

**MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 14, 2023**

A special meeting of the Common Council of the City of Oneida, NY was held on the fourteenth day of November 2023 at 6:30 pm at the City of Oneida Common Council Chambers, 109 N. Main Street, Oneida NY 13421.

The meeting was called to order by Deputy Mayor, Michelle Kinville

<u>Attendees</u>	Present	Absent	Arrived Late
Councilor Szczerba	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor Laureti	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor Rossi	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor Kinville	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor Pagano	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor Simchik	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

Also Present

City Attorney Nadine Bell	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fire Chief Scott Jones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
City Clerk Sandy LaPera	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Parks & Rec Director Luke Griff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
City Engineer Jeff Rowe	<input type="checkbox"/>	Police Chief Steve Lowell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Codes Director Bob Burnett	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Safety Com. Kevin Salerno	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Comptroller Lee Ann Wells	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Councilor Elect Andrea Hitchings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Councilor Elect Rob Winchell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**2024 CITY OF ONEIDA BUDGET DISCUSSION
PARKS AND RECREATION
Director-Luke Griff**

Parks and Recreation Director, Luke Griff, addressed the Council to review his 2024 Budget.

Director Griff went through his proposed budget, line by line. He requested a fourth seasonal recreation maintenance worker to be added to his 103 line at a cost of \$21,120.00, because he had requested a full-time maintenance worker that was cut in the Mayors budget. Director Griff noted that he had at least 4 seasonal maintenance workers in the past, and the position is needed.

Pool salaries were discussed, and they are looking to keep the pool hours open the same, which is noon to 7pm, with possibly extending an extra hour this year and including Sunday (noon to 4:30-same as Saturday). The potential for additional revenue was mentioned, and it was noted that currently there are enough lifeguards to cover the hours of operation, which was an issue in the past. Pool chemicals for chlorine was kept at \$10,000, which was not enough this past summer. Councilor Szczerba inquired about using a chlorine generator. Director Griff advised that for a public pool, you have to use chlorine.

Director Griff advised that he put in for a Park Program, which was cut by the Mayor for \$54,000, as he has been getting a lot of requests from residents.

Councilor Laureti inquired if our Fire Department could do inspections for fire extinguishers, to which Fire Chief Jones advised only minor inspections could be done, as they do not have a way to service them.

There was some discussion pertaining to line item 2032, Contracts and Entertainment, and if there was enough interest to make this worthwhile. Director Griff stated that they had a good turnout when the Farmer's Market was there, but not with the concerts alone, in response to a question from Councilor Laureti. Further discussion was held about whether the Farmer's Market was going to be run by OC3 next summer. Councilor Laureti suggested changing things up by having a food truck night, to which Director Griff responded that there would need to be a significant number of people potentially present for them to be willing to participate. There is competition from other municipalities, and there would need to be another draw to get people to come.

Zumba was discussed, noting that in the past, Zumba instructors did this for free; however, if this changed, Director Griff wanted to have money in the budget to cover any expense. Noted as well though, was that the department could also charge the participants to offset that cost. Art Camp and the Rail Trail were also discussed briefly. Art Camp has not been done in a few years, as they do not have someone to run the program. It was advised that the Pavilion at Harmon Field, which is in the ARPA Fund, needs repair (roof replacement).

There was discussion pertaining to other items in the ARPA Fund. Director Griff advised the Council that if the Kubota tractor is cut from the budget, he will need \$5,000 to repair the tractor they currently have which needs a new transmission. This is used for mowing and wood chips. The baseball/softball field groomer for dragging fields used during the summer months was mentioned, and it was noted that Little League does their own. The Ferris mower was discussed, including trade in value, repair, and the potential for the City to contract out for lawn mowing services due to the time spent by employees mowing and the cost for mowers, repair and maintenance.

Discussion was had regarding the Oneida Rail Trail Improvements. Director Griff requested \$8,000 but noted that he has secured \$12,000 in donations and grant funds from the Gorman Foundation and the Oneida Savings Bank Foundation, to help offset the cost of the project. Director Griff also contacted the Madison County Highway Department, who agreed to help haul stone and the use of their paver. He noted that without these contributions, it would be a \$25,000 project if contracted out. There is the potential to get more outside funding to further offset the cost, which he will investigate. Director Griff explained that a stone dust surface would be installed along 3 different sections of the Rail Trail, and in his opinion, defines the trail more, make it more visible, and would eliminate the need for mowing. Director Griff would like to see the entire trail be stone dust.

The Capital Project to resurface the basketball and tennis courts at Allen Park (24-10) for \$50,000 was also

discussed. Both are in dire need of replacements. He noted that they cannot be repaved at this point, they would need to be milled and paved. Comptroller Wells advised that there is no money in this Budget allocated for it, and it would need to be funded by serial bond. Director Griff suggested that it could potentially be tied into the DRI, as work at Vet's Field will be done under that.

Council thanked Director Griff, and the Parks and Recreation Budget Meeting concluded at 7:03p.m.

CITY OF ONEIDA

Sandra LaPera, City Clerk

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**2024 CITY OF ONEIDA BUDGET DISCUSSION
FIRE DEPARTMENT
Fire Chief-Scott Jones**

The Council welcomed Fire Chief, Scott Jones, to discuss his 2024 Budget.

- Salaries are contractual. The Mayor cut \$2,000, which was put in by Chief Jones in anticipation of adding 2 inspectors.
- Overtime is below the average for the last 6 years. This is based off requirements, sick time, military time.
- Retirement- no anticipated retirement currently.
- Holidays are contractual and were increased due to pay increases.

- EMS Training Overtime-this is to maintain EMS training levels and to increase the level of ALS providers. Originally, this request was for \$65,000, but was reduced to \$20,500.
- Fire Marshal Overtime-Chief Jones stated that his Department is a “young” department, and he has some senior guys who are potentially retiring in the next few years. He does not want a gap, and he needs time to train new people. Training can take up to 3 years in some cases for certification, which includes both in class and in the field.
- Training overtime is up from last year due to mandatory training to maintain certifications. They try to do as much of this as possible in house.
- Personal Leave-the stated number will only cover half of what each person gets contractually. This is new in the current contract and does not get rolled over. If it is not funded through the Personal Leave time, it will be paid through the Overtime line.
- Short Shift Staffing Overtime-this is for pre-scheduled overtime.
- Fire Equipment-Fire hoses, old equipment-replace with newer, safer equipment that is more user friendly. He also noted having an Opticom System-not all lights are fully outfitted, but this system makes it safer for the Firefighters/EMS, as well as pedestrians, and gives the emergency vehicle the right of way, thus pausing traffic in the other directions.
- EMS Equipment-this went down this year and is for nonperishable equipment.
- Cardiac Monitor-was moved into the ARPA Fund by the Mayor. Chief Jones currently has 2, and the older one needs to be replaced, as it is obsolete now and can no longer be serviced.
- Medical Supplies-Same as previous years, medications, IV's etc. Chief Jones noted they usually wait until the end of the year and place a large order at that time.
- Clothing-uniforms-contractual
- Turnout Gear-Maintenance-all gear has a 10-year life cycle. Avoids having a large purchase at one time. This is also for third party cleaning and repair.
- SCBA (Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus)-went down this year, working on buying new bottles; the bottles have a 15-year life cycle and were purchased in 2015. They will expire in 2030., so they are slowly replacing them.
- Contracts are computer programs -some were transferred to the IT line.
- Rescue Fee Payments-remain the same.
- Building Maintenance & Repairs-intercom system in the Fire Department, which is in dire need of repair as soon as possible. Chief Jones is currently waiting for quotes.
- Chief's Expense-no change

- New Hire Expense-they have 2 people that are eligible to retire, but no one has advised that they will be retiring.
- Equipment Repair & Maintenance-Mayor cut by \$5,000. This is for required annual testing and preventative maintenance for Fire Department apparatus, which is roughly \$20,000. That will only leave \$2,000 if something breaks. Chief Jones recently had aerial testing done on both aerial devices and ladders that had some failures that need to be fixed to get them certified. They will try to get as many as they can done this year, but some will have to go into 2024. The ladders can be used, but they are not certified at this point. These are not major failures, but they do need to be repaired.
- Radio Maintenance & Repair-no change
- Training-tuition portion. This is where money from the 107 line was moved to. The plan concerning those retiring is critical care. They need to train more personnel for this level. By 2030, the critical care level is no longer recognized in the State, so they either must move to a paramedic level or drop them down. If not at a paramedic level, they cannot provide the level of service they do now, even with the paramedics that are on staff. If we are not recognized as a Level 4 Paramedic Agency, they can't practice at that level, even if they have certification. This is a 10-month class, and there is a waiting list to get in. The next class starts in September, and they will not finish until June of 2025. Chief Jones is working with a grant writer to hopefully get a grant for this. He noted that he is asking for this now, as by time he gets word on the grant, they will miss the deadline to get in the class. Currently, they always have 2 ALS providers on. The department currently has 11 ALS providers, including critical care and paramedics, with the majority being critical care. They can either retire, or they will lose their certification by the end of 2030.
- Promotional Clothing went down with no anticipated retirements.
- Annual Physicals is contracted through WellNow.
- Fire Marshal Account-this went up to cover the tuition cost for the Fire Investigators that were mentioned earlier, along with other certifications required.

Chief Jones advised that he would like to expand his Fire Prevention Program into the schools and to start a program for the senior living facilities as goals for 2024.

There was discussion about the shifts, and it was noted that there are 4 full shifts/24 hours on, 72 off. Chief Jones also discussed Capital Project 24-7 (Fire Auto Pulse). This is an automatic device that gives CPR. He explained that once this is turned on, the patient can be moved and does not need to be stationary. This is to replace the Zoll Auto Pulse and add an additional Auto Pulse to the backup rescue, so the primary and secondary rescues are outfitted with the same equipment. Zoll has updated the Auto Pulse since the initial one was purchased 10 years ago and is starting to show some wear. The batteries and band are not compatible between the two different machines. A benefit of the newer machine is when at the hospital and a Cat scan is needed, they can go directly in the machine, and it does not need to be removed. Another benefit is that it is the same brand as the monitor currently used, in which they can talk to each other and provide a chronological report of what has happened.

Lastly, Chief Jones discussed the Recue Vehicle and leasing vs purchase was discussed. He would like to move forward with this. The cost, if purchased outright, would be roughly \$90,000 with the outfit. The current vehicle has been owned for approximately 10 years, and the mileage is low. The cost of outfitting vehicle, including Police vehicles, was also discussed.

The Fire Department Budget Meeting concluded at 7:45p.m.

Sandy LaPera, City Clerk