

The regular meeting of the Mechanicville City Council was held at the Senior Center, North Main Street, Mechanicville, NY, on Wednesday, February 5, 2014. Mayor Baker opened the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

Roll Call:	Mayor Baker	- present
	Comm. Seber	- absent
	Comm. Gilheany	- present
	Comm. Higgins	- present
	Comm. Hipwell	- present

Dave Hicks led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Comm. Hipwell, seconded by Comm. Higgins, moved that the minutes of the regular meeting of January 15, 2014 be accepted as prepared. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Mayor Baker said tonight they are having a representative from Clifton Park/Halfmoon to speak to them a little bit about what's going on. Said he will give them a couple of minutes after the Commissioner's reports. Said he also wanted to announce that next Wednesday there is a presentation of \$20,000 from the Stewart's Corporation to Mechanicville in conjunction with the work they have been doing down on the dock. Said they will be contributing to the decorative lights that are going down there. Said it would be at 10:00 a.m. next Wednesday morning.

Comm. Higgins said in other words that will take care of our match.

Mayor Baker said it absolutely will.

Comm. Higgins said so the lights are costing us nothing.

Comm. Gilheany said they are just working on getting the 2013 numbers together and hopefully at the next meeting she will be able to tell them where we stand.

Comm. Higgins said plowing today seemed to work out pretty good, they didn't tow as many cars, it seems like everybody is starting to cooperate which is a good thing.

Comm. Hipwell had nothing to report at this time.

Chief Waldron said Lou Rocco was promoted to Sergeant today by Mayor Baker, Sergeant Pete Rocco retired so he is filling that spot on the midnight shift and he wanted to congratulate him, he is definitely deserving of it. Said he graduated from Marist College, is very smart and has been with them for 23 years. Said he is a great choice. Said they are fighting with Saratoga Chrysler over the Dodge Charger, at first they were friendly until they learned the whole motor has to be replaced. Discussion was held on the Charger. Said a lot of people got rid of the Charger. Said they changed the brakes and rotors 6 times in one year. Said it's been a nightmare for them. Said as Comm. Higgins said the snow emergency went very well.

Fire Chief Corrigan gave his report (see attached). Said they've had a LOSAP auditor at their office for about two weeks now and she has reported very good things about their program. Said Steve Sgambati, their Administrator, helped out a lot. Said as they all know the EMS has been a lot of their topic lately. Said the Mechanicville Fire Department will still respond to calls as they request them. Said their goal is to get out within 6 ½ minutes. Said they are working very hard on this and the fire department will be involved, he thinks it will work out very well for everyone.

Comm. Hipwell said then everything that they are doing is going to change so anything after 6 ½ minutes Clifton Park will notify our police to dispatch you guys.

Chief Corrigan said they have a system that they know where all their ambulances are 24/7 so they will know if it will take longer than the 6 ½ minutes to get an ambulance here so they will say get Mechanicville going.

Mayor Baker said he will ask Clifton Park/Halfmoon to come up to the podium and give a rundown.

Eric Hanchett, Director of Administration for Clifton Park/Halfmoon Ambulance. Congratulated the Mayor for taking office and giving him the opportunity to talk with them tonight. Said with him are Tom Walsh, Director of Clinical Service and Mike Seney, Director of Operations. Said he will give them a moment to answer some questions. Said in April 2013 John H. Ahearn Rescue Squad approached them and asked them to work with them in consolidating the agencies to provide services to the community. Said over the past 8, 9 months they worked closely with them to be at where they are today. Said from what the Department of Health tells them, the authority to work with the City of Mechanicville is in the mail so they should be able to enter into contract with the city soon. Said at this point they have 5 ambulances on, 3 ambulances 24 hours a day, one will be located here in the city when they get the building renovated. Talked about how they would bridge the gap in the meantime. Said they have taken many of the staff from the John Ahearn Rescue Squad to make up the additional rig. Said they have changed their by-laws to allow one of the members from Jars to come on board which is Larry Whalen. Said they welcome the community to come in and talk with them during their board meetings. Hopes the city will create a liaison to interact with them constantly. Asked if anyone had any questions.

Mayor Baker said he will have the council ask questions first.

Comm. Higgins asked what John Ahearn's response time is now.

Michelle Duel said 3 or 4 minutes.

Comm. Hipwell said if the county dispatches only and Mechanicville PD isn't in that system who notifies Mechanicville PD to make sure one of our patrol cars are there.

Mike Seney said his job is putting together a plan where they can best serve the citizens of Mechanicville. Talked about how they can set up dispatching the police from Mechanicville if it's going through the county. Said they don't want to change any policies that you previously had before they came in here to provide service. Said if a police officer responded on every call to please continue that service, they would love that.

Comm. Higgins said how would Mechanicville know that they were coming in on a call.

Mr. Seney said they would notify them.

Chief Waldron talked about how this is police and sheriff matter. Said they are going to try to develop a separate tone that is pertinent to them in their dispatch service.

Mr. Seney said he is right on the money. Said in recent months they started pushing ambulances out to substations. A lot of discussion was held on dispatching ambulances. Said there will be an ambulance in Mechanicville 24 hours. They said their response time is 6 1/2 minutes but they pulled the statistics the other day and their response time is 5.7 minutes. Said the national standard is 9, they want to be well below that so that's why they are pushing their substations. Said they want their response times to be 2 or 3 minutes. Said there are times they exhaust all 6 of their ambulances plus a supervisor. Said it happens everywhere, you need to have a good mutual aid plan in effect and he feels they do have that.

Jeff Alonzo said today they had two EMS calls within a half hour of each other and for both calls an ambulance was there within 5 minutes for both calls.

Comm. Higgins said so right now nothing is coming out of John Ahearn.

Mr. Whalen said nothing.

Mr. Seney explained how they are 24 hours and how they staff it.

Mayor Baker said one of the questions was they thought the ambulance that is stationed on the Waterford Road would respond to Clifton Park after midnight but once you get the Con that's not going to happen right?

Mr. Seney said honestly he could not send an ambulance from Clifton Park to service Mechanicville, there is no way he can do that. Talked about moving into Mechanicville but can't currently utilize the John Ahearn Rescue Squad Building as it exists today. Said there are plans for them to acquire a facility in the city, rehab it and they will give that 110% to get that done as soon as possible, they are doing the best they can.

Mr. Hanchent said if that building goes through as everybody anticipates, they have the resources in place, ready to go. Said they have talked to contractors and they are ready to rehab that building immediately. Said it's not something that will wait for nice weather to do, they will move in there and get started. Said they will put that building in the shape they need it to be in and put that ambulance in there.

Comm. Higgins asked if they are doing the plowing and stuff.

Mr. Hanchent said the building is being put up for public auction and they purchase it, it will be their property so they will take care of it unless they want to come in, they are more than welcome to do it.

Mayor Baker said they would never say no to that.

Mr. Hanchent said they would never want to put the burden on them. Said this is part of what Mark and he have been going back and forth with these buildings, whether they become lease, whether they become purchase, whether the city continues to own them. Said he thinks they came up with a good solution and it takes the burden off of the city and it anchors them in this community. Said they will be investing in the city, in the service, this is an evolution of what John H. Ahearn Rescue Squad started in 1954, this is just an evolution of them and this is where they are going to be. Said if they have any questions, give them a buzz.

Mayor Baker said before they are done if you guys have any questions I would like you to ask them because he doesn't want to keep them here however late we're here.

Kim Dunn said so Clifton Park/Halfmoon haven't officially taken over, you are still on a mutual aid basis so they are not utilizing the building on Central Avenue you are utilizing from the facility on the Waterford Road.

Mr. Hanchent said Halfmoon.

Mrs. Dunn said she's a little confused, said everyone here knew this was coming down the pipes so it's surprising the lack of planning. Asked why the rigs wouldn't still be running out of John Ahearn which would be the fastest.

Mayor Baker said John Ahearn doesn't have any personnel to run the ambulances now.

Michele Duell said they also don't have a CO anymore.

Mr. Seney said he has been doing this whole process for 26 years and he thinks he learned more about the Department of Health in the last 3 months than he has in the last 26 years. Said they have done their best to make this transition. Talked about everything they have to do for the transition and the dissolution of the John H. Ahearn Rescue Squad.

Mr. Hanchent said the Department of Health issues the certificate to operate in this district and that's what they are waiting for. Said until they actually have it in their hands they will notify the city and all the appropriate departments and that will give them absolute authority to operate within the city. Talked about how hard it is to dissolve the John Ahearn Rescue Squad and all the work it takes. Talked about all the services they will provide.

Mrs. Dunn said if she calls 7383 today what will happen.

Chief Waldron said the police officer will do what they have always been trained to do, take the pertinent information, call back number and what the illness is, they are to do this all within less than a minute and then make that call to the county Sheriff's Department. More discussion was held on that.

Mr. Seney said he just had a meeting with all the fire chiefs and did a power point presentation about the system and how they work it. Said he thinks there is some confusion there that they are telling the fire department that they don't want them to respond any more, that is not it at all. Said all the fire departments they work with in Clifton Park and Halfmoon they foster that relationship, they love that relationship, they don't want that to change, they want to work out something that would work out best for them.

Dave Hicks asked what happens to the present equipment we have now, do they buy that, do we absorb that.

Mr. Seney said in essence they already signed an asset purchase agreement with John H. Ahearn Rescue Squad and that equipment will transition into another not for profit.

Mayor Baker said the city doesn't own that David, the Rescue Squad does. Said we own the building which will be sold at a future time.

Larry Whalen said John Ahearn was established in 1954 so for 60 years they provided services to the citizens of the area. Said they realized in the last couple of years that they didn't have the physical resources to continue on so they looked around and came up with the solution to go with Clifton Park/Halfmoon. Said they certainly are the best for this area. Said that's why they did what they did.

Mayor Baker thanked Larry and asked if anyone had any questions for Clifton Park/Halfmoon. No one did so he thanked Eric, Mike and Tom for coming. Opened up the meeting for regular public comment giving them 5 minutes and asked them to go to the podium and identify themselves.

Dave Hicks said he heard the Esplanade is back on schedule.

Mayor Baker said they hadn't heard that, he just heard they weren't building in the winter.

Mr. Hicks said he was wondering how involved we were in the tax base for this project and he understands that we will carry it for 20 years.

Mayor Baker said he couldn't answer about the tax base but yes for the 20 years. Said the IDA awarded them a 20 year PILOT program. Said the members on the IDA are from Mechanicville and Stillwater, it's not from anyone out of the area doing it.

Mr. Hicks asked if they figured out what the increased expenses would be, how would the sewer and water be built and how many apartments will there be. Said they are talking about a lot of kids. Said that would be 3 school buses anyway, 350 cars, 50 to 75 services vehicles, possibly 500 vehicles at prime time, asked if anyone realized this.

Mayor Baker said yes, they did all kinds of checks up there.

Mr. Hicks asked if the power companies were giving them breaks on this.

Mayor Baker said he didn't know.

Mr. Hicks said he heard the gas company was not going to supply them with gas because it was low pressure.

Comm. Higgins said they are working on where the old gas plant was, they are putting some tanks in there so they won't hook anyone else up until they get this done. Said a guy from NYSEG told them they were on schedule. Said they are rerouting the gas around the city. Said they told them they can supply Esplanade.

Mr. Hicks said they are going to push Mechanicville into bankruptcy. Said they haven't looked at all this stuff.

Mayor Baker said they looked at the stuff and he wasn't here at that time but he was at a few public hearings that they had. Said they talked about the actual number of kids they expected and it's nowhere near 200.

Mrs. Dunn asked about Station 2 being bid on. Asked if they had a figure on it for a minimum bid.

Mayor Baker said 115.

Mrs. Dunn said on the Esplanade the city is banking on the money we received for water and sewer, said we need to know.

Mayor Baker said he spoke with the Chairman of the IDA 3 or 4 days ago and she is talking to their attorney and they are speaking to their attorney. Said he will have the answers when they get back to him but he has talked to her.

Mrs. Dunn said last time she talked about retirements and they have one, there's no more on the hopper for the police department.

Chief Waldron said they do, they just haven't announced it yet.

Mrs. Dunn said say they have all 6, they said they would replace them with dispatchers, said they hired 2 dispatchers so do they plan on filling the other 4 positions.

Mayor Baker said at this time they are looking at probably losing 5 officers this year by retirement, 3 will be replaced with police officers and 2 will be replaced with dispatchers. Said that will save them money in itself plus the fact that you are losing a 20, 25 year veteran police officer and getting one that is step one, you are saving a lot of money there.

Mrs. Dunn said looking over the agenda they are hiring a full time desk officer before the test. Asked if they know when that test will be.

Mayor Baker said he talked to Civil Service this morning and they haven't gotten anything from the State yet on when they will have it, they are hiring pending the test.

Mrs. Dunn asked who that officer is replacing.

Chief Waldron said Officer Westfall.

Mrs. Dunn said she is glad to see they are replacing them with the climate of the city it's not the time to not hire them.

Mayor Baker said he agrees, it's their job to try to save some money here and he really thinks that a police officer on the desk is a waste of money when he can have them on the road and have someone on the desk making less money.

Jim Thompson, 354 South Main Street, said he read in the Express that the city is eligible for a grant of \$400,000 for sidewalks, matching funds of \$100,000. Asked where we stand on that.

Mayor Baker said it's on hold for 5 years and maybe it might never happen, you have 5 years to use it. Said unless things drastically change for the good, we probably won't do it.

Comm. Higgins said he is against it because you will be putting sidewalks in for everybody on Central Avenue, what about all the home owners that have to pay for their own.

Mr. Thompson said he is worried about the \$100,000. Also some people got a 3% pay raise, it's quite a bit of money at this time when we are paying 18%. Asked how the 18% will save us moving ahead, coming next year we're solvent?

Comm. Gilheany said hopefully, if they can stay within the budget. Said they really need to see where they stand with 2013, she is sure we are in the hole a little bit which they did expect but she doesn't know how far. Said they are trying.

Mayor Baker said he thinks everyone here at this table knows they can't spend any extra money this year and they are watching. Said Mr. Higgins department is working on the fire truck so they don't have to farm it out and spend a lot of money on it, they are trying. Asked if anybody else wanted to speak. No one did. Said they will move to resolutions and after the resolutions he will give a trial tonight on a second public comment, hopefully that works well.

Mayor Baker read RES. NO. 21-14 APPOINTING AUSTIN MCGUIRE TO THE
TO THE FULL TIME VACANCY THAT CURRENTLY EXISTS
THE MECHANICVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT,
EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

Introduced by Mayor Baker, seconded by Comm. Higgins.

Roll Call: Mayor Baker - yes

Comm. Gilheany asked why they are starting him off at step 2.

Mayor Baker said Austin was here in the police department, he left to go to another job. Said he misses police work and wants to get back. Said he would be on step 3 if he was here so him and I made an agreement that he would come back on step 2.

Comm. Gilheany - yes
Comm. Higgins - yes
Comm. Hipwell - yes

Mayor Baker read RES. NO. 22-14 AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE
MAYOR TO RETAIN THE FIRM OF GIRVIN AND
FERLAZZO TO REPRESENT THE CITY LABOR AND
EMPLOYMENT MATTERS INVOLVING THE CITY AND
AND ITS EMPLOYEES FOR THE SUM OF \$15,000 PER
YEAR

Roll Call: Mayor Baker - yes
Comm. Gilheany - no
Comm. Higgins - yes
Comm. Hipwell - yes

Mayor Baker said they saw Jodie and him on television on swearing in day saying how bad a shape that city was in so they sent him a letter reducing their fee by \$7,000.

Comm. Gilheany said she does want it to be noted that they only budgeted \$10,000.

Mayor Baker read RES. NO. 23-14 AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A LEASE WITH THE COMMUNITY CENTER FOR THE TERM OF JANUARY 1, 2014 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017

Introduced by Mayor Baker, seconded by Comm. Hipwell. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Mayor Baker read RES. NO. 20-14 APPOINTING IAN FOARD TO THE POSITION OF FULL TIME DESK OFFICER AT A RATE OF \$13.47 PER HOUR

Introduced by Mayor Baker, seconded by Comm. Higgins. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Mayor Baker read RES. NO. 24-14 CITY COUNCIL APPROVING THE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER SERVICE AWARD PROGRAM

Introduced by Mayor Baker, seconded by Comm. Hipwell. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Mayor Baker read RES. NO. 25-14 ABOLISHING WORKING SUPERVISOR POSITION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Introduced by Mayor Baker, seconded by Comm. Gilheany. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Mayor Baker read RES. NO. 26-14 AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE THE APPROPRIATE LOAN DOCUMENTS TO LOAN “BAKED LLC” THE SUM OF \$9000 AND “CKMJ GROUP LLC” THE SUM OF \$9900 AT ZERO PER CENT INTEREST

Introduced by Mayor Baker, seconded by Comm. Gilheany. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Comm. Gilheany read RES. NO. 27-14 PAYROLL AND VOUCHERS

Introduced by Comm. Gilheany, seconded by Comm. Higgins. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Mayor Baker said now they will do their second comment of the night.

Mr. Hicks asked where the money is coming from on the loans.

Mayor Baker said it's coming through a grant from the Department of Agriculture, municipalities have to run it for them.

Mrs. Dunn asked about the status of Barton & Loguidice getting \$2,000 for a generator for them to go up to the Stillwater School to do a study.

Mayor Baker said the work hasn't been completed yet but he was with the Supervisor this week and its very close to being started.

Mrs. Dunn said the year has just begun and we are already in the red in giving raises and \$10,000 for attorneys and we don't know where we stand.

Comm. Gilheany said we are in the hole, no doubt about it. Said she is hoping to have it by the next meeting, she will do her best.

Mrs. Dunn said we have Val as an attorney, is this other attorney in addition to him.

Mayor Baker said it's a labor attorney, Val is not our labor attorney. Said this is the firm we always use. Said they called us and lowered their cost because of the shape we're in.

Mrs. Dunn asked what the position in DPW saves us.

Comm. Higgins said \$8,000.

Mrs. Dunn asked if the dispatcher position was put out there if people wanted to apply for it.

Chief Waldron said it was put out there and he received around 50 resumes for the position itself. Said he had asked for the exam in April 2013 to be given, they really want to get the dispatcher in there and working. Said he's taking a big risk by coming because if he's not in the top 3 he is out.

Mayor Baker said they are hoping by the next one there will be a Civil Service exam.

Comm. Gilheany asked if it was in the newspaper or posted on the website.

Chief Waldron said it was posted on the website.

Mr. Thompson said he's on the Civil Service Commission and it isn't them, the State only gives the test once a year now. More discussion was held on the test.

No other public comment.

Comm. Gilheany, seconded by Mayor Baker, moved that the meeting be adjourned at 8:30 p.m. Motion carried.