

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON
March 11, 2020
6:00 P.M.

The regular meeting of the Mechanicville City Council was held at the Senior Center, North Main Street, Mechanicville, New York on Wednesday March 11, 2020.

Mayor Baker: Called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.
Dana Watt led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call:	Mayor Baker	Present
	Commissioner Seber	Present
	Commissioner Gilheany	Absent
	Commissioner Gotti	Present
	Commissioner McGuire	Present

Motion to accept the February 5, 2020 Meeting Minutes:

Motion: Commissioner Gotti Seconded by: Commissioner Seber

Roll Call: AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

Motion to accept the February 28, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes:

Motion: Commissioner Seber Seconded by: Mayor Baker

Roll Call: AYES: 3 NAYS: 0

Abstain: 1 Commissioner McGuire

Commissioner Reports:

Mayor Baker stated he attending a meeting along with the City's Public Health Officer at Ballston Spa in reference to the Coronavirus and the basic message was to use common sense by advising people to wash their hands, and sneeze into their arms. He went on to say that they stated at this point there are still only two (2) cases in Saratoga County. Mayor Baker stated the State enacted a burn ban which will be affected from March 16th thru May 14th.

Commissioner Seber stated he received a call from the Saratoga County Clerk's office regarding New York State Yellow Ribbon Day which is April 9th which is an event to remember our Troops. He went on to say they would be collecting donations for Blue Star Mothers of America who are mothers who have children currently serving or have honorably served in the military. Commissioner Seber stated donations will be used to send freedom boxes to our deployed troops. He stated there will be a box in his department for people to contribute to. He went on to say that his office is in the middle of tax collection and the last day to physically pay tax bills in the office is Monday March 16th, if the bill is being mailed it needs to be postmarked by March 15th and stated the office will be open on Saturday March 14th from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. for any business. Commissioner Seber stated he is hoping to set up a charter review committee to look into the possibility of changing the form of government in the City. He went on to say nothing would be changed without it first going to the voters.

Commissioner Gotti stated they are finishing the re-facing of the water plant and they are getting ready to jet the west side to keep the storm drains clear from debris and other problems. We went on to say the MS4 structure is catching up but isn't at full capacity. Commissioner Gotti stated he is concerned with the ongoing problems with the decaying structure of City Hall. He added he feels the building has outlived its life and a lot of money is going into it to try and stabilize it but he feels with the growth of the city there is more of a demand on the structure. He stated he believes they need to start looking into facilitating a new facility.

Commissioner McGuire stated that during the month of February the Public Safety Office and the Mechanicville/Stillwater Chamber of Commerce participated in the Leap of Happiness. She went on to say that through donations for specific charities you sell paper frogs and they delivered paper frogs to many businesses in Mechanicville and Stillwater and for a dollar or more you could purchase a frog to be hung in the windows of the businesses. Commissioner McGuire stated they chose to give the money collected to Sleep in Heavenly Peace and she presented three (3) checks to Jim Welch which amount to \$1410.00. She thanked the Mechanicville/Stillwater Chamber of Commerce for partnering with them as well as: Mechanicville/Stillwater Senior Centers, Undeniable Nutrition, Legends Barbershop, the Mechanicville Library, Stillwater Library, Mainstreet Barber, Mechanicville/Stillwater Elks, Post 91 American Legion Sons, Post 91 American Legion Ladies Auxiliaries, Val's, Del's Liquor, Connor's Agency, Kearney's Service Station, Buccerio's Pizza, the Ugly Rooster, The Endzone, Split Endz, and G. A. Bove Fuels. Commissioner McGuire gave a thank you to Kim Noonan for helping making it so successful. She then presented the check to Jim Welch.

Jim Welch thanked the City of Mechanicville and Stillwater and added he grew up in Mechanicville his whole life. He went on to say he began this in 2018 and it has been going non-stop ever since and the first year they built over 225 beds given out in the Capital District with about 25 of those beds being distributed in the City of Mechanicville. Jim stated they would be having their first build in Mechanicville at the Catholic Church at the end of April. He thanked everyone again and stated these funds would go a long way and will go back to our community.

Mayor Baker added that Jim and his organization were recently honored by the Community Center and was well deserved.

Commissioner McGuire stated the Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for April 4, 2020 and will begin at 1:00 p.m. and the hunt will go on until all the eggs are found. She added they have about 4000 eggs that are stuffed and they go very quickly. Commissioner McGuire added she would appreciate any volunteers that would like to help and the Easter Bunny would be there from 1-3 p.m. for pictures. Commissioner McGuire stated she had some questions in reference to the resolutions. In reference to resolution 15-2020, she is asking why this is the 5th time they are appointing someone temporary full time and why they can't find someone. In resolution 18-2020 if anyone knew when the current contract expires.

Commissioner Seber stated it expired December 31, 2019.

Commissioner McGuire asked if this should be going out to bid.

Commissioner Seber stated they have already been through this and it does not have to go out to bid. He added Tenn has does a terrific job in securing the system and he personally feels comfortable retaining him for another five (5).

Commissioner McGuire stated that if it went out to bid there may be other people that could come in at a lower price and do just as good of a job. She went on to state that on resolution 20-2020 there is no salary on the resolution for Chief Rabbitt.

Commissioner Seber stated it was in the contract.

Commissioner McGuire stated that the tax-payers have a right to know what we are paying our Chief.

Mayor Baker stated it wasn't left off the resolution intentionally. He added the salary would be \$84,000 when he is appointed.

Commissioner McGuire asked that since he has been here as acting Chief for such a long time is there a reason why there is a probation period.

Mayor Baker stated it was required by Civil Service.

Commissioner McGuire stated we have an independent Civil Service.

Mayor Baker yes but they still go by the State rules.

Commissioner McGuire questioned if someone else's probation was ended early. Sent went on with resolution 21-2020 and asked why there was a resolution for the Council to approve the Assessor's time.

Commissioner Seber stated he believes that in a resolution in 2019 as a part of her re-appointment for her to report to the Council in which he doesn't think it makes any sense that she has to report to the entire Council if she needs to work an extra hour. He went on to say he wasn't in office at the time so has no idea if there was a reason for it.

Commissioner McGuire asked what has been budgeted for this change.

Commissioner Seber stated there is no change in the budget.

Commissioner McGuire stated that if she is going to be able to work extra hours it needs to be budgeted.

Commissioner Seber stated that is not what the resolution states. He went on to say the previous resolution approved in 2019 states anytime she works extra hours it needs to be approved by the Council, but with this resolution it is up to Commissioner of the department to make sure the hours she wants to work are legitimate and works within the budget that is currently in place.

Commissioner McGuire stated she will not go over the budget.

Commissioner Seber stated that is not his plan.

Commissioner McGuire stated there is no dollar amount for additional services in resolution 23-2020 for Barton and Loguidice.

Don Fletcher from Barton and Loguidice stated it was \$4500.50.

Commissioner McGuire stated she received a call concerning pulling out onto Central Avenue if you are coming off Canal Street. She suggested that the spot where you come out and go down be moved so it is further down so if someone is coming down Central Avenue they can see someone waiting there.

Acting Chief Rabbitt stated that it is South Railroad Street she is talking about not Canal Street.

Commissioner Gotti stated he understands what she is saying and what needs to be done, he went on to say that he would have to see how much of that property is privately owned.

Fire Chief Matt Dunn gave his monthly report which is attached to the minutes. He went on to say that although he was unable to attend the last council meeting he was able to watch it and

wanted to inform the public that his phone number is on the City's website and he is available anytime.

Mayor Baker announced the Water Derby would be held on April 5, 2020.

Acting Chief Bill Rabbitt gave his monthly report which is attached to the minutes. He addressed Commissioner McGuire's concern about hiring Michael Burgess as a temporary full-time officer stating he did get the test results back and there are three (3) people on the list and two (2) of them are certified Police Officers and one (1) is not. He stated he had an interview with the one that is not and gave him his background packet. He added to keep everything fair for the top three (3) people he needs to interview everyone and do a background check on everyone and then will make a selection at that point and he will discuss it with the Mayor when it gets to that point. He went on to say that background checks for Police Officers can take months so to get through until then he needs a temporary full-time Officer.

Public Comment:

Kim Dunn – 250 South Main Street – Read from the City Charter chapter 6, 6-1 which stated the Board of Assessment Review consists of five (5) members so she is questioning why resolution 16-2020 is stating the number of members has increased from three (3) to five (5). She went on to state a resolution was passed in 2017 in reference to the amount of hours in which the City Assessor is paid for. Kim Dunn stated that at the February meeting it was voted to abolish dispatch and she had a few follow up questions. She asked what the status of having someone in the police office to answer questions and if it would be filled by May 29th. She also asked when the remediation in the police department would begin, how long it will take, and what is going to happen to the staff that is inside there when the remediation takes place.

Mayor Baker stated that for the police department they plan on filling that with a civil service jobs and a request was put in for a test, and in the meantime it will be filled with part-time Police Officers.

Commissioner McGuire asked what the title of the position is.

Mayor Baker stated it would be secretary to the Chief of Police.

Commissioner McGuire asked if that test was given office.

Mayor Baker stated they give the secretary test often.

Kim Dunn restated that it will be filled by part-time Officers until the test is given, then when scores come out...

Commissioner McGuire asked if anyone would go into that provisionally.

Mayor Baker stated it would be a part-time position when it is filled.

Commissioner McGuire asked if it would be 8-4.

Mayor Baker stated it would not and would be hours that have not been figured out yet. He did say they would be going 29 hours and asked acting Chief Rabbitt what the hours they were thinking.

Acting Chief Rabbitt stated they are going to be over staffed one (1) person every Wednesday they talked about a person working that position.

Commissioner McGuire asked if they meant a Police Officer.

Acting Chief Rabbitt stated every Wednesday would be a training day and they would be over one (1) Officer every Wednesday.

Dave Hicks - 241 First Avenue asked when the energy audit is going to be implemented. He went on to ask if anything has been done to find out who owns the railroad overpass and asked if the computer upgrade resolution refers to the same people that did the XP to Windows 7 and then it became obsolete and had to be upgraded.

Commissioner Seber stated it was.

Dave Hicks asked when they are being hired again if that is the case.

Commissioner Seber stated they do a good job.

Dave Hicks stated they are not doing a good job if they put in obsolete software. He then asked what has been done about the upcoming garbage contract and if it has been researched.

Commissioner Seber stated he has not.

Mayor Baker stated it will be done in time.

Dave Hicks asked what the next to the firehouse is and what will it be used for.

Mayor Baker stated it is for the project.

Dave Hicks stated the project is supposed to use 24 inch pipe and that is 18 inch.

Mayor Baker stated not all of it is 24 inches but part of it is.

Commissioner Gotti stated the 24 inch through Kearney's because it is a flat ground and the elevation is not great and the 18 inch is on the outfall end.

Tom Mahoney of The Express asked what the hours of the part-time person working in the Police Department would be.

Acting Chief Rabbitt stated someone would be there every day but at this time he did not have the exact schedule at this time.

Bill Claydon – 36 Underwood Avenue asked if there is a lot of Police Officer turnover going to other municipalities for better money.

Acting Chief Rabbitt stated there used to be but that has not been the case recently. He went on to say there is a new contract on the table and in his opinion is a new contract that he thinks will keep them here. He went on to say there is part-time Officer displacement but they are actively looking for full-time so they naturally will go to a full-time job.

Bill Claydon asked if there was anything in the contract that makes them stay for a particular time.

Acting Chief Rabbitt stated there is a three (3) year clause in the contract that is on a sliding scale so they are bound for three (3) years and would have to pay money back if you leave before those three (3) years. He went on to say that it sounds better than it is because municipalities are always looking for well-trained officers all the time so another municipality will have no trouble paying for them.

Bill Claydon stating he thinks they should be looking immediately for a new City Hall instead of pouring money into the present building. He asked if there was any room at the DPW park for a facility.

Mayor Baker stated there is a possibility and he has also been working to get grants.

Bill Claydon asked if there was a monetary amount.

Mayor Baker stated the City Engineer is looking at the square footage needed then they will know more.

Bill Claydon asked if that would include the Police Department and emergency medical.

Mayor Baker stated it would be everything in City Hall he will not move one (1) department, everyone will go.

Bill Claydon asked if it will be similar to what Stillwater has.

Mayor Baker said it would be.

Dana Watt of 244 South Main Street asked when dispatch is abolished how you would get a hold of our local police department in an emergency.

Mayor Baker stated you would call 9-1-1.

Dana Watt asked if that would go to the Sheriff's Department.

Mayor Baker stated if you call 9-1-1 now it goes to the Sheriff's Department.

Dana Watt asked what was going on with the remediation in the Police Department.

Commissioner Gotti stated they were waiting for the inspection and once he receives the report he will have a start date.

Dana Watt asked if the dispatchers that were abolished would be working locally or would not have jobs.

Mayor Baker stated both dispatchers have been offered jobs with Saratoga County but he does not know if they accepted the offers but he knows they have three (3) months to accept.

Resolutions:

RESOLUTION 14-2020: Memorandum of Agreement City of Mechanicville and
Mechanicville Police Department

Moved by: Mayor Baker
Seconded by: Commissioner Gotti

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 15-2020: Michael Burgess Temporary Full-time Police Officer

Moved by: Mayor Baker
Seconded by: Commissioner Gotti

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 16-2020 Roger Jackson Board of Assessment Review

Commissioner Seber stated the reason it doesn't fall within the five (5) years is because all terms end on September 30th. He added when he left as Commissioner in 2015 but in 2016 they could not get five (5) members to serve and there were only three (3) members. He Roger was added as an alternate and needs to be appointed full-time.

Moved by: Commissioner Seber

Seconded by: Mayor Baker

AYES: 4

NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 17-2020 Sasha's Superhero Run

Moved by: Commissioner Seber

Seconded by: Commissioner McGuire

AYES: 4

NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 18-2020 Diagnostic Services Contract

Commissioner Seber stated there is an extension for the rest of this year at \$3000 and this contract will go into effect January 1, 2021.

Commissioner McGuire asked if there would be another resolution in January of 2021.

Commissioner Seber stated there would not be.

Commissioner McGuire asked if it would be put out to bid.

Commissioner Seber stated it would not be.

Moved by: Mayor Baker

Seconded by: Commissioner Gotti

AYES: 3

NAYS: 0

Abstain: 1 Commissioner McGuire (stated she was abstaining because she would like to look into if bids need to be acquired)

RESOLUTION 19-2020 Sub King Water Bill

Moved by: Commissioner Seber

Seconded by: Commissioner Gotti

Commissioner Gotti stated he was the one to look at this situation and the owner was aware there were leaks in some of the sinks in the upstairs properties which caused the fluctuation of the bill. He went on to say the meter that was installed inside the building was not a new meter.

Commissioner McGuire asked how they came to the agreement to charge for 5000 cubic feet.

Commissioner Gotti stated it was based on the extent of time he estimated the leaks were there. He went on to say they installed a new meter and assessed the situation knowing with the new meter the reading would have a slight increase in which he advised the owner of since it didn't necessarily mean an increase in water use.

Commissioner Seber added 38,000 cubic feet was a mutual agreement and added Park Avenue would be flooded is 352,000 cubic feet was used so clearly there was a mistake.

Commissioner McGuire asked if this pops up when something out of the ordinary like this occurs.

Commissioner Seber stated this happened last fall and what normally happens is when an out of line meter read comes in it is flagged in the system both manually and electronically.

Commissioner Gotti stated before the new system it needed to be physically read and at that time if there was a fault in the wire or the gel cap the wire was hooked to that could have given a false reading. He went on to say if that occurred Emilia would flag them and they would go back out and manually re-read them.

AYES: 4

NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 20-2020 William Rabbitt Jr. Chief of Police

Moved by: Mayor Baker
Seconded by: Commissioner Gotti

Commissioner McGuire asked what the salary was.

Commissioner Seber responded it was \$84,000.

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 21-2020 Assessor's Hours

Commissioner Seber stated he is putting this resolution on and she reports to him but he would side with anyone at the table with a similar situation because he believes people who work for a Commissioner or the Mayor should report directly to them and it is up to them to live within any budget they are given.

Moved by: Commissioner Seber
Seconded by: Mayor Baker

AYES: 3 NAYS: 0

Abstain: 1 Commissioner McGuire

RESOLUTION 22-2020 William Bernard Mahoney IV DPW Laborer

Moved by: Commissioner Gotti
Seconded by: Mayor Baker

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 23-2020 Additional Train Station Services

Moved by: Commissioner McGuire
Seconded by: Commissioner Gotti

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 24-2020 Payroll and Vouchers

Moved by: Commissioner Seber

Seconded by: Commissioner Gotti

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

NEW BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

Close Meeting: 6:54 P. M.

Moved by: Commissioner Gotti

Seconded by: Commissioner Seber

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

Executive Session Began: 6:55 P.M.

Executive Session Ended: 7:32 P.M.

Moved by: Commissioner McGuire

Seconded by: Commissioner Gotti

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

Meeting Adjourned: 7:33 P. M.