

APPROVED MINUTES of the
Special Meeting of the City Council of the City
of Rye held in City Hall on August 13, 2001 at
8:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

STEVEN OTIS, Mayor
CAROLYN CUNNINGHAM
ROSAMOND LARR
DOUGLAS MCKEAN
ARTHUR STAMPLEMAN
Councilmen

ABSENT:

ROBERTA DOWNING
ROBERT H. HUTCHINGS

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Otis called the meeting to order and invited the Council to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call

Mayor Otis asked the City Clerk to call the roll; a quorum was present to conduct official city business.

3. Presentation of the 2000 Financial Trends Report

Mayor Otis asked City Comptroller Michael Genito to summarize the 2000 Financial Trends Report for the Council. Mr. Genito said that the City was in sound financial condition with the ability to pay current expenditures, a healthy fund balance, good revenue to expenditure margins, and an excellent tax collection rate.

He reported that there are several warning trends which the City is watching: 1) dependence on elastic revenues as a percentage of net operating revenues; 2) increasing fringe benefits as a percentage of salaries and wages; 3) decreasing operating surplus or deficit as a percentage of net operating revenues; and 4) increasing overlapping long-term debt with other taxing agencies such as the school and the County

In conclusion, Mr. Genito said that while the City is currently in a sound financial condition, major expenditures such as debt, insurance, and fringe benefits are rising, while property tax revenues have remained essentially flat. He said that coupled with a continually decreasing operating surplus and a growing dependence on elastic revenues, the City must be vigilant of changes in the economy and act swiftly should those changes threaten our financial strength. He said that so far, the economy has not affected either Rye or Westchester County in that sales taxes and mortgage amounts remain very high, but that lower interest rates will have an effect on the amount our investments can earn.

4. Presentation of the 2002-2006 Capital Improvements Program

City Manager Julia Novak officially presented the 2002-2006 Capital Improvements Program (CIP), submitted to the Council on August 3, 2001, by providing an overview of the plan and highlights of projects scheduled for 2002. She welcomed George Pratt, Chairman of the Finance Committee and those Department Heads present and urged everyone to ask questions and identify additional projects. She said the CIP includes building maintenance and infrastructure improvements projects over \$15,000, but excludes investments in technology and fleet needs which will be incorporated into the Operating Budget.

The 5 year CIP assumes the implementation of the Recreation Master Plan which would include \$13,815,500 of projects to be constructed over the next five years (\$4,405,500 of current funds; \$7,453,000 of new debt; \$787,000 of grants and aid; and \$1,170,000 from the Enterprise Funds).

For 2002, there are a total of \$3,441,500 of projects (\$1,426,500 of current funds; \$1,688,000 of new debt [\$1.4 million attributed to the Recreation Master Plan]; \$187,000 of grants and aid; and \$140,000 from the Rye Golf Enterprise Fund.

The Capital Projects Fund will support \$552,000 of these projects (\$175,000 for Drains, Sewers and Flood Control; \$337,000 for Streets and Traffic Safety). During the past several years the City has had a very aggressive CIP, stretching the ability of the staff to implement the funded projects. This year it is recommended the City only add annual maintenance projects (miscellaneous sewer drainage [\$75,000] and rehabilitation projects[\$100,000]) to the list. In the Streets and Traffic Safety area, \$300,000 is for annual street resurfacing (50% of which is funded by the State CHIPS funds); \$50,000 for the annual sidewalk program; and \$15,000 for Traffic Safety projects. Also scheduled is use of a \$12,000 Federal Community Development Block Grant to help develop a streetscape plan in the High/Maple Street area.

The Building & Vehicle Fund will support \$2,749,500 of the 2002 projects in four separate areas:

- *General Government* (\$396,500) includes City Hall office refurbishing (\$16,500); a new HVAC system (\$280,000); HVAC and Security for a new records storage area in the attic (\$100,000).

- *Public Safety (\$688,000)* includes \$400,000 to remove contamination and construct a new police pistol range; \$238,000 to upgrade the existing police headquarters (generator replacement, electrical, AC, stabilization of the west wall and window replacement plus \$50,000 for a study/plan to identify ways to maximize existing space and to develop a maintenance schedule;
- *Community Environment (public works)* includes \$50,000 to replace the flat roof and point the brick work of the City's 1927 garage;
- *Recreation (\$1,615,000)*, assuming the passage of the Bond Issue, includes:
 - Athletic field development (\$850,000) at both Disbrow Park and the Rye Nursery Site;
 - Finalization of construction plans and documents for the expansion of Damiano Center (\$500,000) with construction scheduled to commence in 2003;
 - Resurfacing the tennis courts and installing a fence at Disbrow Park (\$65,000);
 - Refurbishing the playground which does not meet current safety guidelines at Disbrow (\$20,000);
 - Construction of a 20'X30' picnic shelter at Gagliardo Park (\$60,000-the City's match to a CDBG Grant);
 - Resurfacing the Grainger Field House (\$15,000);
 - Demolishing the house on the Anderson Property and reclaiming the Wetlands (\$20,000);
 - General maintenance of the Friends Meeting House (\$15,000);
 - Planning and designing the Rye Scenic Trailway (\$50,000);
 - Paving and striping the tennis court parking lot at Midland Avenue to make use and access easier for Senior Club Members and winter maintenance easier (\$20,000).

Enterprise Funds: No projects are scheduled at the Boat Basin until 2003 but \$140,000 will be spent at the Golf Club for blacktopping (\$15,000); miscellaneous course improvements (\$30,000); irrigation (\$20,000); expansion of the golf maintenance facility (\$15,000); retiling the bathhouse (\$40,000) and for Teletrol - the Building Monitoring System (\$20,000).

Councilwoman Cunningham urged the City to look at energy efficiency and emissions controls as they develop plans and voiced her concern that the resurfacing of Theall Road has been pushed back, especially in light of the problems being experienced by the residents of Rye Manor. Manager Novak said the Traffic and Transportation Committee was looking into a proposal which could help the situation.

There were several suggestions concerning the refurbishing of the Police Station. George Pratt suggested it might be more efficient to repair the lower flat roof at the same time the wall is being re-pointed, especially if leakage from the roof is an issue, and at the same time the Public Works garage roof is being repaired. He also suggested that the design of a long-range maintenance and use plan be given priority, even if it would require additional funds. Councilwoman Cunningham said that she did not think a decision never to build a new police/court facility in the future had been made. Councilman

Stampleman remarked that, in the meanwhile, the City needs to make sure what they have is all right and concurred that a formal study was very important.

Councilman McKean urged the city to conduct a Building Assessment of all City structures and develop a cohesive plan so that a regular Building Maintenance Schedule can be set. He is concerned that the City look at building needs anecdotally and that the currently scheduled major projects will all deteriorate at approximately same time in the future.

Councilman Stampleman asked if there were alternatives to reconstruction of the pistol range and was informed by Commissioner Connors that there were not many; that regular training is necessary even though one hopes it will not be necessary to use it; and that other area ranges have closed. Councilwoman Cunningham voiced concern that cleaning up hazardous waste tends to go over budget and Councilman Stampleman suggested it might be better just to close up the old one and construct a new one.

Mayor Otis and Councilman McKean both spoke about the need to include provision for Rye City's share of expenses at Rye Town Park (i.e. the City's share of the reconstruction of the Duck Pond and the need to renovate the tower building and the pavilion space. While the City is not able to build any of these costs into the recreation bond referendum (because it is part of the Town, rather than the City), the City will be liable for 50% of any costs incurred.

Manager Novak said she was pleased to report that the air conditioning in the Council Chambers had been fixed and that she would also look into a suggestion that a check and balance system be developed to track the completion of projects on time and within cost.

The Mayor thanked the Comptroller and City Manager for their informative presentations.

5. Other Business

There was no other business.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business to be conducted, Mayor Otis made a motion, seconded by Councilman McKean and unanimously carried, to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan A. Morison
City Clerk

