

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

Chief Waldron led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Sylvester, seconded by Comm. Chauvin moved that the minutes of the regular meeting of July 7, 2010 and special meeting of July 21, 2010 be accepted as prepared.

Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Mayor Sylvester read his correspondence:

- 1.) Note from Comm. Hipwell saying there has been two different Cases involving an overcrowding of cats in the city. One house Had 30 cats and the other had 13. One of the houses had a serious infestation of fleas and needed to be evacuated due to safety reasons. He wanted to thank our Animal Control Officer Kathy Kelsey-Peluso for her outstanding effort in both of these cases. She went above and beyond to meet the needs of these animals and has been doing an outstanding job. He's very thankful to have her working for his department.
- 2.) Letter from Supervisor Thomas J. Richardson regarding the closing of the fire station on the west side of the city. Said his concern is the safety of the citizens of this city first as well as the safety of our firemen. He hopes that all facts are brought forth and that a logical decision will be made. Said after a few discussions this past week with several citizens and fireman, he still feels uncomfortable closing this station however he doesn't know all the facts.

Comm. Seber said on Monday they conducted a tax sale. Properties that were delinquent from 2005 were eligible to participate in the tax sale. Said they sold two properties, one was a property on 12 New York Avenue and actually they foreclosed on 2004 but they had some environmental concerns and it's about \$60,000 in outstanding taxes. They sold the parcel for \$23,000 which will cover the unpaid taxes for 2004 and 2005 and the successful bidder is also responsible for to pay the balance of the taxes which \$38,000. The second was a piece of city owned property at the end of Walnut Street and it's of no use to the city so they sold that for \$1,000. Said there's a resolution tonight accepting the sale. The fact that they got rid of that property on New York Avenue is a big deal.

Comm. Chauvin had nothing to report at this time.

Comm. Higgins said the water ban is still in effect. Said they take the water out of the creek when they water the flowers, they are not using water from the city.

Mr. Serbalik had nothing to report at this time.

Chief Waldron said one of our Police Officers, Anthony Toleman, has been activated to go to Iraq. Said he left yesterday and will be gone for at least a year. Said our prayers go out to him for a safe return and to his family. Said they also have another full timer that's still out in Kosovo since 2008 and he's not supposed to be back until the end of this year. Again, hope everyone comes back safe. Said they are taking shots at the department as far as staffing levels. Two of his officers are attending Police Academy. Said they've had a lot of damage to police vehicles, one occurred during a pursuit, the transmission blew in the car. Said he's happy to report that the suspect pled guilty and has agreed to pay \$3,250 dollars to the city to pay for restitution for replacement of the motor. In another case, a guy kicked out the back door of one of the police cars but they did get a check made out to the city to replace it. Said the state legislatures are looking to mandate something but not funding it that will mandate law enforcement to record all interrogation of suspects, they want it on camera. Said that's a huge tax and an awful burden on them, about \$10,000 per camera. Said he talked with Sheriff Bowen and all the other local police chiefs and they are trying to submit a grant at the county level for the county to pay for the entire operation so that all 14 law enforcement agencies in the county will get the same exact recording system.

Mayor Sylvester said he would like an executive session after the meeting for a legal problem that John Holland brought to his attention today and also a personnel problem. Called upon Chief Dunn to give his monthly report and then to go into their presentation on the fire house.

Chief Dunn said they will forego the report and go into the presentation. Said as Chief of the Fire Department they decided to move 411 from Station 2 to the Central Station. Said they will see from the data presented the obvious advantage to do away with it. They obviously don't want to offend anyone. Said Jeff Alonzo couldn't be here so he sent a note asking for the council to accept his apology that he couldn't be here. Said he's serving his second year as Chief of the Mechanicville Fire Department and has been a member for 23 years. Wants everyone to know he's here to serve all the people in Mechanicville and too he is in full support of moving truck 411 to the Central Station as this is the best thing for all of you. Thanked them for their time. Said briefly they have come here to inform, they are not looking for a resolution, the fire department has made the decision, the Mayor has the decision, they hope it will happen. Said it's the most efficient use of their people, their manpower and equipment and hopefully they will see that. He asked Tim Cuilla to present the data and said they will answer all questions after the presentation.

Tim Cuilla, Captain and Training Officer in the Fire Department and he is here to present the information and data surrounding their decision. Asked everyone to hold all comments and questions until afterwards. Said the fire department is an all volunteer department staffed 24/7 by volunteer fire fighters who respond from wherever they may be at the time of the call.

Said the individual fire fighter is not obligated to respond to the call as they are a volunteer. Said they respond to approximately 200 calls a year and they also participate voluntarily in dozens of community events. Their primary first response district consists of the City of Mechanicville and the vehicles they utilize are 2 engine tankers which are simply fire engines with larger water tanks, they also utilize one engine, 2 support vehicles and one tower ladder. Said approximately 3 years ago the members of the fire department voted to consolidate the 5 individual fire companies into one fire department which allowed their departments to respond more effectively. They united under one common training program and under a group of assistant department officers. Said the decision of the chief to relocate engine 411 from Station 2 at Depot Square to the Central Station on Main Street which also involves the personnel that respond out of that station to relocate to the Central Station to help get that equipment out for alarms. Said the reason the chief made this decision is to get all of their vehicles, all of their fire suppression apparatus out of one station. They believe that this will allow response to an emergency to be more effective and more efficient. Talked about how it was more effective this way. Said this is all motivated for public safety. Talked about issues getting vehicles out when they come out of two stations. Said the chiefs are asking for their help, not trying to punish anyone. The chiefs would not be making this decision if they thought it affected the safety of the residents and of property. Said the 3 main issues that motivated the chiefs to make this decision are apparatus staffing, apparatus interchangeable with emergency vehicles and emergency vehicle staffing. Went into requirements, staffing, fire gear, vehicles and faster response time. Second issue that motivated the Chief's decision is the time of day that the calls are occurring. Said during daytime hours they are at work and many either work too far away or cannot leave work to attend these calls. Of the people that are available they have varied experience during the day and it makes it more difficult to produce a crew. Said their retirees are around during the day and they do an excellent job for the fire department, they have so many years of service, however, they may be beyond the point where they can go inside a burning building any more, they contribute more as fire police, operating the vehicles or exterior function. Said they can assemble a crew but it takes longer during the day and increases response time. The last issue that motivated the chief was the overall coordination of the response. If they use only one engine that means only 5 firemen can respond on it and if additional members come and are left behind, they take their vehicles to the fire which clogs the scene with additional cars. Said if all these vehicles were centrally

located, if you miss a truck, you get on the next truck. Said now you have a person on the truck responding with the right equipment, ready to do their job rather than responding in their cars. It's more effective, more efficient. Said there are many types of calls they respond to, not just fires, there are vehicle accidents, odor investigation and fire alarm rescue and they require a different level of equipment and utilization. If they have the trucks centrally located, people can start making decisions about the calls in the station and respond with the right equipment rather than just overloading an incident that may not need that equipment. Talked about the trucks and in what order they respond and where the ladder truck can go and can't go because of the size.

Mayor Sylvester said didn't they just spend \$10,000 on the radios.

Mr. Cuilla said they weren't in service yet as they weren't trained on it yet. Said they know that the railroad is a major concern for a lot of the residents and the chief factored that into the decision making. They have not noticed any concerns or any incidents in recent years where a train at a crossing has affected the response of the department to the point where life was sacrificed or property was entirely lost. Said John Ahearn Rescue Squad respond to 5 times more calls than they do and they have nothing to report that would indicate that a blocked crossing negatively affected someone's life. Said what it comes down to with the railroad is that there really is no section of the city that is unreachable, it's one square mile, you can utilize the overpass on the north end and they can utilize South Street on the South end. Said it's very feasible and they have done it. Said also trains are going through faster and spending less time at the crossing. Said it will not affect the west side. Went into examples of fires over the past few years and how effective response out of the Central Fire Station is. Said people have been led to believe that if you remove that engine, there's going to be an entire compromise of public safety and they will show examples to indicate that it's just not true. Gave examples of fires on west side that firemen couldn't get to the firehouse because of a train. Also gave examples of examples of first vehicles on the scene were from the Central Station. Said before they answer questions, they want everyone to know that if they think this is some personal issue that the chiefs have, it's not, they are motivated by public safety and they should always be and if not, they will ask them to retire. Said they are here to provide the best quality service to the public and they are asking for all of the firefighters for support in helping make this better.

Mayor Sylvester said they would take questions now.

Dave DeMarco, 52 Warsaw Avenue, has been a member of the fire department for 10 years and joined the station for the west side coverage. Talked about guys that tore the station apart. Said a large number of firemen live on that side of the track so why should they drive to the Central Station, they have faster response time from this station. Talked about the pros of keeping the station, it's not a good idea to close it, it's an asset to the city.

George Amann, has been a fireman for 50 years, said he has the greatest respect for his officers and fellow firemen, talked about the length of trains and how long it takes them to clear a crossing. Said there are 423 homes on the west side and including businesses is 434 and the DPW complex. Talked about the total price of real estate on that side, number of people and apartments and response time from different area. Said they should leave Station 2 open.

Marie Amann said she appreciates what all of our firemen do for us. Doesn't believe it's in the best interest of the people closing that station and how it would affect house insurance not having a firehouse on that side of the track. Said this is something serious to think about.

Peter Hanna, 232 South 2nd Street, said he has been in the fire department for 57 years and was Captain of the W.B. Neilson Fire House longer than any other captain that served up there and went through the ranks as chief. Said he was on the committee to build the new Central Fire House and it was suggested by the Division of Fire Safety that the Strang Hose Company stay on the west side. Said they need a truck on that side of the track. Gave examples of routes and response times. Said he knows they have a staffing problem but it's not only in Mechanicville, it's all over. Said they had voted for a retirement for firemen to get more to join, if it's not working, maybe they should take that away and use the money in other places. Believes it would be a stupid move to take the truck out of there and suggests that the Mayor makes a decision to keep it over there.

Lady asked what if a train derailed on the track, what would they do.

Chief Dunn explained how they would get around it and they have fire fighters on both sides. Many people were talking all together.

Lady talked about houses that are disgusting and are fire hazards.

Mayor Sylvester said they are being addressed, one is under litigation.

Lady said people come in and buy houses and rent them and don't care.

Mayor Sylvester said they can't prevent them from coming in

Comm. Higgins said the building inspector is doing something with them.

Jim Salmon, 61 Park Avenue, resident of the west side and 30 year member of the fire department said he doesn't agree that it's the right solution moving the truck but respects their expertise and the time they put into this. He does question the statistics on the 6% response from the Strang, most times they had a crew. Another concern he has is public safety and he personally doesn't think it's a good idea but gives the chiefs credit and in his opinion this is the most professional trained department ever.

Sam Carabis, Elizabeth Street, said he knows many of the firemen and they are doing a great job. Asked how many people here tonight would like to see that fire station stay open? Many of the people in the audience did.

Deputy Chief Corrigan said he's been in the fire department for 25 years, talked about fire safety.

Deb ?, 20 years in the city asked about how they respond to fires, how many are in trucks, etc.

Chief Dunn gave her an explanation.

Leah ? asked who will make the decision.

Mayor Sylvester said he would.

Chief Dunn said whatever the Mayor decides to do is fine.

John Southworth, Chrystal Dunn and Mary Lou Anatriello all voiced their opinions.

Mayor Sylvester said he has 20 years of fire fighting experience in the GE with chemicals. Said they inherited that piece of junk up there, you did not do that John. Said Tim is not here, I discussed it with him, he did that. That was done to discourage people from showing up there. Said he thinks the truck should stay up there, he's not going to close that fire house. Thanked them for coming.

Mayor Sylvester made a motion to close the regular meeting to go into a public hearing on ORDINANCE NO. 2010-5 AMENDING THE MECHANICVILLE CITY CODE ENACTING SECTION 194-29 "EMERGENCY WATER REGULATIONS" at 8:45 p.m., seconded by Comm. Seber. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Mayor Sylvester read Ordinance No. 2010-5. Asked if anyone had anything to say about this water restriction.

Pete Hanna said we paid \$11,000,000 for a new water plant, why are we running short of water now?

Comm. Higgins said it was 6 million.

Mayor Sylvester said because of all the hot weather we have had and the silt situation they have up there, the reservoir is down. Said it would take about 11 million dollars to get the silt out of there.

Comm. Higgins said a lot of the problem is what they are doing in Luther Forest.

Chris Sgambati said Mason Barber said if they start building on Cold Springs Road, we are in a lot of trouble with our water shed. Said he rode up there and there is a lot of building going on. Said the Board of Supervisors had assured them that they wouldn't do anything to hurt our water but it has.

Mayor Sylvester said they have a \$350,000 grant to do a study with Stillwater, the town and the village, regarding running a line down from the county as a secondary supply once we get our situation straightened out. Said we can buy water from the county cheaper than we can make it.

Mrs. Anatriello said she believes the cost of the water treatment plant went from 2.5 million to 5.5 million.

Comm. Higgins said it did.

More discussion was held on the water.

Mayor Sylvester made a motion to close the public hearing at 8:59 p.m. to re-open the regular meeting, seconded by Comm. Seber. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Mayor Sylvester made a motion to pass Ordinance 2010-5, seconded by Comm. Seber. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Mayor Sylvester opened up the meeting to public comment. No one had anything.

Com. Seber read RES. NO. 68-10 ACCEPTING BIDS ON THE SALE
OF FORECLOSED PROPERTIES AND
AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE
DEEDS TO THE PROPERTIES

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

Comm. Chauvin read RES. NO. 69-10 PAYROLL AND VOUCHERS

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

No new or old business.

Mayor Sylvester closed the regular meeting at 9:08 p.m. to go into executive session on personnel and a legal matter, seconded by Comm. Seber. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Mayor Sylvester, seconded by Comm. Chauvin, moved that the executive session be closed at 9:40 p.m. to re-open the regular meeting. Roll Call: Affirmative – all. Negative – none.

Comm. Seber, seconded by Mayor Sylvester, moved that the regular meeting be adjourned at 9:42 p.m. Roll Call. Affirmative – all. Negative – none.