

PUBLIC HEARING on the proposed 2008 Small Cities Application was held on Monday, March 24, 2008, at 6:50 p.m. in Council Chambers at 82 Main St., Hornell, N.Y.

PRESENT: Honorable Shawn D. Hogan, Mayor; Aldermen Koehler, Norton, Sciotti, Testani, Shepard, Hann, Lewis, and Carbone; City Attorney Joseph Pelych; Stenographer Karen Schu; and City Clerk Robert J. Roberts.

AND FROM THE MEDIA: Bob Clark of The Evening Tribune.

ALSO PRESENT: George Patterson; Joe Duffy; Jessica Cordes; Mike Marsh; Lisa Herrick; Jerry Walsh; and John Thompson.

Mayor Hogan opened the hearing. The City annually applies for financial assistance for specific projects through the Governor's Office of Small Cities, which administers federal HUD funds. The City is a competitive community, not an automatic entitlement city, he said. In the past, Small Cities awards have been used for economic development, public facilities, and housing rehabilitation, among others, work that the City otherwise would have to fund itself, according to the Mayor.

The City earlier this month held a public hearing to solicit comments on what project should be applied for this year; no one attended, according to the Mayor. The decision was made to apply for the maximum award of \$400,000 to fund a housing rehabilitation program, which drew much interest last time. The hope is to rehabilitate at least 15 homes, said the Mayor, which would provide about \$23,250 for each house [the extra revenue covers lead-based paint testing and program delivery costs].

The final day for income-eligible owner-occupants to apply is March 31. The City will submit its application on April 21 for state review. The City could learn if it is successful in late summer or early fall. If it does win the money, the City would do property analyses and let them out to bid in 2009.

The last time the City offered this program, Mayor Hogan said, there were 155 applicants, of which only 15 could be assisted. "Again, we'll have many more applicants than we can help," the Mayor said. Anyone who previously received rehab funding in the past 15 years likely will not be considered, he added.

If the award is received, the City will send an investigator to qualifying properties to determine what work needs to be done. The emphasis is bringing the homes up to codes and making them safe. "A lot of the money in these homes will be hidden, so you won't see a marked improvement in appearance," the Mayor said.

Mr. Duffy asked why the City can only do 15 houses. Mayor Hogan replied that while the maximum award remains the same, construction and materials costs increase. Mr. Duffy asked if the City Codes Enforcement Office will do the inspections; the Mayor said independent contractor Bob Lee has been doing them. Alderman Koehler asked how the 15 homes are selected; Mayor Hogan said it was "purely based on need."

Mr. Duffy asked if the City ever bid out for construction supplies. Mayor Hogan said the City had to be careful to avoid collusive purchasing, but if an extraordinary

situation arose – such as all 15 homes needing furnaces – then maybe the City could be best served by seeking a group bid.

Alderman Koehler checked to ascertain that there were no target neighborhoods under this application. Mayor Hogan said this is Citywide.

There being no further comment, the public hearing was closed at 7:08 p.m.

Shawn D. Hogan
Mayor

Robert J. Roberts
City Clerk