

CITY OF BATAVIA – CONFERENCE MINUTES

MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2015

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

Call to Order

Council President Hawley called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Councilperson Pacino led the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

Mary Valle, Jackson St, noted that she had attended the walkability audit and felt it was an incredible day. She explained that the facilitator had asked for ideas that could be implemented relatively easily and suggested having walkability audits in each ward. She asked Council to each consider hosting one.

Mark Janofsky, 23 Gateway Dr, noted that there were four abandoned properties near his property at 33 Manhattan Ave. He felt the existing proposal for the exemption was an excellent idea but feared that if it got watered down any further it wouldn't be attractive to buyers. He explained that there has been a population decline but a housing supply increase and that 35% of the houses for sale in Batavia were listed below their assessed value. He also suggested demolition of some properties to reduce the supply of homes.

John Roach, 116 Grandview Terrace, liked the idea of the abatement, suggested Council didn't delay the passage of the resolution and that it get passed at the meeting immediately following so it could go to the state. He also asked what the holdup was with Empire and noted they were starting to come around offering internet and phone but not TV.

Richard Richmond, 20 Washington Ave, again brought up the idea of having an independent audit for the attorney legal fees and asked when it was going to be part of the agenda.

Council Response to Public Comments

Councilperson Deleo liked the idea of the walk in the wards, agreed there was a housing problem and hoped Mr. Janofsky would keep the issue on the table, and also wondered the status of the Empire deal. He noted that discussions with Comcast were moving along but not as quickly with Empire. Mr. Molino noted that the discussions with Comcast were about a transfer from Time Warner to Comcast but the negotiation with Empire was developing a cable franchise agreement which was a lot more involved. He noted they were working with Empire for a good franchise agreement for all parties involved. Councilperson Deleo asked if Empire could come in to do a presentation and stated that the negotiation was taking way too long. Councilperson Cipollone wasn't sure if it was appropriate to have Empire come in before there was a negotiated contract and that Council needed to be careful. Mr. Molino suggested having legal counsel for Empire come in to

brief Council.

Communications

Councilperson Doeringer presented a proclamation to Mark Mikolajczyk on his retirement as a captain from the Fire Department after over 21 years. He noted that Captain Mikolajczyk served as coordinator for many projects over the years, was a dedicated and dependable firefighter and made the proclamation for his service. Captain Mikolajczyk thanked his family, close friends and the Fire Department.

Living Waters Ministries requested to have a community outreach on Wednesday, August 26, 2015 in Austin Park from 10:30am – 6:00pm. Council approved.

The National MS Society requested to hold a walk on Sunday, May 3, 2015 from 9:00am – 12:00pm at Dwyer Stadium as a fundraiser. Council approved.

Council President Report

Council President Hawley announced the next regular City Council business meeting would be held on Monday, May 11, 2015 at 7:00pm at the City Hall Council Board Room, 2nd Floor, City Centre.

Accrued Liability

Mr. Molino noted that transfers are made from reserves this time of year for accrued liabilities and requested approximately \$72,000 be transferred out of reserves. Council agreed to move the item to the next business meeting.

Capital Project Close Out

Mr. Molino noted that when capital projects are completed, they have to be officially closed and there were three for that year. Council agreed to move the item to the next business meeting.

Auctioned Properties

Mr. Molino noted that the auctioned properties had to be moved to the business meeting so they could officially be sold to the approved purchasers from the March auction. Council moved the item to the next business agenda.

Independent Living of Genesee Region

Mr. Molino explained that he had met with this civil rights advocacy group about their concerns and wanted to form a regional group to discuss what they provide and make people aware of what they do. He noted it was in the development stage and they asked for a letter of support and participation in the program from Council. Councilperson Deleo asked if this was a collaboration with the County as well and Mr. Molino noted that it was as well as with others. Councilperson Christian felt it was a great idea and they really

needed something like that. Council moved the item to the next business agenda.

Comprehensive Plan Preparation

Mr. Molino noted they had been discussing the comprehensive plan for some time, had received a grant to assist, and needed to create a work statement. He noted they needed a steering committee to make consultant recommendations and that the planning board aided in the comprehensive planning process. Mr. Molino recommended requesting the planning board begin the update process and that they be the steering committee. Council had no objections.

Distressed & Abandoned Properties – Gap Financing Exemption

Mr. Molino noted that Council had requested a revised resolution which he had completed and explained that property owners would always get the most beneficial exemption that was available to them. He noted that there had been a lot of concern of others not getting similar exemptions but pointed out that there was a similar exemption for eight years for single and multi-family homeowners. He noted that if the resolution got approved tonight it would start the drafting of a home rule bill. Councilperson Christian asked if the exemption would be for County and school taxes as well. Mr. Molino noted that other taxing districts can opt into it but the City couldn't do it for them. He noted that it was a very targeted exemption and that the County and school had a tendency to accept those. Councilperson Doeringer asked if the school had to have a public vote to opt in and Mr. Molino noted that they just needed to adopt a resolution. Councilperson Jankowski stated that he had a lot of favorable responses from residents and felt the City was on the right track.

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Councilperson Christian noted that her daughter had submitted a grant for the trap, neuter, and release program.

Conference Meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

**Heidi J. Parker
Clerk-Treasurer**

04/27/2015