

**MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
DECEMBER 7, 2015**

A special meeting of the Common Council of the City of Oneida, NY was held on the first day of December, 2015 at 6:00 o'clock 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: Mayor Alden Smith, Councilors Brahim Zogby, Michael Bowe, Erwin Smith, James Chamberlain, and Thomas Simchik (arrived at 6:28 p.m.)

ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk Susan Pulverenti

Councilor Acker stated that the Council should go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

RESOLUTION 15-285

Moved by Councilor Smith
Seconded by Councilor Chamberlain

RESOLVED, that the meeting is hereby adjourned to Executive Session at 6:05 p.m. for the purpose of discussing a personnel issue.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

PRESENT: Mayor, Councilors

1. Discussion relating to a personnel issue.

Moved by Councilor Chamberlain
Seconded by Councilor Smith

RESOLVED, that Executive Session is hereby adjourned to the regular meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Deputy Mayor Acker initiated discussion about the LOMR for the Trestletown Homes and if it was the City's responsibility or not. Councilor Bowe said someone should have done it, but the City didn't require it; so the bottom line is that we need to know what the elevations are. Councilor Bowe said if something else wants to go in the area, the City would need to know where the flood zone is. Councilor Zogby said it is the buyer's responsibility, noting they had attorneys and paid cash for the homes. He said they all probably have homeowners insurance, but flood insurance is not required unless borrowing from the bank. Councilor Zogby proposed that the six owners should share the approximate \$8K cost for the study to complete the letter of map revision, since they would benefit when the time comes for them to sell their properties. Mayor Smith agreed with Councilor Zogby that this is not the responsibility of the City. He said that the City Engineer is trying to help interpret what FEMA is saying and what the DEC is saying. Councilor Bowe said someone has to update the flood map and that other quotes could be obtained. He said he can see the advantage of the City having the map, and the disadvantage of the City paying for it. Councilor Bowe spoke of what has been done over the years to regulate Higinbotham Brook in that area. After a straw vote, Deputy Mayor Acker said the money for this will not be included in the budget.

Deputy Mayor Acker said the City has to go through the County with respect to increasing the sales tax.

Councilor Chamberlain said that an increase in the salaries for the Mayor and Council should be considered, as it hasn't been considered in years. He suggested \$500 for the Council and \$2K for the Mayor. Councilor Bowe reviewed the previous salaries from the chart. Councilor Bowe said in 20 of the last 25 years, the stipend for Deputy Mayor has been \$1,000 (currently \$500). After a brief discussion, Councilors Acker and Smith opted for no increase, and the rest of the Council said they would like to

look into this further to see what other communities with comparable budgets and populations are compensated. The City Clerk said she will look into it.

Discussion turned to setting the tax rate levy. The Mayor's budget called for a 5% increase, while increases of 6.5%, 8% and 10% were also discussed at previous meetings. Councilor Bowe said an increase of 8% is \$68 on \$100K with \$398K coming from the Fund Balance, and an increase of 6.5% is \$62 on \$100K with \$454K coming from the Fund Balance. Mayor Smith said he is frustrated, because it was his understanding that the \$641K he had proposed in his budget was real, and it wasn't. He said \$50K appeared in sales tax revenue, and the \$67K from the County that he had asked to be included wasn't, so his numbers appeared skewed. Councilor Acker said there is still the unknown with the properties in the flats and when FEMA will begin the buyout. The Council continued to debate the tax levy increase and explained the reasons for their choice as the straw vote was taken. Councilor's Acker, Smith, Zogby and Simchik agreed to 8% and Councilor Bowe and Chamberlain were at 6.5%. The rate was set at 8% for the 2016 budget.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Chamberlain

The meeting is hereby adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

CITY OF ONEIDA

Susan Pulverenti, City Clerk