

**Auburn City Council  
Regular Meeting  
Thursday, April 29, 2021 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 5:00 p.m. via Zoom videoconference from the City Council Chambers, 24 South St. Auburn, NY by Mayor Quill. The meeting was held by videoconference due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**ROLL CALL** – The City Clerk called the roll. Councilor Deb McCormick, Councilor Jimmy Giannettino, Councilor Terry Cuddy, Councilor Tim Locastro and Mayor Quill were all present.

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

- City Manager, Jeff Dygert
- Corporation Counsel, Stacy DeForest
- City Clerk, Chuck Mason
- Police Chief, Shawn Butler
- Fire Chief, Mark Fritz
- City Comptroller, Rachel Jacobs
- City Engineer, Bill Lupien
- Director of Planning and Economic Development, Jennifer Haines
- Director of Municipal Utilities, Seth Jensen
- Police Lieutenant James Slayton
- Senior Planner, Renee Jensen
- Assistant to the Mayor and City Council, Rhonda Miller

**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.

**Public Announcements** –

The next meeting of the Auburn Planning Board scheduled originally for May 4, 2021 has been cancelled.

**CEREMONIAL PRESENTATIONS –**

**WHEREAS**, in 1872, J. Sterling Morton proposed to the Nebraska Board of Agriculture that a special day be set aside for the planting of trees; and

**WHEREAS**, this holiday, called Arbor Day, was first observed with the planting of more than a million trees in Nebraska, and

**WHEREAS**, trees, wherever they are planted, are a source of joy, spiritual renewal, and beautify the community; and

**WHEREAS**, trees express the order of the nature, and show us all the strength of diversity, and the advantages of interdependency in adapting to a changing world; and

**WHEREAS**, trees can reduce the erosion of our precious topsoil by wind and water, cut heating and cooling costs, moderate the temperature, clean the air, produce oxygen and provide habitat for wildlife; and

**WHEREAS**, trees are a renewable resource giving us paper, wood for our homes, and fuel for our fires; and

**WHEREAS**, trees in our city increase property values, enhance the economic vitality of business areas, and beautify our community; and

**WHEREAS**, The City of Auburn has been designated a Tree City USA for more than 20 years; and

**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 do hereby proclaim April 30, 2021 as

**ARBOR DAY**

in the City of Auburn, and we encourage our citizens and visitors to support efforts to protect our trees and woodlands and to support our city's community forestry program. Furthermore, I urge all citizens to plant trees to gladden the heart and promote the well-being of this and future generations.

In witness whereof I have hereunto  
set my hand and caused the seal of the  
City of Auburn to be affixed this  
Twenty-Ninth day of April 2021.

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

**Mayor Quill presented the proclamation to Dr. Walt Aikman.** Dr. Aikman organizes the Grow Auburn's Trees program and consults the City on its tree program. Dr. Aikman made the following remarks: That's, that's terrific. Mayor Quill, thank you very much. Congratulations, the city of Auburn. As always, I want to congratulate and thank all of you for your service on Council, our police and firefighters and all the staff members that are here. But it's also a big thank you to all the tree planters, who every year, help plant trees in Auburn, along with the terrific support of our Department of Public Works. And you know, you think about the work that went into the cleanup of the river this last week, many volunteers out there. But there's also many hours of the support from staff to make sure there's a place to take all that terrible junk they found. But I also want to give special recognition and thanks to our City Department of engineering, who worked for many years after many attempts to secure grant funding for the inventory work that we've already begun. And in the coming year, the terrific management planning that we'll undertake and I know we're all very concerned about the loss of our ash trees but I have every reason to expect with this success that our best days are yet to come. Thank you very much. Thank you.

### **Mayor Quill**

Next on our agenda, we have two Keys to the City for Jane and Bill Fox and it reads as follows. In recognition of your many years of dedicated support for the City of Auburn and its residents presented April 29, 2021, by members of Council and myself, so Bil and Jane, if you would meet me at the podium.

### **Jane Fox**

Good evening, everyone. Actually, I've thought about this a little bit. And I am so proud for Bill and I to be standing here if we go back into the 1800s. And I won't take you year by year through it, but our maternal grandparents were proprietors and business owners right here in downtown, the Curtain Hotel, the Curtain Grocery Store, and my grandmother's side, the Maloney family, the Millenary Store, and they've lived through all the depression and all the wars, and our dad Leo Fox, who is from Missouri, came to Auburn and met this lovely young lady at the Curtain Hotel and married her in 1940. And dad had businesses, he had a laundromat, he had a fruit stand, he had a used car lot, and ultimately we went into the wholesale used car business. They educated Bill and I and Bill went on to become an attorney. And I went into the retail business with siblings. And then through a lot of good fortune somebody was silly enough to loan Bill and I a little money. And we've gone along and we feel very dedicated to our heritage. We grew up on Nelson Street, we played in the Seminary where the new firehouse and the police station are being built. I climbed many a tree, I looked at one over there the other day, and I remember it was only about that tall, but I fell and now it's way way high. So, this is a great honor to our family and I thank you all very much.

### **Bill Fox**

I won't go back to 1800. Jane said it well, as she always does. And I thought about this a little bit. First of all, thank you for having us and thank you for the recognition. And you know, as I look back, as Jane

told you were native Auburnian's, grew up by Nelson Street. We had, if we were poor, we didn't know it. And we had a great life, a great childhood. And as we grew and we went along, we got in the car business and we had opportunities, opportunities to go to bigger markets. The manufacturers are always trying to find somebody to go to bigger market. Each time, whether it was Buffalo or Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and even Los Angeles at the end, we'd get together and we'd say okay, great opportunity who's going to go? And the answer was always the same. Nobody wanted to go. And that's a tribute to all of you and your predecessors. Because you've created this little town, a culture of caring, and that culture of caring, it's unspoken, but you can see it every day, on every corner in the street. I don't care whether it's senior citizens in a blizzard before Christmas being driven around in a bus by the Cuthberts singing Christmas carols. I don't care whether it's a handicapped person, getting a ride home, an unemployed person getting a free meal. It happens on every corner all the time. And it's only because of you and your predecessors, that you've created, all those people, that have created a culture of caring. And so we're very honored to be a small part of that. So, thank you very much.

**Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Amendment Public Hearing was declared to be open by Mayor Quill. The following residents spoke:**

Karen Walter. Good evening, Mayor, Council, staff. My name is Karen Walter, 15 Case Avenue. And I too want to speak in gratitude and in favor of the proposed sidewalk plan for Case Avenue and Perrine Avenue, as well as, the proposed improvement to St. Francis Playground that the staff will speak on later in the agenda, later in this evening's meeting. As the speakers before me mentioned the improvements that were made on York Street is like the difference between being in a dark room and turning the light switch on. Those sidewalks are so beautiful, and to be able to extend that into this, into the neighborhoods that are right before Falcon Park is truly a great opportunity. And I know that my neighbors are also very enthusiastic and hopeful that it will take place this summer. And again, thank you for your consideration on these projects.

**Public to be heard:** Mayor Quill asked the Clerk read the public to be heard rules. The following individual spoke:

**David Clifford.** Hi, my name is David Clifford, resident of Auburn. And I want to speak about the opt in or opt out option of the new cannabis law. I know it's a new thing that's come out. But I know from 25 years of experience in Colorado and California, protesting and fighting for and advocating here in New York for and speaking in front of the legislature that education is the first thing that we need to do as far as the effects it can have on the community and legalities of it, the environment. And that's what I'd like to speak about and help the councilors, legislators who work with the police and hopefully getting you to opt in and show you the benefits that can happen with it, and the economic and positive effects it can have. I'm not sure how Councilors feel about it at this point, or the mayor. But I would like to invite you to call me at any time any meetings I'd like to attend. And I'd also like to invite you, I've talked to the owner of Taproot Farms in Skaneateles. Sorry, I'm a little nervous. But, Josh Allen is the owner of that, and he's from the Welch Allyn Foundation, or, family, and he's very environmentally conscious. And it's a place that can show you the benefits it can have on the farms around here, even if they don't grow

hemp or cannabis, and how it can be a positive environmental effect. And I think that's where we really need to start out first with the lakes being as dirty as they are and we need to clean them up. I know that's a big impact, it can be environmental, but if we do it right, set the policies from the beginning, work with the County Legislature, I think we can really have a great environmental impact. As far as economic, they say in New York, it's about a \$4.4 billion projected within the next five years, in the tax revenue, that we could, you know, benefit from that. Police wouldn't have to worry about it as much, they've shown, excuse me, they've shown in the most recent study that in Washington and Oregon that case clearances which, I'm sure police would love to have more cases solved, have actually risen since legalization of cannabis because they're spending less time on minor, minor simple possession charges, courts, arresting them. It cost \$1,000. to arrest person for simple possession charge average, is what they say. 600,000 people a year are charged with simple possession. That's between \$600 million and over \$3 billion I think, sorry, I don't have my notes, that we're spending for simple possession charges that can ruin people for life. I got charges when I was young and every time I went to get employment it always says have you ever been charged with a crime? Unfortunately, yeah. And I was in it's cut me from jobs and kind of ruin my life, but it's also benefited me a lot. And I've helped people when I was in Colorado in California. Thank you. And my name is David Clifford. And I'd like to welcome any of you to speak with me anytime.

**JoLynn Mulholland (Cayuga County DFCC Project Coordinator)** Good evening, my name is JoLynn Mulholland and I'm the project coordinator for the Cayuga County Drug Free Community Coalition here in Cayuga County. I am here to speak to you about the opt in and opt out. We would love to work with you guys on working on environmental strategies to make sure that our community is safe for our youth. We've been noticing from our data that our youth marijuana rate is above the national average here in Cayuga County. We're also worried about what's going to happen with the black market rate as we are a poverty community already. From that, we have things like working on DUIs, strategies, compliance checks, and other informational things that we can work on in educating parents about keeping their marijuana plants once able to be grown in their home, safe away from their children, same thing we do around prescription drugs, and other things to make sure that our youth are safe in our community as they are the future generation of this community. Also, we are seeing in other states increase in teen pregnancy, teen homelessness and dropout rates. So, these are all things that we would hope that you would consider and work with the coalition on these strategies and thinking.

#### **Approval of Meeting Minutes –**

- April 15, 2021 Council Meeting Minutes  
Motion to approve the April 15, 2021 minutes by Councilor Giannettino, seconded by Councilor Cuddy. Motion to approve carried 5-0.

#### **Reports of City Officials**

**A. City Manager's Report**

- The City of Auburn is seeking bids for the following project: CDBG Sidewalk Program; bids are due May 19, 2021. More information on this project is available on the City of Auburn webpage under the tab "Bids/RFPs"
- Police Chief Shawn Butler will soon be graduating from the University of San Diego with a Master of Science degree in Law Enforcement and Public Safety. Congratulations Chief, on successfully handling the ever-increasing needs of the Auburn Police Department while simultaneously completing the necessary work to achieve this most recent designation.
- Today as part of their corporate mission to provide community service throughout the country, local Verizon crews completed the cleanup of several city parks in recognition of Earth Day.
- Saturday, as part of the annual Spring Cleaning Event hosted at the new transfer station, our public works department took in about 13.4 tons of trash from 181 residents that included 70 electronic devices and 142 tires.
- The Barber, Wall, West St cleanups that were conducted over the last two Fridays resulted in 20.32 tons of trash being removed and 880 lbs of scrap metal.
- The Earth Day Cleanup organized by the Beautification Commission resulted in 2,200 lbs of trash, 1,600 lbs of yard waste and 8 tires being removed.

**B. Reports from members of Council**

**Matters to Come Before Council**

**A. State Environmental Quality Review Act Resolutions (SEQR)**

**B. Ordinances – none**

**C. Local Laws – none**

**D. Resolutions –**

**E. Staff Presentations –**

- 2021 CDBG Annual Action Plan Amendment Presentation by Renee Jensen, Senior Planner and Tiffany Beebee, Senior Planner
- Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council and Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection Program (OLWMC/OLWIPD) Presentation by Adam J.P. Effler, PhD, Executive Director
- Final Balanced Budget Based on Council Input and Revised Revenue Estimates by Rachel Jacobs, Comptroller
- Cannibus Legislation Presentation by Stacy DeForrest, Corporation Counsel
- Bar Graph Reports for March 2021 by Jeff Dygert, City Manager

**16. OTHER**

**TABLED ITEMS - none**

**OTHER BUSINESS – none**

**ADJOURNMENT:** By unanimous vote the Council adjourned the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 6:51 p.m..

Minutes submitted by:

Chuck Mason, City Clerk