

**MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 13, 2014**

A special meeting of the Common Council of the City of Oneida, NY was held on the thirteenth day of November, 2014 at 7:30 o'clock P.M. in Council Chambers, Oneida Municipal Building, 109 N. Main Street, Oneida, NY.

The meeting was called to order by Deputy Mayor Helen Acker

PRESENT: Councilors Brahim Zogby, Michael Bowe, Erwin Smith, Helen Acker, James Chamberlain and Thomas Simchik, Mayor Alden Smith arrived at 6:45 p.m.

ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk Susan Pulverenti
Comptroller Linda Pease
Fire Chief Kevin Salerno
1st Deputy Chief Darrin Ball
Director of Parks and Recreation Lucas Griff
Public Safety Commissioner Michael Kaiser

DISCUSSION OF 2015 MAYOR'S BUDGET

Opening Remarks

Deputy Mayor Acker stated that tonight is for listening, as this is a work session for the Common Council, and said if anyone has any questions to please write them down and save them for the Public Hearing on November 18th.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Recreation Director Lucas Griff said his budget is over by \$35K from last year. There is an additional \$15K put in by the Mayor for flowers/pots downtown. He said he took out \$12K for a mower when the Mayor requested the budget be cut by 10%. Pool salaries are up by \$4,500, as the minimum wage is going up to \$8.75 per hour, so the current hourly rates were adjusted accordingly and some part-time employees are budgeted to receive additional pay raises as well. Lifeguards have to get their WSI (Water Safety Inspection) certification, and it costs them \$300-\$400 out of pocket, so the pay increase is an incentive for them to get the certification. Director Griff said they are using a 2001 mower that is in rough shape, and said the life expectancy of the mower is only 13 years. Councilor Chamberlain questioned if a used Ferris mower would be feasible and asked the Director to look into it.

The budgeted amount for utilities at Vets Field, Allen Park and Higinbotham Park are doubled, and the Director said last year was the first year costs were tracked. Pop Warner and adult leagues pay for the lights, and the price is built into the fees. The contract line amount was previously included in utilities, but a new line was created with no additional money, just moved funds from one account to another. This is to cover all Recreation Department contracts, i.e. elevator, generator, dumpsters, copiers, etc. The contract line for the annual Halloween party was dropped by \$500 to \$1,000, and it was noted that the American Legion has expressed interest in helping again next year. Most of the contract lines have revenues to offset the expenses. The equipment repair and maintenance line includes all equipment for the entire department.

A discussion relating to the flowers downtown vs. a mower ensued, which included asking the Oneida

Improvement Committee to apply for grants, the streetscape grant the City received through Senator Valesky's office, splitting the budgeted amount in half for flowers and half for a mower, and reaching out to the Gorman Foundation to see if they would be interested in funding the concerts in the park or donating for flowers since their offices are here in Oneida. Mayor Smith said we are in tough times, but we must be willing to invest in our community. He said that many surrounding communities are spit-polished and lovely, and Oneida looks like a baron wasteland. Mayor Smith said he wants the City to put their best foot forward, and said the biggest impact will be changing attitudes, adding that this will have a positive impact on behavior as well. He said the flowers would be placed on Main, Lenox and Farrier downtown.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Councilor Bowe said there a 6.1% increase in the fire budget, noting the original 2014 budget amount of \$1,778,126, and the final 2014 current projection of \$1,801,795, and the current total of \$1,886,326.00 budgeted for in 2015. Chief Salerno said overtime is up because of injuries, training, a resignation, and others in the academy. The final projection for OT for this year was \$115K, but the department has passed that amount with two months left in the year. A brief discussion ensued relating to how much should be budgeted for overtime next year, and the amount stayed as budgeted at \$125K. Salaries are up based on contractual obligations and the prospect of hiring another firefighter. The holiday, sick leave buyback, vacation buyback and clothing lines are all contractual. The EMT training overtime is budgeted to increase from \$3,000 to \$8,000, as Chief Salerno said per State law they are required to have advanced level people, who can give medications, etc. Fire Marshall overtime is up \$1,150 because of the new housing inspector and training. He said not all employees will use the personal leave, but in case they do, it is included in the budget. Many of the medical supplies are purchased from Oneida Healthcare Center, and the department is in ongoing talks with Vineall Ambulance seeking some reimbursement as well. Deputy Mayor Acker inquired about the purchase of an ambulance and the Chief said that would be a huge undertaking to start up. There is a paid ambulance service already in Oneida and besides the costs involved, a certificate of need may be hard to obtain. In the Fire equipment line, the amount budgeted includes \$14K for pre-emptive devices when the DOT does the Lenox Avenue project. The turnout gear maintenance line is in case any gear is damaged, and it has to be professionally repaired. SCBA line for maintaining the airpicks, and for the compressor that fills the bottles, was increased from \$9,400 to \$10.5K. The contracts line shows a \$13K increase, however, the lease on the defibrillator and EMS charge program were moved from another account to this line. The rescue fee payments are for participation with a company who submits claims to no fault insurance companies seeking reimbursement for the City, and the Chief said the projected revenue of \$3K more than offsets the cost. The building maintenance line has increased by \$3,500 for a new kitchen at the Fire Department. Chief Salerno said this is for materials only, as the labor will be done in house. The Chief's expense has also increased by \$2,100 to replace the department's soiled 14 year old mattresses and box springs. The new hire expenses are budgeted for \$11,700 should the vacant position be filled. The line for equipment repair and maintenance increased because of the replacement of tires for various vehicles. Alarm maintenance was zeroed out and moved to alarm overtime. The training line, which consists of videos, books and maintenance of training equipment, is down \$1,500. The Fire Marshall's account line covers the cost of course hours for training, books, manuals, and switching to an electronic inspection format. The Chief said the office expense line for computers, tablets, monitors, printers, etc. is half of the amount he budgeted last year at \$1,500.

Chief Salerno said he is requesting three capital projects this year. The first is replacement of Engine 292. It is 20+ years old and heading towards a state of disrepair. The transmission slips, the cracked frame was temporarily repaired in 2009, and the boom needs significant repairs. DC Ball read the comments about the truck listed on the repair bill from 2009 and displayed photos the truck's undercarriage. The cost of replacement is budgeted at \$750K using serial bonds for funding. The second capital project includes the

replacement Rescue Truck 295. This truck is 14+ years old and needs work on the body, paint and front suspension. This vehicle is the most used vehicle in the fleet and is currently nickel and diming the department. There is no back up vehicle for this truck. Replacement of the low pressure extrication equipment to replace the current outdated equipment will be needed with the addition of a rescue pumper and new truck. The cost for the replacement of Rescue 295 is projected at \$125K and replacement of equipment is \$50K for a total of \$175K to be funded by serial bonds. The third capital project is for the replacement of SCBA air packs and bottles projected cost of \$267K to be funded by serial bonds. Chief Salerno said he is applying for a grant for this as well. The Comptroller said these would go to bid in 2015 but there would not be any costs in 2015, as Bond Anticipation Notes would not be needed until 2016.

The next special meeting on the budget is Wednesday, November 19, 2014 with the Water, DPW and Sewer Departments.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Simchik

The special meeting on the 2015 budget is hereby adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

CITY OF ONEIDA

Susan Pulverenti, City Clerk