

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON
APRIL 12, 2017
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 April 12, 2017.

Roll Call:	Mayor Baker	Present
	Commissioner Gilheany	Present
	Commissioner Higgins	Present
	Commissioner Hipwell	Present
	Deputy Commissioner Foard	Absent

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

Motion to accept the March 8, 2017 Minutes:

Motion: Commissioner Gilheany Seconded by: Commissioner Hipwell
Roll Call: AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

Commissioner reports were as follows:

Mayor Baker reminded everyone about Sasha's 5K run which is taking place on April 29th, and the walk for the kids starts at 9:30 A.M. and the 5K run will begin at 10:00 A.M. Mayor Baker stated that the City is trying to obtain a grant to fix the drainage issue at the Central Avenue underpass. He stated that he went with Mark Seber to the Department of Transportation and when they spoke with DOT they stated they wanted to resurface the road but Mayor Baker informed them that until the drainage was fixed they shouldn't waste their money. He stated there is a grant available and on the agenda tonight there is a resolution for Barton and Loguidice to do the Engineering work and we should hear in the very near future about the grant.

Commissioner Gilheany has the yearend report complete. She stated that for 2016 the City's revenues have exceeded the expenditures by \$356,704. Commissioner Gilheany pointed out that some of the major items that increased revenues were franchise fees which was \$79,000 more than expected. Also, the police department and City Court fees increased by 29,000 over budget and sales tax the City had an increase in revenues of \$37,000. Commissioner Gilheany stated that overall we had additional monies we received such as grants for a new roof for City Hall, new storage sheds, new doors at the Fire Department. Commissioner Gilheany stated we received grant money for the Train Station, Zim Smith Trails, and insurance recoveries for the boiler at the Fire House and the firetruck for \$40,000. She stated on the expenditure side we under spent by \$309,000 in various areas. She stated some of the larger amounts are in the

Engineering service which was under spent \$20,000 and the Police Department had \$39,000 left over and DPW had quite a bit left over with the majority coming from salaries, the City had two (2) people retire and the positions were not filled. Commissioner Gilheany and Mayor Baker stated it was a great job done by everyone.

Commissioner Higgins stated that NYSEG started on South Main Street and they had some machinery problems at first but everything is now up and running, they are doing between 150-200 feet a day so he hopes it will move along quickly.

Mayor Baker asked Mr. Higgins how far up they were going and Mr. Higgins stated they would be going to the Dutch gap.

Commissioner Hipwell stated that last month at the City Council Meeting that there was a request to see the CDTA buses coming through Mechanicville and that he spoke to one of the bosses for CDTA and he informed him that he does not see a bus coming through the City but he did recommend driving to Exit 9 in Clifton Park and getting the bus there. The CDTA representative stated that the conclusion from their last survey showed it would not be beneficial for them to have a bus come through the City.

Mayor Baker added that the Council has come to an agreement with the Girls Scouts, and that they have found what they think is a better location for everyone. Mayor Baker stated there is a fenced in area to the left of the DPW building. He stated that Commissioner Higgins and his crew are going to empty the area out and put a sand base down and then the Girls Scouts are going to put a dividing fence down the middle to separate a “big dog”, “little dog” area. Mayor Baker stated this location is a more suitable area for parking and is handicap accessible. There is parking; a fenced in area and once the DPW workers clean out the area the Girls Scouts will be going to work. Mayor Baker stated as of this evening that is where it is going to be and he does not see this changing.

Attorney Serbalik stated that the 2014 tax sale lawsuit will be filed by next week and there are between 50-55 outstanding properties. He stated that after the suit is filed there will be a publication which will include the names of all delinquent taxpayers so if anyone doesn't want their names in the paper they need to pay by next Wednesday. Attorney Serbalik asked for an executive session on the status of the litigation matters.

Chief Waldron informed the Council and the public that the resolution on tonight's agenda for Abraham and Cooney is just a formality, they have attached Senate and Assembly bill numbers to each one of the officers and all they want is for the Council to approve that so the Mayor will sign it and send it in. Chief Waldron stated that they are looking to put holding cells in the Police Station. Chief Waldron stated there is a new rule from the State of New York that states anytime you arrest someone that needs to be arraigned you will no longer be able to call a judge out in the middle of the night. He stated what would have to happen is they would have to take the prisoner and drive them up to the jail (if the jail is willing to accept them) and they would

hold them until the morning and then the City would have to pay another officer to come in and go and pick them up and bring them to an arraignment. Chief Waldron stated it is a convoluted way of what they want done. He further stated that because we are a City we can get an exemption from this by having a jail cell and holding them here until the judge comes in. He feels this would be much easier and much smoother. Chief Waldron stated he is currently working with State Corrections and looking for an architect who is familiar with jail cells. He stated what they probably are looking to do is move the current area which is a holding area and change that into a jail cell. Chief Waldron stated that we don't need cell bathrooms but we do have the capabilities to have it so the Mayor asked me to look into that. Chief Waldron did state that it has to be a one piece unit, the toilet and sink can't be apart there are certain regulations. He stated that DPW will be doing a big part of removing and bringing it out to make it 60 square foot and the City could probably get this done for under \$10,000 which will in the end save us money from having to transport prisoners. Chief Waldron stated the Police Cars have been ordered and he thanked Commissioner Gilheany for assuring the revenue is going to come back in this year to pay for the cars. He stated that they are scheduled to be delivered in June and the reason it is taking so long is because that is what happens when custom cars are ordered. Chief Waldron informed the public that the voice recorder that was installed when he first became Chief is getting older and the machine is not working as good and the maintenance fee is getting higher and higher and at this point it is \$2000 and he stated he has decided not to pay the fee but instead take the money and put it towards a new recording system that could do much better than the current one. This is a voice recorder on the police phone lines in the police station and it is essential. Chief Waldron stated he put out RFP's and received three (3) competitive bids that have come in and will be reviewing them to see which would best fit the City. Chief Waldron stated that they will be doing a drill in conjunction with the Fire Department on a Naval Nuclear Propulsion Drill that will occur in the railyard but will be simulated on the Viall Avenue intersection, this will include several agencies locally, federally, and state wide. He stated the planning stages have been well over a year and by the time the next City Council meeting comes the drill will have been complete; there will be press releases as it comes closer. There will be press releases within one (1) week of the drill and then again one (1) day before the drill. Chief Waldron stated that the Mechanicville Police Department partnered with Toyota and is participating in Teen Driver Safety which is a great event where you can do things such as use a simulator for texting and driving, walk a line and drive a golf cart with googles on that make you feel impaired. He informed everyone that Mike Raucci of Toyota is offering three (3) \$1000 scholarships to students who come in and participate in the various events and there will be victims and families of people who have lost their lives in a tragedy and it brings it home for these students to see.

Chief Alonzo apologized to Commissioner Gilheany and stated that his department will probably never be able to give money back. He stated that this year is his last year as Fire Chief; he would not be seeking re-election due to too many other personal things going on. Chief Alonzo stated that in the month of March there were 60 total emergency calls, 5 of which were mutual aid. He stated that two (2) of the significant calls were structure fires. He stated there have been working structure fires with significant damage on a monthly basis. Chief Alonzo assured

everyone that they are not related, unfortunately we live in an older town and this happens. Chief Alonzo stated there are a lot of homeowners in Mechanicville who keep their rental properties in fantastic conditions and have a lot of pride in the properties but, unfortunately there are some that do not. With that being said and with the older infrastructure he stated that things need to be kept up. He stated all of the causes were accidental in nature. Chief Alonzo commended his firefighters for doing a tremendous job month after month. Chief Alonzo stated in regards to the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Rail Incident that this drill is brought about by them since the route from Maine comes through Mechanicville, The Nuclear Propulsion people are required to have an emergency drill every other year and they chose Mechanicville for the drill location. Chief Alonzo stated he went to the initial planning meetings and there are several agencies involved but the one thing they definitely want to make clear it is pretty safe stuff, the container that the radioactive base is being transported in is very safe. Although it is safe Chief Alonzo stated it is an opportunity to be trained for any hazmat incident that the City may come across and that is how he is going to approach it. Chief Alonzo informed everyone that Wednesday May 3rd the drill will take place and it will be out of the way so most of the residents won't even know it is occurring. Chief Alonzo thanked Chief Waldron with his help with the drill. Chief Alonzo was pleased with the crews that stayed around the clock during the late winter storms and luckily there were no major incidents. Chief Alonzo stated he is taking a month's hiatus complementary of the City of Saratoga Springs. He informed everyone he is taking officer training courses with the NYFD and will be back in the City on weekends starting next Monday. Chief Alonzo stated that as he and the Mayor have discussed all the training he is receiving on behalf of the City of Saratoga Springs actually benefits the City of Mechanicville. Chief Alonzo thanked the Council for supporting the Mechanicville Fire Department.

Mayor Baker informed those who did not know that Chief Alonzo is a Lieutenant with the Saratoga Springs Fire Department so as he gets his training there it benefits us.

Chief Alonzo forgot to mention the ladder truck. He stated a lot of people have been asking where it was and stated hopefully the ladder truck would be back Thursday and there have been re-occurring problems with it. The Chief stated a few months ago two (2) of his best operators were running the truck and the ladder started to run into the cab and there have been some repetitive issues over the last seven (7) years and the salesman is no longer in business so the Chief called E1 Fire Apparatus and told them there was a major problem so Nichols Fire Apparatus which is located in New Hyde Park, NY came and looked at the truck and took it and promised when it came back it would be fixed correctly. The Chief stated they promised to have it back on Friday in the best shape it has been in since the City had received it.

Public Comments:

Victoria Welch from Girl Scout Troop 1114 stated that for the Girl Scout Troop to earn their Silver Award they have a limited time to complete the Dog Park project. Victoria thanked the Council Members consideration and time spent thinking about the proposal. Victoria stated that

they were pleased with the most recent location proposed to them for the Dog Park. Victoria asked if the Girl Scout Troop could expect the Council to vote by next month so they can move ahead to earn their Silver Award since they only have a limited time if they don't have an answer by next week they would have to unfortunately withdraw their proposal and seek an alternate project.

Mayor Baker informed the Girl Scouts Troop 1114 that the entire Council is in favor of the Dog Park at the DPW location so he told them to feel free to start doing the things they need to do. Mayor Baker asked Attorney Serbalik if he needed to meet with the Girl Scout Troop.

Attorney Serbalik stated he would talk with the Council so he could find out if the City would be leasing it or will the City be maintaining it.

Mayor Baker stated he City would maintain it for a certain amount of time to see how it works. Mayor Baker also stated that he spoke with the Troop Leader and as long as people pick up after their dogs there isn't anyone on the Council that has a problem with the project continuing. Mayor Baker stated that if the City needs to invest the time of the DPW workers or whoever to clean up after people then the project will have to cease but, that won't be a reflection on the Girls Scouts because they have done a terrific job getting everything ready. He confirmed that as far as the Council is concerned you may do what you need to do, Commissioner Higgins is going to clean up the area and truck in some sand, and then the fence can be put up.

Tara Morelli Girls Scout Troop 1114 Leader thanked the Council.

David Hicks 241 First Avenue stated he has been out of sync and is playing catch up. He asked in reference to resolution 3-17 how is the public going to be notified within 24 hours if there is a special meeting called.

Mayor Baker stated that for emergencies only announcements can be made through reverse 911 but this is not considered an emergency.

Mr. Hicks asked in resolution 6-17 on storm water management for Cumberland Farms, how does it come about he hasn't found any reference to it, there are no minutes to the Zoning/ Planning meeting online.

Mayor Baker stated he will find out why they are not online.

Mr. Hicks wanted to know how the money returns when you put out the money for resolution 11-17. He stated it is the money for the IDA and wants to know if the money is going to be returned.

Commissioner Gilheany stated it would be returned.

Mr. Hicks asked how the hourly rate is determined on resolution 20-17. He informed the Council that if you divide the annual rate by 500 hours it comes up to \$32.87 so he asked what the game plan is and why the double talk. Mr. Hicks asked if she would be working more than 500 hours.

Commissioner Gilheany stated it was for accountability and it is a maximum of 500 hours. Mr. Hicks asked that if the Assessor only works 450 hours is that all she will be paid for, and asked if she punches a clock.

Commissioner Gilheany stated that she only gets paid for the hours she works and does not punch a clock we don't have time clocks in the building. Commissioner Gilheany stated the Assessor used to work Monday, Wednesdays, and Fridays but many of the holidays fall on Mondays and she would have to make up the time because she does not get holiday pay. Now the Assessor works Wednesday mornings and all day Friday.

Mayor Baker added that the Assessor checks in with the Commissioner of Accounts.

Mr. Hicks asked what is going to be done first on the rehab of the train station on resolution 21-17.

Mayor Baker stated that Supervisor Richardson is not here and he is the one running that project.

Mr. Hicks stated that he can't understand why the City is going to be taking on 20% of the project in resolution 24-17.

Commissioner Gilheany said that was the South Street Hill Project and there were some additional issues with the hill and the Council had to approve additional monies but the City will be reimbursed 95%.

Mr. Hicks stated that in resolution 27-17 \$750,000 is not going to cover the work.

Mayor Baker stated that they say it will.

Commissioner Higgins stated the City and the County ran a camera through it.

Mayor Baker stated that the plan is to put a new line through it down near Kearney's.

Mr. Hicks asked in resolution 28-17 what are we changing back to.

Mayor Baker to Mr. Hicks that they are changing it back because the State had scheduled a training during the period that we normally have this and they have re-scheduled the training so we have to re-schedule ours.

Mr. Hicks asked why the State doesn't pay the 15% in resolution 29-17 instead of us taking over 20%.

Commissioner Gilheany stated it says non-federal funds of 20% and, 15% of that come from the State.

Mr. Hicks asked if we are going to pay attention to the past loans that have gone out in reference to 30-17.

Mayor Baker stated that yes the City is and they are being paid and almost paid off. He said we are in the process of taking care of the other loans right now.

Kim Dunn of 250 South Main Street asked when NYSEG gets closer to her area will she be able to get in and out of her driveway.

Commissioner Higgins stated that obviously while they are there digging she will not be able to get in and out of her driveway and she will have to park elsewhere and walk.

Kim Dunn asked if there are any additional plans for curb cuts because she states there are a lot of sidewalks around the City that don't have them and are forced to go into the road.

Commissioner Higgins stated they are doing curb cuts as they pave.

Kim Dunn informed the Council that there is a lot of gravel on the sidewalk near the underpass on Central Avenue and asked if there is anything that can be done about that.

Mayor Baker stated that he would send someone over there to clean it up.

Kim Dunn asked for resolutions 25-17 and 26-17 if the only reason we are doing it again is because now there is a number attached to it.

Chief Waldron confirmed that was correct is is a formality.

Mr. Micklas is a business owner in the City and asked how we were doing with the project.

Mayor Baker stated there is nothing in front of any of the Boards of the City at this time.

Mr. Micklas asked if we were at Esplanade or at a modified project.

Mayor Baker stated since there was nothing before him he could not answer that question.

Mr. Micklas stated there was a project that was approved.

Mayor Baker stated they have withdrawn everything and there is nothing before the Council or any other City Board.

Mr. Micklas stated that after he spoke at the last meeting his name was used incorrectly and he just wants to know what the modified project that was withdrawn when NRP gave a letter.

Mayor Baker stated that the NRP project as a whole is withdrawn from anywhere it was; whether it was IDA, Planning, it is not anywhere.

Mr. Micklas stated there is a major question that needs to be sorted out; there was a project that was approved then it went beyond the point, after that point there is apparently confusion on everyone's part now that there was a modification, he asked the Mayor if he signed a letter on the 2016 application.

Mayor Baker stated that has been withdrawn.

Mr. Micklas asked the Mayor if he looked at the application document.

Mayor Baker said he did not read it page after page.

Mr. Micklas asked Mayor Baker if he looked at it at all and if saw the plan that was in there.

Mayor Baker stated that the Council will not be answering any questions on this and that Mr. Micklas is well aware they have sent letters to their lawyer and we are not commenting on it.

Tom Mahoney of The Express asked if once or twice a year nuclear waste goes zipping through Mechanicville.

Chief Waldron stated the City is never told when it comes through. He did state it is an armed train with Federal Agents all over it but they will never tell you when it is coming through.

Tom Mahoney asked since there wasn't a formal vote on the dog park is it a go?

Mayor Baker stated they didn't need a formal vote but it is a go on the project.

David Hicks asked what is going forward on the energy audit.

Mayor Baker stated since that department isn't here they don't have an answer for him tonight.

David Hicks asked who is responsible for the approach to the plaza. He informed the Council that the pot hole have migrated on to Central Avenue.

Commissioner Higgins stated that he noticed it but the paving plants aren't open yet.

David Hicks asked how is the dutch gap going to be taken care of with all the paving going on.

Commissioner Higgins stated it will have to be done by hand.

David Hicks asked about the garbage contract.

Mayor Baker stated since they were not at the meeting there is no answer.

Resolutions:

RESOLUTION 25-17: Waiving age restriction allowing Officer Abraham to take the next Civil Service exam.

Moved by: Commissioner Higgins

Seconded by: Commissioner Hipwell

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 26-17: Waiving age restriction allowing Officer Cooney to take the next Civil Service exam.

Moved by: Commissioner Hipwell

Seconded by: Commissioner Higgins

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 27-17: Prepare and file the CDBG grant application to secure up to \$750,000 in funding to help mitigate Central Avenue drainage problem.

Moved by: Commissioner Higgins

Seconded by: Commissioner Hipwell

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 28-17: Rescheduling of the Board of Assessment Review Meeting.

Moved by: Mayor Baker

Seconded by: Commissioner Gilheany

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 29-17: Federal Aid and/or Marchiselli Aid with the New York State Department of Transportation.

Moved by: Mayor Baker

Seconded by: Commissioner Higgins

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 30-17: Loan Bubbles Restaurant the sum of \$10,000.

Moved by: Mayor Baker

Seconded by: Commissioner Gilheany

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 31-17: Payroll and Vouchers.

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany

Seconded by: Commissioner Higgins

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

NEW BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

Executive Session: 7:46

INTRODUCED BY: Commissioner Higgins

SECONDED BY: Mayor Baker

AYES: NAYS: 0