

**MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 28, 2017**

A special meeting of the Common Council of the City of Oneida, NY was held on the twenty-eighth day of November, 2017 at 6:30 o'clock P.M. in the Council Chambers, Oneida Municipal Building, 109 N. Main Street, Oneida, NY.

Meeting was called to order by Deputy Mayor Jim Chamberlain

PRESENT: Mayor Leo Matzke, Councilors Al Cohen, Michael Bowe, Erwin Smith, and Thomas Simchik

ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk Susan Pulverenti
Comptroller Lee Ann Wells
Councilor-Elect Jim Coulthart
City Engineer Jon Rauscher

DISCUSSION - 2017 MAYORS BUDGET

Recap – Fire Department

Deputy Mayor Chamberlain said that the Council would be going over certain items again, but will not be going line-by-line. He said they would only be looking at specifics. He asked that the Council revisit the Fire Department Budget again, and they discussed several of the lines. Councilor Bowe said originally \$125K was pulled out by the Mayor, and the Council put \$108K (3%) back in for the retirement package. The Council agreed that with two definitely retiring; there should be some funding earmarked in the budget. He said that this should be transparent and listed in the budget, and the Council was all in agreement. After a long conversation between the Mayor and Council, the Council opted to remove \$24,600 (two-thirds) from the retirement line, so as to allow for the two retirements they are certain of. Councilor Cohen said there are actually five eligible to retire, but the Council is budgeting for only the two that they are certain of. The Comptroller said there will a small adjustment to the Social Security line as well. The Council once again discussed the possibility of a Capital Reserve Fund. The Comptroller said there are certain things you can put into it, and she will continue with her research. The Short Shift OT line was left at \$39K. Under the EMS Equipment line, the Council had added \$10K back in for a refurbished defibrillator and decided to make that \$9K instead. In the Medical Supplies line, the Council added \$2K and in the SCBA line they added \$1K, noting the bottles are only good for 15 years. Councilor Bowe said that if a grant is received, the money put in should come back into the General Fund and not stay in that line. Councilor Acker suggested looking into sharing grant writing services with the County. In the new hire expense line, the Council decided to take back \$5K from the \$19K they had previously raised it to. After discussing the training line, the Council agreed to take that line back to \$10K.

Recap – Police Department

In response to a question from the Deputy Mayor, Councilor Bowe said that he would speak with the Police Chief to see if there is any wiggle room in some of his budget lines. Councilor Bowe said he will keep the Council posted.

Recap – Salaries

The Council said that the Mayor and Council salary lines are okay. Deputy Mayor Chamberlain suggested removing the \$500 additional for the Deputy Mayor. After conversing, the Council decided to leave it in, but said it could be refused by the Deputy Mayor. The City Administrator position was discussed at length, including Civil Service Commission approval, job description, funding from the Water, Sewer and General Funds, whether there is a need or not, and the Mayor's duties/salary if the City has an Administrator, as well as the responsibilities/role of an Administrator. Councilor Smith said if the Administrator comes to fruition, the Mayor's salary should be lowered. The Council all agreed that the best decision at this point is to look long and hard as to how this should be set up and suggested a committee to research. The Council ultimately decided to remove the Administrator and his/her secretary funding (\$52,118). The second line for a Mayor's secretary was removed (\$3,640), as 45% of the Deputy Clerk's salary is allocated to the Mayor. The Council had a long discussion about salaries, which included the equalization to 40 hours, department head/management confidential raises, union contract negotiations, and salary comparability to other communities our size. The City Chamberlain salary was discussed stating that position is elected, although the position has been considered part of Management Confidential. It was mentioned that Councilor Acker has done a tremendous amount of additional work that she has not been additionally compensated for. The possibility of a voter referendum to change the Chamberlain from an elected position to an appointed position was briefly discussed. After a very lengthy exchange, it was agreed by the majority that the Chamberlain position would be allotted a 2.75% salary increase. The Assessor position was briefly discussed, as the position is budgeted for part-time and there is the possibility of contracting for the job. The Assessment Clerk and the Assessor Aide job

descriptions were explained. The Comptroller said that the reason some union employees are showing increases in their salary lines is because they have longevity increases.

Recap – Department of Public Works

Councilor Smith said that \$197K was asked for in the Street Maintenance line, the Mayor zeroed it, and the Council put \$50K back in and another discussion ensued. Councilor Simchik said that 2½ miles of roads could be done with slurry/seal for \$50K and that would make the roads last 5-10 more years. The Mayor said that Morrisville College will be doing a survey of trees next year. The Mayor also said that BOCES may be able to come in and demolish houses for a basic cost. The Mayor said that the sales tax revenue is up, and we haven't accounted for any Christmas sales yet. Councilor Bowe said that at this point in the budget talks we are at about a 6½% tax increase. Councilor Bowe recommended changing the tree line to \$36K, and the Street Maintenance line to \$44K and then placing that additional \$10K into sidewalks, as the City has not had a sidewalk program since 2012. After a brief discussion, the Council agreed and said that they would try to replace sidewalks equally among the wards. The Council continued talking about the DPW, including the sharing of costs with property owners for sewer work, a comparison of the number of DPW employees, sand blasting a truck box, DPW salary breakdowns, sidewalk plowing and parking lots. The Mayor said he is projecting the City will be good for 15 years with taking additional monies from the Fund Balance to lower the tax rate. The Comptroller said that with this budget, it is projected to take about \$230K from the Fund Balance this year. The utility line was discussed, and the Comptroller explained how the credits from the solar array would be attributed to the General, Water and Sewer Funds.

Recap – Recreation Department

The Recreation Budget was relooked at. Councilor Smith recommended cutting back the tennis court line to \$10K, as was originally requested, and the Council agreed. The Mayor said he has someone coming to look at Allen Park to fill the large crack with a seal, so it would not need milling and repaving. The Mayor said that he is hoping to get HP Hood to purchase new swings for Allen Park. The Council restated that the concert line was cut by \$1K, and that the field lining machine was taken out of the budget last year, but will be replaced in 2018, and \$2K was removed from the maintenance line.

Recap – Miscellaneous Budget Lines

In the Law line, the Council said that Contract Negotiations was cut to \$10K, Attorney Expense for Acquisition of Real Property was cut by \$2K down to \$6K, and the Miscellaneous Attorney line was cut from \$10K to zero. The Staff Services line was increased by \$600, back to the 2017 budget stage, as it is contractual. Deputy Mayor Chamberlain asked if Central Stores could have some funding cut. The Comptroller said they are out of funds for Central Stores already this year, but the Council could cut some funding if they choose to. The Council agreed to cut it by \$2K down to \$13K. The Comptroller said in the insurance line she anticipates a 2% increase and budgeted accordingly. The Kallet budget was revisited, but the Council concluded that portion of the budget seemed reasonable. The Contingency line was briefly discussed with the Council debating on including another \$10K in that line, ultimately deciding to add another \$5K making it \$35K.

The Deputy Mayor said the budget deliberations will finish up tomorrow night at 6:30 p.m. here in the Council Chambers.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Simchik

The special meeting is hereby adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

CITY OF ONEIDA, NEW YORK

Susan Pulverenti, City Clerk