

**MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 8, 2021**

A special meeting of the Common Council of the City of Oneida, NY was held on the eighth day of November, 2021 at 6:00 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 Thomas Simchik

<u>Attendees</u>	Present	Absent	Arrived Late
Mayor Acker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor Earl	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor Laureti	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor Coulthart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor Kinville	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor DuBois	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6:04PM
Councilor Simchik	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

Also Present

City Clerk Sandy LaPera	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deputy City Clerk Andrea Hitchings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Comptroller Lee Ann Wells	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fire Chief Dennis Fields	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Recreation Director Luke Griff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PS Commissioner Kevin Salerno	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

City Comptroller Wells gave an update from a previous budget meeting with regard to the HVAC Chiller Replacement, stating that the amount of \$75,000 is only for the preliminary design. This was located within the DPW Capital Projects that was discussed at the DPW meeting on 11/4/21. Additionally, the Comptroller explained that the large increase in the budget line for the Street Maintenance OT is attributed to the fact that in prior years, the amounts for OT Street Maintenance were separated between OT and Snow/Ice Removal. In 2020, that amount is consolidated into the one line, making it appear skewed. The Comptroller also mentioned she is working on copier leases and getting that organized.

2022 CITY OF ONEIDA BUDGET DISCUSSION

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Deputy Mayor Tom Simchik welcomed Fire Chief Fields and Public Safety Commissioner Salerno. The

Deputy Mayor stated that we would go line by line and discuss as needed. Chief Fields confirmed that all had a copy of the Fire Department's Budget Narrative.

A copy of Chief Fields' Budget Narrative is hereby received and placed on file and [attached](#) to the minutes.

Salaries- 001.3410.0101

- Chief Fields stated that the Salary line is prepared by Comptroller Wells. The Comptroller reminded everyone that the amount disclosed includes longevity increases but does not take into account any changes due to contractual increases. Chief Fields stated that he had hoped the negotiations would be completed by now.
- Chief Fields addressed the salary for the Fire Department. He specifically pointed out that he is requesting an 8% increase for himself. He justified this increase by reiterating that Department Heads did not receive an increase last year, and that if you look at it that way, it is 4% each year. He went on to explain that he has taken on additional responsibilities since the start of COVID. Councilor Coulthart voiced concerns about the increase, stating that his concerns had nothing to do with Chief Fields' capabilities and that obviously we have to be concerned about public safety, but it is strictly a cost issue for the City. Chief Fields stated with the sales tax revenue and the ARPA money coming in, there is no reason why this was not addressed in July. Chief Fields further explained that he feels that it is a fair request and that it is not fair that 2 of his employees make more than him. Councilor Coulthart responded that he does not know how it would happen that Chief Fields makes less than his employees, to which Councilor DuBois responded that it is because of the Union. Councilor DuBois further stated that we are asking the Fire Chief to do more and that she supports the raise. Chief Fields further stated that he makes less than the Police Chief by \$12,000 and has lower longevity increases. Councilor Coulthart suggested that perhaps this should be sourced out and that perhaps this should be a contract with an outside agency. Comptroller Wells commented that the Department Heads seek the Chief's input and ask questions almost daily and that he has been a great resource for the HR Department especially. Councilor DuBois commented that it changes daily and is a ton of work. Councilor Earl agreed and asked how much time Chief Fields devotes to COVID duties, and he responded that he currently spends about 5-6 hours a week, but during the height of the pandemic, it was a full-time responsibility and that he spent all week following the updates. Councilor Simchik stated that it fell to the Fire Chief, because it is an emergency situation, and it makes sense that he is in charge of this. Chief Fields agreed and added that he also has the most medical knowledge. Councilor Earl asked for the Chief's professional opinion on whether or not he felt that the COVID reporting would die down, to which he responded, that in his professional opinion and his opinion only, at some point it will be treated more like the flu. Deputy Mayor Simchik stated that they will also look at all Department Heads' raises separately to make sure Council is comfortable across the board and stated that he wanted to make sure the Chief had the opportunity to speak.

Overtime- 001.3410.0102

- Chief Fields explained that, for the Overtime Line, 90% of overtime within his department is paid from this line as this relates to operational overtime with emergency call back to ensure Fire Department staffing during multiple calls remains in line with OSHA and PESH regulations. Per these regulations, the department must maintain 5 firefighters per shift, so if 2 are called out, then 2 have to be called in to cover for the 2 that left on a call. He further stated that

firefighters do not earn OT unless they work over a certain number of hours without a day off. Time and a half is rare in the Fire Department. Councilor Coulthart questioned the requirements with the number of 5. Chief Fields commented the 5th is the pump operator, and this is an OSHA law not a policy. The pump operator must do this exclusively. Injuries, sick leave, and military leave are also included in this budget line.

Holiday Pay- 001.3410.0104

- Holiday Pay is contractual and therefore, is not negotiable at Budget discussions, but rather, it is negotiated and set during Union Contract discussions. The amount has increased because of salary increases. Chief Fields commented that there is a shortfall of \$6,500.00 and that he needs at least \$75,500.00, and this is contractual. Councilor Coulthart questioned when the contract is up, and Chief Fields stated December 31, 2021. The \$75,500 accounts for increases. If the increases are different, they may have to seek additional funds later on.

EMT Training Overtime 001.3410.0107

- Training monies is requested to maintain state required training depending upon the firefighter's level. We do some training in-house and do get some monies back from the state for the Pilot Program. Chief Fields stated the expense depends on what certifications are needed. The Fire Department has ALS and BLS instructors. Councilor Coulthart questioned whether or not the training is done on duty, and the Chief responded that yes most of it is, except for the ACLS and some other types of training which are conducted offsite. Chief Fields stated that multiple members want to go from basic EMT to medic/paramedic, and there is an expense to that. We supply the ALSFR- First Response Rescue team. The Fire Department Rescue can do everything that an ambulance can do but transport. Chief Fields further commented that at times we are waiting for ambulances to come from Morrisville sometimes and there are a lot of delays. Councilor DuBois commented that we need it, to which Chief Fields commented, that yes, it would be nice if we could fund 1 or 2 a year. Councilor Coulthart further asked that if there is an emergency call-out, is there a definition of emergency so that people are not calling when it is not necessary. Chief Fields stated that yes, there is a definition, but that we have to answer every call, and we cannot prioritize calls like the police can. The community does abuse it, but they have to answer every call. Councilor Coulthart stated that we have ambulances local, to which Councilor DuBois stated that no one wants to do that when you can go flip burgers for more money. Councilor Coulthart's concerns stem from the fact that we have lost 1/3 of taxes since we no longer have the Flats and that people are pinching pennies. He does not want a disconnect between the City spending money and the community having to be frugal. Councilor Coulthart further commented that the Council has not said no very much, to which Councilor DuBois commented that they did say no to all raises. Councilor Simchik commented that calls are coded, and the wrong information may be given but they have to take all calls and that this is why we cannot pick and choose. Chief Fields agreed that they don't know what they are walking into. Councilor Earl commented that she assumes that with the hospitals taking on more and more with COVID, that this creates an overflow of emergency calls, to which Chief Fields agreed and further stated ambulances are being delayed 2-3 hours in the bay. Councilor Earl further commented that we need to have the right equipment and services to ensure that we follow the protocols, and sometimes we are stuck with Union Contracts and citizens, and maybe we as a City need to discuss and explain things better to make sure the community understands what we do. Councilor Earl reiterated these are things we need to discuss.

Fire Marshall Overtime 001.3410.0108

- The overtime for the Fire Marshall increased for 2022 compared to this year because for 2021, it was cut drastically due to the pandemic. The Fire Department was not allowed in the schools, but they plan to start the programs again, and there is a cost associated with the firefighters going to the schools. Chief Fields recommends bringing the amount back to pre-pandemic figures, as visits to schools for programs will resume in full next year. Councilor Earl questioned why the amount is over budget this year since they have not been able to go out to the schools for the programs as much this year, to which Chief Fields commented he was not sure without looking further into it. Councilor Coulthart commented wondering if we were saving money without the Housing Inspector, and Chief Fields stated that the Housing Inspector needs to come out from that template. Councilor Coulthart also questioned the other inspectors, and Chief Fields explained that this is from maintaining commercial and business inspections. Councilor Coulthart further reiterated that he just wants to make sure that these are things we need and not just wants. Chief Fields confirmed that the entire budget is what is needed to maintain the department and not what the department wants.

Fire Training Overtime 001.3410.0109

- Chief Fields stated that this line should be swapped with the Training budget line in the amount of \$6,000.00, as the Training requires the \$12,000.00.

Personal Leave 001.3410.0112

- Chief Fields explained that rarely is personal time used by the firefighters. He increased it in case the amount increases due to contract negotiations.

Short Shift Staffing 001.3410.0114

- Short Shift Staffing was created in 2014 to cover the amount of overtime as a result of short-staffing due to people retiring. There are 2, possibly 3, firefighters retiring this year. The Short Shift Staffing applies to the lag between the time the people retire and the new people have completed the academy. The Mayor has cut this line, and Chief Fields stated it is up to Council what kind of budget they want. Comptroller Wells stated that she believed the Mayor's thought process was one that this line item could be included in the regular overtime line. Councilor Coulthart questioned who may be retiring, to which Chief Fields stated that the person eligible is the Deputy Chief.

EMS Equipment 001.3410.0201

- EMS Equipment is included in the ARPA, and if they decide to remove this from the ARPA then it has to be moved to this budget line, as it is imperative they have these items. Councilor DuBois questioned if it is expired items or what it consists of. The items are listed with the ARPA expenses, and the monitors are at the end of the life cycle and need to be replaced.

Medical Supplies 001.3410.0300

- Councilor Coulthart questioned if the Medical Supplies can be added to the ARPA. Comptroller Wells stated that it could be, but to remember we have until 2024 to use the ARPA funds. Councilor Coulthart believes we will not use \$100,000 for the sound system. Councilor Earl and Simchik stated we can always use any unused portion for the sound system at a later date and that we don't want to use it all right away, if possible.

Clothing 001.3410.0317

- Clothing is contractual and cannot be changed.

Turn Out Gear Maintenance 001.3410.0318

- Turn Out Gear budget amount pertains to replacement of and cleaning/repair of equipment. Service life of gear is 10 years. Councilor Simchik questioned how old the average age of gear is. Chief Fields stated it is mostly under 3-4 years old as he buys extra as needed. It then becomes back-up gear. Back-up gear is about 8 years old. The majority of gear for everyone is all under 5 years old. This line also includes gear for new firefighters.

SCBA 001.3410.0400

- SCBA air packs were purchased with a grant, but now those are all expiring at once, and we need to continue replacing so they do not all expire at once. We have been upgrading a few each year to account for this.

Contracts 001.3410.0403

- The department has Contracts for various areas. Chief Fields stated that there are various items in this line that need to be maintained including cell phones, equipment, and online training, to name a few. The department currently has a failure in the Station Alerting System, and the Chief was able to get it working, but barely. Money has been allocated for this item with the ARPA, and if it is not approved within the ARPA, it needs to be moved back to this line, as it is important to have this replaced. Comptroller Wells stated that we are saving \$2,000.00 by purchasing all at once. Councilor Kinville questioned if this was the monitoring program for managing the guys, and the Chief stated that that program she is speaking of was purchased last year, and the cost is expensed here for the contract. Chief Fields stated that with that system, he can pull it up on his phone and find out who is on duty, who is on OT, who used sick time, COVID cases, injuries, etc. Comptroller Wells added that with regard to injuries, line 207A on the budget was skipped over and pertains to the salary of the injured firefighter.

Building Maintenance & Repair 001.3410.0405

- Building Repairs and Maintenance pertains to the Firehouse portion of the building. Councilor Kinville questioned if the HVAC system is the same as the rest of City Hall and if the replacement would include this as well, to which Chief Fields commented yes, but not for the air conditioning on the second floor. This is a separate system that was replaced with an Efficiency Grant through National Grid.

New Hire Expense 001.3410.0408

- This includes up to 3 new hires for physicals, Fire Academy, travel time, etc., and this is the cost to replace up to 3. He noted that it may be short, so more money may be needed as the disclosed expense is really only for 2. He may need to request more if there are 3 to replace. Councilor Coulthart questioned if anyone would be transferring in, but Chief Fields stated there are no prospects for a lateral transfer. Commissioner Salerno stated this is not the case, as typically they transfer out and not in.

Equipment Repair & Maintenance 001.3410.0409

- Chief Fields stated how expensive it is to maintain and repair fire trucks and fire equipment.

Chief Fields stated that all need to understand just how expensive these maintenance and repairs can be. Brakes cost upwards of \$4,000 and front tires alone are \$2,000. This is money that needs to be budgeted, as if something breaks, we need to be able to fix it.

Radio Maintenance & Repairs 001.3410.0410

- This line includes existing radios, and there is a capital project from last year for new radios. The radios are at the end of use, and the County did not have forethought on replacing them 10 years ago. There was a grant last year where they were able to get 5 new radios and will be getting 4 this year. Hopefully there will be more grant money available this year to replace more. They did commit to providing a new radio whenever a firetruck is replaced. We have 26 portable radios plus 7 mobile radios. The radios are quite expensive, and we would like to use grant money for the actual radios. Radios right now are about \$4,000-\$6,000. Councilor Coulthart stated there is a \$225,000 bond for this, and Chief Fields confirmed this, to which Comptroller Wells commented that there is a bond, but we have not used it yet. Comptroller Wells further stated that we are waiting to see the final amount as we have been able to fund using grant money. She advised that this will decrease the capital project if we can continue to get more grant money. Chief Fields reiterated this line is for batteries, antennas for existing radios.

Fire Marshall Account 001.3410.0438 Fire Marshall Account

- This line item was reduced last year because they were not able to get into the schools to conduct the demonstrations or do other training and did not have a need to purchase the fire prevention materials. Chief Fields stated that he is ok with the amount being less the \$2,000 as he has a partially built simulator ready for use ready to be assembled for the demonstration.

Chief Fields completed his review at 7:00pm.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Director Luke Griff presented the Parks and Recreation Department budget to the Common Council. A copy of the Director's narrative was distributed and [is attached](#) to the minutes.

Salaries 001.7140.0101.0000

- Director Griff stated that salaries are mostly contractual per the CSEA Contract and that this amount includes his, the Recreation Coordinator, and Account Clerk salaries. Comptroller Wells reminded the group that the reason for the decrease is due to a retirement of the Account Clerk position, so the replacement salary is less than the retiree's salary. There was discussion about new hire rates being lower versus hiring at a rate of the retiree. In contrast to the Police/Fire Contracts, the CSEA Contracts do not have a large gap in replacement of new hires. The Rec Coordinator and Account Clerk are CSEA positions.

Maintenance Salaries 001.7140.0103.0000

- This has an increase because the Director is requesting a full-time maintenance worker. He stated this was approved in 2019, but due to the pandemic this was not completed. The request was cut from last year's budget. Councilor Earl questioned the current positions, stating she thought that they hired someone in the summer. She further stated to question that the Rec

Department currently has seasonal part-time positions along with the Director, Recreation Coordinator Account Clerk, and another new hire. The Director confirmed that currently there is one seasonal and then the 3 full-time positions. The Director stated that he is always hiring part-time, seasonal people and that the maintenance position was changed around last year. It was a seasonal position at 40 hours during the season but then it was changed to a year-round employee. He stated that it is difficult to keep training part-time seasonal help and that it would be ideal to have one person full-time. Councilor Coulthart questioned what the position needed is and what the duties of this position would be, to which Director Griff answered it is for a full-time maintenance worker, and this person would do whatever and be wherever they need to be. They would do work right along with the crew. There may be a slower time for that person during December-February where the work would be indoors, mostly at the Rec Center, except for snow removal. This person would be responsible for removing snow from The Kallet Civic Center, Recreation Center, Parks, and Trails. Also included would be maintenance to all of the equipment, table repairs, bench repair, painting, and anything else that needs to be done. Councilor Earl questioned if that means they would need less part-time people, to which Director Griff responded that, yes it would eliminate the need for a seasonal part-time employee that is at 40 hours a week for 30-32 weeks a year. He stated that he did run the numbers, but he did not have the numbers with him, and between the full-time employee and the seasonal part-time employee that we have to pay unemployment benefits for, there is not a lot of difference in expense. Councilor Earl requested to have Director Griff send those numbers, and Director Griff stated that he would. Councilor Coulthart questioned if there is any kind of certification required for this job, to which Director Griff stated, no, the candidate would have to meet the requirements of the job description and that there are not any certifications needed. Director Griff further stated that he is requesting this to bring stability to this position and that he has been training a seasonal part-time employee for the 10 years that he has been here, starting over each year and losing the training from the prior year. The position is not a tested position, but the application will be sent to the Civil Service Secretary and follow the normal hiring process. Pay rates were also increased to \$15 per hour for part-time and seasonal workers. Director Griff requested this increase to account for any increases in minimum wage and to remain competitive. Comptroller Wells reiterated that, when the budget process started, they were not sure what the rate for minimum wage would be. He asked that they consider this increase as he had 3 positions that they were not able to fill because the salary was not competitive. This must be considered when looking at the wages. Because minimum wage did not increase to \$15.00, there is room to lower this amount from the requested \$15 an hour, as minimum wage is \$13.50. Council discussed the wage and the impact that the higher minimum wage has had on the workforce. Conditions that existed last summer may not be a factor next year. Things may change so that the \$13.50 is competitive. No one knows, but the wage increase needs to be considered or they may not be able to fill positions again next year.

Pool Salaries 001.7140.0104.0000

- The rate for this is also based on the \$15 an hour minimum wage, so this amount can also be adjusted if needed. In years past, a certain amount would be allotted and then if more money was needed, more would be requested from Council. Last year the amount was based on being open for 7 weeks, and this year the pool will be open for an additional 2 weeks. The increase is also attributed to this total 9-week period. Councilor Earl questioned the feedback on being open 2 less weeks, and Director Griff stated that they really did not receive any feedback other than they noticed they were not open in late June like usual. He feels it is beneficial to be open 2 weeks earlier before school lets out, as it makes it helpful for placing kids at the correct swim

levels, noting it is nice to have a place for people to come and swim.

Ferris Mower Purchase 001.7140.0219.0000

- Director Griff stated that this has been going on for years and that this is going great. Director Griff further stated that with being short staffed this year, having the mower was extremely helpful. Councilor Coulthart questioned if, in the current supply climate, it may be difficult to get a new mower. Director Griff stated that they do not get the mower directly from Ferris, and he cannot foresee if that will be an issue or not. There is no contract or formal agreement for this, and it has been an ongoing program for about 4-5 years.

Picnic Tables 001.7140.0220.0000

- Councilors Earl and Coulthart questioned if this is for repairs or purchase. Director Griff stated that this is for repairs and to purchase new materials for existing tables. A lot of the tables that are used, you can buy replacement parts such as wood and metal legs rather than replace the whole table. Councilor Coulthart wondered if we could add this to the ARPA and add to our “wish list” to make sure we have enough for repairs. Comptroller Wells stated that yes, they do have the right to add this to the ARPA. Councilor Kinville questioned if this is its own line item for this year. Director Griff stated that this has typically been categorized within Materials and Supplies or “other” line item. He believes it had its own line before and it was cut. It was not used last year, as the tables were not used as often so repairs were not needed.

Rail Trail Materials 001.7140.0221.0000

- Still more work to be done and need to start converting trail areas to stone dust so that it is more consistent and identifiable as the Rail Trail. This expense includes curb cuts and stone dust for trail areas and ADA accessible grade on Seneca St. Councilor Earl questioned if the grant was done for this, to which Director Griff stated it is. Councilor Earl further questioned if this expense could be included within the ARPA money, to which Comptroller Wells stated that yes it can be. Councilor Coulthart agreed with Councilor Earl that this would be a good idea and will be discussed further at final budget discussion.

Disc Golf Course Equipment 001.7140.0223.0000

- This idea has been in the works for quite a few years. Councilor Earl questioned if there is a group already working on this and raising money for it. Director Griff stated that there is a group that is interested in it. The course will be placed at Allen Park because it fits the layout. With Disc Golf there needs to be obstacles, which is why the trees in Allen Park are ideal for this sport. The Rec Department would only have to install the baskets for this. Disc Golf is becoming a very popular sport, and this will be a great addition to our City Parks.

Other Chemicals Swim Rec/Inst/Suits 001.7140.0307.2025

- This is for chemicals for the pool. Swimsuits do not belong in this line item.

Various Programs 001.7140.0403

- Director Griff explained the various programs provided and expenses incurred related to Refereeing fees, t-shirts, and other expenses. Councilor Coulthart questioned the increase in the Concerts Line 2032, to which Director Griff responded there were more concerts offered this year. Councilor Coulthart questioned the Easter Egg Hunt and was informed that this expense is within the Materials Supplies line item. Councilor Earl stated that for the majority of these

programs, there is a revenue established, and Comptroller Wells agreed. Comptroller Wells suggested that they go through the budget to match up the revenues with the particular program expense to see. Director Griff stated that the Adult Programs pay for themselves but for the others, that is not the case. The others break even or are a loss. A certain portion of the expenses may be offset by revenues collected from the program. Councilor Earl questioned if there are enough employees for all of these programs, and Director Griff stated that they rely heavily on volunteers or in some cases, the expense allotted includes instructors for that particular event. Councilor Earl also questioned whether or not the Rec Commission is able to volunteer. Director Griff stated that there has not been a meeting, because there are not enough people on the committee and that the Mayor is working on filling the Committee. The Committee usually meets every other month. Director Griff further stated that typically there are not enough volunteers from the Rec Commission.

Tree and Stump Removal 001.7140.0420.0000

- Moved to ARPA and will fall under the DPW Tree Contract.

KALLET CIVIC CENTER

Kallet Salaries 001.7521.0101.0000

- The salary increase anticipates increased traffic and busier seasons with more frequent rentals. Councilor Coulthart asked if the activity has increased, to which Director Griff commented that it is busier. The Director cited an example from June 2021 where there was a rental for 15 straight days. Additionally, Director Griff stated that the full-time maintenance worker would be used a lot at the Kallet with the increase in traffic and rentals. Councilor Coulthart questioned if we have anyone doing the marquee, and they do not have anyone dedicated to this responsibility currently.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Councilor Simchik relayed a message from Councilor Laureti, who could not be at the meeting, with regard to the playground at Cooley Park. The equipment has to be new and cannot be used (cannot obtain 3 quotes due to uniqueness of the used equipment), and Director Griff stated that it is on their radar, but the Rec Center would need funding for it. The expense for this depends on what they would want but could be around \$30,000.00. Comptroller Wells stated that the ARPA can be used for this, to which Deputy Mayor Simchik stated that they still have not finished the playground at Allen Park. Director Griff commented that only 1 of the 3 phases has been completed at Allen Park. Each phase for Allen Park is \$25,000.00 for a total of \$75,000.00. Cooley Park currently has a basketball court and is used by the residents of the area. These residents have contacted Director Griff about the possibility of adding a playground. Councilor Earl questioned whether or not it is possible to have different activities instead of a playground. Director Griff stated that, yes, this is possible. Comptroller Wells said to keep in mind that, if the ARPA is not used with this budget, they can talk about the playground during the year and decide if whether it gets expensed to the ARPA or General Fund. Director Griff stated it is easier to get a number for the playground since you can get a price based on what you are looking for, to which Councilor Kinville commented that the equipment at Cooley Park should be consistent with what is at the other City parks. Councilor Earl suggested that each park have a different theme so that residents can “park jump” depending on what activity they would like to do. This could help to keep costs down for equipment at each park. Councilor Coulthart would like to see a walk area around the grass where Alfred’s was.

Councilor Coulthart stated that the soccer fields could still be there but the walk “track” would go around the perimeter. Director Griff stated that there is a portion of the Rail Trail in that area for people to walk on. People can walk on that in either direction and that walk track is a possibility.

ARPA MONEY DISCUSSION

- The City’s tree removal has been moved here because there are a lot of Ash Trees in the parks that need to be removed. DPW can do some, but if the tree is too large then it has to be contracted out.
- Vets Field is in need of new bleachers which is included within the ARPA funds.
- A new fence for Vet’s Field to create a barrier from the fans is included. Bleachers will not be placed on the visitor’s side. This fence will help keep people back.
- Vet’s Field is also in need of new bathrooms at the field and at the pool. The Vet’s Field property is very old and out-of-date and needs a lot of work. This work needs to be completed.
- Discussion took place that it would be great if the expenses come in lower so that we are able to have more of the ARPA funds to use elsewhere should we need it. Vet’s Field definitely needs the work done with this budget. With the current ARPA expense list, we are spending about \$962,000.00 total next year, so if we could save money where we can, then we can do more with the funding. We should not use all of the ARPA in one year. Hopefully we can complete Vet’s Field this year and then other ARPA funding can be used by other departments in subsequent years.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Kinville

The special meeting is hereby adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

CITY OF ONEIDA

Andrea Hitchings, Deputy City Clerk