

**MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 30, 2015**

A special meeting of the Common Council of the City of Oneida, NY was held on the 30th day of November, 2015 at 6:30 P.M. in Council Chambers, Oneida Municipal Building, 109 N. Main Street, Oneida, NY.

Meeting was called to order by Deputy Mayor Helen Acker

PRESENT: Councilors Brahim Zogby, Michael Bowe, Erwin Smith (left at 8:31p.m.), Helen Acker, James Chamberlain and Thomas Simchik

ABSENT: Mayor Alden Smith

ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk Susan Pulverenti
Comptroller Linda Pease

Discussion of Mayor's 2016 Budget

Deputy Mayor Acker said she had a request from the City Engineer that \$4,800 be added to the Kallet Civic Center's building repair line 001.7521.0403 (page 39) in case any issues arise with the Kallet next year, and the Council agreed. Councilor Acker noted that the City receives a yearly revenue of \$4,800 from the Verizon lease for the antenna located on the Kallet's roof.

Deputy Mayor Acker inquired if any of the FEMA funds received from the 2013 flood were allocated to the Water Fund, and the Comptroller said the auditors have all those entries. Mrs. Pease said the revenues were allocated in 2013 based on the City Engineer's report.

Councilor Smith inquired if the Police Department's possible retirees were listed in the budget, and the Deputy Mayor said no. Councilor Smith inquired about the engineering assistant in the City Engineer's office, and the Deputy Mayor said he will come on board in January. The Comptroller said the rates went down for the Police and Fire retirement; salaries went up, but the rates went down. Councilor Zogby questioned if there is a deadline in the union contracts for when they have to give notice of retiring, and asked if the Council should set a date by which employees have to notify the City that they are planning to retire. Councilor Zogby said the budget could be off because of a retirement not being budgeted for, and Councilor Smith said it works the other way too when a Department Head budgets for a retirement, and the employee opts to stay employed. A brief discussion ensued, and the Deputy Mayor said she would speak with the City Attorney.

Councilor Chamberlain said he would like to see the Housing Inspector position go to full time, and a discussion began noting the turnovers with part-time inspectors. The question of funding, amount of the salary, insurance expense, inspection revenues and supervision was talked about. Councilor Simchik said the department is on a three year cycle, when the code calls for a two year cycle. Councilor Chamberlain said the Fire Chief, City Engineer and Building Code Officer all recommend this position be full time. Deputy Mayor Acker said it would be investing in our community at a time when there are many code violations out there, and there are not enough man hours to handle all the inspections. Councilor Bowe said the cost would be about \$50K, using the \$13.00 per hour rate, compared to the \$16,900 currently being paid. The Fire inspection revenues were briefly discussed, and a question arose as to if that line included both the fire inspection fees and commercial inspection fees. The Comptroller said she would check on this.

Councilor Zogby questioned the use of the Account Clerk in the Chamberlain's office, and the Comptroller said 40% comes from the Chamberlain's budget and 60% from the Comptroller's budget. The Comptroller said the Account Clerk is in the Chamberlain's office every Monday morning, and the City Clerk added that during tax season, she may be utilized more often by the City Chamberlain.

Councilor Zogby asked about the City's 1% fuel tax, and the Comptroller said it comes to the City with the sales tax monies. He said that he has a concern about people paying for fuel tax, plus sales tax. Councilor Chamberlain said that when he buys the pellets for his stove; he only pays the fuel tax, there isn't any sales tax paid. The discussion turned to possibly increasing the City sales tax rate and appealing to the Governor. Councilor Zogby said a ¼% increase in sales tax would yield approximately \$500K, and no monies would have to be used from the reserve fund. The Comptroller said increasing the utility tax could also be looked into, as she has done some calculations on that. Councilor Zogby said there is a bill pending to allow for the reimbursement to municipalities for medical services. The Fire Department would then have the ability to bill medical services, as we cannot do that now. Councilor Simchik said currently only transporting agencies can bill, and there are non-transporting agencies (like the City) that are expending funds they cannot be paid for. Deputy Mayor Acker asked Councilor Zogby to check with NYCOM about the bill for medical services, and Councilor Smith said to make them aware that the City's

Fire Department is State certified to administer drugs. The Council had a brief discussion regarding the possibility of a City ambulance service.

The discussion returned to sales tax. The Comptroller said the State gets 4%, the County gets 2% and the City gets 2%. She said she believes that is by law, and she said there is a maximum. Deputy Mayor Acker said we would have to negotiate with the State, and noted various communities with different sales tax rates. Deputy Mayor Acker asked the City Clerk to check with Ms. Margo to see if the Housing Authority and Library can be billed for Civil Service work performed by the City, the buyout amount for her retirement, and to also provide explanation of the State formula once again. Deputy Mayor Acker said the Comptroller will look into the fuel tax, utility tax and sales taxes. The Council asked if anyone heard from the Chief as to where he is with the bidding process for the police vehicles. The City Clerk said she will contact the Police Chief in the morning. Councilor Zogby asked when the first pay period for new officials would be, and the City Clerk said it would be the second week in January, as the final pay in 2015 in December 31st. Deputy Mayor Acker said that she will check with the City Attorney to see if the Council can impose employees to give a six-month notice of retirement, as Councilor Zogby said the school district does. The next discussion relative to the budget will be at the end of tomorrow's regular meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

RESOLUTION 15-269

Moved by Councilor Chamberlain

Seconded by Councilor Zogby

RESOLVED, that the meeting is hereby adjourned to Executive Session at 7:35 p.m. for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

PRESENT: Mayor, Councilors

1. Discussion relating to a personnel matter.

Moved by Councilor Zogby

Seconded by Councilor Bowe

RESOLVED, that Executive Session is hereby adjourned to the regular meeting at 9:33 p.m.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 (Smith)

MOTION CARRIED

Motion by Councilor Bowe

The regular meeting is hereby adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

CITY OF ONEIDA

Susan Pulverenti, City Clerk