

The regular meeting of the Mechanicville City Council was held at the Central Fire Station, North Main Street, Mechanicville, NY on Wednesday, September 18, 2013. Mayor Sylvester opened the meeting at 3:02 p.m.

Roll Call:	Mayor Sylvester	- present
	Comm. Seber	- present
	Comm. Chauvin	- present
	Comm. Higgins	- present
	Comm. Hipwell	- present

Deputy Comm. Proper led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Sylvester, seconded by Comm. Higgins, moved that the minutes of the regular meeting of September 4, 2013 be accepted as prepared. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Mayor Sylvester said on October 11th down on the dock there is a homemade sailing boat coming down that's going to stop here in Mechanicville, possibly overnight, to deliver goods from Burlington, Vermont to New York City. They will have dry goods like potatoes, coffee, so on and so forth and bring things back. Said this is something they are trying out and hope to get a lot of support, they hope it will be a regular thing that they can stop here and we can buy things or order stuff from Vermont and have it dropped off or ship things from New York to dock here. Asked if anyone heard about a gas meeting anywhere. Said he was talking to somebody today and they said there is supposed to be a meeting on natural gas today somewhere, countywide.

Comm. Higgins said that was last week.

Mayor Sylvester said not the meeting they had.

Deputy Comm. Proper asked if it was regarding rate hikes.

Mayor Sylvester said he doesn't know what it is for. Said he guess it's your availability of gas, not just for Mechanicville, the whole area. Said he hadn't heard anything about it. Asked if they needed an executive session for the lawsuit.

Comm. Seber said the lawsuit and also CSEA negotiations. Said water bills will go out around the 1st of October. Said the readings are going along pretty well and they will be in the mail around the 30th of this month.

Comm. Chauvin had nothing to report at this time.

Comm. Higgins said they started working back on the hill today, they are doing the stairs, they ground them down and they are recoating them. Said next week they are supposed to come and saw cut the blocks that are cracked and re-grout them.

Mayor Sylvester asked what was wrong with the stairs.

Comm. Higgins said it looks like they poured half the stairs at one point then another half and somebody ran down them when they were wet and they tried fixing them, they were rough so they ground them down and coated them with a coating that is supposed to hold up.

Comm. Hipwell said they had a fox running around on Warsaw Avenue and Stillwater Avenue. Said after today that fox is no longer running around, they took care of it.

City Attorney Serbalik said they have the 2009, 2010 tax sale coming up. Said usually the tax parcels are 3 or 4, really minimal. Said right now they have 69 outstanding parcels.

Comm. Seber said most of them are '10.

Attorney Serbalik said in order to redeem the properties, you have to pay the most recent ones first. Said some of these parcels are pretty extensive.

Comm. Seber said it's about \$1,000,000 for the whole thing.

Mr. Serbalik said to start an inbred tax foreclosure you can do it by publication and you have to serve by certified mail the owners of the property that a tax foreclosure is going to take place. Said they also have to serve all parties that have an interest in the property so that means they have to have searches on the property and notify all lien holders, judgment holders, etc. Said for years they have hired the Firm of Steeringer and Provost out of Ballston which is a title company to do the searches and they charge \$150.00 a search and he got a quote from them again saying it would be around \$10,000 which may not be recouped.

Comm. Higgins asked why it wouldn't be recouped.

Attorney Serbalik said say they have the search done on the 69 parcels and before they actually start the lawsuit, they've done the search and they pay up, we can't charge them because they are not a party to any action, once an action is started then that can be assessed on it.

Comm. Chauvin said if they have to spend \$10,000 to get a million, it's all right.

Attorney Serbalik said he would like permission to hire them if we have to but he also wants to check around and get some other prices, maybe they can do it in-house or hire another company, it seems like a lot of money. Said all of the searches can be done online now, the Saratoga County Clerk has everything on line so \$150.00 seems kind of high.

Mayor Sylvester said if you serve someone with a notice of claim that you are going to sue them, can we charge them then.

Comm. Seber said what they are planning on doing is as the searches go on and if someone pays in the interim while they are not complete we probably can't charge them for the fee. Said once they are complete and we start the actual legal proceedings, then the plan is as they redeem them they will have to pay the \$150.00 on top of it for the cost of the searches.

More discussion was held on this. The City Attorney was given permission to look for a firm that charged less but if he couldn't find one to hire the original firm.

Attorney Serbalik said they have contract negotiations with BCI to give them an option to buy and develop the industrial park. Said he sent them a letter on what their counter proposal says which says if they want an option to purchase but if we exercise the option to purchase we want to give that option to someone else if we want to walk away from any of the environmental responsibilities of DEC. Said he would like their authorization to get that letter sent out, the lawyer called him again asking what their position was.

Comm. Seber said the position is no.

Chief Waldron said he and the Mayor worked on the 2014 budget and he has submitted it to the Finance Office. Said he appreciates the whole time he spent getting that done.

Chief Alonzo said they still have to work on their budget. Said it's been a very busy month in the Fire Department, they've responded to 26 calls so far this month and it's only the 18th of the month. Said one significant call in the city was a structure fire on September 7th up at Penrose Avenue. Said they did stop the fire from extending to the houses on either side, the house that did burn received extensive damage and it will be taken down. Said the guys did a good job, they had a great turnout for the overnight, they called in for some help, the guys were beat up pretty good, it was a hot and muggy night but they did well with no injuries. Said they responded to a couple of other structure fires since then out of town. Said the guys are working hard, they are busy. Said they are continuing conversations for a new fire engine. Said the latest, as they know, they have selected a vendor, they gave them a quote and he knows that they are working on how it will be financed. Said this will be a brand new vehicle, they won't get delivery of it for 8 months from the time the city approves it, if they approve it, so they won't see it until next summer. Said as he talked about before, they will get rid of two vehicles for the one. Said he knows there have been conversations on Station 2 being used as the EMS station and he's in favor of whatever has to be done to keep our emergency services up and running. Said as they know, they haven't been responding out of there for emergencies and their response times have improved as a result of that. Said he does store a van up there, he will be able to store it here, he just needs some space for some of their long term storage. Said as they know, he will work with them in any way that he can on that, he may just need a little notice on when they have to get their stuff out of there.

Mayor Sylvester opened up the meeting to public comment.

Dep. Comm. Proper asked if they planned on closing the hill anymore.

Comm. Higgins said no.

Dennis Baker asked if we are holding their nose to the grindstone because his concern is that they will walk away from this hill and we will have all kinds of problems because they are patching, they are not fixing.

Comm. Higgins said like he said the last time, the engineers are supposed to be watching this, said he stood right there and said there was a hump in it and they told him it was a figment of his imagination. Said the engineer was there today and he said to him the same thing and he said it's kind of hard because of the 2% grade going towards the drains and they are working with old. Said he said what you mean they are working with old, they are just redoing what is supposed to be new. Said also Paul saw it and then he looked at it after that rain storm last week, where they put the new blacktop at the end there is water coming out of it, the engineers are aware of it, he doesn't know what it is but it's a concern to him.

Comm. Seber said there is discoloration on the South Side Wall.

Comm. Higgins said he's not real happy with the job. Said they have a year from the completion date.

Comm. Seber said they haven't taken completion yet.

Attorney Serbalik asked if we are withholding money from them at this point.

Comm. Seber said we are paying nothing.

Attorney Serbalik asked what our engineers say about the quality of the work and are we happy with what they are saying; let's get the thing done right at this point.

Comm. Higgins said to be honest with him he's not happy with the engineers.

Mr. Baker said he just works for the engineer firm right, can't you go higher up in the engineering firm. Said we're going to get stuck with it, it's going to cost us a lot of money.

Mayor Sylvester said what they are supposed to be doing is replacing that block that is cracked.

Comm. Higgins said if they start taking the wall apart it's just going to weaken everything up because of the way it's interlocked.

More discussion was held on the hill.

Comm. Higgins said they should have left the old pump house running because they are down there every weekend. Said the pumps keep clogging up because paper melts.

Attorney Serbalik said why don't they get the engineers to give us a report on what they recommend.

Comm. Seber said they told them that's what they want; they had a meeting with them a few weeks ago and explained to them they wanted a report from them and their recommendation. Said they seemed to be happy with what's going on.

Attorney Serbalik said then why don't they get them here to answer some questions.

Comm. Higgins said one of the sidewalk sections is cracked and he was watching the engineer and the guy, well it's going to crack again well if you put a joint in there where the crack is, they caulked it, they said that's not acceptable.

Attorney Serbalik asked when the report is coming.

Comm. Seber said once the job is done, they haven't accepted the job yet, they have to accept it as a council then the year kicks in. Said they have some issues on both jobs that they need to address.

Attorney Serbalik said let's get them in front of the council and get some answers. Said if they don't give them answers that are appropriate, we will do what we have to do.

Chief Alonzo said he's been in contact with Mark Wells who is the organizer for the Kayak, MESO which is this Saturday. Said this occurred last year. Said the first kayaker is expected to be here at 1:30. Said they will have a boat crew down there and they will have a couple of guys that will control traffic in and out of the dock area. Said the fire department will cook food that they offered to them. Said he hasn't been able to reach out to Jaimen at Spacial Dynamics, they were looking for some additional parking for their vehicles. Said he suggested the Plaza. Asked if the bathrooms are finished down there.

Comm. Higgins said not yet.

Mayor Sylvester said there will be two bathrooms down there.

Deputy Comm. Proper asked how much parking do they need.

Chief Alonzo said there are 100 kayakers so they are bringing a lot of people into town.

Dennis Baker asked why can't they charge them the \$150.00 even if it hasn't gone to sale, we are paying the money to get it done because they didn't pay the taxes.

Attorney Serbalik said because we haven't started an action yet, they actually start the action when they file the papers with the court. Asked how many actually pay between the time they say they are going to start the search and go, this is the first time they've had 70 parcels.

Comm. Seber said he has no idea. Said he has people calling him all the time promising him next week. Said the way it works is on April 1st he sends a letter out saying you have until the end of June to pay or they move forward with the lawsuit and he probably has a 1/2 dozen pay in that period of time. Said of the 70 parcels there is a block of 36 of them that are kind of separated from the rest of them, he has a separate spread sheet for them; there are a bunch of different LLCs. More discussion was held on this.

Sam Carabis said the Community Center is looking to sponsor a 10K Race with the YMCA up in Clifton Park. Said the consensus is they will make it 6 miles. Said they are looking to sponsor it on the same day as the canoe race so hopefully it will be bringing quite a few people into the city.

Comm. Higgins said this coming Friday there will be a bicycle race coming through the city which will be over an hour.

Chief Waldron said this will be for Missing Exploited Children. Said they will go into the elementary school. Said they will come down 67 they will go down over the overpass down Central Avenue and up the hill and then they will go to the Waterford School. Said it's 30 miles and they start in Albany and work their way north and then back south.

Deputy Comm. Proper said she knows they did it last year. Said they go into the school and talk to the kids.

Comm. Seber said on October 2nd at the Senior Center they will be having their official public hearing on the Charter and Code changes. Said the plan is to act on it that evening. Said this will be along with their regular meeting.

Comm. Seber read RES. NO. 69-13 CITY COUNCIL APPOINTING JANICE SYLVESTER TO FILL THE VACANCY ON THE MECHANICVILLE/STILLWATER IDA BOARD

Introduced by Comm. Chauvin, seconded by Comm. Higgins.

Roll Call:	Mayor Sylvester	- abstained
	Comm. Seber	- yes
	Comm. Chauvin	- yes
	Comm. Higgins	- yes
	Comm. Hipwell	- yes

Comm. Chauvin read RES. NO. 70-13 PAYROLL AND VOUCHERS

Introduced by Comm. Chauvin, seconded by Mayor Sylvester. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

No new or old business.

Mayor Sylvester, seconded by Comm. Hipwell, moved that the regular meeting be closed to go into executive session regarding a lawsuit and on CSEA at 3:30 p.m. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Mayor Sylvester, seconded by Comm. Hipwell, moved that the executive session be adjourned to reopen the regular meeting at 4:44 p.m. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Comm. Chauvin, seconded by Mayor Sylvester, moved that the regular meeting be adjourned at 4:45 p.m. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.