

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2016

The regular meeting of the Mechanicville City Council was held at the Senior Center, North Main Street, Mechanicville, New York on Wednesday September 14, 2016.

Roll Call:	Mayor Baker	Present
	Commissioner Duell	Present
	Commissioner Gilheany	Present
	Commissioner Higgins	Present
	Commissioner Hipwell	Present

Mayor Baker: Called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.  
Fire Chief Jeff Alonzo led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Baker:

Motion to accept the August 10, 2016 Minutes:

Motion: Commissioner Duell

Seconded by: Commissioner Higgins

Roll Call: AYES: 4 NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 1 Commissioner Gilheany abstained because she was not present at the last meeting.

Commissioner Reports were as follows:

Mayor Baker: Mayor stated that they are in the possibility of re-zoning where the railroad station (which is residential), XO Tower (which is now light industrial), next door is commercial and across the street is commercial. They are looking to re-zone that entire whole area commercial. They will be talking to the merchants in the area but it is a benefit if they need to declare that is a commercial area if grants are trying to be obtained for some of the projects. One of the projects may be doing something with that intersection, because of that the area needs to be re-zoned. The City Attorney is in the process of looking at that.

Val Serbalik: Informed everyone that Sam Carabis will be doing a map. He stated the first thing to do is amend the zoning map; it will then go to a public hearing, he said it will probably be a two (2) month process.

Commissioner Duell: States that water meters are being read and the bills are starting to be put together. She said the bills will be going out the end of this month and will be due the end of October. She also stated that this will be the first cycle that will see the increase that was approved at the beginning of the year.

Commissioner Gilheany: Stated it is time to think about next year's budget and that she will have everyone's budget worksheets out no later than Monday and she is looking to have them back by October 15<sup>th</sup> and hopes there will be a workshop the first week in November. She stated the tax cap this year is only .68 percent so she said they have a little work to do.

Commissioner Higgins: Informed everyone that in the next few weeks his department will be paving various roads and he asks that everyone obeys the signs that are out.

Commissioner Hipwell: Congratulated hometown boy Chad Brown for a very successful meet at the Saratoga Race Course winning his 1000<sup>th</sup> race and finished the meet as the leading trainer. Also, thanked the Summer Program up to Park Avenue playground for a great summer and also stated that after getting involved with the state it was determined that the pool at the Park Avenue is a level (3) three swimming pool and everything that was done at the pool this year and in the past was legal. He informed everyone that he is getting a lot of complaints about skunks in the City. He has a gentleman that will come in and help out, if the skunk is on private property the property owner is responsible for the bill but, if it is on City property the City is responsible.

MPD Chief Waldron: Gave his support to the resolution on the agenda to promote Paul Pecor to Sergeant. He informed everyone that Paul started at the Stillwater Police Department in 2010 and was hired by the MPD in 2013. He took the test and passed it finishing number one (1) and thinks he will be a good candidate for that position and asked the Council to please support him. Also stated they are still in the process of reviewing cameras for the Park Plaza, Central Avenue and Mabbett Street. He stated he is working with IT because there is no point in putting a camera there that does nothing just to say there is a camera there, he wants a camera that can zoom in to see if there is drug trafficking taking place. He wants the Council to know he is looking into everything and that he will give the Council any prices and things they might have. He stated he is aware that it has to come out of his budget and he does have the money to do that. Stated an aggressive driving detail will take place on Central Avenue down near Fortune Plaza near the Dance Studio specifically. After speaking to the businesses there and a lot of the parents that bring their kids there he found that it is really dangerous because cars are coming up at a high rate of speed. Informed everyone that they will be seeing very active patrols within the next two (2) weeks down South Central from the VFW Post until the split where you can take 146 or 4 & 32 down towards Waterford. Bids are in for the body cameras now the next phase of trying them out on a trial basis first will take place. He reminded the Council and public they are free it is a member item from Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner which she has given us \$5000.00 to do this and that it should be done hopefully before the end of the year. Chief Waldron reported that the department will be starting a firearms training starting next week and that new level 3 holsters will be put into place and send back the old ones. He stated this is for safety purposes to make sure when a weapon is in the officer's holster it is extremely safe because it was discovered through research that officers are being killed by their own weapons. They are being hit and knocked out then the person comes take the weapon out and shoots them. So a level three is more difficult for them to get out of the holster.

City Attorney Val Serbalik: Reported that October 5, 2016 is the 2012 tax sale which is also going to include two (2) other properties. It begins at 10:00 A.M. Also, the 2013 tax sale proceedings have been filed with the last day of redemption at the end of the year. Therefore the sale for 2013 will probably be around February or March. Attorney Serbalik asked for an executive session on a pending litigation.

MFD Chief Alonzo: Reported that the Mechanicville Fire Department had 47 alarms in the month of August. There were 45 within the City and 2 were mutual aid responses, 32 of the alarms were medical emergencies. Mention roadway flooding especially on Central Avenue and stated there is nothing they can do about it but did state that the water there is deep and if there is a car stuck in there and it is

unoccupied the Fire Department will not be put in jeopardy to rescue the car. They will only rescue if there is a human life in the vehicle. Chief Alonzo informed everyone that the new fire engine was put into service earlier today. He commended the Department for doing a wonderful job the last month training. Chief Alonzo thanked the Mayor and the rest of the Council for the member item Assemblywoman Woerner for firehouse upgrades that were much needed.

**Public Comment:**

**Girls Scouts made presentation on Dog Park in Tenendaho Park:**

Emily stated that the Girls Scouts are working to earn their Silver Award and to do so they need to complete a project that requires fifty (50) hours of community service and leave a positive impact on the community. They chose a dog park because they realized Mechanicville has many parks in the community but does not have a dog park. She stated that after doing research they found there are over two hundred (200) licensed dogs in the City of Mechanicville, and stated that many of the residents would welcome a dog park and see it as a great addition to the community. Stated that in the past year they visited existing dog parks, and interviewed trained professionals, and done a lot of research.

Allie informed everyone that if the dog park is approved then their next steps would be to put together a dog park committee, start grant applications, and organize fundraisers. By spring of 2017 they would begin the cleanup and building phase and the park would be up and running by fall 2017. They have obtained the following sponsors; The Mechanicville McDonald's, DeCrescente Distributing, Chase Smith Funeral Homes, and Sit Damn it Dog Training.

Victoria explained that there are many benefits to the project that is being proposed. Some of the benefits are: cleaner community with happier people, fenced area for dogs to exercise, encourages dog owners to license their dogs, and it will bring people to the downtown area for shopping. They are planning for both a large and small area for the dogs. The Girls Scouts plan on doing much of the hands on work to clean up the area. They plan in fundraising to help fund the project. They also are plan on fixing up the playground.

Emily stated that they are planning on putting up a sign on Route 67 welcoming people to the park as well as a sign at the entrance of the dog park which will state all the rules and regulations that the Girl Scouts and City can decide on. They plan on putting emergency contact information on one of the signs. Emily stated that according to Agricultural and Marketing law section 121 "an owner of a dog can be held liable for the action of their dog whether inside or outside of a dog park" therefore, they should not hold the City responsible. They will have the dog owners show proof of home owners or renters insurance upon applying for a dog park pass to make sure the dogs are insured. They are also working with various homeowners to resolve parking.

Mayor Baker thanked them for the very informative presentation.

Mayor Baker informed the public that they would not be voting on the dog park this evening but would like to here if there is anyone that would like to speak pro or con on the dog park.

Matt Chauvin informed the Council he is speaking on behalf of Lucy Golden (123 Saratoga Avenue) which is the property that directly abuts the Tenendaho Park. Matt commended the girls for their efforts and stated they clearly have put a lot of time and effort into the dog park. He also stated that

the attention and much needed rehabilitation that is being drawn to the park is greatly appreciated by his family. He stated that they believe there may be a more appropriate location and whether or not the dog park is warranted should be evaluated before moving forward with a project of this type. He asked that if the City Officials decided that the City truly needs a dog park and the girls worked hard to provide them with a plan it is his families position that it should be cited in a different location further away from homes. He went further to add that being said, it does draw attention to the park itself and the decay that has developed it over the years. He informed that the issues they are most concerned about with regards to this location are parking, the driveway at 123 Saratoga Avenue directly abuts the Saratoga Avenue access to the park and it is routinely mistaken for public access and parking. He stated he concerns comes because his grandmother is elderly and they need to be able to get her in and out. The on street parking at this facility is very limited and Saratoga Avenue in that area is very busy and dangerous for people to be loading and unloading dogs. He posed his concerns that not all dog owners are responsible for their dogs mess and they see it now on their property that not all owners pick up after their dogs. The second concern from his family that what is being set forth will not be maintained in the future. He is asking where the sustainable financial support going to come from for required maintenance and upkeep, supervision, security, who is going to enforce the passes and how will it be insured that the people using the park are indeed pass holders? How will this be paid for is this a burden that will be shifted to the tax payers? His last concern is that is this a legal development of that parcel in the current City zoning? He reiterated they respect the girl's efforts but asked that if the City sees a need for the dog park that it be somewhere else.

Sandra Greene: 12 Tenendaho Lane also commended the girls for their hard work but being a resident there stressed that there is not enough parking there now so if this does go through it needs to be insured that people do not park on the cul de sac. There are a lot of very young children that live and play there and the increased traffic would be a concern. She posed he concern with both road traffic and foot traffic with young kids around the area and also is concerned about noise. Barking dogs will in turn make residents dogs bark and could become a noise problem.

Girls Scouts: Wanted to address a few of the resident's concerns and stated that they have thought about the parking concern and are looking to talk with Mr. Lorenzo (who bought Williams Street next to the park) about him possibly allowing the city a few parking spots for people to park. They are hoping to put a gate to get into the park so only people that are allowed to enter will. On the topic of future maintenance they will have people buy yearly park passes and there will be a small fee and will use the money to maintain the park.

Attorney Val Serbalik: Addressed the Girl Scouts and asked if they are intending to lease the property from the City of have the City run it, maintain it. Will you be charging for the use of the facility?

Girls Scouts: Stated that they would like to develop the dog park and work with the City to build it and after that the City will oversee it. Hopefully they can get a committee of citizens and the city to oversee it. It will be a gift from the Girl Scouts to the City. The City can charge for a yearly pass for the use of the facility.

Attorney Val Serbalik: Also stated a concern that there is nothing in our code book that addresses a dog park as an allowed use so if it is going to go forward it may require a change in the zoning or the group going to the planning commission.

Mayor Baker stated that they knew there would be questions and things to straighten out but wanted to hear from the girls and the community so they can mull it over and the girls are looking to start in April so in the next couple of months they need to get an answer.

Donna Hartman, Mechanicville, as a landlord who rents to families with pets it would benefit them to have a place to go to let the dogs exercise instead of just walking around on a leash.

Kim Dunn: 250 South Main Street, asked Commissioner Higgins what street he would be paving. Also, asked if the hot water heater at the fire house was covered by the insurance?

Commissioner Duell stated it was not turned into her and she was unaware it needed to be replaced.

Kim Dunn: Is confused about resolution 89-16 because so many resolutions have been done for the firetruck. Did we get the \$50,000.00 grant yet, we took the money out of the general fund so did we get that yet?

Commissioner Duell stated that we had to do this resolution with the re-wording so we can get the money from the USDA. It is not a separate bond it is a loan with the USDA.

Kim Dunn: Asked how long will it be to replenish the money from the general fund?

Commissioner Duell told her it was her understanding it would be a couple of weeks.

Kim Dunn stated that resolution 86-16 was done last meeting to appoint that same person to a vacancy so why is this one different and why is it being done again?

Commissioner Duell informed her that the Saratoga County Assessors wanted the wording in there. They wanted it to be clear that Bea Timpanaro was replacing Kevin Robert because he didn't fulfill his full term.

Kim Dunn asked if the Zim Smith Trail will cost the City any money.

Mayor Baker informed her it will not cost the City any money.

David Hicks 241 First Avenue, asked about resolution 87-16 and what happened to Stillwater's connection line for the Saratoga County Water? He stated Barton and Loguidice showed pictures where it was all going to get laid out and put an indication where the connection was to be made in Stillwater and it per the new resolution has changed. David asked if there was a contract with Stillwater for this.

Mayor Baker informed him we do not have a contract and that it is more beneficial for the City this way.

David Hicks asked about resolution 104-15 stated \$3.96 Million now resolution 88-16 bumped it up to \$5 Million and what the whole idea of this is.

Mayor Baker informed him that the cost of the water line is already in it, but that it is set for \$5 million because we are expecting to get more money and we don't want to keep rehashing it every meeting so it is being set at \$5 million but we are probably not going to spend that .

David Hicks posed his concern that a pumping station is going to be required to get the water up to the tank and stated there is a lack of communication to the public what is being done here.

Mayor Baker told him that the thought process after all kinds of calculations is that there will be enough force of the water down Route 67 that there won't be a pumping station needed.

David Hicks asked when it was decided to fill the vacancy for resolution 94-16 of the water treatment plant operator and asked if it was posted under civil service.

Commissioner Higgins informed him it was not posted because it was an emergency vacancy and he had to train someone right away because the training takes 6 months. The guys were working 24/7 and informed him that he didn't want to burn them out.

David Hicks confirmed that the person needs to take the civil service test and pass it before he can be promoted.

Commissioner Higgins confirmed that.

Commissioner Duell stated that the City did seek out other treatment plants in the area seeking people that could come in but they are different systems and they weren't available the shift that were needed.

David Hicks wanted to make it aware that if Chief Alonzo blocks off Central Avenue for flooding he needs to block First Avenue also they go hand in hand.

Mayor Baker closed this portion of the meeting and went to public hearing for the Water Project.

Commissioner Duell stated that the public hearing for the Water Project is just an update on the SECRA that was changed to now come down Route 67 so an update for a bond resolution was required. She wanted to make sure there was a public hearing so everyone knew that it is still the same project. Stated we are at \$2.96 in grant money and we are applying for the third round as well. By having all of this in place we are increasing our chances of getting the most money we possibly can.

David Hicks stated Stillwater is probably going to be upset over the new line coming down 67.

Mayor Baker stated they already knew they were going the other way and that there is a right away by the State.

Mayor Baker went back into regular session.

Resolutions:

Commissioner Duell read RESOLUTION 86-16: Board of Assessment Review Appointment

Moved by: Commissioner Duell      Seconded by: Commissioner Higgins

AYES: 5                      NAYS: 0

Commissioner Duell read RESOLUTION 87-16: Environmental Review Water System Improvement Project

Moved by: Commissioner Higgins      Seconded by: Mayor Baker

AYES: 5                      NAYS: 0

Commissioner Duell read RESOLUTION 88-16: Bond Resolution Water Supply and Distribution System

Moved by: Commissioner Higgins      Seconded by: Commissioner Hipwell

AYES: 5                      NAYS: 0

Commissioner Duell read RESOLUTION 89-16: Bond Resolution - Firetruck

Moved by: Mayor Baker      Seconded by: Commissioner Hipwell

AYES: 5                      NAYS: 0

Commissioner Gilheany read RESOLUTION 90-16: Payroll and vouchers

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany      Seconded by: Commissioner Duell

AYES: 5                      NAYS: 0

Commissioner Gilheany read RESOLUTION: 91-16: Budget Transfers Project

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany      Seconded by: Commissioner Duell

AYES: 5                      NAYS: 0

Commissioner Gilheany read RESOLUTION 92-16: Budget Amendments

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany      Seconded by: Commissioner Higgins

AYES:5                      NAYS: 0

Commissioner Duell read RESOLUTION: 93-16: Sergeant Appointment

Moved by: Mayor Baker      Seconded by: Commissioner Hipwell

AYES:5                      NAYS: 0

Commissioner Duell read RESOLUTION: 94-16: Water Department Appointment

Moved by: Commissioner Higgins      Seconded by: Mayor Baker

AYES: 4                      NAYS: 0      Abstain: 1 (Commissioner Hipwell)





Meeting Adjourned at 8:54 P.M.

Motion by Commissioner Higgins

Seconded by Commissioner Gilheany

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE  
TRANSCRIPT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
AT A MEETING DULY ASSEMBLED THIS 12<sup>th</sup> DAY OF

October, 2016

Michelle L. Quill

CITY CLERK