FINANCE

Tuesday, February 17, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.
Council Chambers – Olean Municipal Building

Present: Members: Chairman McCall, Vice Chairman Crawford, Alderman Bennion, Alderman Keary, Alderman Forney, Alderman Robinson, and Alderman Anastasia. Others: Mayor Amy Sherburne; Lens Martial, City Auditor; Keri Kerper, Community Development Program Coordinator; James Sprague, Director of Public Works, and Tiffany Taylor, Managerial Confidential Administrative Secretary.

1. Roll Call

Alderman McCall called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and asked that the record show that all committee members were present.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Committee Meeting (Tuesday, February 3, 2026)

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 3, 2026 committee meeting was made by Alderman McCall, seconded by Alderman Bennion. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

3. Unfinished Business

    a. Bed Tax

Ms. Kerper explained the Council adopted a Local Law in December 2024 and according to that local law, the assessment of a City occupancy tax is to promote tourism, economic development, and enhance the general economy of the City. She explained collection started in March 2025 and $10,732.68 was collected that budget year. She explained for the 2025-2026 budget year, $104,000 was budgeted as projected revenue, and we currently have received $214,645.39. She explained in May 2025, the Council discussed using $30,000 of these funds for the partner share of the OATS bus. She explained everything that has taken effect will expire September 2027 and the City will ensure we file again in a timely manner to ensure there are no issues.

Alderman McCall explained she would like to know how we are going to utilize that money for those purposes. She explained the Council was not in agreement with the previous mayor to use the funds to cover salaries and those sort of things, and she would like to see plan built how to utilize the funds to help grow the economy. Ms. Kerper explained in March 2023 we were working with a company Make My Move which is platform that gets 1.5 million views for people looking to relocate throughout the United States. She explained she would like the company to give the Council a virtual presentation to see if the Council would be interested in signing on. She explained there are a lot of economic benefits. She explained she would like to start with five families moving here, and explained this is part of attracting residents and economic growth. She explained the inventive piece is the platform for the company, marketing, and a recruitment service. She explained we can look at remote workers who have a set household minimum income of $100,000, the salaries which will allow the household to rent or buy. She explained we can set up the program to our comfort level with that. She explained there are other ideas she would like to bring forward as well if the Council is interested that other communities have done to use the occupancy tax money. She explained she has a list of ideas and would like to partner with the community for this package. She explained she has looked at what other communities have done and with such a rich fabric here, she could really put together a great package in a quick amount of time.

Alderman McCall explained she would like to revisit the highway signs. She explained she would like to see what we can do to partner and raise money with businesses. She explained she feels this is something that is lacking for Olean. Alderman Crawford explained he feels this should be approached as a collaborative agreement with the Chamber of Commerce. He explained he agrees that this needs to be done, but it is difficult for the City to foot the bill and manage, as we would be picking favorites. He explained he thinks the Mayor, Community Development, and a couple of Aldermen can work with the Chamber on running something like this, as their role is to generate business for their member businesses. Alderman Robinson explained we should utilize the proper organizations to do this, as he would like to see the signs on the expressway. He explained he looked into the signs on the DOT website and he doesn't think the City would want to foot that bill.

Alderman Robinson explained the one thing the Council can all agree on is that we are sitting at more than double the projected revenue with another quarter left, and we need to come up with an action plan for the funding. He explained he has heard about programs like Make My Move before and he thinks the collaboration would be great. He explained his only request is the presentation occur after the budget is complete. He would like to make this a priority to reap the benefits in the 2027-2028 budget.

Alderman Anastasia explained when he was a County Legislator, the County always made tourism books to promote the entire county. He asked if this money could be used to make books for the City of Olean to place at rest areas throughout the State, and Ms. Kerper explained it absolutely can be. Alderman McCall explained if we do something like that, we should ensure there is internet capability with QR codes. She explained there is a lot of technology that we can bring into this.

b. Capital Projects

Alderman McCall explained the Council needs to review all capital projects above $50,000. She explained one of the things that was discussed was receiving the information the Friday before a meeting, so if there are any questions they can be answered ahead of the meeting to streamline discussions. She thanked the Mayor for the updates on the capital projects and asked about the budget sheets. Ms. Kerper explained the Form E's are the monthly capital reporting for projects. She explained she sent it out for the pool, Marcus Park, and the East State Street and South Union Street portions of the DRI. Director Sprague explained one had not been done historically for the splash pad, but they are starting from scratch completing one for that.

Alderman McCall asked about the elevator, and Director Sprague explained we are waiting for the equipment to be delivered. He explained once it is delivered the contractor will complete the required work. Alderman McCall explained she realizes the capital project updates are a work in progress as we are getting into compliance when things have not been historically. Director Sprague explained he can probably have the form E's for the splash park and elevator projects by this Friday. Alderman McCall asked for one for each capital project listed and explained she knows it will take some time, but she would like to receive a couple at a time until they are at 100%. Director Sprague explained they can keep working on this list, and explained his staff is getting up to speed on how to assemble those forms. Alderman McCall asked if any additional training is required. Director Sprague explained that it isn't really, and explained they have found on the City's server a more elaborate version of the form E that he feels they can apply effectively to this task of keeping the Council up to date. He explained the expanded form E on the server has more tabs and allows change orders and payments to be tracked independently and then pulls everything together on a summary sheet. He explained he will look at the list of projects, will discuss the form E's with staff, and will get a time table to get them all done.

c. Capital Project – Security Cameras

Alderman McCall explained the Council received two different quotes, one for a five year term and one for a ten year term. Mr. Volz explained to date the Council has now received four different quotes, including ones for installation and without installation for each term. Alderman McCall asked what Mr. Volz recommends. He explained the contracts are for a one time cost, so if we do the ten year term everything is maintained on their servers and they do all the support and maintenance for a longer period of time that ends up being cheaper per year. He explained one last minute addition was to change from 30 to 31 cameras to add two cameras for the investigator's interview areas and to reduce one camera that is not needed.

Alderman Robinson explained the five year term with installation is $76,963.08 and the ten year cost with installation is $103,531.08. Mr. Volz explained there is a pretty substantial cut in rate for the ten year term. Alderman Robinson noted in one of the photos that was shown to the Council the camera was obstructed by a tree, and Mr. Volz explained that has already been discussed and some changes with camera placement would be made. He explained they wanted to keep new cameras as close as possible to the existing cameras to be tied into our network, as there is existing cabling there. He explained there are a couple of cameras they are looking at adjustments for. Alderman Robinson explained if we can go with the ten year term for a fraction of the cost that is what he would personally prefer. Mr. Volz explained the City also owns the camera after the purchase and at the end of the ten years the City owns the cameras and can continue to use it, just paying for maintenance and using the company's cloud servers.

Alderman McCall explained she is in agreement that she thought it was a good deal to go with a ten year term versus the five year term. She explained the question then becomes the budget and where this falls within the budget. She asked if there are any grants or other resources to aid in camera purchases for municipalities. Mr. Volz explained he has been keeping an eye out for grants, and there was one but we did not make the deadline for application. He explained they are really hit and miss, but he is keeping an eye out to see what he might find. Alderman McCall explained in considering the cost, part of this is the decrease in personnel cost as it will take less time for camera searches for discovery. She explained it seems like the Council's recommendation would be to go with the ten year option, and explained we need to see budget-wise what might be realistic for this. Alderman Anastasia asked if there was anything submitted for this in the new budget. Mr. Volz explained there was not and explained this is a capital project from last year that has been kicked along. He explained we were looking at a cheaper option previously.

Alderman Anastasia asked about the City doing Capital Funds incorrectly and Alderman McCall explained that is a part of a larger conversation that we need to have about how we have been doing capital projects to ensure the funding is there. She explained we need to discuss how we look at the general fund, how we need to build up the general fund, and he we use restricted and unrestricted funds in the general fund. She explained per the local ordinance the budget was due to the Council by February 15th, but Mayor Sherburne and Mr. Martial asked for an extension to be able to present the budget with the most accurate numbers using information from the auditors.

Mayor Sherburne explained there were aspects of the new software that caused questions about the features, and functions of it, and explained this software has never been used before in the City. She explained she tried to get answers from the software company but they just got back to us yesterday. She explained she also had the outside audit report given to her last Thursday at the end of the day, and we had to upload information into the system to see where we were at. She explained these are factors that have caused a delay to some extent. She explained next year after having the first year done, there should be no issue having it done before it is due as long as we make sure our outside auditor absolutely knows they need to meet the October deadline which they did not adhere to this year. Alderman Crawford explained the Council had passed a resolution for the deadline for audited financials to be done in the fall. He explained the Council does not want to get the audited numbers after the budget is underway and wants to have the information to be able to be included in budget discussions. He explained he hopes this software moves things along with a quicker pace. He explained he would like to have a sit-down conversation with the outside auditors to see how they can maintain compliance with the deadline, as it has always been a challenge getting the auditors in during the summer months to get the numbers done on a timely basis.

Mr. Martial explained next year the auditors will come in before the books are closed and then will come back in August to hopefully have the audit done in time. Alderman Crawford asked if the auditors will be involved in the process of closing the books and Mr. Martial explained they will be. Alderman Crawford explained this should like a reasonable corrective action. Mr. Martial explained the auditors will be presenting the 2024-2025 fiscal year audit next Tuesday.

Alderman Anastasia explained he has learned letters have been sent out to not-for-profits asking for them to enter into PILOT programs with the City, and asked if the City Attorney can give an opinion on the legality of this.

d. Credit Card Processing Fees

Mr. Martial explained he and Mayor Sherburne will be meeting with Global Payments tomorrow for more information on this. Alderman McCall asked for an update via email after the meeting.

e. Wayne Street Shared Use Path

Alderman Crawford explained he is looking to get an update from DPW as well as to come back to the table to revisit the scope that we would like to explore. He explained we need to see how we are going to approach this project. He explained the City was allotted $1.4 million to improve pedestrian safety with the Safe Routes to School grant to improve walkability and bikeability down Wayne Street and to connect to the trail system, He explained Director Sprague has presented the Council with a synopsis and recommendations. He explained the last time the Council discussed this, the project came in with a much larger price tag than was originally quoted four years ago, which at the time came in around $1.7 million. He explained unfortunately, the grant application was submitted a number of times before it was awarded and since the original estimate costs have skyrocketed. He explained the full scope now is around $2.4 million plus $300,000 for engineering and inspection services. He explained he, the prior Mayor, and the DPW Director worked on reducing the scope and now we need to reach out to the DOT to have the reduced scope approved.

Director Sprague explained he feels the better approach for the City is to reduce the length of the shared use path built and to build a better one, rather than try to stretch it out the entire length of the original proposal. He explained the Southern Tier Trail Project is still working on design and does not have any money currently for construction, so although coordinating at this time can't be done, he is sure if we build half it should be easy for them to come back later and build the rest out. He explained we should build the shared use path where we can afford to build it and live with the length being reduced.

Alderman Crawford explained part of the grant award is for a safe path across North 12th Street. He explained that is heavily used by pedestrians and there is really only sidewalk on the south side. He explained the grant application included a mid-block rect5uangular rapid flashing beacon, which was approved through New York State. He explained another area for an RRFP would be at the YMCA since they have buildings on both sides of the street and the RRFPs are approved for mid-block crossings. He explained there are no red lights in these areas and no other reason for traffic to stop. He explained there were some pedestrian islands included in the design as well including one by the middle school. He explained the original plan for a 10 foot shared use path was reduced to an 8 foot shared use path. He explained he thinks it would be beneficial to sit down with the Mayor and Council to bring some vision forth and see what moving forward would look like.

Alderman Robinson explained he distinctly remembers discussing the beacon in front of the YMCA and he feels if those businesses would benefit but are not willing to put forward funding to assist, then we should eliminate those types of things. He explained around 12th and Buffalo Street, the land belongs to the railroad and it would be nice if we can put something in on that side, but he doesn't know if it is possible. He explained he does recall an alternative sidewalk and crossing at the intersection then taking the trail down where the existing concrete connects to the path. He explained the plan was to link everything together in the most cost-effective way. He explained he does not recall why this fell off, and explained it would be nice to get this moving with the funding we have.

Alderman Bennion explained with the shared use paths, before we install more we have to have a conversation about their maintenance and repairs. Alderman Crawford explained there are a variety of alternative ideas for this project, and we have to decide what to do to reduce the scope. He explained he would like to get input from the entire Council as well as see what Mayor Sherburne would suggest. He explained rather than a ten or eight foot shared use path, we could consider a bike path on the side of Wayne Street. He explained the goal here is to reboot the conversation on the project. He explained we have $1.4 million in funding and if we decide we are not going to use it, w need to cut ties and give it back. Alderman Robinson asked when we received the grant and Alderman Crawford explained he believes it was awarded in 2022.

Alderman McCall explained she would hope the YMCA would take into consideration the safety of residents not only with their child care building, but also with the bus stop there. She explained there are a lot of benefits to making this street safe and she feels it is beneficial to move forward even if we scale down the project. Alderman Crawford explained we had previously talked to a number of the NFPs and entities in the area and only one was willing or interested at that time to collaborate. He explained this is a project where he suggested possibly looking at curb fees as this is something that will directly improve the frontage for these entities. He explained they don't pay property taxes, but curb fees should be explored if we are going to do the entire scope of the project. He explained it might not be something everyone wants to explore, but it is a possibility.

Ms. Kerper advised if the Council chooses not to complete the project to consult with Attorney Mike Morgan and to note expenditures paid to date to the engineering firm. Alderman McCall explained we need to determine if we are going to be committed to the totality of the project even though the costs will far exceed the ori9ginal estimate, or if we will still receive the $1.4 million if we reduce the scope of the project. Alderman Crawford explained it will be good to have that conversation. He asked DPW and Mayor Sherburne to reach out and see how we can move forward on this project. Alderman McCall suggested moving this to after the budget, and Alderman Robinson asked if we can see a response via email from the DOT and then determine where to go. He explained we need construction costs and planning estimates, and need to determine how to proceed. Alderman Crawford explained we can communicate through emails to get an update on the DOT conversation and what recommendations are. Alderman Robinson agreed and explained we have discussed this numerous times over numerous years and he doesn't want to hold something up because we are waiting for a meeting. He explained if we work the kinks out we should go forward, and to communicate via email about the meeting and go from there.

4. New Referrals for Consideration

None

5. Committee Reports

None

6. Adjournment

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