

**MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL  
MARCH 17, 2020**

A meeting of the Common Council of the City of Oneida, NY was held on the seventeenth day of March, 2020 at 6:30 o'clock P.M. in Council Chambers, Oneida Municipal Building, 109 N. Main Street, Oneida, NY.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Helen Acker

**PRESENT:** Councilors Carrie Earl, James Coulthart, Michelle Kinville,  
Brandee DuBois and Thomas Simchik

**ABSENT:** Councilor Michael Bowe

**ALSO PRESENT:** City Attorney Nadine Bell  
City Clerk Susan Pulverenti  
City Engineer Eric Schuler  
Comptroller Lee Ann Wells  
Fire Chief Dennis Fields  
Planning Director Cassie Rose  
Police Chief Paul Thompson  
Public Safety Commissioner Kevin Salerno  
Supervisor Joseph Magliocca

**OLD BUSINESS** - None

**SUPERVISORS REPORT**

Supervisor Magliocca said that the County is closing to the public on Friday due to the Coronavirus and is down to essential personnel only. He said that Board meetings will be held remotely via Zoom, just as the City's will be. Supervisor Magliocca said that he passed on some important information from the Department of Health on the Coronavirus to the Mayor and City Clerk.

Moved by Councilor Coulthart  
Seconded by Councilor Earl

**RESOLVED**, that the minutes of the regular meeting of March 3, 2020 are hereby approved as presented.

Ayes: 5  
Nays: 0  
Absent: 1 (Bowe)

**MOTION CARRIED**

Moved by Councilor Coulthart  
Seconded by Councilor Ironside

**RESOLVED**, that Warrant No. 6, checks and ACH payments in the amount of \$240,984.79 as audited by the Voucher Committee is hereby approved for payment in the usual manner at the discretion of the Comptroller.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0  
Absent: 1 (Bowe)  
**MOTION CARRIED**

Moved by Councilor Simchik  
Seconded by Councilor Earl

**RESOLVED**, that checks in the amount of \$11,832.75 (City Attorney) as audited by the Voucher Committee are hereby approved for payment in the usual manner at the discretion of the Comptroller.

Ayes: 4  
Nays: 0  
Absent: 1 (Bowe)  
**MOTION CARRIED**

### APPOINTMENT

#### **RESOLUTION 20-57**

Moved by Councilor Simchik  
Seconded by Councilor Coulthart

**RESOLVED**, to approve the appointment of Douglas Lippert to the Board of Assessment Review.

Ayes: 5  
Nays: 0  
Absent: 1 (Bowe)  
**MOTION CARRIED**

Mr. Lippert was given the Oath of Office by the City Clerk. Mayor Acker said that this appointment is to fill a vacancy, of a member who retired. The Mayor thanked him for his dedication to the City, and Mr. Lippert received a round of applause.

#### *Appointment to the Civil Service Commission*

Mayor Acker said that she has appointed Bruce Ironside to the City's Civil Service Commission. Mr. Ironside was given the Oath of Office by the City Clerk, while resting his hand on the family bible that was held by his daughter, Councilor Michelle Kinville. The Mayor thanked Mr. Ironside for his commitment to the community, and he received a round of applause.

### MONTHLY REPORTS

#### **RESOLUTION 20-58**

Moved by Councilor Simchik  
Seconded by Councilor Earl

**RESOLVED**, that monthly reports from the Chamberlain, City Clerk, City Engineer, Comptroller, Fire Department, Police Department and Recreation Department be hereby received and placed on file, **and be it further**

**RESOLVED**, that the 2019 Annual Report from the Planning Director be hereby received and placed on file, **and be it further**

**RESOLVED**, that the 2019 Annual Activities Report from the City Clerk be hereby received and placed on file.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 (Bowe)

**MOTION CARRIED**

Councilor Coulthart said that he was happy to see a report from the Planning Department and requested that it would nice to have that on a more incremental basis during the year. Planning Director Cassie Rose said the report outlines the different things her department does. She said that the Planning Commission Zoning Board of Appeals agenda changes monthly with the applications received, and that agenda is provided to each Councilor. She said that those are usually fairly small projects. She stated that the larger projects are typically those that are being worked for a number of years, and said that to put them on a monthly report doesn't make a lot of sense.

The Director used the Green Empire Farms project as an example. She said that over a period of six years, they met with the Mastronardi family to get the City to the #1 spot on the site selection list. After that accomplishment, another year was spent getting both federal, state and local agencies together for this project, and another year after that was spent on the design phase looking through all the applications and getting all the approvals that were needed. She said we are now in the construction phase. Director Rose said that it is the same with all of the in-house grants listed in her report. She said that generally the quickest grants her department administers take a good three to four years from the application process, to the awards process, to the contracts signed by the State, then onto approvals and starting the work on the projects. She said that if a report is done every month, it would just entail "cut and paste" along with changing what the PCZBA does each month, but you already get that agenda each month. She said that an annual report makes more sense for her Department.

Councilor Coulthart said that he disagrees with the report being distributed only on a yearly basis. He said that a report shows progress in projects being worked on and brings deadlines to bear. He said he does receive a monthly agenda and attends those meetings pertaining to his Ward. He requested that a report be done on a more regular basis. The Planning Director said that she works for the Mayor and has always been accountable to whatever Mayor is in office. She said that there has never been an issue with the programs that she runs not being done on time; however, she defers to the Mayor. Mayor Acker said that most of Cassie's projects receive their deadlines by the Federal Government. Councilor Coulthart said that he is curious as to what is planned to regenerate the flats. The Mayor said that the paperwork for FEMA program was just finalized, and we just received a huge check that the Planning Director worked very hard to acquire. The Mayor gave kudos to the Planning Director. Councilor Coulthart said that he would be interested in more detail more often, and the Mayor said his request was so noted.

**CITY CENTER MARKET AT HIGINBOTHAM PARK**

**RESOLUTION 20-59**

Moved by Councilor Simchik

Seconded by Councilor Ironside

**WHEREAS**, the Oneida City Center Committee (“OC3”), a not-for-profit organization whose mission is “to build a strong, vibrant City Center and to stimulate growth and community involvement,” is co-sponsoring with the City of Oneida, a “City Center Market” to be held in Higinbotham Park every Thursday in conjunction with the City of Oneida Department of Parks and Recreation’s on-going concert series, commencing June 4, 2020 through August 27, 2020 during the hours of 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM; **and**

**WHEREAS**, the City Center Market is intended and designed to promote the City Center through live entertainment and regional vendors offering various goods for sale; **and**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Section 9-1 of the Oneida City Code, the possession or consumption of alcohol is permitted on City owned property if properly authorized by the City of Oneida Common Council; **and**

**WHEREAS**, as part of the City Center Market, it is anticipated that vendors from regional wineries and microbreweries will participate seeking to offer wines and microbrews available for purchase; **and**

**WHEREAS**, it is the desire of the Common Council to promote public interest and participation in the City Center Market and to allow such sales by vendors, **now therefore be it**

**RESOLVED**, to authorize the Oneida City Center Committee (“OC3”), a not-for-profit organization to use Higinbotham Park for the “City Center Market” each Thursday commencing June 4, 2020 through August 27, 2020 from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, **and be it further**

**RESOLVED**, that the City of Oneida Common Council hereby agrees to close off the section of Broad Street from Farrier Avenue to Vanderbilt Avenue during said “City Center Market” commencing June 4, 2020 through August 27, 2020 from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM, **and be it further**

**RESOLVED**, that the Common Council hereby authorizes the distribution/consumption of wine and microbrews by vendors of such products in a restricted area of Higinbotham Park during the hours of the City Center Market provided proper insurance riders are in place.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Abstain: 1 (Earl)

Absent: 1 (Bowe)

**MOTION CARRIED**

Planning Director Cassie Rose said that this is basically the same as last year, except the Resolutions have been combined into one. She said that the street will not be closed every week, but there are some activities planned that will require closure. The Police Chief and Fire Chief each stated that there were no problems with closing a portion of the street last year.

**CAPITAL PROJECT 20-3 - DASNY SIDEWALK REPLACEMENT**

**RESOLUTION 20-60**

Moved by Councilor Coulthart

Seconded by Councilor DuBois

**RESOLVED**, to authorize the City Engineer to proceed with Capital Project 20-3 DASNY Sidewalk Replacement, authorize the Mayor to sign any and all documents pertaining to Capital Project 20-3, authorize the Purchasing Agent to Advertise for Bids for said Capital Project and further authorize the City Engineer to expend funds up to the programmed amount of \$50,000.00.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 (Bowe)

**MOTION CARRIED**

City Engineer Eric Schuler said that this 2015 grant was put in place by his predecessor. He said that this grant funding is tied to specific locations.

### **MEMORIAL DAY PARADE AGREEMENT**

#### **RESOLUTION 20-61**

Moved by Councilor Earl

Seconded by Councilor Coulthart

**RESOLVED**, to authorize the Mayor to sign the 2020 Memorial Day Parade Agreement.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 (Bowe)

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **CELLULAR TELEPHONE ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY**

#### **RESOLUTION 20-62**

Moved by Councilor Coulthart

Seconded by Councilor Kinville

**RESOLVED**, that the Employee Acknowledgements of Receipt and Understanding of the Cellular Telephone Administrative Policy from Assistant City Engineer Benjamin Smith be hereby received and placed on file, **and be it further**

**RESOLVED**, that the Telephone Request Form from Benjamin Smith pursuant to the City of Oneida Cellular Telephone Policy adopted June 15, 2010, Resolution 10-153 and reaffirmed on May 17, 2016, be hereby approved.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 (Bowe)

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **BUDGET TRANSFERS/AMENDMENTS**

#### **RESOLUTION 20-63**

Moved by Councilor Coulthart

Seconded by Councilor Kinville

**RESOLVED**, to approve the following budget transfers/amendments:

**2020 Budget Adjustments**

**RESOLVED**, to approve the following 2019 Budget Amendment/Transfers

	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
\$ 4,727.35	001.1990.0400.0000	001.1620.0403.0001
	Contingency	Building Contracts-City Hall

*(To fund unanticipated security system repairs for City Hall)*

**2019 Budget Adjustments**

\$ 17,000.00	002.0002.0912.0000	005.8300.0401.0019
	Water Fund Balance	Water Tank Cleaning

*(To transfer funds up to the programmed amount to approved Capital Project 19-13  
Cleaning Water Tank Storage)*

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 (Bowe)

**MOTION CARRIED**

**NEW BUSINESS**

*Fire Marshall Status*

Councilor Coulthart asked about the status of hiring a Fire Marshall to help with re-implementing the Vacant Building Registry Program. Fire Chief Fields said that there are some legal concerns and civil service issues. Mayor Acker said that this is in the works.

*Coronavirus*

Fire Chief Dennis Fields passed out a flyer outlining the symptoms of COVID-19, noting that this was also provided to all City employees. He said that if you experience any symptoms, to please call the hot line, do not go to your doctor's office or go to the ER. Councilor DuBois firmly reiterated that you should not go to the ER; call the Hotline. The Mayor agreed and said to please call the Hot Line number 315-464-3979, as we do not want to overburden the hospitals.

*Declaration of Local State of Emergency and Emergency Orders due to COVID-19*

Mayor Acker said that the City is taking the County, State and Federal Government directives seriously. She said that she has executed a Declaration of Local State of Emergency and Emergency Orders, thereby closing all City of Oneida buildings to the public and cancelling all committee and board meetings with the exception of Common Council meetings. She said that non-essential personnel will be reduced per the Governor's order. The City Attorney said that the Governor's memo outlined what constituted non-essential. Mayor Acker said that a department may take appointments; however, as staff will be greatly reduced, business should be conducted by email, phone or US Mail. She said that payments by check or money order, no cash, can be placed in the drop box at the front door at City Hall. Mayor Acker said that

Police, Fire, WWTP and Water Treatment Plant will be working on a daily basis, non-essential offices will be closed and will be working remotely, and the City Clerk's office will be staffed daily with either the Clerk or Deputy onsite. She added that Department Heads have outlined with their staff the hours they will be working. The Mayor reminded Councilor's Earl and Coulthart that the feral cat and solar committee meetings are also cancelled. Mayor Acker said that the Comptroller and IT Department have the Council's iPads set-up for video conferencing the next Council meeting and live streaming it for public view. Attorney Bell added that although there are multiple waivers out there, the Council still cannot vote by email.

Mayor Acker said that the City is very lucky to have great department heads. She said that a COVID-19 task force has been formed consisting of the Mayor, Police Chief, Comptroller, Public Safety Commissioner and Fire Chief Fields, as chairman. She said that meetings with all employees were held throughout the day today. She thanked the City Clerk for publicizing all the necessary information via social media and the website, and complimented the City Attorney and her staff. The Mayor said that we are all working together as a team.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Kinville

The regular meeting is hereby adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

**CITY OF ONEIDA**

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Susan Pulverenti  
City Clerk