

**Auburn City Council  
Regular Meeting  
Thursday, May 7, 2020 5:00 P.M.  
City Council Chambers  
Memorial City Hall  
24 South St.  
Auburn, NY 13021**

**Minutes**

The meeting of the Auburn City Council was called to order at 5:00PM in the City Council Chambers, 24 South St. Auburn NY by Mayor Quill.

**Roll Call** – The City Clerk called the roll. Mayor Quill, Councilor Debra McCormick, Councilor Jimmy Giannettino, Councilor Terry Cuddy and Councilor Tim Locastro were all present. Councilor Cuddy was present via teleconference.

**The following City Staff was present for the meeting:**

- City Manager, Jeff Dygert
- Corporation Counsel, Stacy DeForrest
- City Clerk, Charles Mason
- City Comptroller, Rachel Jacobs
- Superintendent of Public Works, Mike Talbot
- Director of Municipal Utilities, Seth Jensen (by teleconference)
- Police Chief, Shawn Butler
- City Engineer, Bill Lupien
- Interim Fire Chief, Mark Fritz
- Director of Planning and Economic Development (by teleconference)

**Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag** – Mayor Quill led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Moment of Silent Prayer or Reflection** – Mayor Quill asked for a moment of silent prayer.

**Mayor Quill**

Thank you. Mr. Clerk, any public announcements?

**Chuck Mason**

Thanks Mayor. I do know that a couple things are going to be included in the City Manager's report but the one thing that I wanted to give a final plug to is this Saturday is our second Spring Cleanup day down at the City Landfill. The landfill will be open free for city residents only to bring large items and

trash and recycling down for free for this second of two spring cleaning days and there will be rules that are strictly enforced. The first is that the this the event is for city residents only and people will be asked to show their proof of residency with a matching driver's license and vehicle registration of the vehicle you're bringing into the landfill with your stuff on it. There is also no trailers, no box vans, or no rented U-hauls. Stuff being brought down in a pickup truck people are reminded that they need to have their their vehicles tarped the stuff in the back of the truck needs to have a tarp over it. And then all materials must be containerized either in brown bags for leaves or plastic bags for construction demolition, or in garbage cans. Please do not show up with truckloads of construction and demolition debris that can't be handled. Everything must be containerized. And there's a complete listing of the rules on the city website and the landfill will be open from 7am till 2pm, hat's this Saturday, May 9, down at the 311 North division Street. Thanks Mayor.

**Mayor Quill**

Thank you. National Tourism week Proclamation.

**Chuck Mason**

Yes, Mayor, thank you.

**WHEREAS**, travel has a critical role on New York State and the nation’s economic prosperity; and

**WHEREAS**, a robust travel industry has provided significant economic benefits for the nation, generating more than \$2.6 trillion in economic output in 2018, with \$1.1 trillion spent directly by travelers in the U.S.; and

**WHEREAS**, travel has been the foundation of a healthy workforce, serving as one of the largest private-sector employers in the U.S., supporting 15.8 million jobs in 2018, including 9 million directly in the travel industry and 6.8 million in other industries; and

**WHEREAS**, spending by travelers has aided state and local governments alike, generating \$180 billion in tax revenue last year to support essential services and programs; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2018, tourism generated \$101.65 million annually, was responsible for the employment of 1,649 people in Cayuga County, included in these totals are \$12.97 million in state and local taxes, and provided \$418 in tax relief per Cayuga County household; and

**WHEREAS**, meetings, events and incentive travel have always been a core business function that helps companies strengthen business performance, educate employees and customers, and reward business accomplishments; and

**WHEREAS**, leisure travel, which accounts for more than three-quarters of all trips taken in the U.S., spurs countless benefits to travelers’ health and wellness, creativity, cultural awareness, education, happiness, productivity and relationships; and

**WHEREAS**, businesses and workers in the travel industry were some of the first and hardest hit by the economic crisis resulting from coronavirus; and

**WHEREAS**, travel and tourism-dependent businesses, 83% of which are small businesses, depend on our community's support through and after this crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, the leaders of our state's travel and tourism industry truly encapsulate the spirit of our community and our nation; and

**WHEREAS**, even while New York State cannot welcome visitors in person, the spirit of travel and hospitality remains the enduring ethos of the travel industry and the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, the spirit of travel will be a necessary and prominent component of our return to everyday life and must be supported and protected at all costs.

**NOW THEREFORE**, I, Michael D. Quill, Mayor of the City of Auburn, New York, on behalf of the City Council and the Citizens of Auburn, do hereby proclaim May 3-9, 2020 as

**National Travel and Tourism Week**

in the City of Auburn, and urge the citizens of City of Auburn to join me in recognizing the critical role the tourism industry.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Auburn to be affixed this Seventh day of May 2020.

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**Michael D. Quill, Mayor**  
City of Auburn, New York

Mayor on your desks this evening is a letter, traditionally we have the director of the Cayuga County Office of Tourism here to accept the Proclamation. But due to the COVID-19 with the meeting being closed, she sent a letter for the Council and I'll read that letter into the record. "Dear Mayor Quill and Auburn City Council, It is our honor to receive the National Tourism week proclamation from you in recognition of the impact tourism has on the city of Auburn this year is an especially important one to recognize the tourism industry in acknowledgement of the seemingly insurmountable challenge brought upon by the COVID-19 pandemic. Restaurants and attractions are closed to walk in businesses left to their creativeness to attract what business they can from the local residents to pay the bills. Despite the resources available by county, state and federal sources, many of our small privately owned businesses are at risk of closing permanently. This will be a tremendous loss to the character and spirit of Auburn. As stated by the US travel Association, the COVID-19 impact on travel is nine times worse than we suffered from the 9-11 incident and a third of the jobs lost due to COVID-19 are from the tourism industry. With the loss of jobs and businesses, not only do we lose one of our greatest economic generators, but we lose our sense of community by losing the business and attraction that makes us who we are. Continuing to support tourism development and promotion is critical to our way of life. And we

look forward to our continued work together in support of our businesses and community.” That was from Karen Kuhl, the Executive Director of the Cayuga County Office of Tourism. That's all I have.

**Councilor Giannettino**

Mayor, if I may real quick, just as a member of the Historical and Cultural Sites Commission I'd like to, I guess back up what what Ms. Kuhl is saying here, this Council has been very supportive of tourism. We recognize it as a key economic driver for our region. In preparing this year's budget, we saw sales tax over the last three years and it was a steady increase. You know, I believe and as do many others, that a lot of that is a direct result of the hard work that we've put in with these partners and all those historical and cultural sites. You know, it says in the resolution that it's 100 million dollars annually. So, we're going to feel that and I just wanted to say, you know, to our partners on that commission that we support them, we recognize that they've been hit hard by this as other people have in the community. And you know, I feel we have a good foundation and hopefully when this passes, we'll be able to pick up where we left off and continue on. Thank you.

**Mayor Quill**

Approval the meeting minutes.

**City Clerk Mason**

- Motion for approval of the April 16, 2020 City Council meeting minutes by Councilor Locastro, seconded by Councilor Giannettino. Councilor McCormick (aye), Councilor Giannettino (aye), Councilor Cuddy (Yes), Councilor Locastro. (Yes), Mayor Quill (aye). Carried.
- Motion for approval of the April 23, 2020 City Council meeting minutes by Councilor Giannettino, seconded by Councilor Cuddy. Councilor McCormick (aye), Councilor Giannettino (aye), Councilor Cuddy (Yes), Councilor Locastro. (Yes), Mayor Quill (aye). Carried.
- Motion for approval of the April 30, 2020 City Council meeting minutes by Councilor Giannettino, seconded by Councilor Locastro. Councilor McCormick (aye), Councilor Giannettino (aye), Councilor Cuddy (Yes), Councilor Locastro. (Yes), Mayor Quill (aye). Carried.

I do want to thank Rhonda Miller who's been working from home for the last several weeks, she helps under this COVID, one of the requirements under COVID is that minutes are actually transcribed, word for word. So, they're a bit lengthier than they usually are but Rhonda and all of her expertise and probably frustration with transcribing came across a pretty efficient app that we've been using the last couple of weeks and it does work pretty well. So, we were able to get these three sets of minutes fired up pretty quick last week, but, we'll see how things, you know how technology goes. We'll see how things go moving forward. Thank you.

**Mayor Quill**

I did speak with Rhonda during the week. She wasn't that thrilled with the app or any of it, but she got through it. So, she, she's a, she's a good person, glad to have her. City Manager's report. Mr. Dygert.

**City Manager Dygert**

Thank you Mayor got a few updates on things. This week we made the difficult decision to postpone our Sydney city sponsored summer events. As the state imposed restrictions on gatherings relax, we'll reevaluate the possibility of rescheduling some events and we're also exploring some other options that might offer some entertainment or recreation while complying with social distancing recommendations. So as of now, our previously scheduled summer events are postponed. The contractor for the State Street Bridge replacement project will be providing updates starting on May 18 via some message boards in that area for travelers. They will also provide the city with regular updates that will be shared across our various media platforms. It is currently expected that the bridge will be closed to traffic on June 1, always subject to change, but that's the target date right at the moment. Like to remind the public that the public hearings related to the distribution of the additional CDBG funding are scheduled for Monday, May 11, at 10am and 5pm. Those will happen with the use of WebEx or similar program and those have the ability for folks to call in. Additional information on how that process will work is available on the city of Auburn webpage. The city of Auburn is currently accepting bid proposals for the following projects, landfill disposal services, which to clarify is for landfills themselves to give us pricing on what it will cost us to tip our trash, dump our trash in their landfill upon the closure of the city of Auburn landfill. Those bid proposals are due back on May 14, the 2020 CDBG sidewalk program bids are open currently for that and do back on May 12. And, we also have a power system study that's due back May 29 and that is for our compliance at our water treatment and wastewater treatment facilities, we're required by our insurance company and Department of Labor to occasionally do a study related to the safety of the installed electrical systems and policies, procedures and all that. All of the information related to the bid opportunities. It is available on the city webpage under the tab bids and RFPs. That's all I have Mayor.

**Mayor Quill**

Thank you. Reports from members of council.

**Councilor McCormick**

Just two quick kind of acknowledgments. I was able to tune in to the planning meeting on Monday and I wanted to acknowledge Steve Selvek. I'm sure there's other departments that are doing these meetings, doing this kind of meeting, but that it was a, I'd say a great challenge, and Steve was a soldier, I guess, is the best I could think of. To manage, it was a difficult, because there were a lot, there was a lot of discussion and questions, but he really handled it so well. I told him, I probably would have cried. So, it was, it was difficult, but he did a great job as usual. And the other, this morning, I caught the last half of Leadership Cayuga's they're, they're presentations for the programs that they do, the projects that they do. And they did 'Bound West' and I think we've heard a little bit about it. It's a group of businesses and other entities, like the museums and the library, that are trying to revitalize the West End. And they've

been working on it for over a year. But, they turned it over to the Leadership Cayuga, for their project and that, it's really, in this cloudy COVID atmosphere, it was really encouraging. They acknowledged that we're in COVID, so, things are what they are, but they proceeded to do their presentations on, imagining what could be possible, boundaries, they did a lot of research, really good research on how many businesses, how many employees, different demographics. They did a survey that was really interesting. I don't know if, there was four or five projects, but it would be interesting I think, someday, when we're have the time if maybe one or two of them could come in, just give us a presentation, because it was really a lot of information and it's good for the west, the west end is, they look at to the BID, but we can't help from the BID, and all that. So, they went all the way to Aurelius, to York Street, they looked at everything. So, it was great and I just thought it was a positive encouraging thing and I want to compliment Jessica Wrench, she's the Executive Director. It was a really great presentation for being online too, it was good. So, that's all.

**Mayor Quill**

Is it online Councilor?

**Councilor McCormick**

I don't know if she's kept it online. But it was, it was Zoom, no, it was GoTo meeting. And, yeah it was GoTo meeting. So, they might have recorded it. It would be great. If they did.

**Mayor Quill**

Maybe we could talk our Clerk into finding it? Putting it on our website?

**Councilor McCormick**

Yes, that would be a great idea. Yeah. Thank you.

**Mayor Quill**

Thank you Councilor. Anyone else? Councilor Cuddy, anything for us?

**Councilor Cuddy**

I'm all set Mayor. Thank you.

**Mayor Quill**

Okay, thank you. Any questions?

**Mayor Quill**

Thank you. Resolution, Agreement Resolution Number 55 of 2020 Authorizing an agreement with the Finger Lakes Railway Corporation for the State Street over the Owasco River Bridge Replacement Project. Do we have a sponsor? Councilor McCormick, seconded by Councilor Giannettino.

**City Clerk Mason**

Agreement resolution #55 of 2020

AUTHORIZING an agreement with THE finger lakes railway Corporation FOR THE STATE STREET Over the Owasco river BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT (pin#375637)

By Councilor McCormick

May 7, 2020

**WHEREAS**, on April 6, 2017, the Auburn City Council passed Agreement Resolution #50 of 2017, authorizing the City to enter into an agreement with New York State Department of Transportation to proceed with the State Street Bridge Replacement Project in all phases; and,

**WHEREAS**, in order to proceed with this project it is necessary to have an agreement with Finger Lakes Railway Corporation to make changes to the State Street railroad crossing at M.P. 26.16/D.O.T. 521079P in Auburn, NY, Cayuga County; and

**WHEREAS**, the cost of this Resolution is to be charged to the State Street Bridge Replacement Project Account #HA 5110-440-JA and is estimated to cost \$36,000, which is 95% reimbursable by the NYSDOT up to maximum grant amount of \$4,750,000 for this project.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Auburn City Council does hereby authorize an agreement with Finger Lakes Railway Corporation for the State Street Bridge Replacement Project; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the cost of this Resolution shall be charged to the State Street Bridge Replacement Project Account #HA 5110-440-JA for the estimated amount of \$36,000; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Mayor of the City of Auburn is hereby authorized to execute any and all necessary agreements and contracts, certifications, and reimbursement requests on behalf of the City of Auburn for said project.

**Mayor Quill**

Councilors, I see. Mr. Lupien. Do we have any questions for him? Councilor Locastro? Billy do you want to come up? Please.

**Councilor Locastro**

Just to go back on a couple numbers. Do we have a total price of the project, the bridge, roughly?

**Bill Lupien**

I think we're around 5.6, 5.7 million.

**Councilor Locastro**

And we have a grant for roughly up to 4.7?

**Bill Lupien**

4.75, it's 95% of the first 5 million.

**Councilor Locastro**

And roughly, 10% overage, possibly?

**Bill Lupien**

We've got built into the contract 5% contingency and we do have the bonding does allow for about 10%, right, for change orders.

**Councilor Locastro**

So, so roughly we got to come up with 1.5?

**Bill Lupien**

Well, probably 900,000 to 1.5, depending on if we run into some really unknown conditions. I don't really anticipate it. I think that we'll pretty, stay pretty close to contract. Really,

**Councilor Locastro**

Can this project be delayed?

**Bill Lupien**

Well, we're, it's, it's, we've already signed an agreement. We have a contract with a contractor. This is considered an essential project as far as the state's concerned. It's right next to the prison. It's on Route 38, I wouldn't recommend delaying it.

**Councilor Locastro**

Thank you.

**Councilor Giannettino**

A couple questions. Mr. Lupien. I was on the actual review committee for this project, what is the state of that bridge?

**Bill Lupien**

Well, it's the abutment on the north side is, is in really bad shape especially, we had where the retaining wall is where they used to be a gas station taxicab, whatever that and that's contaminated material that we have to take out there. The bridge, a lot of the steel is corroded, we had holes, on three out of the four corners that we had to do temporary repairs at the bridge joints. This bridge needs to be replaced. I mean, the state has a bi-annual inspection and it's been, what do you call it, kind of rated as being poor and needing to replace. And I mean, we've submitted this project several years ago and we were very fortunate to get it approved.

**Councilor Giannettino**

Sure, and if I remember correctly prior to us proceeding with the project on North Division, that bridge two was in poor condition, and it was in such poor condition that we were forced to spend \$80,000.

**Bill Lupien**

Just as a temporary support.

**Councilor Giannettino**

Which we couldn't, that could happen on this bridge. So, could it, hypothetically speaking, if we weren't to move forward, if we were not to move forward, and it further deteriorated, we would be forced, possibly, to spend money like that to reinforce the bridge while we waited to fix the bridge or replace the bridge?

**Bill Lupien**

And then, besides that, where our bridge abutment is right next to the abutment for the railroad bridge. So, if something happened on the north side, we could jeopardize the railroad bridge at the same time. So, I mean, it's, could be a double whammy.

**Councilor Giannettino**

And my understanding is there's several utilities that run under that bridge as well, that could be threatened.

**Bill Lupien**

That's correct.

**Councilor Giannettino**

As far as the railroad goes, if I remember correctly during the presentations, there are certain requirements for the railroads for flagging and things like that.

**Bill Lupien**

And that's included into this cost.

**Councilor Giannettino**

Okay and we don't have a choice and those costs, those are requirements?

**Bill Lupien**

That's correct.

**Councilor Giannettino**

Thank you.

**Councilor Locastro**

Thank you, Billy.

**Bill Lupien**

Excuse me.

**Councilor Locastro**

When was the last time that that bridge was rebuilt? Do you remember the year?

**Bill Lupien**

I think it was in the 60s? It's, yeah, I think, I think it was in the 1960s. So, I mean, you know, we probably got 50 years or so on it. And I mean, bridges were, they're made better now than they were back then. You know, a lot of times the steel wasn't coated. If you didn't maintain it to then it started rusting and all that, we've had, like I say, three out of the four corners, of the bridge corners, we've had to go in and do repairs in the last few years. It's been in such terrible shape.

**Councilor Locastro**

So the bridge is 50 years old?

**Bill Lupien**

Approximately, yes.

**Councilor Locastro**

Okay.

**Mayor Quill**

Good, man Billy, there's a lot of the 60's I don't remember. Further discussion? Please call the roll.

**City Clerk Mason**

**Agreement resolution #55 of 2020**

**AUTHORIZING an agreement with THE finger lakes railway Corporation FOR THE STATE STREET Over the Owasco river BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT (pin#375637)**

	<b>Ayes</b>	<b>Noes</b>	<b>Excused</b>
Councilor McCormick	X		
Councilor Giannettino	X		
Councilor Cuddy	X		
Councilor Locastro		X	
Mayor Quill	X		
Carried and Adopted	X		

**Mayor Quill**

Council Resolution Number 56 of 2020, Authorizing a public hearing for the City Manager’s recommended budget for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Do we have a sponsor? Councilor Giannettino, seconded by Councilor McCormick. City Clerk.

**City Clerk Mason**

**COUNCIL RESOLUTION #56 of 2020**

**AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE CITY MANAGER’S RECOMMENDED BUDGET FOR THE 2020-2021 FISCAL YEAR**

**WHEREAS,** on March 13, 2020, Governor Cuomo issued Executive Order No. 202.1 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which suspended the Open Meetings Law, in order to allow local governing bodies to close meetings to the public, and this order also allows local officials to meet remotely by conference call or similar service; and

**WHEREAS**, on April 9, 2020, Governor Cuomo issued Executive Order No. 202.15 in further response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which prohibits any in-person public hearings until after June 1, 2020, with the exception that such public hearings be allowed by telephone or video conference.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Auburn, New York, that it does hereby authorize a Public Hearing to be held by telephone and/or video conference before the City Council of the City of Auburn, New York on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of May, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. at City Council Chambers, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Memorial City Hall, Auburn, New York, concerning the City Manager's Recommended Budget 2020-2021; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to advertise this resolution in the official newspaper of the City of Auburn in accordance with the governing State and local requirements.

**Mayor Quill**

Clerk, how do we plan to hold the public hearing? We talked briefly before the meeting, so?

**Chuck Mason**

Yes, Mayor, thank you. The meeting will be set up, we, we're actually holding two public hearings on Monday, this coming Monday, May 11th for the Community Development Block Grant. The public hearing for the city budget will be set up in the same manner. We will advertise the directions for people to take to gain access to the teleconference or they can just call in, the information will be on our website. We will be asking people to register at least two hours prior to the meeting. So, we will have an idea of how many people that are out there that will want to be heard. And we will, you know, once the, we, open the meeting and open the public hearing we will, one at a time provide members of the public that want to hear, want to be heard, to speak and will follow the traditional public be heard rules of three minutes per person and however many people show up, we will allow for that participation. We will also in the published notice and on the website and through our different channels of communication that we use, we will make people well aware of the fact that there is a comment form on our website for people to submit comments about the budget. People are always welcome to call the members of Council, email the members of Council, they can simply write letters to the city as well. So, we'll get the word out to everybody. All the budget information is contained on the city's website and when we put this notice out

we'll make make sure that the public is well aware of all the options they have to provide any feedback that they may have.

**Mayor Quill**

So all communication from the public will be electronic there will be no non-employees allowed in the building for the meeting. Am I correct?

**Chuck Mason**

That's correct. Yep.

**Mayor Quill**

We're, just some just want to make sure everyone has the same message.

**Chuck Mason**

Yeah. The state has gone over conceptual reopening plans, and I know the city manager is spending more time than, in the organization on those plans with the regional effort. It doesn't look like public buildings will probably be reopening till the second phase in, which will probably be sometime after June 1. So, we're in this mode at least for two or three more weeks, probably.

**Mayor Quill**

Thank you. Councilors?

**Councilor McCormick**

I think Councilor Cuddy had his hand up,

**Mayor Quill**

Councilor Cuddy, did you have a question?

**Councilor Cuddy**

I was gonna, so, this will be on our website? Will there be a note as posted on Facebook and other social media, Clerk?

**Chuck Mason**

Yes.

**Councilor Cuddy**

Great, thank you.

**Mayor Quill**

Very well. no further discussion. Clerk if you call the roll in regards to Council Resolution Number 56. Please.

**City Clerk Mason**

**COUNCIL RESOLUTION #56 of 2020**

**AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED BUDGET FOR THE 2020-2021 FISCAL YEAR**

	<b>Ayes</b>	<b>Noes</b>	<b>Excused</b>
Councilor McCormick	X		
Councilor Giannettino	X		
Councilor Cuddy	X		
Councilor Locastro	X		
Mayor Quill	X		
Carried and Adopted	X		

**Chuck Mason**

Carried. We also ran the Board of Assessment Review public hearing back on April 29, was run the same way and people called in to that and managed to pull it off with no problem. So, hopefully there won't be any, I don't want to curse the technical, the technical spirits that are out there, but, we'll get through it.

**Mayor Quill**

Thank you. Councilors, other business from the Council. so, we have listed final Council input due to the City Manager in regards to the budget.

**Councilor Giannettino**

I had asked for a list of current vacancies, that was provided to us. What that basically shows is that other than really essential firefighters and police officers, there really are no vacancies. I think there's an IT position there, but there really was no plans to fill that at this time. So, really, I was asking for that as part of due diligence. I, you know, we've talked about staffing for police and fire, we all agree that that should be budgeted, because those are the levels that need to be there for the public safety. So, I'm fine with where we are in in terms of manpower, and I just want to thank staff for putting that together for us.

**Councilor McCormick**

I know we asked. I'm sorry. We asked to have department heads come and only, the only reason was if to talk about what you had to cut for the benefit of the public. And we get the memos and the paperwork. But things that have to be cut that people will notice and wonder why or if there's things that you've struggled to have to cut, which I'm sure there are. That's I think we because I still see a few department heads, I don't want to dismiss them that they're here. So, if anybody wanted to, I know that

everybody's done a really difficult difficult I guess the worst best word, made decisions to cut in it's really cut down to the to the bone. And it's too bad but I'm just concerned that we'll get a lot of feedback, meaning everyone, the city departments, City Council, once summer rolls up and things aren't what they were Last summer in the summer before that, I just want to make sure that people the citizens of Auburn are aware, and the citizens of the surrounding towns who enjoy our beautiful parks, as well, that we're doing this because of the COVID, and all that, and I just wanted department heads to be able to talk about it if they wanted to. Which they do. There you go.

**Mayor Quill**

We'll have to have a number system here. Everybody's ready to get up, so.

**Councilor McCormick**

Not all at once.

**City Manager Dygert**

Let's be willing to go over some just some high level.

**Councilor McCormick**

Yeah, a couple high level things for the police department.

**Police Chief Butler**

So, I'd like to first start on, you know, behalf of my staff and obviously, other city departments, you know, thank you for your vocal dedication to keeping Staff numbers as such, and you know, my department is in pretty dire straits now with staff but being able to fill those positions as we're able is a huge relief and not looking at furloughs or layoffs, at this moment. Speaking with one of my colleagues downstate in Schenectady, he's looking at laying off between 40 and 50 police officers, which is huge. So, having the priority of staff first, all these other things that we have laid out for you to be cut are things that you know, once we have stability, and we know what our future looks like, we can always replace those and that's something that I've really emphasize with my staff, is taking care of yourselves and your family is number one, and that's with the job, so thank you. So, one of the biggest cuts that you know, we have obviously put into the budget is the vehicle line. Back in 2016, Mayor and Council you all, you know, agreed to a fleet management plan that I think is worked well. This would actually be the last year of that plan. But we also understand the position we're in right now. So, it actually is actually working two fold in our favor, is the manufacturing plants are not open right now. So, the vehicles that we ordered this year, we still have not received so that would definitely go into next year with a new order of vehicles. So, it's really a moot point anyways, so that was a cut. You know, of course everybody likes a new vehicle, they look great, safety, security, but we have as you know, Sergeant Gilfus is very on top of his game, and he keeps our, our fleet in tip top shape. Unfortunately, I know other departments always look for our hand hand me downs with this fleet management has allowed us to pass on better vehicles. But it's just one of those things. We're tightening your belt. We all understand. So, over time

Councilor, as you mentioned, some of the things that we've grown accustomed to require security from our police officers downtown fun and events. Those have been canceled that allows us to free up, you know, hopefully some overtime dollars. Unfortunately, this year, we had a large expense, obviously filling some vacancies with overtime expenditures to fill slots because of our manpower issues, created a lot of our overtime issues but we also had a homicide to investigate, that homicide it that's very expensive, that was \$30,000 in overtime alone. You can't plan for those things. But luckily we had the available funding to cover that and remain on task with with our budget. In some other, you know, there's if you have any specific questions about some equipment and things like that, geothermal, you granted us the ability to revamp, renew, I guess, our geothermal system within the fire department and the police department. So I had planned a \$10,000 expense to replace some units, but I won't have to do that. So, I was able to trim some money off of that. So, just all in all, I think we really went through this with a fine tooth comb to try to get us to where we are now. So is there any specific questions?

**Councilor Giannettino**

Thank you. Do you think your budget as you've presented it, allows you to continue the mission of the police department to provide the services that are necessary in the community and keep your police force safe.

**Police Chief Butler**

Absolutely. So Obviously, staffing is number one and paramount to that mission. And, you know, we are going to continue with our plan to recruit, to hire, to transfer laterals, whatever we need to do, because we're not at that optimum number to deliver. But we have done, you know, kudos to our staff, they've done an outstanding job with the fluctuation in numbers that we've had over the last several years. So that's, you know, really priority number one to get those numbers back to where they are. So there is no disruption in service. All these other things, like I said, they add to the comforts and the overall, you know, they help help with morale and things like that, but everybody understands the mission. Everybody understands the position we're in, you know, it's not just local. We're all feeling it nationwide. So, they do get it in and staffing is the number one priority and if we can maintain that I think you know, all the rest will come back.

**Councilor Giannettino**

Thank you.

**Mayor Quill**

Chief. Probably don't answer this but I certainly hope someone is looking down state for recruiting.

**Police Chief Butler**

Its been done before Mayor. Yes.

**Mayor Quill**

Anything else Councilors? Other department heads?

**Interim Fire Chief Fritz**

All right. Good evening, Mayor and Council. Um, you've obviously looked at the budget cuts made by the fire department. Let me start out by echoing Chief Butler's comments. The firefighters are the people that provide the services to citizens. So, by not eliminating and by keeping the current staff, that is what gets the job done. So, the fire department appreciates that. And our citizens will see no service change, when they call 911 we will respond and we will continue to perform on the mission as always. That being said, if you've looked at the sheet that I presented, it is mostly a series of small things. It's equipment that though is needed to be replaced, we are going to hunker down and we're going to make it work for another year or two or whatever that turns out to be. Training will be knocked down to only that, that is needed to keep certifications. So, we will go a little bit less on training until we get our footing again. Probably the biggest item you look on there is vehicle maintenance and repairs. We've been lucky enough over the past couple years to replace three pieces of apparatus and our hope is that with the new apparatus, obviously being under warranty, we can see some cost savings there as well. So, other than that, if you have any questions specific to the list, but again, service will continue. Systems will see no negative effect, and we appreciate your dedication to our employees for retaining our numbers.

**Councilor McCormick**

Okay, thank you.

**Councilor Giannettino**

Thank you.

**Mayor Quill**

No one else? Anyone?

**Councilor McCormick**

Could could I ask? Mr. Talbot? I don't know if he wants to, but?

**Mayor Quill**

Mike can you come forward please?

**Councilor McCormick**

Just to talk about it. Because we'll want, I know there's thousands of people that watch us online.

**Mike Talbot**

Good thing I showered.

**Councilor McCormick**

But in case they want to watch it again next week, just to see what's going on, and I'm going to encourage people I know, to do that, because this is an unprecedented budget. So, and I know your department is, can be a hotspot. So would you talk about the things that you've had to?

**Mike Talbot**

Yeah, you know, public works. It's our most diverse department probably in the city. And what's exciting for us is that if you go to the city website and watch the scrolling activities or events, and they're all ones that we put on from public works on behalf of the city. So what we did for our budget preparation this year, we didn't ask for anything. We kept it the same as last year. Of course, the only thing that went up was the collective bargaining agreement pay raises. So, you know, we understood like everybody, it's it's difficult and we'll have to make it make it work. Now some of the cuts that we had to do, so we didn't have any cuts, or, no additions from our current budget. So, when we were asked to really look very hard at a lot of our different departments in public works, are different accounts or departments, wherever you want to call it. You know, what we, some of our larger line items are our operating supplies and services, so, for different departments that translate a little bit different, like for parks, that's what we buy all our mulch with those, you know, our decorative mulch around the buildings like the Heritage Center, all the parks all the playground mulch, street department, that translates into blacktop, road signs, guardrail. So, those are all the areas, you know, that will probably feel a little bit it'll be a little bit tight. But with that being said, similat to what the two chiefs said, you know, we know what our residents expect and what they want, and we're going to continue to deliver that timely service and do the best we can. You know, we get it, it's tough. You know, we're bare bones as it is, you know, we've experienced a lot of reductions in our department, you know, in the last 15 years more so I think, than any other departments and we've acclimated pretty well. So, you know, we're used to it, I guess. So to recap, we have, like I said, so many different departments make up our public works. I can answer any specific questions anybody might have, to any of those departments we have, but generally, it's it's tough. We're right there with everybody else. So, we're just, you know, it's a great community we live in and we have to make it work.

**Councilor McCormick**

Thank you. That's ready.

**Mike Talbot**

Yes.

**Councilor Locastro**

Just talking about the landfill a little bit, is that still gonna be open to the people of Auburn?

**Mike Talbot**

Yes. And I, if I can, next week, we have a presentation on the transfer station. All that's going to be discussed then. So, you know, we can talk a lot more specifics next week, but in a nutshell for our residents, they won't see a difference in anything. So, just in possibly how they're going to have to present their garbage if they come to the transfer station.

**Councilor McCormick**

One more thing that you've had to or you didn't, you didn't fill the part time seasonal people. This summer, for the summer that you usually do. So, there could be a chance that something could grow a little longer, or look a little less maintained. And that's to be expected to, for the most part.

**Mike Talbot**

Yeah, you know, similar to probably how all our hair looks right now. Our parks are going to be a little bit a little bit shaggy at times, but you know, we do the best we can and it takes a while, you know, for us to mow the arterial, well, you know, there's two people, there's there's three people who during the summer months, maybe seven or eight months of our work year, that for 40 hours a week they mow. So, you know, also in our, you know, we're not buying any new equipment, any new mower. So, that easily translates into a little more downtime, a little more servicing and repairs of our older machines. Because they get thousands of hours each each summer. You know, and I know you buy a lot more for your house, you can make it last 15 years sometimes, like we all do with a, you know, with a pipe wrench hold on a wheel for the last two years, which we just can't do because time is our efficiency when we mow. So, you know, we'll feel it in different areas. But hopefully, you know, if the residents out there see an area of that we're lagging behind just please give us a call and we'll jump right on it. But yeah, to your point, yeah, there's probably going to be a little bit delay. Our job is gonna make sure that delay is minimal. So, that's what we're preparing ourselves to do. But I know one of the things we are sacrificing is seasonal help. And it'll be a little bit different, especially at Hoopes Park because really 80% of our seasonal help out there, or, I mean, 80% of our staff during the summer is seasonal people, which I think we're still hopefully we'll survive a little bit, so we'll have, because we do, it's open, you know, people enjoy it seven days a week, just like at Casey Park. So, yeah, it'll be, it'll be a challenge, but nothing that's daunting or intimidating. We'll, we'll get it done. You know, and if anyone has any concerns, all they have to do is give us some advice, and we'll make it work.

**Councilor McCormick**

Thank you. All set.

**Councilor Giannettino**

Thank you.

**Mayor Quill**

Thank you. Thanks, Mike. Thank you. Councilor McCormick anyone else? I think it's a great idea, so, I just

**Councilor McCormick**

Oh, Jenny Haines?

**Jennifer Haines**

Hi, I'm here.

**Councilor McCormick**

Hi. Oh, Jenny, I didn't realize you're there, it's a telephone instead of your face. Is there anything that you can think of that would be beneficial to, to articulate when you've got the public's attention that would be, you know, helpful to them to understand what they're going to see coming forward, going forward.

**Jennifer Haines**

Sure, thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. I'll echo my colleagues in appreciating the Council focused on maintaining staff on behalf of our, my coworkers, we appreciate that so thank you very much. The biggest item that we needed to cut was demolitions of unsafe buildings. We had wanted to get pretty aggressive with that this year, we had requested \$200,000. to do that. We had identified eight properties that we wanted to target off for demolition. So, that's obviously something that we'll need to wait on. And so we'll just ask for patience from, from folks in those neighborhoods, we do care about the eyesores that are around you. And, we'll do our best in keeping the property maintenance piece up to snuff there. So, that is something that we won't be able to move forward. We do have some community development block grant funding that we have set aside for demolition. So, we will try to do a couple with those depending on how the priorities come together for that. The other piece related to code enforcement, we had a couple, one piece of equipment for sidewalk maintenance that we were looking to obtain. We really, really struggle with the equipment we have for snow blowing on Grant Avenue and North Street in particular, we have residential grade snowblowers, which work great in most of our neighborhoods, but really difficult on the bigger streets. So, that is something we are going to be waiting on. And then we had a vehicle truck with a dump box that we were hoping to obtain and that is really around, as we have been refining this program over the last couple of years, it's around efficiencies and being able to to do the work quicker with less trips back and forth. So, we would have appreciated especially municipal utilities and DPW and borrowing equipment when we needed that so we'll continue to work with them on that. Related to planning, the biggest ticket item there that we had requested was a update of the comprehensive plan that is now 10 years old if you can believe that. There are some things in there that are still fresh and relevant but it does need to be updated. So, we'll we'll continue to move forward our development process in the best way we can, we do have a fairly new zoning ordinance that needs to be tweaked here and there. But we'll, we'll continue and the public will not see a difference in our services, we'll continue to do the good work that we do.

**Councilor McCormick**

Thank you. Thank you.

**Jennifer Haines**

Thank you.

**Mayor Quill**

Thank you, Jenny.

**Jennifer Haines**

Thank you.

**Councilor McCormick**

No one else that I can think of. Not that I don't think you're important Seth. But it's the thing the things I wanted to bring up are the things that you'll, except for unless the water doesn't turn on when we turn it on, but I don't think there's anything?

**Seth Jensen**

Water will still be on for the next budget year.

**Councilor McCormick**

Right. Thanks. And it'll be clear. We're doing the same thing we did last year, not cutting any of the things we do for taking care of our water. And I don't have any questions. Thanks.

**Mayor Quill**

Any other department heads want to weigh in, Corporation Counsel.

**Stacy DeForrest**

Good evening. Good evening Council, Mayor and Council. I have a very small budget. I just wanted to make a comment really more for the public's awareness. When I started with the city, it was late 2015. And at that time, the Corporation Counsel budget included consulting fees of about \$70,000 I think, and we've brought that down to \$2,000. So, I just wanted to make the public aware. It's been a slow process, every year we've kind of taken more and more in house. And I'm really proud of what my team has managed to accomplish. So, in bringing that down and trying to give city staff, City Council and the residents like the best legal services we can in house. So, just wanted to comment

**Councilor McCormick**

No I'm glad.

**Mayor Quill**

That's interesting.

**Stacy DeForrest**

Yeah, we, I mean, we, I'm always happy to work with other attorneys in the community, and welcome outside advice, but I think we can handle so much here to the benefit of the city that that's what we try to do.

**Councilor McCormick**

Just to comment on that. It's a good example because that's something you found that you could cut that you don't need. But a lot of the cuts that we're making, just because they're cut doesn't mean they were excess, not needed. These are things we need to run an efficient, good operation. So, I hope that it's understood by departments and the public that these are things we don't intend to keep this way that they need to come back, eventually. It's my opinion, only that these aren't gravy, things that you were cutting. They're things that are going to impact, not services, basic services, but other things. So, I just want to make that clear but that was a good example. And I think every department has been trying to do things like that, bring things in house where we paid out outside before. Thank you.

**Councilor Giannettino**

I think that's a good point that Ms. DeForrest brought up and I think it highlights how difficult this whole process of coming up with, and we've used the term austerity budget, was, because over the last four or five years staff has worked so hard to streamline everything by reducing those costs. You know, we've looked at health insurance, what we did with Falcon Park and partnering with the college, we've worked diligently to reduce the cost of providing these services. So, when we say it's time, in a situation like this that we have to cut things, it's that more difficult. So, I appreciate you bringing that up. It shows that there isn't a lot of fluff in the budget. So, thank you.

**Councilor McCormick**

And they were attorney fees and we know their way over the top. Thank you.

**Mayor Quill**

I trust that all the work is still getting done, just not going outside. We're not farming it out. Anyone else? Anything else? You have direction in the budget, or do you need anything?

**City Manager Dygert**

So, I haven't heard anything else Mayor as far as any proposed changes, so we'll move on, move ahead, get ready for May 21.

**Councilor McCormick**

Excuse me, Rachel. feel slighted, we haven't asked her to talk. We know, you've all done a great job but Rachel I know, we've, we've called on me a lot too.

**Mayor Quill**

Rachel was a ring leader, she got them all in line.

**Councilor McCormick**

We appreciate it.

**Mayor Quill**

Good work, well thank you. Councilors, anything else? City manager for you and Stacy and I don't know who else. Someone mentioned earlier this evening about receiving an email or something in the mail in regards to testing.

**Councilor McCormick**

Oh, I did. Okay.

**Mayor Quill**

Without playing your hand, are we planning on testing all of our employees? If it is not a good time to speak of it? Or?

**City Manager Dygert**

Well, I can tell you some of the things that we're looking at. So, I wasn't gonna mention this in the beginning but we are looking at developing a reopening policy or procedure for the city because again, we're anticipating, that probably, and I can't say that loosely enough not knowing exactly what's going to happen. But we're anticipating to see some relaxation in the restrictions. Probably sometime mid June, I'd say for a broad ballpark. So, we are already exploring testing for our employees and we have employees in different roles that may need different types of testing and there are different types of tests out there. So, we're trying to work through that to find out the most appropriate type of test for employees and their various situations where we would have that done, because we do have some options, there are several places in the community that do that. We're having some discussions with some of them about whether or not we can actually bring that right to the facility so we don't have to have employees going someplace and doing it where we might actually be able to do it right in one or more of our buildings. And if you don't mind, I'm just going to talk through some of the things that we've got that we're working on.

**Mayor Quill**

I don't mean to interrupt, but I believe Council is interested and everyone watching at home.

**City Manager Dygert**

You know, what we're modeling this after is some of the guidance that's been given to private industry from New York State and from the CDC and things like that. Some of it may seem extreme, some of it may not. But it's what we are aware of right now that's going on. So we're trying to prepare for the the

highest level of restriction when we come back. So, all of these things have to be driven by policy. Not to try to make it too confusing for our employees or staff, but we need to have policies that we can follow. We had a brief discussion just before this meeting, about you know, how long will this all last? And, you know, I think a reasonable expectation is probably at least a year, some of these things will be in place. So we want to make sure we have good guidance, so that we can go back if there's a, if there's a dispute about a procedure or something like that, or there's a question. We want to make sure it's well documented, to protect us and to protect your employees. You know, there's some discussion, certainly some discussion, it looks like it will have to happen some sort of a mandatory evaluation for the workforce every day when they come into their place of work. That, again, coming out of some of the things we're seeing from the CDC in New York State. We have to develop policies for our folks if they happen to say, you know, they feel like they've got the symptoms of something or they're just in general sick, and how that works and return to work policies. One of the biggest issues we have is, how do we appropriately protect the results of those tests? To protect the privacy of our employees while still getting the information we need to protect the rest of the employees if that makes any sense. So we're, you know, digging through HIPAA information and a lot of the other EEOC guidance that's out there, as well as our union, labor contracts, and how this will all play into those. That's policy related things is related to workplace safety, the buildings that our folks work in and the environment that they work in, you know, all these private industries are being asked to have policies on social distancing in the workplace. So we've got to look at that. I don't think we're going to have as big of a problem as some of the other businesses and industries that are out there because we typically don't pack a lot of people into one office anymore. But we've got to make sure that those things are They're things like face mask use for the public and our employees and when that should happen when it needs to happen or has to happen, workplace cleaning and disinfecting, things like that. And you may notice if you go through City Hall, were experimenting with a few things, because we know that it's coming, we don't know. But we're very confident that it's coming, that we're going to have to have some barriers between our employees and the general public. So you will notice like in the clerk's office, the treasurer's office, some of these other offices where we're working on going through trying out some essentially clear plastic barrier that can can do that. It's a similar environment to like if you went to a grocery store right now where they've got a plastic barrier, and we're doing our best to try to be conscientious and aware of the historic nature of the building, as well. So we're still working through that. The other issue issue that we are still working through is attendance for employees seems like a simple thing but there are a lot of provisions out there under the New York Pause Act and some of the other things that are out there that give some different rights to the employees and responsibilities to the employer to allow for time off related to whether you're ill or you're caring for somebody that's ill, or somebody that presents with symptoms. And the other big issue that we've got is childcare at this point in time, so our employees that have childcare issues due to the school closure, we've got to work through all that. And that's if you look at New York State's some of the things they've been discussing, even for private industry, those are things that we've got to work through. That's the overview.

**Mayor Quill**

Not to be current, but it's ever evolving, ever changing. Oh, it's changing. I know I I've been asked if our employees will be tested or whatever. So, it's in the process, right. It's that fine line.

**City Manager Dygert**

So, we've been in communication with the health department, we've been in communication with several of the other businesses or organizations, doctors offices that provide that. And we're trying to just make sure we're doing the right thing at the right price point, because I've seen everything from free to \$100 a person. So we need to get that all organized. And again, it's my understanding, there's a variety of tests out there, some more accurate than others. So, we want to make sure we don't want to drag people through the mill and have them keep going through going through because we find out something they'll, we're on it. It's, that's something that's developed mostly within the last week or so, we continue to work on it, Stacy's constantly checking every day with the new executive orders that come out of the New York State, the governor's office, Steve Selvek, from the very beginning was kind of reassigned from just planning in general to keeping an eye on the environment of what's going on across the state and across the nation with things related to this to try to keep up with as everybody knows, right, you can open up any type of, you can open up the internet or social media or a newspaper and not be inundated with information. So, that's one of the things we are dealing with is trying to sift through a lot of that stuff, figure out what's, what's true, what's real, what's applicable to us and what we've got to do. But, again, we expect within the next few weeks, we'll have some policies set out. Probably gradually start bringing our workforce back to work. Sorry for the long winded explanation, but.

**Mayor Quill**

You could have could have spent twice as much time. I believe everyone in this room and probably everyone listening to us tonight has a million questions. Councilor Giannettino was talking about the swabbing the nose I had done in March. That was very exciting.

**Councilor Giannettino**

That's not the adjective I would use, but.

**Mayor Quill**

I've done it before and I certainly don't want to do it again. So anything else from the Council?  
Councilor.

**Councilor Giannettino**

Mayor, if I may, and it's really related to our budget discussion tonight and to COVID-19. We passed the resolution a couple weeks ago really regarding direct aid to municipalities, and really the need for that, and I think our budget shows that that it is imperative that we receive that aid. The good news is that our congressional delegation is listening. Senator Gillibrand and Senator Schumer had been out in front of this Congressman Katko committed to fighting for direct aid to municipalities. There's a proposal in the Senate that was spearheaded by Senator Schumer and Gillibrand in conjunction with five other senators.

And that plan would call for 70% of that money to go to CDBG entitlement communities, the other 30% would be dispersed to other communities based on population. I believe that that's the way that the funding should go. You know, what better way to distribute that money than through the CDBG program. We know that that program is highly successful, right? People criticize government programs all the time, you can point to the success after success of the CDBG program, and it would get the money to communities who need it the most. Congressman Katko is proposing that the money go directly to counties and then counties would distribute that money to municipalities and I want to thank him for his recognition that municipalities need money. But I want to, you know, express that I disagree with that 100%. We being a municipality, we're providing our own services, that money should come directly to us. If it goes to the state or the county, we are not going to get our fair share of money. So, I would ask that next week we present a resolution, basically making our case supporting the CDBG mechanism for distributing the funds and not having it go from the, go to the counties if everybody's agreeable with that.

**Councilor McCormick**

Sounds like a good idea.

**Councilor Giannettino**

Thank you.

**Mayor Quill**

Do you want staff to do it where you're going to work on it with staff or how would you like to do it?

**Councilor Giannettino**

Clerk, the Clerk will work on it for us.

**Chuck Mason**

I just if I could just add one thing. We confirmed with the staffs of the Senator's office today that what they're going, what their proposal does is it uses the CDBG entitlement formulas to identify how money would be distributed to cities. However, it will not contain the CDBG requirements. It'll be unrestricted aid to the city. So, but they're going to use the same formula mechanisms to decide which cities in the country will get a little bit more funding using CDBG formulas. That's what their proposal says. This is something that is probably going to be debated greatly over the next couple of weeks. We'll definitely get a resolution prepared for next week and hopefully, maybe it'll resolve itself before then but might take a while on this one.

**Councilor Giannettino**

Thank you.

**Mayor Quill**

Is that agreeable Council? Very, very good thing. Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Any other business Councilors? Do we have a request for Executive Session?

**City Manager Dygert**

Mayor, we've got one matter related to the sale or lease of real property. All right, well,

**Mayor Quill**

Anyone else have an item for Executive Session? So, at this point, I'll entertain a motion, Mr. Clerk, for Executive Session.

Executive Session. Councilor McCormick made a motion to enter Executive Session, seconded by Councilor Giannettino. Council voted unanimously to enter an executive session at 6:14 p.m. regarding the following matters:

- One matter regarding the sale, lease or acquisition of real property.

Executive session adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

**Adjournment:** By unanimous vote the Council adjourned the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Minutes submitted to the City Council on May 14, 2020 by Charles Mason, City Clerk