

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Tuesday, August 12, 2025 – 6:45 p.m.

Council Chambers – Olean Municipal Building

Present: Members: Chairman Crawford, Vice Chairman Forney, Alderman Bennion, Alderman McCall and Alderman Robinson. Others: Alderman Anastasia; Mayor William Aiello; Lens Martial, City Auditor; Eric Maurouard, Fire Chief; James Sprague, Director of Public Works; Brad Camp, Water and Sewer Superintendent; Tiffany Taylor, Managerial Confidential Administrative Secretary, and Michiko McElfresh, Mayor's Secretary.

1. Roll Call

Alderman Crawford called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. and asked that the record show that all committee members were present.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Committee Meeting (Tuesday, July 8, 2025)

A motion to approve the minutes of the July 8, 2025 committee meeting was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Bennion. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

3. Unfinished Business

a. City Garage Long-Term Strategic Plan

Director Sprague explained he sent the Council a memo via email, and explained he has reached out to some contacts in consulting and has received some good guidance. He explained they propose a high-level needs and use study, which would cost around \$30,000. He explained he stopped there as he did not want to write an RFP before speaking to the Council, but in his experience the question needs to go beyond the City Garage. He explained the City has other facilities and departments that have needs and wants, and needs that need to be addressed. He explained the question becomes if we want to focus just on the City Garage which could be done, or if we want to expand the scope and work in some other City facilities to take a comprehensive look at where we need to go down the road. He explained if the Council is in agreement with what they want to ask a consultant to do in an RFP then we can move forward producing the RFP. He explained he thinks if we focus on the City Garage when it comes to site selection it will be different than if we are looking for something more comprehensive, to see what site would include what the City needs in total.

Alderman Robinson explained he is not opposed to looking at the salt shed and garage because they pose a risk to the public and employees, but otherwise he feels we should refer to the Comprehensive Development Plan when making decisions. Alderman Crawford explained the

CDP is a game plan for the City for the next twenty years and the garage is at the top of the list. He explained he would love to see a more efficient building that could take the place of the aging fire houses and infrastructure, as well as the garage, but that would probably cost \$50 million. He explained if you don't have a plan in place you can't go after funding so he would like to hear how the Council feels about which option to move forward with.

Alderman Bennion asked if the \$30,000 was just for the garage or for all facilities and Director Sprague explained that would include some feedback on other facilities. He explained we won't know exact costs until the RFP goes out for the consulting services. Alderman Crawford explained we need to know which way to go to write the RFP. Alderman Bennion explained minimally we need to have the garage and salt shed looked at, but he feels for the small extra cost we should have some of the other facilities looked at as well. Alderman Crawford explained he is fine with that, and Alderman McCall agreed. Director Sprague explained he hasn't digested the CDP yet and explained this may give the consultant a lot of guidance to make the process more efficient.

Alderman Crawford explained the Council is okay moving forward with an RFP that pulls out of the CDP, that includes more facilities than just the garage and salt shed. Director Sprague explained he can have the RFP out in a month and explained he wants to go a little slower with this RFP because if this all goes forward the goal is to get the right consultant in from the start to also do the design work.

4. New Referrals for Consideration

a. 405 North Union Street Trees / Visibility

Alderman Crawford explained the owner of Aquaria Salon on North Union Street reached out, and explained they have purchased the facility across from the mall right next to CVS. He explained over the years the Council has heard about the lack of parking and how that challenges the businesses that set up shop there. He explained the new owner sent a request about two trees in front of the business and explained he forwarded this email and photos to the Council. He explained he would like to see some ideas for these trees that cause visibility issues.

Mayor Aiello explained he doesn't know if we have the capability in the Parks Department to prune bigger trees, and we might want to get some advice on that as there are many trees on North Union Street that need to be pruned. Alderman Crawford explained we have gone a long time without a City Forester and asked if we can see about getting one. Mayor Aiello explained we look all the time but we haven't had any luck because it is a part-time position. Alderman

Crawford asked if we have explored having a current employee getting additional training to do this, and Mayor Aiello explained we can look into that again.

Alderman Bennion explained the email stated the owner would like to request removal of the trees, and according to the Code, they will need permission from the Tree Board, not the Council. He explained the pruning of trees takes no Council action. He explained if there is a request to remove a tree that is not the City's, the owner needs to go in front of the Tree Board. He explained we need to get the tree board active so we can follow the Code the way it's laid out. Alderman McCall noted Pfeiffer Nature Center may have someone on staff the City could contract with as a forester.

Alderman Anastasia explained the business owner is willing to cut down the trees at their own expense and will plant two trees next to the railroad tracks to replace them. Alderman Crawford explained this request should go in front of the Tree Board. Alderman Robinson explained a lot of side streets have intersections where you can't see STOP signs because of overgrown trees, and we should have someone looking at these areas to make sure things are pruned as they need to be. Mayor Aiello explained he just had this conversation in the Department Head meeting for all departments driving around to take note of STOP signs that are blocked by trees and report them so they can be taken care of.

Alderman Anastasia asked how we give permission to take down the trees. Alderman Crawford explained the Tree Board has been defunct without a City Forester and explained the Council has the ability to grant permission so he brought this issue forward. Alderman Bennion explained it only comes to the Council upon appeal after a denial from the Tree Board. He explained the Forester isn't even a member of the tree board. Alderman Crawford explained he thought the City Forester would grant or deny permission and then the issue could be taken to the Tree Board if there is a denial. Alderman Robinson explained the Code does not state anything about the City Forester. He explained we need to bring about the tree board and the Mayor needs to appoint members. Alderman Crawford explained he does not have an issue with that and Mayor Aiello explained he does not either.

5. Committee Reports

None

6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Forney. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:05 p.m.