

**CITY INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 10, 2019
CITY OF PLATTSBURGH COMMON COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MINUTES
4:30PM**

Roll Call: Chair Councilor Moore; Councilor Gibbs; Mayor Read

Others Present: Councilors Armstrong, Kelly, Ensel, McFarlin (*arrived after roll call at 4:45pm*)

Absent: None

1. REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVES AND DISCUSSION WITH COUNCILORS:

1. Council will hold 2020 Budget Sessions with the Department of Public Works, Municipal Lighting Department and Environmental Services.

Environmental Manager Jon Ruff gave budget narrative for Water Resource Recovery Facility and Water Filtration Plant and report is made part of the minutes of this meeting.

Manager MLD Bill Treacy gave budget narrative for Municipal Lighting Department and report is made part of the minutes of this meeting.

Public Works Superintendent Mike Brodi and Assistant Superintendent Mike Bessette gave budget narrative for Public Works Department and report is made part of the minutes of this meeting.

2. AGENDA ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD FROM DEPARTMENTS TO BE APPROVED BY COMMITTEE AND RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

1. Request from the City Chamberlain to adjust the 2019 General Fund Budget by a combined \$46,000 in appropriations for under-budgeted Temporary Pay and Repairs to Motor Vehicles to be funded through a transfer of \$46,000 from Separation Pay within the Fire Department budget.
2. WHEREAS, in accordance with the New York State Environmental Quality Review regulations (SEQR), the Common Council of the City of Plattsburgh announced its intent to serve as Lead Agency on or about August 19, 2019, to conduct an environmental review of a Type I project to complete abatement and demolition of surplus Plattsburgh Municipal Lighting Department structures located at 26 Green Street (hereinafter the "MLD Abatement and Demolition Project"); and

WHEREAS, the Common Council circulated its intent to serve as Lead Agency on or about October 1, 2019, with requisite environmental assessment forms, to other involved and/or interested agencies to review the MLD abatement and Demolition Project and has not received any objections thereto; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council, in its capacity as Lead Agency, has caused to be prepared an environmental assessment of the significance of and potential environmental impact of the action described above; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council has considered the environmental assessment forms, project description, including any comments received from the Involved Agencies, and the proposed Part 2 and 3 and proposed Negative Declaration.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council, as the established Lead Agency for the MLD Abatement and Demolition Project, which is a Type I action under SEQR per 6 NYCRR Part 617.4(b)(9) and as required for funding purposes, declares that, based on the record which has been prepared, including a review and completion of Part 2 of the Full EAF, a Negative Declaration is hereby adopted for the MLD Abatement and Demolition Project as it will result in no major adverse environmental impacts. The filing of this Negative Declaration is hereby ordered in accordance with 6 NYCRR Part 617.11 and this resolution will take effect immediately.

3. Request from Environmental Manager Jon Ruff that the Council authorizes entering in to a Wastewater Treatment Plant Operation Agreement with “The Point” in Saranac Lake subject to the final contract approval of the Mayor and City of Plattsburgh Corporation Counsel.
4. WHEREAS, by resolution dated August 6, 2015, the Common Council of the City of Plattsburgh resolved to encourage city departments and city residents to refrain from the use of GMO seeds and to refrain from the use of pesticides in the practice of lawn care and beautification, in part, to protect pollinating insects; and

WHEREAS, human contact with glyphosate, a prominent herbicide, has been linked to certain cancers and there has been national media coverage regarding litigation against the manufacturers of glyphosate; and

WHEREAS, in early September of 2019, the Press Republican reported about the application of an herbicide, which likely contained glyphosate, on City property located between Lake Champlain and the Terry Gordon Bike Path.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Plattsburgh re-affirms its resolution dated August 6, 2015 in whole, and in particular, with respect to encouraging city departments and city residents to refrain from the use of pesticides and herbicides in the practice of lawn care and beautification; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that City Departments shall refrain from any use of pesticides and herbicides in the maintenance of City Property, absent written approval from the City Mayor; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that no pesticide or herbicide may be used by private parties on City Property, absent written approval from the City Mayor.

5. WHEREAS, the Imperial Dam, located on the Saranac River in Plattsburgh NY, is a Class “C” or “High Hazard” dam; its failure may result in serious damage to residences and infrastructure such that the loss of human life or widespread substantial economic loss is likely; and

WHEREAS, the masonry portion of Imperial Dam is owned by Main Mill Investments and the earthen embankment is owned by the NYSDEC; and

WHEREAS, Imperial Dam has a long history of serious uncorrected safety and habitat deficiencies; and

WHEREAS, the impounded water behind Imperial Dam allows for thick ice to develop, which exacerbates ice jams downstream—most recently and notably, the ice jams which impacted City infrastructure and the Underwood Mobile Home Park; and

WHEREAS, the impounded water behind Imperial Dam is not used for any hydropower electrical generation or industrial use; and

WHEREAS, in addition to these safety deficiencies, Imperial Dam presents an absolute impediment to fish spawning and fish passage on the Saranac River; and

WHEREAS, improved fish passage and improved health of the landlocked salmon fishery in the Saranac would likely increase tourism and recreational opportunities within Plattsburgh;

WHEREAS, New York State has entered into a Consent Order with the owners of Imperial Dam to correct these safety deficiencies and improve fish passage and included in these corrective actions was a proposal to lower and/or breach Imperial Dam; and

WHEREAS, the City of Plattsburgh is willing to facilitate these safety and fish passage goals by allowing for the use of adjacent City-owned property for sediment treatment and storage; improved recreational access; and improved community connections to the Saranac River; and

WHEREAS, the City of Plattsburgh’s Common Council received a presentation by the Lake Champlain Chapter of Trout Unlimited in September of 2019 regarding these issues.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the City of Plattsburgh Common Council supports the removal of Imperial Dam so that these safety deficiencies with the high-hazard dam will be resolved, salmon will re-gain their historic spawning grounds and ice-jams in the future will be mitigated.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Plattsburgh joins and supports the efforts of the Lake Champlain Chapter of Trout Unlimited to petition New York State to remove Imperial Dam.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Plattsburgh has available adjacent City-owned property to facilitate the removal of Imperial Dam and any sediment upstream of the dam.

6. Request from Councilor Armstrong to enter in to agreement with “Open Gov” subject to the final contract approval of the Mayor and City of Plattsburgh Corporation Counsel.

7. Request from Planner Malana Tamer to authorize Clinton County to close six parking spaces to public use on the south side of Cornelia Street between Oak Street and Margaret Street during construction activities on the County's Government Center Parking Lot to accommodate the operations of Clinton County Public Transit. Construction activities are scheduled to begin on Monday, October 14 and are expected to last one month.

By Councilor Gibbs; Seconded by Mayor Read

(RC) Roll call: Chair Councilor Moore; Councilor Gibbs; Mayor Read

(All voted in the affirmative)

3. OLD BUSINESS: None

4. NEW BUSINESS: None

Motion to Adjourn by Councilor Gibbs; Seconded by Councilor Moore

(RC) Roll call: Chair Councilor Moore; Councilor Gibbs; Mayor Read

(All voted in the affirmative)

MEETING ADJOURNED: 5:30pm

PROPOSED 2020 WATER RESOURCE RECOVERY FACILITY BUDGET NARRATIVE

Draft 10-9-19

Positives and Negatives

Positives include:

- Stable budget with 2.9% overall increase.
- Sufficient funding to sustain operations at present level of service.
- Hoping to add organization capacity.

Negatives include:

- Could be tight on lab, chemical, and biosolids disposal costs depending on how bids and regulations go.

Comparison of 2019 Budget to 2020 Budget

Increases/Decreases in Expenditure:

- *Expenses*
 - The overall budget is up \$83,661 (2.9%)
 - \$50,000 is for Capital Outlay
 - Increases efficiency and flexibility
 - Offset by corresponding reduction in Capital Project expenses
 - Regular Payroll is up \$30,667(3.3%)
 - Two promotions to certified operators
 - Partially offset by \$20,000 decrease in Temp Payroll
 - Overtime is up \$3,755 (5.6%)
 - Temporary Payroll is down \$20,000.
 - Equipment is up \$8,750 (29.8%)
 - Bar screen washer housing, lab oven, pH meter
 - Contracted Services is up \$6,850 (0.4%) due to chemicals price increases
 - Capital Outlay is increased by \$50,000 to make smaller projects more flexible and efficient.
 - This offsets small costs in Capital Projects.

Impact of Each Expenditure on Operations/Services:

- The expenditure budget maintains the same level of service as last year by adding some funds for capital outlay and chemical increases.

Personnel Increase/Decrease on Budget and Departmental Services

- Fifteen positions are budgeted
 - Down from sixteen in 2017
 - Reorganized some work assignments to make this permanent
- Three positions are presently vacant
 - Developing plan to repurpose some of these funds to create more organizational capacity and efficiencies

PROPOSED 2020 WATER FILTRATION PLANT BUDGET NARRATIVE

Draft 10-7-19

Positives and Negatives

Positives include:

- Stable budget with 1.8% overall increase.
- Sufficient funding to sustain operations at present level of service.
- Hoping to add organization capacity.

Negatives include:

- Could be tight on lab and chemical costs depending on how bids and regulations go.

Comparison of 2019 Budget to 2020 Budget

Increases/Decreases in Expenditure:

- Expenses
 - The overall budget is up \$9,168 (1.8%)
 - Regular Payroll down \$5,798 (-1.7%)
 - Overtime is up \$1,675 (13.6%) but is restored to the 2018 level
 - Equipment is the same at \$11,991
 - Contracted Services is up \$4,957 (3.9%)
 - \$5,000 is added to chemicals due to price increases
 - Capital Outlay is increased by \$10,000 (40%) to make smaller projects more flexible and efficient. This offsets small costs in Capital Projects.

Impact of Each Expenditure on Operations/Services:

- The expenditure budget maintains the same level of service as last year by adding some funds for capital outlay and chemical increases.

Personnel Increase/Decrease on Budget and Departmental Services

- The personnel level is to remain the same
- Evaluating staffing plan to create more organizational capacity and efficiencies

Municipal Lighting Dept. (MLD) 2020 Budget

The MLD budget for 2019 successfully provided adequate funding to support the resources and personnel required to meet the requirements of our ratepayers and the Public Service Commission. Unlike other City Departments, MLD must fund all requirements based on the revenue generated from its selling of electricity in the City of Plattsburgh and receives no direct funding from the City's general fund. Public Service Commission regulations require that electrical expenses should not exceed electrical revenue. If this occurs, then the MLD budget must be adjusted so that the utility ensures that adequate electrical services are provided to the ratepayers. If electrical services are impacted, then a rate case must be pursued through the Public Service Commission.

Based on the 2019 budget, our 2020 budget follows that budget with minimal increases primarily in payroll, health care benefits, utility purchase expenses and property tax. Additionally, we have budget decreases in the electricity to be purchased by approximately \$300,000 based on projected weather reports for the coming winter. The winter of 2020 is projected to be similar to the winter of 2019 according to NOAA weather reports. Also we are projecting a decrease in our debt service in the amount of \$27,600 due to refinancing of debt that was accomplished by the City Finance Dept.

MLD pays for health care not only of its current employees but of its retirees as well. We have projected a \$26,517 increase in this area. In property tax, we expect an increase \$45,000 as a result of moving our administration, operations, garage and warehouse from 32 Green Street and 6 Miller Street to 217 Sharron Ave. Our new location is located in the Town of Plattsburgh and is currently serviced by NYSEG for electricity and natural gas. Before the end of the year, we intend to replace NYSEG electric with City owned power. We will still have to purchase NYSEG gas for heating which is estimated to cost \$20,000 a year. Town water/sewer costs are expected to be similar to City water/sewer costs.

MLD payroll will increase slightly due to the new City-Union Contract agreement. Annual pay raises are based on the annual Consumer price Index (CPI) which is published in January for the previous year. Therefore MLD employee pay increase can be anywhere from 0 to the upper limit of 1.5%. For budgeting reasons, the worst case 1.5% is used. MLD also combined two typist positions into 1 new senior account clerk positions saving payroll. This senior account clerk works in our finance area with our Finance Manager. By hiring this senior account clerk, then we were able to make our Finance Officer a part time position which is capped at \$30,000. We hired our retired Finance Officer back saving both payroll and benefit expenses.

MLD will be losing 5 linemen and 1 Line Helper between the years 2021-2024, so MLD will need to hire more lineman helpers to keep the utility functioning. It takes 4 years to train a lineman helper, in both schooling and 7,000 hours of field work, to become a lineman. MLD will need to start the hiring process now so that we do not have a shortfall of qualified personnel. The succession plan is to hire 2 line helpers each year for the next 3 years starting in 2020. MLD plans to conduct the interview process in December and the individuals would not be hired until after the budget is passed which would be late January. This would also allow MLD to get them scheduled for the first year of lineman training which starts the beginning of April, as well as, getting them equipped with the proper equipment and clothing that they will need. In 2019, Civil Service gave a Line Helper's exam so that there is a current list with about 10 individuals listed. MLD at this time plans on no other additional hires. The 2020 budget includes the costs of payroll and training for these new individuals. If we do not hire these line helpers and train them then MLD will have difficulty providing adequate electrical service with the loss of so many linemen in the future.

In conclusion, City Council approval of MLD's budget will ensure adequate resources and personnel are available to provide the necessary electric services to our ratepayers.



DISCOVER

Plattsburgh
NEW YORK

Department of Public Works

Arsene M. Brodi
Superintendent

Michael M. Bessette
Assistant Superintendent

2019 BUDGET NARRATIVE

1. Positives/Negatives

-Positives – **NONE**

-Negatives – Arbitrary OT hold back makes overall budget look negative.

-Added work load for DPW Management due to restructuring of departments.

-DPW is required to support other departments without direct reimbursement to our budget.

2. a. What are the increases and decreases in general operational expenditures/revenue (if applicable.)

- Will vary with additional work load put onto DPW due to support of capital improvement projects and of other city functions.

b. Explain the impact of each of the above on operations/services. How will these changes affect your department's ability to carry out operations/provide services.

- The above will take away from our core function as a maintenance operation.

c. N.A.

Department of Public Works

215 Idaho Avenue, Plattsburgh, NY 12903

www.CityofPlattsburgh-NY.gov Phone: 518-563-1120 Fax: 518-562-1128