

CITY OPERATIONS

Tuesday, June 9, 2026 – 8:15 p.m.

Council Chambers – Olean Municipal Building

Present: Members: Chairman Bennion, Vice Chairman Anastasia, Alderman Keary, Alderman Crawford, and Alderman McCall. Others: Alderman Forney; Alderman Robinson; Mayor Amy Sherburne; James Sprague, Director of Public Works, and Tiffany Taylor, Managerial Confidential Administrative Secretary.

1. Roll Call

Alderman Bennion called the meeting to order at 8:15 p.m. and asked that the record show that all committee members were present.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Committee Meeting (Tuesday, May 19, 2026)

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 19, 2026 committee meeting was made by Alderman Bennion, seconded by Alderman Anastasia. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

3. Unfinished Business

a. Ash Tree Reimbursement Issue

Director Sprague explained he has not solved this issue but he did receive an update from staff. He explained there is a balance of \$37,247 in the ash tree capital fund, and we currently have identified 8 dead or dangerous trees in the public space so there is enough funding available once we have a new tree contractor to address the ones identified as dangerous. He explained two of these are in the right-of-way. He explained the RFP has been released for the new tree removal contractor so hopefully we can go under contract sooner than we did last year. He explained there have been 13 ash trees removed in the right-of-way that the City paid 50% for, but he did not get a breakdown of where they were.

Alderman Bennion asked how many remain in the inventory that are not dead or dying, and Director Sprague explained he believes there are 52 healthy ash trees remaining. Alderman Bennion explained he thought we were going to remove them all and Alderman McCall explained she thought that was the goal of the funding the Council appropriated for this.

Alderman Robinson explained this started because we learned about one property owner and we still have not gotten the information we are looking for. He explained if we owe people money we should reimburse them, and if the money was not used correctly we should transfer funds from another capital fund. He explained this was really an innocent thing and he did not think it

would turn into months and months of discussion. Alderman Bennion agreed and explained he is at the point where he feels the funds should be reimbursed. Mayor Sherburne explained no one is asking for reimbursement for what they paid. Alderman Bennion asked about the original resolution to establish the Capital Fund and Ms. Taylor advised it states "City-owned" ash trees. Alderman McCall explained this may need clarification. Alderman Bennion explained this comes down to the bigger question of who owns the right-of-way that we need to figure out. Alderman McCall explained the whole question is if the ash trees in the subway were included in the original count or not, and that is the only answer that we need. Alderman Crawford explained he believes they were.

b. Paperless Water Bills

Mayor Sherburne explained we were coming up with a plan for a fee for sending a water bill in the mail as we want to get away from that and start doing billing online. She explained moving forward we will be sending out bills July 1st with a flyer that states water bills can be sent online for free, or there is a \$1 charge to have them mailed out. She explained we want to do another public service announcement with that such as about inspecting downspouts. She explained residents will have July and August to make the decision before the fees start. She explained the \$1 will cover postage as well as some labor costs for producing water bills. She explained this is a normal occurrence in industry and we are just late in the game.

Alderman Bennion asked what the Mayor needs from the Council, and Mayor Sherburne explained right now she does not need anything from the Council and explained she wanted the Council to be aware of what is going on in case they get phone calls. She explained people have to be proactive and make the change to online billing to save \$12 a year. Alderman Robinson explained this looks great and he thinks this is something we should definitely be doing. Alderman Bennion noted the announcement should also be put on social media. Alderman Anastasia explained he is against this as residents pay taxes and we have surpluses in water and sewer. He explained he knows it is only \$12 a year but he feels we are nickel and diming taxpayers with this.

c. Right-of-Way Committee Scheduling

Alderman Bennion explained it is imperative to get some days where we can start talking about right-of-way issues that keep coming up and to get some clarifications. He explained this was already established with himself, Alderman Keary and Director Sprague, and we just need to get a meeting set up. He explained the idea is not to cause issues but rather clarify responsibilities for the right-of-way and try to take out any ambiguity that exists in our Code regarding the right-of-way. He explained the goal is to have informal meetings that will end up resolving a lot of issues.

4. New Referrals for Consideration

None

5. Committee Reports

None

6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Bennion, seconded by Alderman Anastasia. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:40 p.m.