

FINANCE

Wednesday, March 8, 2017 – 5:30 p.m.

Police Training Room – Olean Municipal Building

Present: Members: Chairman Dougherty, Vice Chairman Crawford, Alderman Witte, Alderman Andreano, Alderman Gonzalez, and Alderman Smith. Others: Mayor William Aiello; Al Utecht, City Clerk; Fred Saradin, City Auditor; John Anastasia, Youth & Recreation Director; Bob Bell, Fire Chief; Jeff Rowley, Police Chief; Jerry Volz, IT Department; Terrence Shaw, Senior Center Director, and Tiffany Taylor, Managerial Confidential Administrative Secretary.

1. Roll Call

Alderman Dougherty called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and asked that the record show that all committee members were present except Alderman George, who was excused.

2. Unfinished Business

a. PL #15-17: (Aiello) Budget 2017-2018.

5:30 p.m. Clerk

Mr. Utecht began by providing a handout to the Council encompassing all of the different departments that he budgets for. Mr. Volz went through the IT budget. He explained that all of the computers, printers, ink and paper for the City are purchased through their budget. He added that the travel and training budget dropped because there simply is not enough time for them to go to training. They will do as much online as possible to be able to be in the building in the event that they are needed.

Alderman Witte questioned how secure the City is. Mr. Volz responded that we are pretty secure, as Mr. Wells in his department runs security scans, as well as has email blockers and filters on the internet, but there is no way to be protected 100 percent. Servers are backed up (but not every machine), some to a hard drive located in the building, and some to a cloud program called Jungle Disk. Mr. Saradin questioned if there is any off site backup, and Mr. Volz replied that there used to be. It has been replaced with the Jungle Disk backup.

Alderman Crawford questioned if we have a preferred provider for office supplies. Mr. Volz stated that we get state bid prices through Staples Advantage with free next day delivery. For our paper orders, as Staples will bring the paper to the building but leaves it up to us to unload it and carry it to storage, we get local quotes from vendors who will bring pallets and carts to deliver the 80 or so cases that we order at a time directly to the server room in the basement. This is very comparable to the prices Staples provides. Mayor Aiello added that he asks departments to check locally for prices before they buy.

Mr. Utecht continued with his budget, stating that there is relatively no change in the Clerk and Vital Statistics budgets. The On Street Parking budget has decreased drastically, as the employee is now only working one day a week for a couple of hours to collect money and fix parking meters. Since we have removed a lot of meters with the North Union Street project completion, he is needed much less than he was in past years.

He continued in stating that the Off Street Parking budget has decreased as well, as lot attendants are no longer needed in any of the lots except the Community Bank lot. We are working with the bank to determine who owns the lot, so this may decrease even further in the future as well.

Alderman Smith recommended coming up with a standard for the presentations that are given to the Council from department heads regarding the budget.

6:00 p.m. Fire Department

Chief Bell stated that his portion of the budget contains Fire, Codes, Ambulance, Demolition of Unsafe Buildings, and line items for the Zoning and Plumbing boards. He went line by line through his budget, describing the purpose of each line item.

He stated that he was able to obtain funding elsewhere for new hoses, so that was removed from the budget. Also, he would like to replace the foam on the fire engines, as what was previously on the trucks was found to be hazardous by the DEC or EPA. He also found alternative funding for the fire investigation team, so that was removed from the budget as well.

He stated that the line item for travel and training is higher than last year because we anticipate four openings in the future. At the present time, we have four new employees in training, with two current employees planning to retire before June, and two more possible to leave in the future. Alderman Crawford asked if this was taken into account in the 100 line item, and Mr. Saradin explained that it is difficult, as we only receive a two week notice from some of the fire fighters. Some also state that they plan to retire, but submit no formal notice and stay on for much longer than anticipated.

Under the Ambulance budget, Chief Bell stated that we are in the process of finding a new medical director. Alderman Andreano stated that the City was paying the past director, even though he was receiving payment from other sources, so she would like to work with Chief Bell to save money on that item. He stated that the State mandates that we have an active Emergency Room physician as our medical director.

Alderman Crawford questioned how continuing education works for the Fire Department. Chief Bell stated that continuing education is contractual. We are required to send the employees to training. Mayor Aiello found funding for some online training opportunities that will save us money.

Alderman Andreano asked if hiring an ambulance billing company was significantly more expensive than billing in house. She also questioned if they are paid a flat rate, or a percentage of what they collect on our behalf. Mayor Aiello stated that they are paid per PCR, with a cap of \$5,000 per month. He stated that there are not enough resources to bill in house, and we would need to hire additional staff if we were interested in doing so. There are also issues with coding, so we would need to ensure that there was a trained staff member to do the billing. He stated that we are considering sending out an RFP when the current contract has expired to see if we can get the services any cheaper.

Chief Bell continued in stating that he anticipates that he has under budgeted miscellaneous fees for services in the Codes portion of his budget. Alderman Gonzalez questioned the reasoning, and he stated that there are a lot of vacant homes (thirty documented so far) in the City, and houses that people just don't take care of. We ticket them, but then end up mowing and picking up their trash. Mr. Saradin reminded the Council that they transferred \$5,000 from Contingency at the end of 2016 to aid with the shortfall in the current budget, and that they can do so again in the future. Alderman Smith added that even if we don't get the money back from the County to reimburse this, we don't want to be a trashy city.

Prior to wrapping up the Fire Department portion of budget discussions, there was some conversation regarding the current funding for demolition of unsafe houses and where we are in terms of that.

6:30 p.m. Police Department

Chief Rowley stated that a major change in this budget is that previously dispatch was included with the rest of the police department budget. Last year, it was separated out, and he overestimated one budget while underestimating the other. He has worked that out this year and there shouldn't be any issues. He also mentioned that we are reimbursed for court security's salaries by the State.

He continued in stating that the line item for communication equipment has decreased greatly because last year the Council provided him with extra funding for radio upgrades, which is not required again this year.

Chief Rowley went line by line through his budget, describing each item in detail.

In response to a question, he stated that he has five full time dispatchers, four part time dispatchers (the part time number can fluctuate at times), thirty four police officers (including himself), three court security officers, one matron, and one cleaning person (who he believes is paid from the DPW budget).

There were no other major changes in his budget or questions from the Aldermen.

7:00 p.m. Parks & Recreation

Mr. Anastasia went line by line through his budget, discussing each item and its purpose.

He stated that the personnel services line item is reduced because we will not be hiring staff and opening the War Vets pool this summer with the proposed construction. Alderman Witte questioned how many fewer people would be hired, and Mr. Anastasia stated eight lifeguards and three recreation attendants. He stated that the Franchot pool will remain open. Mayor Aiello added that we will be in discussions regarding possibly using the pool at the Olean Middle School or the YMCA for a few hours each week for open swim. He will keep the Council updated on the progress of these talks.

Mr. Anastasia provided a brief overview of the summer program. Alderman Crawford questioned if we charge for this, and Mr. Anastasia stated that we do not. We had 436 children registered last year.

Alderman Crawford questioned why there was such a drastic decrease in funding for the concessions inventory. Mayor Aiello stated that the concession stands were losing money, and we are looking into either contracting out the service or installing vending machines. There is still some money in the budget for items sold out of the ticket booth at the recreation center.

Alderman Witte asked if we still receive funding from the Youth Bureau. Mr. Anastasia stated that we do, but that the funding amount has drastically decreased through the years.

Alderman Crawford asked why we have a City Historian. Mr. Anastasia stated that he is a part time employee that not only works as a historian for the City, but also is a caretaker for the Bartlett House. He has a lot of events at the Bartlett House, which couldn't occur without his hard work and dedication to the history of the City.

Alderman Andreano commended Mr. Anastasia and Mr. Shaw for the excellent adult recreation programs that are held at the Senior Center.

Mr. Anastasia concluded in stating that he worked very hard to stay within budget, while also continuing to provide a great program.

3. New Referrals for Consideration

None

4. Approval of Committee Reports

None

5. Adjournment

Prior to adjournment, it was decided to host a Capital Projects Work Session Tuesday, March 15, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. in the Police Training Room.

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Witte. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:50 p.m.