

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

February 24, 2009

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

PRESENT: Mayor Nelson, Councillors Hannan,
Powers, Sholette and Vaugh

ABSENT: Councillors Flynn and Morley

COMMENDATIONS

1. Mayor Nelson and Council presented a commendation to Firefighter Chris Fay for his exemplary and heroic service to the community and citizens of the City of Ogdensburg at a structure fire at 915 Lafayette Street on February 10, 2009. (A copy of the commendation follows these minutes.)

2. Mayor Nelson and Council presented a Commendation to Firefighter Nelson Charlton for his exemplary and heroic service to the community and citizens of the City of Ogdensburg at a structure fire at 915 Lafayette Street on February 10, 2009. (A copy of the commendation follows these minutes.)

Fire Chief Steven Badlam thanked Council for their support of his department and stated their real reward is that three lives were saved and the Fire Department continues to make a difference in the City of Ogdensburg.

PROCLAMATION

1. Mayor Nelson signed and read a Proclamation declaring the week of March 8th through 15th, 2009 Girl Scout Week. (A copy of the Proclamation follows these minutes.)

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PUBLIC HEARING

1. A public hearing regarding an Ordinance to amend AR-42 "City Attorney" was held. No one being present to speak, the hearing was declared closed.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Tom Doheny, Manager of Government Reporting, Time Warner Cable made a presentation to Council regarding underpayment of franchise fees. Mr. Doheny summarized a report that was presented to Council. (A copy of the report follows these minutes.)

2. Mayor Nelson stated that Councillor Vaugh had arranged a presentation pertaining to the recent NYCOM meeting information and questioned if we should wait until all members of Council were present. There was a consensus of Council to postpone the presentation until the next meeting when all members of Council will be present.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Nelson moved that the claims as enumerated in General Fund Warrant #4-2009 in the amount of \$471,278.11 and Library Fund Warrant #4-2009 in the amount of \$25,617.43, Capital Fund Warrant #4-2009 in the amount of \$0.00 and Community Development Fund Warrant #4-2009 in the amount of \$177,567.05 and Community Renewal Fund Warrant #4-2009 in the amount of \$10,228.87 and HOME Fund Warrant #4-2009 in the amount of \$0.00 and AHC Funds Warrant #4-2009 in the amount of \$3,800.00 as audited, be and the same are ordered paid and Councillor Vaugh seconded the motion.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

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APPOINTMENTS

1. Mayor Nelson moved the appointment of Douglas McDonald to the Library Board of Trustees, term to expire 12/31/13, and Councillor Powers seconded the motion.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

1. Mayor Nelson asked the Council to postpone action on Ordinance #2 of 2009 so that all members of council could participate in the discussion on this item. There was a consensus of Council not to act upon Ordinance #2 of 2009 (to amend AR-42 "City Attorney") until the next City Council meeting when all members of Council will be present.

2. Mayor Nelson moved a resolution calling for a public notice and public hearings to obtain public input for the submission of a grant application to the NYS Office of Community Renewal, and Councillor Vaugh seconded to wit:

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL
TO PROVIDE FOR PUBLIC NOTICE AND PUBLIC HEARING

WHEREAS, the City of Ogdensburg is contemplating the submission of a grant application to the NYS Office of Community Renewal; and

WHEREAS, the City Council and staff of the office of Planning and Development are desirous of obtaining public input into the matter of the ongoing community development program of the City,

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council shall hold public hearings in the matter of the ongoing community development program to be held in the City Council chambers at City Hall, Ogdensburg, New York, on the 9th day of March, 2009 and the 23rd day of March, 2009, at 7:00 p.m.; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Clerk give notice of such public hearings by publication in the newspaper so designated by the City Council of the City of Ogdensburg for legal and public notices at least seven (7) days before the hearing dates setting forth the time and place.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

3. Councillor Powers moved a resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit a \$75,000.00 NYS Housing Trust Fund RESTORE Emergency Home Repair Program funding application, and Councillor Vaughn seconded to wit:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE NEW YORK STATE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION RESTORE EMERGENCY HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the City of Ogdensburg has participated in NYS Division of Housing & Community Renewal Programs for many years and is a past applicant of a NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation grant for the rehabilitation of owner-occupied housing in the City; and

WHEREAS, the NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation RESTORE Emergency Home Repair Program can result in benefits to the City in general and to low/moderate income elderly persons in particular throughout the City;

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Ogdensburg City Council hereby authorizes the City Manager to submit an application for funding under the 2009 NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation RESTORE Emergency Home Repair Program in the amount of \$75,000.00.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

4. Councillor Sholette moved a resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit a \$500,000.00 NYS Housing Trust Fund Access to Home Repair Program funding application, and Councillor Powers seconded to wit:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE NEW YORK STATE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION ACCESS TO HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the City of Ogdensburg has participated in NYS Division of Housing & Community Renewal Programs for many years and is a past applicant of a NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation grant for the rehabilitation of owner-occupied housing in the City; and

WHEREAS, the NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation Access to Home Repair Program can result in benefits to the City in general and to low/moderate income disabled persons in particular throughout the City; and

WHEREAS, the NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation Access to Home Repair Program will allow disabled and handicapped homeowners to remain in their homes by providing among other repairs, home modifications for ramp installation, handicapped bathroom modifications and kitchen modifications;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ogdensburg City Council hereby authorizes the City Manager to submit an application for funding under the 2009 NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation Access to Home Repair Program in the amount of \$500,000.00.

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The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

5. Councillor Vaugh moved a resolution supporting the construction of a four-lane highway in St. Lawrence County, and Mayor Nelson seconded to wit:

DRAFT RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT CONSTRUCTING A FOUR-LANE
HIGHWAY IN ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY

WHEREAS the Ogdensburg Bridge Crossing consists of a single suspension bridge with approach spans, a 3% vertical grade, and 13-foot travel lanes; and

WHEREAS because of the low vertical grade, lack of sharp horizontal curves and wide travel lanes, this crossing has the highest vehicle carrying capacity of the three bridge crossings studied in the Northern New York Border Crossing Study (NNY-BCS); and

WHEREAS the NNY-BCS stated that traffic diversion from the Thousand Islands to Ogdensburg could be achieved by constructing new or improved high-speed roadway access between I-81 and the Ogdensburg crossing; and

WHEREAS the North Country Transportation Study (NCTS) recommended that the region should pursue up to eight different modal development strategies, but that further analysis should be conducted on a highway based solution; and

WHEREAS the locally preferred route is along the Route 37 corridor; and

WHEREAS the NCTS included economic development analysis that concluded that among the highway alternatives, economic opportunities are maximized by four-lane expressway and east-west alignment generally along the existing Route 11, with spurs between Watertown and Lowville/Ft Drum area, Ogdensburg and Gouverneur, and Massena and Route 11; and

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WHEREAS the Northern Tier Expressway (NTE) is a byproduct of the NCTS and builds on the recommendation that an east-west four-lane expressway be developed from I-81 to I-87 via the Route 11 corridor; and

WHEREAS the NTE puts forth a strategy for implementing a phased approach to developing the NTE over the next 20 years; and

WHEREAS the scope of the NTE did not include analysis or recommend construction of the spurs discussed in the NCTS;

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Ogdensburg City Council supports the construction of the Northern Tier Expressway as long as it is constructed with spurs between Watertown and Lowville/Ft Drum, Ogdensburg and Gouverneur, and Massena and Potsdam; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Commissioner Glynn, New York State Department of Transportation; Governor Paterson, New York State Senators Griffo and Aubertine and Little; New York State Assembly Members Scozzafava, Russell, Sayward and Duprey; United State Senators Schumer and Clinton; Congressman McHugh; St. Lawrence, Franklin, Clinton and Jefferson Counties; The Development Authority of the North Country; and the Citizens Coalition for Economic Infrastructure Development.

There was much discussion among Council regarding whether this resolution contained too much information and could weaken our position.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

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OLD BUSINESS

1. Councillor Hannan asked how Council will proceed after hearing the presentations from Mike Caton, Computel and Tom Doheny, Time Warner Cable. Councillor Hannan questioned if Council discussion would take place in closed or public session. There was a consensus of Council to direct staff to provide the pros and cons of both presentations to Council for their review.

2. Councillor Sholette asked City Manager Arthur Sciorra if there has been any interest in the concession stand at the Visitor's Center. Mr. Sciorra stated nothing to report at this time.

3. Councillor Sholette questioned if the company Adirondack Studies will be doing the interior decorating at the Visitor's Center. Mr. Sciorra stated they will be working with various community groups to reflect the flavor of Ogdensburg's history, but at the same time try not to emphasize transportation which would be a duplication of what is in the post office.

4. Councillor Sholette asked City Manager Arthur Sciorra if there has been an agreement made with the Ogdensburg Volunteer Rescue Squad. Mr. Sciorra stated a finalized document is being worked on.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Councillor Sholette asked if there was a sprinkler system malfunction at the Visitor's Center, if this malfunction was inside or outside the building and how often it happens. Kit Smith, Director of Public Works explained that there was a malfunction in the check valve of the sprinkler air system outside the building during the night. Mr. Smith stated some fittings were changed, and the system is now working fine.

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ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Councillor Sholette complimented Phil Clemens, Director of Recreation for doing a great job with Rivershiver 2009. Mr. Sholette remarked that the third annual Polar Bear Plunge was well attended.

2. Mayor Nelson stated that the NYCOM winter legislative session he recently attended was very informative and briefly reviewed the topics discussed. They were:

- 1) NYCOM is working on the National Grid tax refund issue on behalf of the City and the 150 affected municipalities.
- 2) Timothy Gilchrist, a top aide to Governor David Paterson, talked about the stimulus package and how money was going to be awarded.
- 3) New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli discussed the retirement fund and how the next few years are going to be challenging.

Mayor Nelson added that he, City Manager Sciorra, and Councilor Vaughn had a scheduled meeting with Senator Aubertine, but due to a Senate Conference meeting that was running over schedule, the Senator was not able to meet. They met with Senator Aubertine's Chief of Staff to discuss the issues affecting our local cheese plant. Mayor Nelson said he was advised that the Senator would speak with the New York State Agriculture Commissioner, Patrick Hooker on the City's behalf.

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