

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON
January 9, 2019
7:00 P.M.

The regular meeting of the Mechanicville City Council was held at the Senior Center, North Main Street, Mechanicville, New York on Wednesday January 9, 2019

Roll Call:	Mayor Baker	Present
	Commissioner Dunn	Present
	Commissioner Gilheany	Present
	Commissioner Gotti	Present
	Commissioner McGuire	Present

Mayor Baker: Called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.
Jim Herkel led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Motion to accept the December 12, 2018 Meeting Minutes:

Motion: Commissioner Gotti	Seconded by: Commissioner Dunn
----------------------------	--------------------------------

Roll Call:	AYES: 5	NAYS: 0
------------	---------	---------

Commissioner Reports:

Mayor Baker stated that the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) paid back \$3000 loan that was given to them. He also stated that the City is almost under contract with the owners of the lot next to the Central Firehouse. He added the City is in need of more parking and he received a grant from Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner's office which is specific for buying the property and developing it into a parking lot.

Commissioner Dunn informed the public resolution 03-19 states that the City is mandated by New York State to provide cancer insurance to all volunteer firefighters that qualify for it. She added the insurance is not optional; it is an unfunded State mandate.

Commissioner Gilheany had nothing to report.

Commissioner Gotti stated the City received two (2) grants, one for sanitary and the other for water which total \$750,000.

Commissioner McGuire stated they will be having an Easter Egg Hunt on April 13, 2019.

Mayor Baker asked how the Christmas trees in Tallmadge Park went.

Commissioner McGuire stated the memory trees went very well. There were thirty (30) trees purchased and she is hoping to have more next year. She added everyone did a fantastic job decorating the trees. Commissioner McGuire added she thinks people enjoyed walking through the Park looking at the trees.

Mayor Baker stated he heard a lot of positive comments on the trees.

Acting Chief Bill Rabbitt gave his end of the year statistics which are attached to the minutes. He went on to say the Police Department purchased body cameras which are being tested out and they are in the final implementation of producing a policy for them.

Deputy Chief Matt Dunn gave his December Fire Department report which is attached to the meeting minutes and added their average response time is three minutes and thirty-three seconds (3:33), which is time of dispatch to the time they arrive on the scene. The Deputy Chief went on to say they purchased two (2) new thermal energy cameras and are trading in the old ones in which credit will be received for. He added there is a rebate deal until the end of the month when the old ones are brought in and new ones are received; the price is cut in half. He added they are using Target Solutions to get through their training which complies and covers any State/Federal mandate. Deputy Chief Matt Dunn stated he understands the cancer insurance is going to be a burden and wasn't planned for but he stated it is an unfunded State mandate. He went on to say that the most recent State mandate is everyone is required to have a rope which they were able to get a grant to buy the special ropes and training for them. Deputy Chief Matt Dunn mentioned he reached out to Lexipol which is company that does response guidelines and keeps the Fire Department in check with any State/Federal mandates and covers them for best practices which the State follows. He stated that if something were to happen they would legally be in better shape if they had Lexipol backing them up. He went on to say he knows they haven't budgeted for it and it runs about \$3,000 for the Fire Department and he added that Acting Chief Rabbitt has also looked into it and they would get a 10% discount if both were purchased. Deputy Chief Matt Dunn stated he is going to go ahead with it this year and will make it work and asked the Council to look into adding it in the budget in the years to come.

Commissioner Dunn asked if there was a bigger discount if both the Fire Department and the Police Department were to get it.

Deputy Chief Matt Dunn stated if they were both to get it there would be a 10% discount.

Acting Chief Rabbitt added that his cost is double of Assistant Chief Dunn's.

Deputy Chief Matt Dunn stated that combined it is around \$10,000 or \$11,000.

Fire Safety Inspector Jeff Alonzo stated from April until the end of 2018, he completed 86 Fire Safety Inspections and the revenue from these inspections totaled \$12,905. He went on to say that he also temporarily condemned one house for unsanitary conditions and that situation was corrected within 24 hours. Jeff added that the inspections have been received very well and there is more occupancy that needs to be inspected than he originally expected. Jeff thanked the Council for the addition of a full-time building code inspector since he sees the high frequency of traffic that comes in the office on a daily basis. He added he is very pleased with how things are working out.

Jim Herkel Building/Code Enforcement Officer stated that his hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and he has an open door policy. He went on to say that he wanted to clarify some things that were brought up at the last meeting about him. Jim stated there was a background check done on him and through a State mandate he is required to do twenty-four (24) hours of training and he actually did thirty-three and a half (33 ½) hours. He went on to say to become a Code Officer it is State mandated to take one hundred forty-four (144) hours of training within an eighteen (18) month period and he actually completed his in six (6) months. Jim added he has trained with National Grid for gas, electric, emergencies, accidents and has limited OSHA and FEMA training. He went on to say he is very familiar with the emergency reporting system (ERS) which is the form of documentation through the State and if the State audits the City all the documentation is there. Jim stated his salary was brought up at the last meeting and although some think it is high it is comparable to surrounding areas and he took the position because the City needs a full-time inspector. He added that Commissioner McGuire stated at the last meeting that she didn't know anything about him and it wasn't personal but his background was a builder with limited training as a Code Officer and he stated that was not true he was a carpenter for thirty-two (32) years and owned his own business for over twenty (20) years so he knows how to manage people and his position. Jim stated during that time frame he was trained as an armed guard and knows what to look for when he is in that field and how to deal with the public.

Public Comment:

Michael Uccellini with Mechanicville Associates (mid-rise apartments) thanked the Mechanicville mid-rise residents for joining him and stated he was at the meeting to talk about the mid-rise apartments and a project with the apartments. He gave a little background stating his Dad and his friend Gary developed the apartments back in the 80's and his Dad passed away suddenly in 2012 and Gary is now eighty-four (84) years old and with that being said they started to look into selling the project to a group that would maintain it the same way as it has been. He added they found a group called the Arker Companies which has been doing affordable housing for sixty-five (65) years and they are under contract to sell the project. He went on to say the Arker Companies have a plan to invest millions of dollars into the apartment community and stated throughout the years money has been invested in the common areas, community rooms, floors, grounds, and outside but their plan is to invest in all of the kitchens and bathrooms. Michael stated this is a fantastic opportunity for the residents which he added spend money in the

City. He added they are looking for the Council's support on the sale of the property. He also stated that it was brought to their attention there is a lease with the City for a parking lot and park area that the current onsite management team was not aware of. Michael added that since it has been brought to their attention they have already begun renovation on the gazebo and the picnic tables will be replaced and he apologized for the miscommunication. Michael stated he is looking for the support of the Council on the sale which will be a great benefit to the residents.

David Hicks of 241 First Avenue stated that after going over the numbers the Code Enforcement Officer gets approximately \$26 per hour and the part-time Council members get about \$11 per hour.

Mayor Baker stated he get nowhere near that and would gladly take \$11 per hour.

David Hicks asked if the Code Enforcement Officer was salary or hourly.

Commissioner Gilheany stated it was a salary position.

David Hicks stated the reposting of permit fees seems to be extreme and he wasn't sure if other municipalities were compared. He added since it wasn't posted until earlier in the day he didn't have time to do his research. He reiterated the breakdown of fees is very extreme. David went on to ask if the energy audit has ever been done or completed.

Commissioner Gotti stated new LED lighting has been installed throughout the water plant and is going through it one step at a time.

Mayor Baker stated Assistant Chief Matt Dunn has the firehouse half completed.

David Hicks asked what seems to be the problem with the light on Pruyn Hill. He went on to say the number of potholes is increasing. Mr. Hicks asked if there is a contingency plan in place for when the underpass gets blocked.

Mayor Baker stated there will be a plan.

David Hicks stated he thinks the new permit fees should be published.

Mayor Baker stated it will be on the website.

David Hicks asked if the \$153,000 received is for \$270,000 bond or on top of that.

Don Fletcher from Barton & Loguidice stated the City Council passed a bond resolution for \$270,000 for the work at the water treatment plant and they have received \$153,000 which is part of the \$270,000.

Tom Mahoney of the Express asked if there is a final cost of the Mayor's attorney.

Commissioner Gilheany stated they did receive a bill from the Mayor's attorney but there wasn't any details attached so she is waiting for that.

Tom Mahoney stated this has been going on almost a year.

Mayor Baker stated he thought they were talking about the other attorney.

Tom Mahoney corrected him by saying he was asking about the Mayor's attorney. He went on to ask if the taxpayers would ever get a copy of the report.

Commissioner Dunn stated they were still waiting for the report.

Tom Mahoney asked if part of the agreement was that it is confidential.

Commissioner Gilheany stated it is public information.

Steve DiCierce of 102 Saratoga Avenue stated he lives next to 96 Saratoga Avenue which is a vacant parcel that is owned by the City. He went on to say it has been vacant for over ten (10) years and is in horrible disrepair. Mr. DiCierce stated that members of the Council visited the property and told him they felt it was in awful condition; they could smell mold, animals living in the house, there is broken glass that goes on his property and they told him they felt the building should come down. He asked if there have been any plans for the parcel.

Commissioner Dunn stated the City had three (3) properties and a piece of vacant land that they are going to be trying to auction in the next month and that will be one of the properties being auctioned off. She added the City attempted to auction off the three (3) parcels in 2016 and the Council at that time did not accept the bids that were made. Commissioner Dunn mentioned it will be posted in the newspapers and she has been in touch with a lot of realtors so she is hoping they will find someone interested in the properties and she added they will be sold as is.

Steve DiCierce asked if they are sold as is will the new owners be made to bring the properties up to code.

Commissioner Dunn stated they would.

Mayor Baker stated they will need to bring it up to code or tear it down.

Commissioner Gotti stated they would probably set guidelines on the sale to make sure it is brought up to code.

Commissioner Dunn stated they are anxious to have the auction go through so something can be done with the parcels.

Beth Miller DiCierce of 102 Saratoga Avenue stated she was wondering what was done after a few of the Commissioner visited the property, was code enforcement contacted. She added windows are broken out, and her eighty-seven (87) year old mother-in-law lives downstairs from her and it is a great health concern. She added they have spoken with Anthony Sylvester and he stated he formed a formal complaint about bringing it up to code but nothing has happened over many years with the exception of a few boards put up over the bottom windows and no trespassing signs were added to the property. Beth stated her concerns are not only safety issues but why hasn't the City brought the property up to code.

Mayor Baker stated the new Building/Code Enforcement Officer has been out to the properties and he will be pursuing getting them all up to code. He added once we have a new City Attorney they will make sure everything is in order to sell them properly to anyone that wants to buy them as a "as is sale" or "as is" plus taxes.

Commissioner Dunn stated they will be buying the property "as is".

Commissioner Gotti stated it doesn't make sense for the City to invest that type of money to bring the properties up to code.

Beth Miller DiCierce asked if it doesn't make sense for the City to protect the residents.

Mayor Baker stated he is saying it would cost too much to make them livable.

Commissioner Gotti stated what it would take to bring that parcel up to code would have to be reflected in the taxes which would mean our taxes would go up. He added if the property is purchased the owner would spend the money to bring it up to code.

Beth Miller DiCierce asked if a tear down was an option.

Commissioner Gotti stated they would consider different options if they are unable to get it sold but he added that Commissioner Dunn is working diligently on getting the properties sold.

Commissioner Dunn added it is not a compliment to the City to have the properties the way they are so they are anxious to get them sold.

Resolutions:

RESOLUTION 01-19: Robert Rules of Order

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany

Seconded by: Commissioner Dunn

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 02-19 Building Permit Fee Change

Commissioner McGuire asked what is meant by plumbing and electrical. She asked if it was if you were putting in a whole new electrical service.

Building/Code Enforcement Officer Jim Herkel stated that was correct and it is the same if someone was redoing a kitchen or bathroom they would need a plumbing permit.

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany

Seconded by: Commissioner Dunn

Commissioner Dunn added that the permit fees have not been increased in seven (7) years and she is aware of the fact that the Code Enforcement Officer did check around with other municipalities to see what they were charging. She added the research was done and now they are broken down better and more in line with others.

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 03-19: Firefighter Enhanced Cancer Disability Benefits Program

Moved by: Commissioner Dunn

Seconded by: Commissioner Gilheany

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 04-19 CDBG Agreement

Moved by: Commissioner Gotti

Seconded by: Commissioner Dunn

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 05-19 Payroll and Vouchers

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany

Seconded by: Commissioner Dunn

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 06-19: Water Treatment Plant Improvements

Moved by: Mayor Baker

Seconded by: Commissioner Gotti

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 07-19: Christopher Alonzo Full-time dispatcher

Moved by: Mayor Baker

Seconded by: Commissioner Gotti

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN 1: Commissioner Gilheany

RESOLUTION 08-19: Matthew Waldron Resignation

Moved by: Mayor Baker

Seconded by: Commissioner McGuire

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 09-19: Michael Patterson Full-time Police Officer

Moved by: Mayor Baker

Seconded by: Commissioner Gotti

AYES: 3 NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 2 Commissioner Dunn & Commissioner McGuire

NEW BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

Close Meeting: 7:37 p.m.

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany
Seconded by: Commissioner Dunn

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

Executive Session began: 7:48 p.m.

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany
Seconded by: Commissioner Dunn

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

Executive Session End: 8:11 p.m.

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany
Seconded by: Commissioner Dunn

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

Meeting Adjourned: 8:12 p.m.

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany
Seconded by: Commissioner Dunn

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0