

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON
SEPTEMBER 6, 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 September 6, 2017.

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

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

Motion to accept the August 9, 2017 Minutes:

Motion: Commissioner Higgins Seconded by: Deputy Commissioner Foard
Roll Call: AYES: 3 NAYS: 0
 Commissioner Gilheany: Abstain
 Commissioner Hipwel: Abstain

Commissioner reports were as follows:

Mayor Baker informed everyone that the demolition at Cumberland Farms has begun and the second building was taken down today. He stated he is unsure as to when they will be taking the store itself down but it will be in the near future. He also stated that when the demolition is complete they will be grading the area and then construction will begin. Mayor Baker stated they are hoping to have the project completed in 120 days.

Commissioner Gilheany stated it is time to start thinking about the 2018 budget and they will be planning a budget workshop in early November.

Commissioner Higgins stated Kubricky will be grinding South Main Street on September 18th so South Main Street and a few other streets will be done that week. The following week Kubricky will patch the roads where the cuts were made. Commissioner Higgins is hoping that in the next couple weeks South Main Street will be complete.

Commissioner Hipwell stated there is a five (5) year old boy that lives on Elizabeth Street that is deaf and he ordered signs for DPW to put up in the area to alert drivers that a deaf child lives in the area. He asked the public to take it slow driving up through that area.

Deputy Commissioner Foard stated that the DPW Department picked up the water books and will be reading meters for the next 10-14 days. She also stated that the bills should be in the mail by September 30th and they will be due by October 31st with no penalty.

Attorney Serbalik stated the 2014 tax sale documents were sent out for filing and at this time there are three (3) properties remaining. Mr. Serbalik stated there were 51 properties and over \$37,000 has been collected in penalties and interest. He also stated he thinks only one (1) of the three (3) properties will go up for actual sale.

Mayor Baker added that he wanted to thank Deputy Commissioner Foard's office for a job well done. He personally thanked Emilia, Kim and Mark for all of their hard work.

Chief Joseph Waldron stated that the summer months have been extremely busy and he is very thankful to his Police Officers for their hard work. He stated the force is down four (4) full-time Police Officers and the other Officers have worked tirelessly for the Department. Chief Waldron stated that between June 1st and August 31st 220 arrests were made. Chief Waldron added they are not small arrests; there are serious things that are occurring and he wanted to commend them publicly for all of their hard work and time keeping all of us safe. Chief Waldron also reminded the public that social media is a horrible area for people to have the ability to send out statements, make comments, or do things without ever being vetted for accuracy nor investigated by anyone for truthfulness. He stated that one site has recently done this; they copied and pasted a statement against one of our Police Officers that was horrible. He stated being the boss during this is awful because you want to jump out and defend them and the bad part is if that is done then the public thinks you are covering them up. But, he did say that he is "asking the public to be mindful of what is said in a public domain for accuracy and truthfulness. With the rise of social media, it's now easier than ever to make a defamatory statement; this is because social media services like Twitter and Facebook allow you to instantly publish a statement that can reach thousands of people". "Whether it's a disparaging blog post, Facebook status update or YouTube video, online defamation is treated the same way as more traditional forms. That means you can be sued for any defamatory statements you post online." Chief Waldron wanted to make sure that people understand that if you post something online that is not truthful a person individually has the right to come back after that person. Chief Waldron asked the public to be mindful of what you post, don't make derogatory comments. He also stated that Police Officers are human beings and they will make mistakes, we all do, but when Police Officers make a mistake it is magnified. Chief Waldron then read the year to date stats which are attached to the minutes.

Mayor Baker stated that the Girl Scout Troop 1114 is present and they will be giving an update as to where they are on their Dog Park project.

Emily Morelli from Girl Scout Troop 1114 stated they have been working with Barton & Loguidice to make a draft plan of the Park. Emily stated there would be two (2) phases of development for the Park, some but not all of the features are necessary for the opening of the Park, the other features may be added on at a later date. There are features that are optional and are dependent on interest and funding. She also stated they will be having a bake sale to raise funds on September 16th from 8:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. at the Stewart's on Central Avenue.

Public Comment:

David Hicks, 241 First Avenue, asked where the City stood on the energy audit and the DPW land. He stated he is aware that the garbage contract is coming up and it is a significant increase of close to \$1,000,000 and he suggested that the Council talk to the City of Cohoes to see what they pay for dump fees. Mr. Hicks stated he researched online and you can purchase a few trucks for a \$100,000 apiece and then you would just have to hire people to work part-time (therefore you could pay a higher rate and not have to offer benefits) and it could go under the Department of Public Safety. Mr. Hicks asked for an explanation for the \$1400 difference between Resolution 52-17 and Resolution 44-17.

Commissioner Gilheany said it states the contract still remains the same but it actually doesn't, there is an increase of \$4,756. She stated there were differentiating factors; the number of meters that were purchased was reduced by 280 and that was \$42,683 less, the City bought radio transmitters (the original meters that were purchased didn't have them) which increased it \$42,900, and there were additional meters purchased that included the radio transmitters which was \$11,000. Commissioner Gilheany stated that overall the contract increased by \$4756. She added as far as the "DPW" land goes the City does not own the land and it is up to the State Department of Environmental Conservation to make sure they are following remediation.

Mayor Baker added he received an email today regarding that property and it stated that they are extending his time and adding a few extra things they want him to do if he develops it.

Mr. Hicks asked why Baker's building on Central Avenue was left unsecured while the Fire Department used the building to practice.

Mayor Baker stated that he spoke with the firm that was tearing the building down and he stated it was fine to leave it and he would take care of it.

Mr. Hicks stated the fire code states it is supposed to be secured.

Mayor Baker stated the Fire Department was using it for practice 2 to 3 days a week and it wouldn't have been worthwhile to board it up.

Mr. Hicks stated on the website the CS, IDA and the PZ have no postings on there as to what is going on. Mr. Hicks also stated that the water is still on at Lane's.

Commissioner Higgins stated he was aware of that.

Mr. Hicks asked how many units were put out for bid for the garbage contract.

Commissioner Gilheany stated it was 2,400. She also stated that the increase over 3 years was \$71,712 for the 3 year contract but if you look at what we are going to pay in 2018 versus what we are going to pay in 2019 it actually went down \$41,000. Commissioner Gilheany added that for 2018 the recycles and the regular garbage was \$343,584 and for 2019 it will be

\$302,400. She added the last bid was very high because they had no competition and that was the problem.

Kim Dunn, 250 South Main Street asked if resolution 53-17 (United Court System) was just money in and money out and doesn't cost the City any money.

Mayor Baker stated that was correct it is the City's contract with them.

Kim Dunn asked if the grant money is covering both resolution 50-17 (award bid for rehab of water tank storage) and 51-17 (award bid for water meter installation).

Mayor Baker stated it is part of the project.

Commissioner Gilheany stated legally have to go out to bid.

Kim Dunn asked if someone could give a brief update on the water situation.

Commissioner Higgins stated that the water is safe to drink and the musty smell is from the reservoir turning over and it is going to take time.

Mayor Baker stated he spoke with Oscar today and six (6) bacterial tests are done per month to make sure everything is fine. He also stated that every August the reservoir turns and once the cold weather comes it settles down.

Kim Dunn asked what it means when they say the reservoir turns.

Commissioner Higgins stated it is when the bottom comes to the top.

Tom Mahoney from The Express asked about the taxes that are owed for the property owned by The Augustine Schools.

Mayor Baker stated that they are now tax free but this is tax that was owed when they bought the property and had not been paid.

Tom Mahoney asked if anyone thought there might be property that might not be taken care of.

Attorney Serbalik stated the property on Burke Street is a vacant parcel.

Mr. Mahoney stated it is good news that there are only three (3) properties left because just a month ago there were 35 or so parcels that were not paid.

Julie Bisnett, Stillwater Avenue stated that she is super frustrated with the water at her property. She stated that although the reservoir turns over every year she has never experienced this problem before.

Commissioner Higgins stated that he thinks that because of the issue of what happened in the beginning everyone is watching the water more. He stated the water smells musty every year at his house when the reservoir turns over.

Julie Bisnett stated that she has never experienced any problems. She also stated there was a water main break right outside her house and she didn't have water for two (2) days then when it came back on it was dirty for a day but it didn't smell. Julie stated she made herself a cup of tea Monday night and the smell was pungent and she couldn't drink it.

Deputy Commissioner Foard stated she doesn't have any turbidity in her water now but she said she still has the smell and the taste is not good. She said that she is buying water and it is her own personal preference not to drink it. She does not like the after taste. She also stated that she spoke with Oscar and he did tell her that it is going to take time for it to clear up.

Julie Bisnett asked if there is a time frame as to when it will clear up.

Mayor Baker stated he is hoping in the next 2 or 3 weeks.

Commissioner Higgins stated that once the weather gets cold it will help.

Don Fletcher from Barton & Loguidice stated that the water temperature has an effect on it. He also stated they are testing the water to see if they have to change chemicals or change the dosage of chemicals. He also stated they are continuing to run the numbers and testing the water to evaluate it. Mr. Fletcher stated that they want to get it cleared up and prevent it from happening again or to at least minimize it the best they can.

Deputy Commissioner Foard stated she knows it is hard to ask people to be patient but that is what everyone needs to do.

Mayor Baker stated the water is not bad to drink but he does understand it is hard for people to drink it when it smells. He also stated The Department of Health is involved with the City every step of the way. Mayor Baker said that Mr. Fletcher who is with Barton & Loguidice (who are the City Engineers) were already working with the City for the grant that was received and now they have stepped in and helped us with this problem.

Julie Bisnett asked what was being done to help the elderly population to make sure they are not getting dehydrated because the water is not drinkable.

Mayor Baker asked if you boil the water will the smell go away.

Commissioner Higgins stated the smell would not go away.

Julie Bisnett stated that boiling the water actually makes the smell worse.

Resolutions:

RESOLUTION 49-17: Update Code/Charter

Moved by: Mayor Baker

Seconded by: Commissioner Higgins

AYES: 4 NAYS: 1 Commissioner Hipwell

RESOLUTION 50-17: Rehabilitation of DeVoe Road Water Storage Tanks Bid Award

Moved by: Commissioner Higgins

Seconded by: Commissioner Gilheany

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 51-17: Water Meter Installation Bid Award

Moved by: Commissioner Higgins

Seconded by: Commissioner Gilheany

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 52-17: Water Meter Change Order

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany

Seconded by: Commissioner Higgins

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 53-17: Uniform Court System Resolution

Moved by: Mayor Baker

Seconded by: Commissioner Hipwell

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 54-17: Trash Collection Contract

Moved by: Commissioner Higgins

Seconded by: Commissioner Gilheany

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 55-17: Hiring of Full-time Police Officer

Moved by: Mayor Baker

Seconded by: Commissioner Higgins
AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 56-17: Sergeant Promotion

Moved by: Mayor Baker
Seconded by: Deputy Commissioner Foard
AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 57-17: Payroll and Vouchers.

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany
Seconded by: Mayor Baker
AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION 58-17: Budget Transfers

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany
Seconded by: Deputy Commissioner Foard
AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Baker informed everyone that the gazebo is between 90% and 95% complete and it looks great and he thanked the Union Hall and the local volunteers (that were listed in The Express). He stated that the handicap ramp, the front stairs and the front pad are left to be complete but they will be done in the near future.

Commissioner Gilheany mentioned The Mechanicville/Stillwater Elks is having a 9/11 Service on Saturday September 9th at 2:00 P.M. and the public is welcome to attend.

Commissioner Hipwell stated that the reason he voted no on resolution 49-17 was because of the price. He stated he is all for changing the charter but the price is too high.

OLD BUSINESS: None

Mayor Baker stated that the meeting will be adjourned to go into Executive Session and at the end of Executive Session they will come back into normal session but will not be taking any action.

Close Meeting: 7:32

Moved by: Mayor Baker

Seconded by: Commissioner Higgins

Executive Session: 7:33

Moved by: Commissioner Higgins

Seconded by: Commissioner Gilheany

Adjournment: 7:44

Moved by: Commissioner Gilheany

Seconded by: Mayor Baker