

## CITY COUNCIL MEETING

February 24, 2014

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Mayor Nelson called the meeting to order and asked the Clerk to call the roll:

PRESENT: Mayor Nelson, Councillors Ashley, Hosmer, Mitchell, Morley, Skamperle and Stevenson

ABSENT: None

### PUBLIC HEARING

1. A public hearing regarding the application of Time Warner Cable Northeast LLC, for a franchise agreement renewal to provide cable television services through the City of Ogdensburg was held. No one being present to speak, the hearing was declared closed.

### CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Nelson moved that the claims as enumerated in General Fund Warrant #4-2014 in the amount of \$489,435.92 and Library Fund Warrant #4-2014 in the amount of \$22,146.92 and Capital Fund Warrant #4-2014 in the amount of \$8,142.63 and Community Development Fund Warrant #4-2014 in the amount of \$3,025.50 and Community Renewal Fund Warrant #4-2014 in the amount of \$0.00 and HOME Fund Warrant #4-2014 in the amount of \$0.00 and AHC Funds Warrant #4-2014 in the amount of \$0.00, and NSP Funds Warrant #4-2014 in the amount of \$0.00 and Ogdensburg Growth Fund Warrant #4-2014 in the amount of \$0.00 as audited, be and the same are ordered paid and Councillor Stevenson seconded the motion.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

1. Councillor Hosmer moved a resolution to appoint the audit firm for the years 2013-2015, and Councillor Stevenson seconded to wit:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT  
FOR AUDIT SERVICES FOR THE YEARS 2013-2015

WHEREAS, the City Charter, Chapter C-15, requires that the City have an independent annual audit, and

WHEREAS, the City Comptroller has solicited proposals for a three year contract, for the years 2013-2015, and

WHEREAS, the City has received and reviewed the proposals, and

WHEREAS, the firm of Pinto Mucenski Hooper VanHouse has met the requirements of the proposal,

NOW, THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Manager is authorized to enter into a contract with Pinto Mucenski Hooper Van House to perform the annual audit for the years 2013-2015 for the price of \$17,400 for 2013, \$17,500 for 2014 and \$17,600 for 2015.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

2. Councillor Ashley moved a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with Black River Tree Removal, LLC for a sum not to exceed \$10,500, for the removal of 54 trees along Paterson Street, and Councillor Skamperle seconded to wit:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO  
AGREEMENT WITH BLACK RIVER TREE REMOVAL LLC  
FOR THE PATERSON STREET TREE REMOVAL PROJECT

WHEREAS, the City desires to proceed with the Paterson Street Reconstruction project during this construction season; and

WHEREAS, the City has been notified that the 54 trees along Paterson Street that are scheduled for removal during the project could be habitat for the endangered Northern Long Eared Bat and can only be removed during the months of November to March utilizing NYS DOT funding; and

WHEREAS, the City solicited quotes for the removal of the trees along Paterson Street; and

WHEREAS, four quotes were received and City staff have evaluated the quotes and have recommended the City enter into an agreement with Black River Tree Removal LLC;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Manager is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with Black River Tree Removal LLC, for a sum not to exceed \$10,500., for the removal of 54 trees along Paterson Street upon New York State Department of Transportation approval of funding; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that funding for these services will come from the Paterson Street Reconstruction Project – H5110.518.

Councillor Morley asked if this company expects to keep the wood. City Manager John Pinkerton said permission has been given for the wood to be put in our landfill, and if it ends up there, we will sell it. Councillor Morley asked if the City crews will be hauling the wood, and Mr. Pinkerton said no. Mr. Pinkerton explained the project must be completed by March 31, 2014 to be eligible for DOT funding.

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Councillor Stevenson asked if most of the trees being removed will be replaced. Mr. Pinkerton said yes, but the replanted trees will be shorter and will not interfere with the wires. Mayor Nelson asked if landowners have been contacted about the tree removal. Mr. Pinkerton said letters will be mailed to landowners and a press release will be done. Councillor Skamperle asked if the landowner can keep the wood. Mr. Pinkerton said no because it is not an option in our contract with the tree cutter.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

3. Councillor Skamperle moved a resolution supporting Senator Ritchie's legislation to convey 160 acres of surplus SLPC property to the City of Ogdensburg, and Councillor Ashley seconded to wit:

### RESOLUTION SUPPORTING SENATOR RITCHIE'S BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE CONVEYANCE OF FOUR SLPC PARCELS TO THE CITY OF OGDENSBURG

WHEREAS, since 1887, the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center, located on the banks of the St. Lawrence River, in Ogdensburg, N.Y. has been home to literally thousands of New York State residents who were in need of long term inpatient psychiatric care, where they were not only provided that specialized care but were also offered vocational programs aimed at giving them a sense of normalcy in their day to day lives at the facility, and

WHEREAS, in the 1970's, the Office of Mental Health changed its focus from inpatient care to outpatient care and off site living accommodations. To this end, buildings formerly used to house, treat, sustain and teach residents, were taken from service, boarded up, and over the years were neglected and allowed to deteriorate. The lands on the periphery of the Center, some of which in years past were home to farm animals, animal shelters and crop land went unneeded, unused and uncared for.

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Other lands originally thought to be needed for expansion of the facility or other reason went undeveloped, seldom if ever used in productive social or therapeutic ways, and

WHEREAS, the essential services currently offered at the Center, have been concentrated in but a few of the formerly used buildings resulting in considerable acreage on which the Psychiatric Center is situated, being no longer needed in its entirety to sustain the programs that currently are offered to a greatly reduced number of in house recipients, and

WHEREAS, the transfer of these unused lands and structures to the City of Ogdensburg, would not only result in development of the properties for potential residential, commercial, industrial and recreational use but would stimulate the local economy by creating the jobs associated with such development. Land which heretofore has been exempted from taxation would be returned to local tax rolls, and

WHEREAS, there is no publicly known or advocated plan by the State of New York or the Office of Mental Health, to make productive use of any of the parcels referred to in the proposed bill, nor is there any reasonable expectation that any of the parcels requested to be conveyed to the City of Ogdensburg, would be needed to maintain, or even expand, the current levels of service provided, and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ogdensburg City Council supports Senator Ritchie's bill to authorize the conveyance of the four parcels identified in the bill, to the City of Ogdensburg and strongly urges favorable consideration of the bill, by the members of the Senate and Assembly, without delay, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Senators Joseph Griffo, Betty Little and Patricia Ritchie, Assemblywomen Addie Russell and Janet Duprey, and Assemblymen, Ken Blankenbush and Marc Butler.

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Mr. Pinkerton explained there are four parcels under consideration: Parcel A which the City would like to develop into a commercial industrial district, is on Route 37; Parcel B is uncontaminated riverfront; Parcel C is the wooded land west of SLPC; and, Parcel D is the co-gen parcel. (A copy of the material describing the bill follows these minutes.)

Councillor Skamperle asked if any of the property is contaminated. Mr. Pinkerton explained the only contamination is north of Parcel C where there was a fly ash pit. Councillor Skamperle asked if that contamination would prevent construction nearby. Mr. Pinkerton said yes, an environmental assessment would need to be done. Councillor Stevenson said OBPA is interested in part of Parcels A and C, and Assemblywoman Addie Russell is working with them. Mr. Pinkerton explained he was just notified of their interest and he plans to meet with OBPA. Mr. Pinkerton said it is important that the parcels be put back on the tax roll, noting Parcel B is thirty prime acres with significant value. Councillor Ashley asked if the Task Force supports this bill. Mr. Pinkerton said yes as well as the St. Lawrence County Board of Legislature. Mayor Nelson suggested we partner with OBPA to increase the tax base.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

### OLD BUSINESS

1. Councillor Morley said he wants the public to know that the Department of Public Works crews are doing the best they can to fill the potholes on City streets. Mayor Nelson told Interim Public Works Director Gregg Harland to keep up the good work.

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### NEW BUSINESS

1. Mayor Nelson said the Time Warner franchise agreement will be discussed at the St. Lawrence County Mayor's Meeting on March 13, 2014. Councillor Stevenson asked if the County Mayor's Meeting is open to Council members. Mayor Nelson said yes. Mayor Nelson advised that a local company, Slic Networks Solutions, is not yet available for private residential customers. City Manager John Pinkerton explained Slic representatives are fearful Comcast, the company purchasing Time Warner, may not supply service in the North Country. Mr. Pinkerton said he wonders if a subsidy may be available through Slic. Mayor Nelson said the City does not have to grant the 10 year franchise to Time Warner.

### ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. City Manager John Pinkerton explained that we have found a way to place five to seven City Council Meetings on our website for viewing, at a cost of \$30.00 per year. Mr. Pinkerton requested Council approval before moving forward. There was a consensus of Council to proceed.

2. City Manager John Pinkerton said the Planning Department has requested Council liaisons for the Planning and Zoning boards. Councillor Morley and Councillor Hosmer volunteered to serve as liaisons for the Planning Board. Councillor Stevenson and Councillor Ashley volunteered to serve as liaisons for the Zoning Board. Mayor Nelson said he would like the City Council access to the Planning and Zoning Boards website portal link. Director of Planning & Development Andrea Smith said the minutes are available online and she will work on getting Council access to that portal link.

3. Councillor Skamperle said the Battle of Ogdensburgh re-enactors were in the City last weekend and did a great job.

On a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.