

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON
May 10, 2023

The regular meeting of the Mechanicville City Council was held at the Senior Center, 178 North Main Street, Mechanicville, New York on Wednesday May 10, 2023.

Commissioner Seber: Called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Commissioner Seber led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call:	Mayor Butler	Absent
	Commissioner Seber	Present
	Commissioner Sgambati	Present
	Commissioner Hosley	Present

Motion to accept the April 12, 2023 Meeting Minutes:

Motion: Commissioner Seber Seconded by: Commissioner Hosley

AYES: 3 NAYES: 0

Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Seber stated the Mayor has received the March and April monthly fire reports from Chief Dunn and they will be attached to the minutes. He went on to say that the Mayor asked him to announce that there will be a Free Electronics Recycling Day Saturday May 20th from 9am-3pm at DPW, they will be charging for TV's only and will also need an appointment for TV's only and the list of items accepted is on the City's website. Commissioner Seber stated they are into water collection until May 31st without penalty. He added the Charter Committee would be meeting on May 22nd at 6:00pm at the Senior Center. He went on to say his office has begun the next stage of tax foreclosure proceedings for taxes that are due for 2019 however there were several taxes that were due before 2019 but the tax foreclosure process was delayed because of COVID and the restrictions on collected taxes and fore closings. He said several months ago he sent about twenty-five (25) informing them they have until a certain date to pay their taxes to avoid foreclosure. He added out of the twenty-five (25), twelve (12) have responded and they collected about \$150,000 in back taxes. He went on to say he has handed the remaining over to the City Attorney and they will move forward in which eventually could get to a tax auction. Commissioner Seber stated that since he has been here in 2009 they have never had to foreclose on any occupied properties, but there have been some abandoned properties sold and put back on the assessment roll.

City Attorney Lyn Murphy added that the Appellate Division came out with the decision on Thursday that affects how you process tax foreclosures in which she knew was pending so they have been waiting for the decision before going forward because it had to do with adequate service of notice as you proceed through the proceedings.

Commissioner Sgambati stated DPW has begun summer hours which are 6am-2:30pm. He added leaf and grass clippings need to be in the brown recyclable bags and they won't pick it up in plastic bags, they try to pick them up on Monday's and Friday's and there is no need to call for pick-up. He went on to say when dumping at the DPW, no matter what is being dumped you have to go in and check-in with the clerk, there is no dumping allowed without checking in. He stated the sweeper has been out a couple time but not has been out in the past week or so due to lack of manpower.

Commissioner Hosley stated the City Bus down and they are attempting to get a new one or a different one but it may take some time.

Public Hearing (Code Changes):

Commissioner Hosley read a letter that was sent from the previous Fire Safety Officer (Jeff Alonzo) in support of the changes to the City Code that the Code Enforcement Officer is proposing.

Several residents spoke in favor and against the proposed code changes, several questions were asked by: Sheldon, Joe Starr, Barb McGuire, Dom DiNallo, Kim Dunn, Ray Martin, Dave Hicks and Bill Connors. The Council Members, City Attorney, and Code Enforcement Officer answered their questions.

Public Comment:

Elizabeth Espinoza of 2 Harris Avenue read a statement representing herself and her neighbor of J.S. Moore Housing about her displeasure with the Mechanicville Police Department.

Dave Hicks of 241 First Avenue questioned the various fees on resolution 36-2023 and the purchase of a new DPW vehicle.

Commissioner Sgambati stated him and his mechanic have been looking at this vehicle for the past three (3) months.

Dave Hicks asked why they would be voting on a truck body next month, what is wrong with the body's they already have.

Commissioner Sgambati stated the present truck body is leaning and falling apart.

Dave Hicks then questioned resolution 39-2023 stating a four (4) year term is max.

Commissioner Seber stated the term is six (6) years and they don't have a choice in the matter the State dictates that.

Barbara McGuire asked if when people go to the Zoning/Planning board to change the number of units in their property, the Assessor gets notice of these changes.

Commissioner Seber stated she does.

Barbara McGuire asked how much money the City has come into with the new assessment.

Commissioner Seber explained that the new assessments are not about generating more money it is about how the tax levy is distributed. He added that in the last update that was done about 70% of the people saw either a no great change or a decrease in their taxes and about 30% went up.

Barbara McGuire stated it was said at a previous meeting that the City was saving money using Twin Bridges and is wondering how that is possible since Twin Bridges charges more than County Waste did previously.

Commissioner Seber stating the savings is in the hauling costs and all together the savings are about \$70,000 from the previous contract.

Kim Dunn of South Main Street questioned if resolutions 43 & 44 were being pulled because they need to be reviewed by the County.

Commissioner Seber stated that was correct.

Kim Dunn asked if anything that has been done in the past needed to be reviewed.

Commissioner Seber stated he knows that they send things to the Secretary of States Office.

Kim Dunn asked if she can get the information for the public hearing prior to the meeting. Kim asked what the area they are going after in resolution 37-2023 on the Brownfield public hearing.

Commissioner Seber stated the public hearing is to give the City the designation so that the City can apply for grants.

Ray Martin asked Commissioner Seber if he has taken over the Commissioner of Finance role.

Commissioner Seber stated it is being handled primarily by the Deputy but he is there for signatures and questions but the Deputy does a tremendous job.

Ray Martin asked if he received permission or direction from the Council to take over that role.

Commissioner Seber stated he is not officially that.

Ray Martin stated the Charter stated the City Council must appoint...

City Attorney Lyn Murphy corrected him and said it states they shall.

Commissioner Seber stated it does not give a time frame.

Ray Martin stated it does, it says 20 days after the resignation.

Commissioner Seber stated this has happen many times before.

Ray Martin stated one of the concerns is the AUD was due to be reported to the OSC and he asked if that has been done.

City Attorney Lyn Murphy corrected Ray stating the Charter reads “a vacancy exists after 20 days” it doesn’t say when you shall appoint.

Ray Martin asked if the AUD was filed.

Commissioner Seber stated it probably was not since the books just get closed in April.

Ray Martin stated the City had a big problem the last time the OSC did an audit.

Commissioner Seber stated that was in 2012 or 2013 and the City has come a long way since then.

Ray Martin asked how we know that, since we had a Finance Commissioner that left suddenly and now they are not going to do an audit.

Commissioner Seber stated the City has an audit done annually.

Ray Martin asked for Commissioner Seber to report to him next month about the audit. He went on to say that he can’t believe they are not going to do an audit.

Commissioner Seber explained to him again that an audit is done every year by a private independent CPA firm.

Ray Martin asked where he can find the results of the audit.

City Attorney Lyn Murphy stated he can find it on the website.

Ray Martin asked if committee members need to be from Mechanicville.

City Attorney Lyn Murphy stated it depends on what committee it is, and stated the Civil Service Committee does not need to be.

Ray Martin asked who determined it was a six (6) year term for Civil Service.

Commissioner Seber stated he believes it was the State.

Bill Claydon of Underwood Avenue asked Commissioner Seber what his qualifications were to take over the Commissioner Finance Department.

Commissioner Seber stated he is familiar with what goes on in the Department since his office works side by side with the Finance Department but the Deputy runs the office. He went on to say that he has a background in Government Finance, and he deals with all the infrastructure work, and the bonding and borrowing.

William Connors stated the fees that were passed are outrageous, they deter development, they punish the people who invest in the community, and were not advertised in the paper. He added this punishes the small businesses who are just getting by. He went on to say the City got by great in the past.

John Snyder of Park Avenue asked Commissioner Sgambati if there was a licensed pesticide employee at DPW and is wondering what is applied around the fences at playground that kills the grass. He went on to say someone is applying pesticides and not notifying anyone, there are no placards for the kids or families to see.

Commissioner Sgambati stated he will look into it.

John Snyder stated that they guys should move the pile of stones that were left behind from the plowing when they are mowing as opposed to mowing around them.

Resolutions:

RESOLUTION 36-2023 Vehicle Purchase

Moved by: Commissioner Sgambati
Seconded by: Commissioner Hosley

AYES: 3 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 37-2023 Public Hearing (Brownfield Opportunity)

Moved by: Commissioner Seber
Seconded by: Commissioner Hosley

AYES: 3 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 38-2023 Re-appointment (Police-Civilian Internal Affairs Review Commission)

Moved by: Commissioner Sgambati
Seconded by: Commissioner Hosley

AYES: 3 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 39-2023 Re-appointment (Civil Service)

Moved by: Commissioner Sgambati
Seconded by: Commissioner Hosley

AYES: 3 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 40-2023 Bid for Dump Body

Moved by: Commissioner Seber
Seconded by: Commissioner Hosley

AYES: 3 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 41-2023 Youth Service Project Agreement

Moved by: Commissioner Sgambati
Seconded by: Commissioner Hosley

AYES: 3 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 42-2023 Public Hearing Notice

Moved by: Commissioner Seber
Seconded by: Commissioner Hosley

AYES: 3 NAYS: 0

NEW BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

Close Meeting: 8:28 P.M.

Moved by: Commissioner Sgambati

Seconded by: Commissioner Hosley

AYES: 3 NAYS: 0