

**CITY OF ITHACA
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
November 17, 2020
7:00 PM**

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca City Council held and conducted via Zoom in conformity with Open Meeting Act (Pubic Act 228 of 2020) on the 17th day of November, 2020 was called to order by Mayor Schafer at 7:00 p.m. and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Mayor Protem Koppleberger gave the invocation.

Present were Mayor Alice Schafer and Councilpersons James Andrew, Brett Baublitz, Scott Gray, James Gruesbeck, Clark Hubbard and Rick Koppleberger. Staff present were City Manager Jamey Conn, Clerk-Treasurer (C-T) Barbara Fandell, and DPW Director Bob Studt.

Absent was Attorney Jefferson Arnold.
Audience in attendance was unnamed.

Moved by Hubbard, second by Gray to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the City Council of November 3, 2020. Motion carried.

Mayor Schafer asked for approval of the Agenda and for Items to be removed from the Consent Agenda. City Manager Conn asked to add a Memory Park Request to the agenda. Mayor Schafer placed it as Item 9B. Moved by Gray, second by Andrew to approve the Agenda with Item 9B Memory Park Request addition and the Consent Agenda. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Mayor Schafer asked for public comments. None were offered.

Consent Agenda

Moved by Koppleberger, second by Gray to approve the consent agenda items as listed:

- **Ithaca Unit Report – October 2020**
- **City Manager report which included updates and information on the scraper truck sale, traffic light at Pine River/Center St, No Truck signage, Veterans Day service, DDA billboard, COVID Plan, Library hours, Community Center rental and repairs and the IPC Christmas parade.**
- **Claims submitted to the Ways and Means Committee by City Clerk-Treasurer Fandell and recommended for payment: Accounts Payable Checks #46978-47033 and Payroll Checks #16017-16026, DD1726-DD1735, EFT #1190-1195 as listed in the Check Register Book.**
- **Correspondence received: Email – EGLE regarding Ithaca Shell water issue.**

Motion carried by Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: (7) Gray, Gruesbeck, Hubbard, Koppleberger, Andrew, Baublitz and Schafer

Nos: (0) None

Absent: (0) None

Committee Reports

Councilperson Koppleberger reported the Personnel Committee met to discuss a COVID plan and the AFSCME Union contract. The Committee met in closed session for union negotiations. The City Manager will meet with the union representatives and confirm items with legal counsel and if agreed, will draft and present the new contract to the Council. The committee reviewed the effects of COVID on work staff and discussed with the City Manager.

City Manager Comments

City Manager Conn reported the scraper truck was sold to Matt Mills (Mills Excavating) for \$8,650.00 and picked up today. The traffic light at the corner of S. Pine River/Center Street was damaged in the wind storm. The entire light needs replaced as it cannot be repaired due to the age of the light. He asked if Council would like it taken down or replaced. Council discussed and decision to replace the light with a new LED one. Director Studt is to contact MDOT for information. Manager Conn asked for direction on the “No Truck” signs. Councilperson Baublitz asked if they would be solar or hard wired and where placement would be. Director Studt will look into this, but most likely they would be hard wired and the plan is one sign on the south post at Pine River/Center Street. Council discussed signs at both ends of the downtown mall area.

Moved by Baublitz, second by Gray to purchase two “No Truck” signs as presented by the City Manager with one sign placed at S. Pine River/Center St and another placed at S. Main St/Center St at a cost not to exceed \$5,000.00 and amend the budget for the purchase. Motion carried.

City Manager Conn reported that City Hall staff had been quarantined and are returning to work, however there have been people with COVID coming in to City Hall to make payments and do business. The plan in place, which complies with the new health order, is for City Hall to be open by appointment only until January 18, 2020. Staff will work remotely through December 8th except coming in as necessary to complete work that cannot be done remotely. The phone will be answered and the Library will be moving to curbside pickup only during this time.

Manager Conn asked C-T Fandell to provide an update on the Community Center doors. C-T Fandell referenced the quote provided for replacement of both sets of double doors at the Community Center for replacement of the broken and worn doors. The cost of replacement is \$7800 without Auto Openers to assist with ADA; which could be added at a later date. Previously, it was discussed to write a grant to assist with the auto opening devices, these grants are open in May. The City could replace the doors now with General Fund dollars and write for the grants, later. Another option would be to utilize Caldwell Funds for the entire project or for the replacement doors and use General Fund for the openers. This is a project that benefits the entire community. The auto openers will cost between \$6,000-\$7,000 for one side of both sets of doors.

Moved by Baublitz, second by Andrew to approve the replacement of both the interior and exterior doors at the Community Center and add the Automatic Openers by Advanced Glass; with funding to come from the Caldwell Fund at a cost not to exceed \$15,000.00. Motion carried.

City Manager Conn further reported that he contacted the IPC representatives regarding the Christmas parade and new restrictions for outdoor gatherings and possible option to change the date. IPC met and has made the decision to cancel the Christmas event because of the new restrictions.

New Business

C-T Fandell presented the MERS Defined Contribution Plan Adoption Agreement Addendum for consideration. The addendum has been requested by MERS because effective January 1, 2021 it is implementing several modifications to the way in which the plans are administered. The addendum is required to indicate changes and/or provision clarifications the City may make based on these modifications. The Defined Contribution Plan Adoption Agreement Addendum presented, makes no changes and only confirms the current adopted plan in place, unless Council chooses to make changes.

Moved by Baublitz, second by Gray to adopt the Municipal employees Retirement System Defined Contribution Plan Adoption Agreement Addendum for plan 290401106164 effective January 1, 2021 and authorize the City Clerk-Treasurer to sign and file. Motion carried.

City Manager Conn stated he received a request from Mrs. Vusich, who resides in the home abutting Memory Park. Mrs. Vusich would like to replace some bushes in the park. He advised her that he would bring it to the City Council as long as there was no cost to the City and no additional maintenance for the DPW staff. She is agreeable to those terms.

Moved by Gray, second by Baublitz to allow Mrs. Vusich to replace some of the shrubs in Memory Park at her cost, with the type being approved by the City so no additional maintenance would be needed. Motion carried.

Mayor Schafer stated she received a phone call from a citizen concerned that the crossing guards would not be paid during the school shut down and was upset about it. She informed the resident that the crossing guards were employed by Gratiot County and follow their personnel policies; but would share the concerns with the Council.

Old Business

Councilperson Gruesbeck asked for an update on the security project for the City buildings. Councilperson Hubbard shared he has some ideas prepared for the city, but still needs to meet with the Fire Chief and also determine if the city is handling the Library security or if the Library Board will be handling it. It has been determined that the water and sewer cannot work off the SCADA system, but we can set independent cameras at each site. He gave a brief review of the project progress and asked for another meeting of the committee to be set up. It was decided the Technology Committee will meet the first week of December and Councilperson Hubbard will contact staff with the date.

Director Studt updated the Council on the Shell station water sampling and issues with its water quality. Testing has been done all around the line and the issues are isolated to just the Shell station. EGLE has been on site to evaluate and are working with the corporation as the problems are within the facility itself. He further informed the Council that the Leaf Vector truck was still down and waiting for the part to arrive. The crew tried to repair it without the part, but were unsuccessful so we need to wait for it; it is supposed to arrive in the next day or two.

Public Comment

Mayor Schafer asked for public comments. None were offered.

Mayor Schafer asked for any additional business to come before the Council. None was offered.

Moved by Gray, second by Baublitz to adjourn. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:47pm.

Barbara Fandell, City Clerk-Treasurer