

CITY OF BATAVIA – SPECIAL CONFERENCE MINUTES MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2020

Present were Council President Jankowski and Councilmembers Bialkowski, Briggs, Christian, Canale, McGinnis and Viele. Councilmembers Pacino and Karas were absent.

In attendance from the City of Batavia were Matt Worth, Shawn Heubusch, Stefano Napolitano, Rachael Tabelski, Lisa Neary, and Lisa Casey.

Call to Order

Council President Jankowski called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation and the pledge of allegiance were led by Councilmember Viele.

Public Comments

Richard Umlauf, 465 Ellicott St., said he was looking for approval from Council for a skate park in the City. He said that the skate park would be free and available for the public to use. He noted that he had been in touch with the Tony Hawk Foundation and Ralph C. Wilson Foundation, which offer grants. One grant for \$250,000 that is a matching dollar grant and another for ecological studies for \$50,000. He said the project is close to him, as he was one of the kids that benefited from the park. He noted that the park kept him free and clear of trouble. He volunteered to head a committee to look into the project, as other residents have reached out to him to express their interest.

Council Response to Public Comments

Councilmember Viele said that he thought the skate park was a good idea, but questioned the City's liability. Mr. Van Nest said that the City would need to review the current insurance portfolio to be sure that the City had ample coverage. Council President Jankowski said that the skate park is in the early stages now, but would like to see concept and design information in the future. Councilmember Christian said that she would like to see a committee continue on with the project and come back to Council.

Communications

None

Council President Report

Council President Jankowski announced the next regular City Council Conference meeting would be held Monday, February 24, 2020 at 7:00 pm in the City Hall Council Board

Room, 2nd Floor, City Centre.

Council President Jankowski presented Retired Assistant Police Chief Todd Crossett with a Proclamation from the City. Mr. Crossett said that it had been a pleasure and honor to serve in this community. He also thanked everyone for all of their well wishes.

Tax Cap Override

Martin Moore, City Manager, said that as he had discussed in his memorandum to Council, he would be seeking to override the property tax cap. He noted that a 50/50 split with expenses and revenues would balance the \$700,000 burden equally. He said hats off to City staff for their hard work on cuts to the original budget. He noted that New York State's proposed elimination of the \$440,789 Video Lottery Terminal (VLT) revenue to the City was fairly substantial. He said that with strong concerns from financial and management staff, and an extensive 15+ year review of past City budgets, that he agreed that his original recommendation to use \$257,540 unallocated cash from workers compensation was unsustainable. He said that those funds need to be there for possible claims, as the City could see a claim of \$100,000, \$200,000, or \$600,000 in a single shot. He noted that the original budget had a property tax increase of .97% and that the proposed rate would increase 7.48% or approximately \$9.60 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value. Council President Jankowski said that the Governor's action came as a surprise, as the City had started using the VLT money 3 years ago to offset taxes. He noted that the City had planned to use the VLT revenue again this year to offset any tax increase. He said he hoped that pressure from State Senators and Assembly Members would be able to change the Governor's mind about the VLT funding for this year. He noted that the City would be much more prepared moving forward with the change in the 2021/22 budget. He said that Council was looking to schedule a public hearing to override the tax cap tonight. Council agreed to move the item forward.

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Conference Meeting adjourned at 7:21 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

**Aimslee M. Cassidy
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer**

02/10/2020