. Meakin noted that concession revenue, after obtaining the required permits, is up considerably due to the profits from the sale of beer and wine. She reviewed the documents with the Council noting the various types of rentals, membership and donations, and the higher expenses due to the salary and utility costs. She said they want to continue to develop and create programs to maximize rentals. They are currently working on a much more in-depth strategic plan.

There are seven board members at this time, and Mr. Downes said they would like to have a total of 9 to 11 qualified, committed board members. The by-laws are being revamped, and the number of board members will be stated in those by-laws. Gregg Myers, Board Member, said that 11 is the optimum number, but there are a great deal of time requirements. They are looking for people who have the talent to assist in specialized areas. Mr. Myers said the City stepped up with the boiler breakdown, the air-conditioning chiller and replacing the roof, and he is aware that these are extreme costs. He said the Kallet spends approximately \$213 a day in expenses and with the anticipated revenue, it is about a wash. He said they were fortunate that a reserve was left over from the previous Board. He said the alarm system has to be updated by the end of the year. He said the building has lacked maintenance for many years. Discussion included replacing the exterior doors to make them energy efficient and updating the timeworn 1964 air-conditioning system, noting the possibility of securing grant funding or undertaking Capital Projects.

Mayor Smith said he commends the Board. He said that since the last time he met with the Kallet, he has seen a fairly significant response to the issues he was concerned about. The facilities issues are the City's responsibility, and for years it was out of City budgets, but that has now been changed. The Mayor said with respect to utility costs, there is a potential for significant savings with solar energy if the City is able to roll that building into the project.

The Kallet's volunteer base, their roles, and attracting volunteers was discussed. Mr. Myers named the service clubs that have been approached to ask for volunteers to help out at the Kallet's various events, as well as, signing up on the website and Facebook, media blasts and volunteer sign up sheets. He said they

are actively trying to schedule as many different kinds of events as possible to see what is successful, and what is not, in an effort to raise revenue. Mayor Smith said not to pay too much attention to cynics, and Ms. Kennedy said, with respect to any nay-sayers, as long as they are talking about the Kallet, there is no such thing as bad publicity. She said they keep plugging away and work harder.

Mayor Smith inquired about the exclusive caterer the Kallet currently has. Ms. Kennedy said that the Kallet has followed the contract, and the Board made the decision that caterer did not follow the contract. She said that a letter has been sent, and the Board has decided they will no longer have an exclusive caterer, but at this time and until July 20<sup>th</sup>, they still have a preferred caterer. They are developing rules and regulations for the catering of events at the Kallet, keeping in mind the main priority is renting the facility. Ms. Meakin said there are not a lot of venues in the area that allow you to choose your own caterer. Most, like Rusty Rail or Dibbles Inn, provide the food themselves. Mayor Smith said the Kallet's "BYOC" (bring your own caterer) is a unique marketing angle. Different places were talked about for the Kallet to reach out to for help with various concepts. Ms. Meakin said a Community Center in Washington State has been very helpful with ideas of what they do with their city run venue.

In response to a request from the Mayor, Planning Director Cassie Rose said that usually a municipal owned building is not eligible; however, because the City leases it, she would check into the possibility of obtaining State funding. Mr. Downes noted that many times the Board finds they are not eligible for funding, because they do not own the building. Mayor Smith said he knows there will be growing pains and bumps along the way, but he wants to see that steady progress is being made toward the goal of having a viable, cultural facility in our City center. He said the Kallet is heading in that direction. Councilor Zogby said we are in this together, and the Mayor and Council agreed. The Kallet said they want this to be a collaborate relationship.

Mr. Downes said he is worried that over time they will have a hard time dealing with the lease payment, utilities, etc., and the previous board and their monetary responsibilities were discussed briefly. Mayor Smith said the Kallet Board would like to apply for a liquor license. He said they are not eligible unless they have at least two years left on their lease, and they do not have that threshold in the current lease. A brief discussion ensued about increasing the term for six months, and the Council was all in agreeance to do so. The Mayor said he will contact the City Attorney and place this on the agenda for next Tuesday's Council meeting. A question was raised about using the services of the City Attorney to assist the Kallet Board with any legal issues, because it is a City owned building. The Mayor said there would a conflict of interest. Ms. Kennedy said the CNY Arts and Community Foundation may have an attorney to help. Mr. Downes said the goal of the Kallet is self-sufficiency. Mayor Smith said he will check the Upstate Revitalization Initiative for any opportunities for the Kallet and will pass along any positives.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Bowe

The meeting is hereby adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

CITY OF ONEIDA

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Susan Pulverenti, City Clerk