

# **CITY OF BATAVIA – BUDGET WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 10, 2014**

A budget work session of the City Council was held Monday, February 10, 2014 immediately following the business meeting at 8:35 PM in the Council Chambers, One Batavia City Centre, Batavia, New York, with Council President Hawley presiding.

Present were Council President Hawley and Councilpersons Pacino, Christian, Briggs, Canale, Cipollone, Doeringer, Jankowski, and Deleo.

The floor was open to discussion of the water, sewer and worker's compensation funds and the debt schedule and capital plan. Mr. Molino noted that the capital plan was updated annually and color coded to show completed projects, grant projects and other categories. He noted that the debt schedule was informational to show the debt that was coming due.

Councilperson Christian expected more cut from the budget, glad the rate was reduced to \$9.17 per thousand but wanted more. Councilperson Jankowski asked if there were any other agreements that had multi-year commitments like the Batavia Development Corporation and Vibrant Batavia. Mr. Molino noted that there was nothing additional that hadn't already been discussed. Councilperson Christian noted that she was content, in a way, with the budget. She felt Council should be thankful they had worked as hard as they had and still been able to reduce taxes which was more than the school or county could say.

Mr. Molino reviewed the proposed budget amendments. Starting with the wage increases, he noted that the average wage increase of management was about .25% less than the unions over the years. He also provided a summary of the amendments and noted that a detective vehicle was in twice and it had been removed.

Councilperson Christian made a motion to change the salary increase for non-union to 2%. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Jankowski and on roll call, failed 1-8. Councilperson Christian was the only one to vote in favor of the change resulting in the increase remaining at 2.5%. Councilperson Jankowski felt there was a large gap between management and other workers and that the dollar amount with a salary increase was bigger even though the percent increase was the same. He suggested trying to keep the dollar amounts the same and separating management from other non-union employees. Councilperson Canale agreed with possibly looking at dollar amount raises instead of percent raises. Councilperson Cipollone reminded Council they were talking about 11 people.

Councilperson Doeringer made a motion to take out the wi-fi. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Deleo and on roll call, approved 9-0.

Councilperson Cipollone made a motion to remove the duplication of the BDC funding. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Christian and on roll call, approved 9-0.

Councilperson Christian made a motion to remove the electric car charging station. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Cipollone and on roll call, approved 9-0. Councilperson Canale felt that it was a really cool publicity idea, would try to pursue it on his own, and try to find funding for the project. Councilperson Doeringer agreed and offered his help to see the project come to fruition.

Councilperson Jankowski made a motion to amend the fire department budget as proposed which was seconded by Councilperson Briggs. On roll call, motion approved 9-0.

Councilperson Cipollone made a motion to remove the police vehicle which was accidentally recorded twice in the budget. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Canale and on roll call, approved 9-0.

Councilperson Jankowski made a motion to remove the assistant city manager position. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Briggs and on roll call, failed 4-5. Councilpersons Jankowski, Briggs, and Deleo and Council President Hawley voted in favor of removing the position. Councilperson Christian felt the position was needed because everyone had different needs and her ward needed help with the flood insurance. She noted they wouldn't be able to sell their homes if the flood insurance wasn't under control and felt the position would be able to do a lot of other things. She said she had to vote in favor because of the people she represented. Councilperson Deleo noted that the Senate passed a bill to delay the increase in flood rates and suggested waiting four years and revisit at a later date. Councilperson Pacino noted that the flood insurance wasn't her only concern, Council spent the summer identifying things they wanted done, and the City needed more help to get those things done. Councilperson Jankowski stated that the strategic plan was due to be reviewed in the upcoming summer, Council could review priorities then and felt that the person would need to have so many talents to be able to do everything that needed to get done. He suggested considering the position next year, felt there was too much confusion, and didn't even know if the things they would be working on would be a priority this summer when they worked on the strategic plan. Councilperson Pacino noted they weren't looking for someone to know how to do everything but to coordinate to get things done. Councilperson Canale noted that he wrestled with the issue but felt the City wouldn't be hiring an assistant city manager just for the flood insurance and there were things the city needed to accomplish. He noted that improving neighborhoods was a priority for Council and that included improving the crime situation, dealing with abandoned housing, landlord issues and the conditions of their homes. He felt that with the increase in the criminal activity and absentee landlords, something needed to be put into motion to solve the problems. He wanted to see action and felt that Council could direct the assistant to the issues they want him to attack and felt it was important to the community. Councilperson Briggs stated that she had received a lot of calls against hiring an assistant city manager, felt the crime rate could be handled by the police department, and eliminating the position would bring the tax rate down 2.8%. Councilperson Doeringer felt that Councilperson Jankowski made the point of exactly why we need an assistant city manager by reading off the list of things the City needed to get done. He noted that consultants were expensive but it was the only job they would do. He felt Council needed to move the City forward, staff had already been cut to the bare minimum and they were already working really hard, there needed to be someone to take the initiative and noted if the City

wasn't moving forward it was moving backwards. Councilperson Deleo agreed with Councilperson Briggs and stated that specialized consultants didn't have to be paid benefits and receive contracts. Councilperson Canale noted that the assistant could meet with different municipalities who had initiated programs for the issues Council identified. He noted that the police chief had a job to do and wouldn't want him away from the City to hear from other municipalities as suggested by others but that would be alright for the assistant city manager to conduct those meetings. He noted that the City was still experiencing a tax rate reduction and now was the time to continue to move forward. Councilperson Cipollone noted that the City had come out of a dark place and to make it a place people wanted to live the City couldn't do that with what they had now. He noted there was too much to do, the City attempted to do a little at a time in the past but now they had some flexibility to move the City forward. Councilperson Jankowski felt that if there were problems with public works or police staff not being able to get work done then staff should be brought up to full employment. He noted that over ten years, the cost of the assistant city manager would be \$1 million. He understood that there were a lot of jobs to be done but didn't feel a lot was being done and the City didn't need more management but more people who were doing the work.

Councilperson Christian asked Mr. Molino to reduce the budget even further but there was no one to second the request and thus it failed.

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### **MOTION TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION**

#### **Motion of Councilperson Pacino**

**WHEREAS**, Article 7, Section 105(1)(d), of the Public Officer's Law permits the legislative body of a municipality to enter into Executive Session to discuss "...proposed, pending or current litigation...".

**WHEREAS**, Article 7, Section 105(1)(h), of the Public Officer's Law permits the legislative body of a municipality to enter into Executive Session to discuss "...the proposed acquisition, sale, or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value thereof...".

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Council of the City of Batavia, that upon approval of this Motion, the City Council does hereby enter into Executive Session.

**Seconded by Councilperson Christian and all of Council approved.**

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**Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Heidi J. Parker  
Clerk-Treasurer**