

# **CITY OF BATAVIA – CONFERENCE MINUTES**

## **MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 2023**

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

In attendance from the City were Chief Heubusch, Chief Graham, Erik Fix, Brett Frank, Tom Phelps, Dawn Fairbanks, Lisa Neary, Krista Galdun, and Scott Allen.

### **Call to Order**

Council President Jankowski called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Councilmember Schmidt led the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Public Comments**

John Roach, 116 Grandview Ter, asked Council to consider supporting resolutions opposing the Governor's proposal to eliminate all gas appliances and the overtake of some zoning rules. He felt they were overreaching.

### **Council Response to Public Comments**

Councilmember Bialkowski noted that he agreed with Mr. Roach and there was a lot of debate over the gas appliances and the zoning changes would overstep the City's own laws. Councilmember Richmond felt it was putting a hindrance on people's ability to build and zoning should be up to the City, not the Governor. He agreed that this was Albany overstepping.

### **Communications**

Batavia Concert Band requested to hold concerts in Centennial Park on Wednesdays from June 28<sup>th</sup> to August 9<sup>th</sup> starting at 7pm. Council approved.

EverPresent Church submitted an application to hold a vendor fair in the City Centre concourse on Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup> from 8am – 3pm. Council approved.

### **Council President Report**

Council President Jankowski requested a moment of silence for James Owen who had recently passed away and announced the next regular City Council Business meeting to be held on Monday, February 13, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the City Hall Council Board Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Centre.

Budget work sessions were set as follows:

Monday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> after Council Meeting (Budget Presentation)

Tuesday, January 31<sup>st</sup> at 6:00pm (DPW, General Government and Administrative)

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Tuesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm (Police and Fire)  
Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm (if needed)

### **Budget Presentation – City Manager**

Mrs. Tabelski welcomed Tom Phelps as the new Superintendent of Water and Wastewater. She then went on to present the budget and thanked the department heads and the leadership team for putting the budget together. She reviewed numerous events and projects from 2022 and introduced the new slogan – TOP City – Tradition, Opportunity, Prosperity. She noted that now that the \$100 million of investment by 2022 was exceeded, topping \$202 million, the slogan of \$100 Million I'm All In needed to be revised. She discussed public sector projects, national and state trends, including the workforce shortage, and reviewed revenue including AIM aid, tax revenue, and sales tax payments. She noted that the City's tax rate was expected to remain the same at \$8.94 even though the budget would exceed the tax cap limit. She explained that exceeding the tax cap would allow the City to cover higher costs primarily due to inflation. Mrs. Tabelski's next slides showed the growth in the assessment values and noted that over 24% of the tax base remained tax exempt which means they use essential services, such as police, fire and street services, but don't pay for them. She explained the use of fund balance and reserves, level debt, and noted that personnel cost continued to remain the largest expense. Mrs. Tabelski reviewed other funds of the budget, including worker's comp and health insurance, both of which are self-insured, water, wastewater, and City Centre fund. She noted that there was a proposed rate increase of \$0.30 for water and the City Centre user fee would increase from \$2.06/sq ft to \$2.10. She noted that dealing with 8% inflation was very challenging and would require a tax cap override. Councilmember Bialkowski noted that there were a lot of concerned citizens and he assured them they wouldn't be raising the tax rate and wouldn't be raising assessments either.

### **Appointments**

This was a resolution to appoint Sharon Burkel to the Historic Preservation Commission and Robert Gerace to the Board of Assessment Review. Council agreed to move the item forward.

### **FY 23/24 Tax Cap Resolution to Schedule a Public Hearing**

Mrs. Tabelski noted that this was a resolution to schedule the public hearing to override the tax cap. Council agreed to move the item forward.

### **FY 23/24 Budget Resolution to Schedule a Budget Hearing**

Mrs. Tabelski noted that this was the annual resolution to schedule the public hearing for the budget and all lines of the budget would be reviewed with Council at the work sessions. Council agreed to move the item forward.

### **FY 23/24 Water & Sewer Rate Resolution to Schedule a Public Hearing**

Mrs. Tabelski noted that this was the annual resolution to schedule the public hearing for the water and sewer rate adjustments. Council agreed to move the item forward.

### **Annual Resolution – Strategic Plan**

Mrs. Tabelski noted that this was the annual resolution to adopt the strategic plan of the City. Council agreed to move the item forward.

### **Annual Resolution – Capital Project Resolution**

Mrs. Tabelski noted that this was an annual resolution to approve capital projects for the upcoming year. Councilmember Bialkowski asked why not sell the Zamboni to the rink operator like we did with the Dwyer equipment. Mr. Van Nest, City Attorney, noted that this was a little different situation due to the size of the Zamboni versus something like a mower. Council agreed to move the item forward.

### **STOP-DWI Grant Award**

Mrs. Tabelski noted that the police were awarded \$17,000 for STOP-DWI from Genesee County. Chief Heubusch explained that this assists with overtime patrols and would help with the drug recognition officer. Council agreed to move the item forward.

### **Police Facility SEQR Resolution**

Mrs. Tabelski noted that this is for the police facility to get the USDA grant and this is part of that process. Council agreed to move the item forward.

### **Amendment to MOU with Genesee County for WIIA Grant Water Plant Project**

Mrs. Tabelski explained that the MOU was passed in 2021 with Genesee County. However, there were some clarifications made regarding payment structure so the language was cleaned up to make sure flow of funds was appropriate for both parties. Council agreed to move the item forward.

### **Surplus of City Equipment Resolution**

Mrs. Tabelski asked Council to surplus the items that were approved previously to sell to Can-USA. Council agreed to move the item forward.

### **Approval of \$635,000 of ARPA Funds for BOM/Fire Facility Improvements**

Mrs. Tabelski noted that they got bids back that were much higher than expected so asking to use \$400,000 of funds previously committed to the Cohocton project and the Austin Park playground. She noted that the Cohocton project was now much more than anticipated so that would be put on hold but would like to see the BOM/Fire facility project

to get done as it's been worked on since 2017. She noted that she wanted to keep working on the Austin Park playground but would look for grant funds for that and use ARPA for the facilities projects. Council President noted that things change and we have to make adjustments. Council approved moving the item to the business meeting immediately following.

**Award of Bids for BOM/Fire Facility Improvements**

Mr. Frank, Director of Public Works, noted that bids were advertised the week of Thanksgiving and opened on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. He noted that the bid needed to be awarded within 45 days so needed to move this forward tonight. Council agreed to move the item to the business meeting immediately following.

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**Conference Meeting adjourned at 7:56 PM.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Heidi J Parker  
Clerk-Treasurer**

01/23/2023