

**CITY OF ITHACA
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
April 20, 2021
7:00 PM**

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca City Council was called to order by Mayor Schafer at 7:00pm. and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Councilperson 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 and City Clerk Cathy Cameron.

Absent was Attorney Jefferson Arnold.

Staff in attendance was City Treasurer Barbara Fandell and Lt. Roy McCollum.

Audience in attendance via zoom was Sean Beckman.

Councilperson Gray reported the reference of Councilperson Clark (change to Hubbard) within the minutes. Clerk Cameron stated a correction would be made to the minutes.

Moved by Gray, second by Koppleberger to approve the minutes, with correction, of the regular meeting of the City Council held on April 6, 2021. Motion carried.

Mayor Schafer asked for approval of the Agenda and for items to be removed from the Consent Agenda.

Moved by Andrew, second by Gray to approve the Agenda and the Consent Agenda. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Mayor Schafer asked for public comments. Sean Beckman expressed his appreciation for DPW Director Studt and that he will miss working with him.

Consent Agenda

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

- **City Manager's written report which included updates and information on the flowers for downtown, the sanitary landfill, appointment of Street Administrator, Planning Commission, Habitat Open House and Rotary signage.**
- **Library Minutes – March 2021**
- **Claims submitted to the Ways and Means Committee by City Treasurer Fandell and recommended for payment: Accounts Payable Checks #47351-47395 and Payroll Checks #16166-16175, DD #1861-1870, EFT #1263-1267 as listed in the Check Register Book.**
- **Correspondence received: CG Habitat for Humanity, GACC Minutes, State Election Recognition.**

Motion carried by Roll Call Vote:

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

Nos: (0) None

Absent: (0) None

Department Reports

Lt. McCollum reported on the quarterly activity of the Ithaca Unit for January through March of 2021. There were 183 traffic stops, 85 tickets, 150 verbal warnings, 47 arrests, 3997 inspections and 330 complaints. Further reporting that they had 3 drivers while license suspended, 3 drivers with no insurance, 8 motorist assists, 16

property damage accidents, 0 personal injury accidents, 20 unlocked business, 0 drunk drivers, 5 no drivers license, 0 violation of restriction, 4 off road accidents (in parking lots) and 1 possession of meth. Comparing these stats to the same time last year, the numbers are down significantly.

Manager Conn shared that he had a conversation with a resident who was unhappy with the policing of the city. His concerns were related to incidents that happened several years ago. Manager Conn relayed to him that the County has a new Sheriff and that things were going better now. The resident was appreciative of the time Manager Conn took to speak with him and felt reassured.

Moved by Hubbard, second by Koppleberger to receive the Ithaca Unit March 2021 written report and the 1st Quarter 2021 verbal report. Motion carried.

Treasurer Fandell reported on the state of finances for the quarter of January through March of 2021. The cemetery fund no longer meets the definition of its own fund due to the majority of its financing coming from the general fund. Treasurer Fandell requested authorization from the council to make this change effective beginning in April so that by the end of this fiscal year the cemetery fund will be dissolved and rolled into the general fund.

Moved by Hubbard, second by Gray to roll the cemetery fund into the general fund beginning on April 1, 2021. Motion carried.

Treasurer Fandell updated council on the list of utility delinquencies that were previously approved to be placed on taxes. Over half of those accounts have had monies collected. Councilperson Gray inquired on the status of the account with the highest amount outstanding. Treasurer Fandell informed council that the water service had been shut off at that house.

Treasurer Fandell stated that the introduction of the budget was not ready at this time. While working on the budget there have been several hurdles due to COVID, revenue estimate changes, staff transition and illnesses related to COVID; that more time is needed to finalize the budget and is requesting to postpone the introduction to the May 4, 2021 meeting.

Treasurer Fandell reported that there have been some issues with the library millage distribution from last year which may result in the library having to repay some of the distributed amount. She is working with the new County Treasurer to help resolve the issue and should any repayment be required; it will be deducted from this year's distribution.

Moved by Koppleberger, second by Hubbard to receive the Financial Report for the 1st Quarter 2021. Motion carried.

City Manager Comments

Manager Conn informed Council that the DDA had agreed to pay for half of the cost of the flowers for downtown this year. Cathy Timmons has offered to train our seasonal staff on the watering and care of the flowers.

Manager Conn reported that he has received seven proposals for the clean up of the west sanitary landfill. Sean Beckman has reviewed them and will be meeting together soon to discuss them. The proposals came in around \$25,000 to \$35,000.

The Planning Commission met to review a site plan for Trident Manufacturing who received a variance of 14' for the south side yard setback for the new addition. Habitat for Humanity will be hosting a house dedication on April 24th at 9:30am., at 401 Barber Street and expressed their appreciation to the City for their assistance with the project. The invitation was extended to the entire City Council.

Manager Conn received a request from the Ithaca Rotary about placing road signs near the four entrances of the City. Councilperson Gray stated that at one time there were signs that listed all the clubs. Treasurer Fandell stated that when the school championship panels were removed from the City entrance signs, that discussion was held about having all the local service organizations listed in that space.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

Mayor Schafer presented the Annual 2020 Planning Commission & Zoning Board of Appeals Report.

Moved by Hubbard, second by Gray to receive to Annual 2020 PC & ZBA Report. Motion carried.

Treasurer Fandell stated that the Charter requires the Budget Introduction be submitted by the second meeting of April each year. Treasurer Fandell requested acknowledgement of the Charter requirement however, due to circumstances is requesting authorization from the Council to postpone until the May 4th regular meeting.

Moved by Andrew, second by Hubbard to approve the postponement of the Budget Introduction to the May 4, 2021 council meeting. Motion carried.

Clerk Cameron presented the Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption Application from Trident Manufacturing and requested the council to set a public hearing for May 4, 2021. Councilperson Gray inquired on the request. Manger Conn stated that Trident Manufacturing is adding an 8,400 sq. ft. addition to the building for more production space. Clerk Cameron followed up stating that the owner of Trident Manufacturing and a representative for Greater Gratiot Development would be attending the meeting.

Moved by Gray, second by Kopplesberger to set a public hearing for the IFE request from Trident Manufacturing for May 4, 2021 council meeting. Motion carried.

Manager Conn presented Resolution 2021-04 Street Administrator Designation. Upon DPW Director Studt's retirement; a new MDOT Street Administrator must be designated.

Moved by Kopplesberger, second by Gray to adopt Resolution 2021-04 Street Administrator Designation; designating City Manager Jamey Conn to fill the role and authorize the City Manager and City Clerk to sign the document.

Motion carried by Roll Call Vote:

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

Nos: (0) None

Absent: (0) None

Clerk Cameron presented Resolution 2021-05 Honoring DPW Director Robert Studt. Director Studt will be retiring after 15 years of service to the City and will be greatly missed. The resolution will be presented to Director Studt at his retirement luncheon with his family, co-workers and council present.

Moved by Hubbard, second by Andrew to adopt Resolution 2021-05 Honoring DPW Director Robert Studt and placed on file.

Motion carried by Roll Call Vote:

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

Nos: (0) None

Absent: (0) None

Manager Conn introduced Ordinance 2021-01 Amending Chapter 38, Section 51: Cross Connections. The Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy has added requirements along with new language, which requires us to amend our ordinance on cross connections to reflect these updates. Councilperson Gray stated that the old ordinance was for commercial operations with backflow preventors and inquired if this change is going to affect residential households. Manager Conn replied that this new ordinance language would include residential households. Discussion was held on these mandates coming down from EGLE and how the City will respond or enforce them.

Moved by Baublitz, second by Hubbard to set a public hearing for Ordinance 2021-01 Amending Chapter 38, Section 51: Cross Connections, for May 4, 2021 council meeting. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Mayor Schafer asked for public comments. Councilperson Hubbard provided an update on the security project. Work will begin soon on the trench to connect the two DPW buildings, then will be ready for the doors when they come in to be installed followed by the security cameras and wiring connections will be made. Manger Conn stated that the doors are six weeks out from ordering to delivery. Discussion was held on the need to replace the City Hall front entrance doors. There is an issue with the door closing properly now with the new door locks installed. Treasurer Fandell stated that there is \$150,000 in the current budget for updates to City Hall. Mayor Schafer was supportive of purchasing new front entrance doors for City Hall to promote the effectiveness of the security that was installed. Manager Conn agreed on starting with the entrance doors and will work on developing a plan to begin implementing updates to City Hall. Councilperson Hubbard stated that updating in phases gives us the ability to make progress over time as budget allows.

Mayor Schafer asked for any additional business to come before the Council. Manager Conn inquired if council wanted to give permission for security camera access to Lt. McCollum. Mr. Hubbard stated that the cameras can store up to 30 days of activity. Consensus was to defer that decision to Manager Conn. Manager Conn stated that the new owners of 129 E Center Street would like to install an outdoor stairwell on the east side of the building (off the alley way) going down onto the public sidewalk. Councilperson Gruesbeck remembered that there was one there many years ago. Mayor Schafer acknowledged that there is an outdoor staircase in the same alley way across the street. Manager Conn inquired if anyone remembers there ever being residential living on the second floor of 127 E Center Street. No one specifically could remember at that location.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

Cathy Cameron, City Clerk