

SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

February 21, 2012

Larry Siegel, President, called the Regular Meeting of the Syracuse Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Other council members present were Jeff Morgan, Paul Stoelting, and Brian Woody. Town Manager Henry DeJulia, Town Attorney Mike Reed, and Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline were also present. Councilman Bill Musser was absent.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Larry asked for public comment on agenda items; there were no comments.

The minutes from the January 17th meeting were introduced for approval. Brian made a motion to approve the minutes; Paul seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Claims # 122 through # 254 were presented for payment. Brian moved to approve the claims; Paul seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Wightman Petrie was not present to provide their monthly update.

Larry announced if there are no objections, he would like Jeremy to give his department report first.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

PUBLIC WORKS

Jeremy Sponseller, Public Works Director, reported that due to the weather, we have been unable to apply sludge and the sludge barn is running out of space. There is room in the back of the sludge barn, but they are not able to reach that space since there is only one door. Jeremy would like to build another entrance with a sliding door to load sludge from the rear. He received two quotes to install the new door. Hostetler's quote was \$1626.00 and Pacemaker quoted \$1860.00. Jeremy would like to go with Pacemaker since the sludge barn is a Pacemaker building, and they know how it is constructed. Jeremy added this additional door will be used this year and in future years; it is very expensive to pay to have the sludge hauled away. Paul made a motion to have Pacemaker install a new door at a cost not to exceed \$1,860.00; work is to be completed in 30 days. Jeff seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Jeremy provided lists and maps for the 2012 sidewalk and street paving programs. Jeremy explained if the council approves, he can begin to obtain pricing. Jeremy discussed the sidewalk improvements; he noted the first five sidewalks listed are all in the area of Lake St. and Main St. Location #6 on the north side of Pearl St will also be made ADA compliant. Location #7 is Mill St from High St to Washington St; some storm water improvements are needed there and will be made when the area is torn up. South of the bridge on Main St is the last location. Jeremy noted that Street Department Foreman Paul Hoffman would like to make the area by Lake and Main a street department summer project involving the sidewalk, trees, lights, and replacing the fire hydrant. Larry commented

he would like to remedy the blind curve at Main St. and Long Dr.; there is a lot of walking traffic there. Paul asked about the removal of five trees in the project area. Jeremy explained some of the trees are in poor condition and some are encroaching on the sidewalk; he added we try to make the sidewalks five feet wide. Paul would like us to save the trees wherever we can.

Council members had no objection to the street paving and sidewalk lists that Jeremy presented.

Jeremy asked council members to approve an additional claim that did not make the docket. Jeremy explained he had questions on the claim and did not get them answered until after the claims deadline. The claim is for Huston Electric for \$11,198.00; he asked permission to have Julie pay the claim. Brian so moved; Paul seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Jeremy discussed the lift stations in the Oakwood Annexation area. There are two lift stations there that are in need of work. The smaller pump only serves about three residences and pumps to the main lift station. The main lift station takes care of the rest of Oakwood Park. There are two pumps at the larger lift station; according to the maintenance records the town was given, that lift station has been running on one pump since 2010. Jeremy stated we need to take care of this pump; if it goes out, we could potentially be liable since we took over the infrastructure. Larry clarified it is the lift station by the Oakwood Inn that is also powered by the electric from the Oakwood Inn; Jeremy stated yes. He added the backup generator for the system is also in the hotel. We are running on borrowed time. Jeremy believes the pumps are ok. He thinks the problem is with the piping, and the check valves are under water. Due to the water, the sewer department can not get in there to repair anything. Jeremy provided three quotes to repair the piping. The quotes are:

Cripe Excavating	\$10,975.00
Kline Excavating	\$11,785.00
G & G Hauling	\$13,853.00

Jeremy recommended we accept the quote from Cripe Excavating; he added Cripe has done this type of work for us before. Brian asked if the quote covers the electrical issues; Jeremy stated no. Brian stated he has a major issue with that and the generator; he would like to see some numbers dealing with the electrical and generator as well. Jeremy explained they were moving in that direction, but they are trying to deal with the immediate issue first. Larry stated the issue more complicated; he read from notes he prepared about the issues. Following is his statement:

The sanitary sewer system at Oakwood Park is failing and deteriorating. There are areas of the system in complete failure. A \$600,000.00 sanitary sewer repair and upgrade is required. 1/2 is budgeted to be paid for by the Oakwood property owners over 5 years through a zoned utility rate. The other half is being funded by Buckingham, if they become the new owner.

Ironically, it appears the only thing standing in the way of this sanitary sewer/lake water quality improvement project is the Wawasee Area Conservancy Foundation (WACF).

Per the WACF website, "The Foundation was formed in 1991 to anticipate, search out, and solve threats to the Wawasee Area Watershed and to its water quality. The Foundation is dedicated to enhancement of the watershed and works hand-in-hand with property owner groups, the State Department of Natural Resources and other governmental and civic organizations that share it's concerns."

It appears that the information posted on the WACF website as recent as today is not current and should be updated immediately to avoid further confusion. In my opinion it is time that all become updated as to the current status. And, the following is my current best understanding.

WACF's website as recent as today expresses concerns of "funneling" regulated by the County and Town zoning code. Through this code WACF contrived a maximum number of piers of 90. Legal opinion is this is a miscalculation. It is important to know that Buckingham asked for no variance and was granted no variance for funneling. It is Buckingham's stated purpose that the piers are a parking lot for hotel patrons, restaurant patrons, and Chautauqua Wawasee attendees. These parking places are for boats already on the lake, not new boats. These parking places are where boats stop, not run. A business without parking is out of business. The DNR permit allows for essentially 190 piers, not 248 listed on the WACF website.

I hope that the WACF can work within the permit and restrictions of the permit issued by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) allowing up to 190 piers, or a least compromise with Buckingham on a number that is truly reasonable allowing a viable Oakwood Park, with Chautauqua programming.

Additionally, the WACF on its website is asking for support to remonstrate against a proposed dredging of 827' of Oakwood Park shoreline, In the past, and as recent as today, a representative of Buckingham Co. told me that the dredging of lake front will not occur. They have stated this on many occasions and the news has been delivered to the WACF. The only planned dredging is in a channel next to the hotel, unopposed by WACF.

I hope all can see that Buckingham Co has conceded to all viable concerns of the WACF. Regardless, per the WACF website today, "WACF is appealing this permit."

Unfortunately, the WACF appeal process will likely last beyond the receivership's financial ability and Buckingham's ability to wait before emphasizing and moving on to other projects. The electric for the main lift station is provided by the hotel. As the receivership ends, the electric to the main Oakwood Park lift station will be turned off, essentially closing down the Oakwood Park sewer system.

I certainly encourage everyone to urge the WACF to follow their stated purpose and work within the DNR's permit and restrictions. Please encourage the WACF to rethink the bigger picture and benefit allowing the town of Syracuse to accept the funds that will allow the sanitary sewer repairs and upgrades required in Oakwood Park.

The negative environmental impact of not repairing the sanitary sewer in a timely manner is immense.

The benefit, environmental, social, and economic, of the proposed Oakwood Park redevelopment project is immense.

Larry stated because of the actions of the WACF we may not have the \$300,000.00 for water and sewer renovations. He told Jeremy that to ask the council to approve the project when WACF has put the funds in jeopardy is very difficult. Larry pointed problems with the sewer system and stated the \$600,000.00 to repair it is contingent on Buckingham buying the property and the funds they are willing to put into this project. Larry agrees with Brian that to fix a pump when we may not have electricity is probably a futile effort. Brian asked if WACF is willing to pony up the other half since they will cause the project to be postponed another two years. The WACF mission statement was again pointed out. Brian repeated the concessions that Buckingham has already made. Brian would like someone from the WACF Board of Directors to attend a meeting and answer questions.

Henry added we wouldn't have done the annexation if we had known there wasn't a way to help pay for those improvements. Jeremy noted \$11,000.00 is just the tip of the iceberg. More discussion followed on what happens if the electric is shut down. Brian asked Henry to reach WACF and ask them to attend next month's meeting. We are leeching sewage into the lake, and we have a way to correct it. Henry noted it has the potential for the equivalent of 90 full time jobs. Brian moved to approve the Cripe quote for \$10,975.00; Paul seconded. Brian added we need to get electric information. Larry noted if it is turned off, no one will have the legal right to turn it back on. Three voted for the motion; Larry voted against. The motion carried.

TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager Henry DeJulia had nothing further to report.

POLICE

Police Chief Tony Ciriello announced January was a quiet month. There were 237 calls for service, which is the slowest month since he has been Chief. Tony reported the trip to the circus was successful; 1157 third graders attended. Officer Ben Hostetler is halfway through the academy; he graduates on April 13. Tony also reported he is working on accreditation for the Syracuse Police Department. Tony added he agrees that the sidewalks at Main and Long are a hazard. Tony went on to report there will be a multidepartment training on active shooters in April that will be held at the high school.

Tony presented a request to purchase a new vehicle. The 2001 Ford Explorer that Henry currently drives is rusting and needs more work. Tony would like to give Henry the 2008 Chevy Impala police vehicle; he added it should last Henry 10 years. Tony would like to purchase a 2011 Chevy Malibu from Lakeside Chevrolet. The price of the Malibu is \$20,172.74; after a trade in allowance of \$2,500.00 for the Explorer, the total cost would be \$17,672.74. He also said if the purchase is approved, he would like the council to give Julie permission to write a check so he can pick up the car. Brian made a motion to allow the purchase of the vehicle from Lakeside Chevrolet for \$17,672,74 and allow Julie to write a check; Jeff seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

PARK

Park Superintendent Chad Jonsson reported on Park activities. The Indoor Yard Sale held February 11 had 31 booths rented. The painting and carpeting in the Community Center is complete. The Park Board approved the purchase of a John Deere lawn mower from Gilsinger's in Leesburg. The breakfast held last Saturday at the Knights of Columbus was well attended; \$3,400.00 was raised for the Youth Athletic Complex. Chad announced the \$80,000.00 match for the K-21 grant was met last week. \$260,000.00 has been raised to date, including some pledges. It is estimated \$325,000.00 will be needed to use the fields for play; that cost does not include such things as bleachers.

Chad discussed the land for the Youth Athletic Complex. When he checked with the Area Plan Commission, he found out that there are still platted streets on the land. Portland St, North St, and Ash St are platted on that land; he will need approval from the council to vacate those streets, as well as

several alleys. Chad plans to bring that to the council in March. In the spring, a well, irrigation, and fences will be some of the first things to be done. They hope to have a couple of football games at the end of season.

Larry clarified they need about \$65,000.00 this year in order to play on the fields. Chad answered they need that amount to complete everything by the end of this year. Larry asked if there is the potential for another K-21 grant. Chad answered they plan to apply for funds for walkways and play areas. Dick Peletier, fundraising volunteer for the athletic complex, announced he is planning a walkathon in May. They plan to use the trails around Syracuse for this event.

CLERK

Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline advised we received notification from the DLGF that our 2012 budgets were approved. All budgets were approved as advertised. She also reported Town of Syracuse employees had no work comp injuries in 2011; the last recordable work comp injury was in April, 2010.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Town Attorney Mike Reed advised the Oakwood Allocation area is recorded. We are ready to go if the project goes through.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Dick Peletier reported that a \$1,000.00 check was received at the Pancake Breakfast as a donation for the Youth Complex; the Rotary also donated.

OLD & NEW BUSINESS

None.

Brian moved to adjourn the meeting; Paul seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

The Syracuse Town Council adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

ATTEST:

Larry Siegel, President

Julie Kline, Clerk Treasurer