

October 24th, 2016

Regular Meeting-

The regular meeting of the City of Port Jervis Common Council was held in the Council Chambers, 20 Hammond Street, Port Jervis, New York on Monday October 24th, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

Attendance-

Mayor Kelly Decker and all members of the Common Council were present. DPW Director Jack Farr, Building Official David Rivera, CDA Director Valerie Maginsky, Police Chief William Worden, Recreation Director John Faggione, City Clerk-Treasurer Robin Waizenegger and Corporation Counsel William Bavoso were also present.

Pledge of Allegiance-

Mayor Decker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Youth Report-

The Port Jervis School District is proud to be the host school for the Red Ribbon week ceremony. PJHS opened its doors to students from ten school districts across Orange County. The focus of the presentations today was to engage students into staying drug free. Dignitaries from across the county were at the school for a very special breakfast before the program began. Port Jervis Schools proudly promotes a drug free community and healthy decision making. PJCS D partnered with Shop Rite and registered Dietician Kelly Pearson for this year's Big Apple Crunch. The crunch was today in celebration of National Food Day. Food Day inspires Americans to change their diets and our food policies. PJMS Math Department presented several workshops focused on assisting adults with understanding common core math. Students at ASK and HBE had a special treat as members of the local fire departments visited the schools to talk fire safety. Children learned about being safe at home as well as school. Firefighters displayed equipment, gear and allowed students to see firsthand what it takes to be a firefighter. October 31st is a half day for all students.

The next PJCS D Board of Education meeting will be held Tuesday, October 25th at 8:00am at the district offices located at 9 Thompson Street.

Senior Report- No report

Veterans Report-

Mr. Siegel reported that after 65 years, a local soldier William Vito Giovanniello, killed in the Korean War will come home to Port Jervis on November 5th, 2016.

Public Hearing-

NYS HCR Jersey Ave Sewer Rehab

Mrs. Maginsky updated the council and residents on the progress of the grant. She noted that the City has requested an extension and waiting for commentary from Albany.

Motion by Mr. Belcher, seconded by Mr. Bavoso to close the public hearing relating to the NYS HCR Jersey Ave Sewer Rehab.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

October 24th, 2016**NYS HCR City of PJ Micro-Enterprise Program**

Mrs. Maginsky updated the council and the residents on the progress of the grant. She noted that the applicants involved have experienced setbacks and therefore the City has requested an extension through July 1st to allow the applicants the opportunity to catch up and participate fully in the expected benefits of the program.

Motion by Mr. Belcher, seconded by Mr. Bavoso to close the public hearing relating to the NYS HCR City of PJ Micro-Enterprise Program

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Public Comment-

Ed Degroat, 3rd Ward, asked about the sale of property on Farnum Street.

Randy Richards, 3rd Ward, inquired about buying a portion of a City Street, located on Short Street.

Minutes Approved-

Motion by Mr. Belcher, Seconded by Mr. Bavoso to approve the minutes of the October 11th, 2016 regular meeting.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Motion by Mr. Siegel, Seconded by Mr. Foster to approve the minutes of the October 11th, 2016 special meeting.

AYE: 6 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 3(Bavoso, Hendry, Randazzo) CARRIED

Committee Reports:**Finance Committee**

Motion by Mrs. Trovei, seconded by Mr. Bavoso to pay the current bills for General Fund, Water Fund, and Capital Account for a total of \$549, 435.92

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Motion by Mrs. Trovei, seconded by Mr. Bavoso to approve the resolution relating to the 2016 budget amendments.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Motion by Mrs. Trovei, seconded by Mr. Belcher to approve the resolution relating to the 2016 tax anticipation note.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Mrs. Trovei announced that budget workshops will be held on October 27th, November 1st, 3rd & 16th.

The next finance meeting will be held on November 16th, at 6:30pm in the council chambers.

Fire & Emergency Management (FEM) Committee

Mr. Siegel noted that the fire trucks will be out driving the streets on Halloween.

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The next meeting will be held on November 21st 2016 at 7:00pm in the council chambers.

Code Committee-

Mr. Bavoso explained the proposed housing program and asked for council input.

Mayor Decker informed council that he will forward all correspondence from Corporation Counsel on this matter.

Mr. Siegel noted that home ownership is part of the American dream.

Mrs. Trovei suggested tabling the program to further discuss her concern of discrimination.

Mrs. Hendry agrees with Mrs. Trovei and doesn't feel comfortable picking winners and losers.

Next code meeting to be held November 2nd at 7:00pm in the council chambers.

Department of Public Works (DPW) Committee-

UPDATE:

Garbage pickup will be on its normal schedule for the next weeks

Every Saturday from 7:15am-11:30am the dump will be open for residents to use. Dump passes can be purchased at the City Clerk's Office for \$10.00 per pass.

Advised residents that the City of Port Jervis has enacted a voluntary water restriction due to the lack of rain and low levels of water stored in our reservoirs.

Notified residents that leaf pick up will begin November 7th, 2016.

Next meeting will be held November 7th, 2016 at 6:00pm

Police Committee-

Discussed recruitment, training and upcoming events at the last meeting.

The next meeting will be November 15th at 7:00pm.

Liaison Reports:

Community Development Agency (CDA)-

The CDA is hosting a first time home buyer workshop being held October 25th from 6-7:00pm at the rec center. For any additional information please call 845-569-0770.

The next meeting will be October 26th at 7:00pm.

Industrial Development Agency (IDA)-

Mrs. Waizenegger reported that a representative from 100 Pike Street Plaza had a conference call with the IDA committee and informed the committee that interior work will continue, however exterior work will be finished in the spring.

The next meeting will be December 21st at 6:00pm

American's with Disabilities Act (ADA)-

Next meeting to be held December 8th at 6:45pm in the Mayor's Conference room

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Housing Authority-

The next meeting will be October 25th, at 7:00pm at Hillside Terrace in the conference room.

Recreation Commission:

The 1st Annual Will of Orange Trail Run was held this past Saturday, October 22 at the new trails in the Watershed Park and Elks-Brox Park. Despite the cold and rainy morning all the participants had a great time and loved the trails! Looking forward to next year's run. Special thanks to Deb Cassara and the Port Jervis High School Honor Society students for volunteering the entire morning- they were a huge help!

Saturday October 29 is The Erie 80 Mountain Bike Race also at the Watershed Park and Elks-Bronx Park Trails. We have close to 70 pre-registered and we hope to hit 100 by race day. If you are interested in participating register at www.bikereg.com/erie-80. If you are interested in volunteering please contact the Recreation office at 845-8585-4045. Hope to see you Saturday!

The 70th Annual Halloween Parade is this Sunday October 30, 2016. Line-up will be at 3:00 pm in front of City Hall on Hammond Street. The parade will start at 3:30 pm and finish at Farnum Park where cider and donuts will be served. Children also have the chance to win prizes for their costumes at Farnum Park. The parade is for children, adults and even pets! Dress festive and we will see you Sunday!

The Youth Center will be open 11:00am-3:00 pm on Monday October 31- Halloween, Tuesday November 8- Election Day and Friday November 11- Veteran's Day. Regular Youth Center hours are Monday-Thursday 3 pm-7 pm and Friday 3 pm- 6pm. Our Teen Night is Friday nights 6 pm-10pm.

The next Recreation Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday November 16th at 7:00pm at the Youth Center.

Tourism Board-

Mr. Belcher announced the winners from the 1st Halloween Decorating Contest and thanked all who participated.

Traditional

1st - Herman Zube 2nd - Courtney Fuller 3rd – Betty Rupp

Scary

1st- Todd Kowinsky

Motion by Mr. Belcher, seconded by Mr. Bavoso to approve the 2016 Christkindlemarkt on November 27th from 10am-5pm and to approve necessary road closures.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Motion by Mr. Belcher, seconded by Mr. Bavoso to approve the closure of the municipal parking lot from November 26th- November 28th for the 2016 Christkindlemarkt.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Motion by Mr. Belcher, seconded by Mr. Bavoso to approve the Police Department to clear the municipal parking lot Friday November 26th in preparation of Christkindlemarkt.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Motion by Mr. Belcher, seconded by Mr. Bavoso to approve the National Rifle Association to hold their annual conference at Riverside Park on May 20th, 2016.

Mayor Decker has sent the contract to Mr. King, event coordinator, and waiting for a confirmation.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Rick Drew holiday parade will be held December 4th at 2:00pm.

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The next meeting will be on November 9th at 6:30 pm in the council chambers.

Zoning Board of Appeals-

The next meeting will be held on November 1st, at 7pm in the Council Chambers.

Planning Board-

Reviewed a pre-submission

The next meeting will be held on November 15th at 7:00pm.

Plumbing Board-

The next meeting will be held on November 2nd at 6:30pm.

Electrical Board-

The next meeting will be held on November 2nd at 6:30pm.

Senior Advisory-

No report.

Access 23 TV-

Mr. Belcher invited everyone to a fall telethon being held October 29th from 2:00pm-7:00pm

Mayor's Correspondence-

Thanked the school district on the Red Ribbon Ceremony.

Mayor Decker praised the Will of Orange Event.

Informed residents that the Farnum house haunting will be October 28th, October 29th, October 30th

Trail maps are available online or at the City Clerk's office.

Reminded everyone of the Erie 80 event being held Saturday October 29th.

Motion by Mr. Belcher, seconded by Mr. Bavoso to approve the Rick Drew Holiday parade to be held on December 4th, 2016 at 2:00pm starting on Canal Street with a snow date will be December 11th.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

The Tri-State Chamber of Commerce announces an event "Kucher's Kids Shoe Drive" aimed at helping to provide local children in need with a new pair of shoes. Beginning November 2, 2016, the Chamber will begin collecting new shoes, sneakers and boots for children. The footwear will be distributed through local charities.

Announced a public hearing will be on October 27th at 11:00am to discuss the railroad crossing at Fowler/First Street.

Reminded residents that Deerpark Senior Council is hosting and delivering Thanksgiving meals to seniors on November 19th at 3:00pm. Mrs. Santini thanked the City, Council and Nutrition Director for their continued support of this event.

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Mayor Decker appointed 4 new members to the NYS Master Plan Committee; Cooper Boone, Sean Donnelly, Eve Fisher, David Krantz.

Mayor Presented Budget

"Working on the mayor's proposed 2017 city budget was a very difficult task.

What was the uphill battle?

In 2016, Moody's Investment Service downgrading the city from A1 to A3

A depleted fund balance that cannot be tapped to ease some pain in a tax increase.

Running a city, which despite some rumors that it doesn't pay its bills, it does but sometimes has to borrow.

A city, which over the last two decades saw either below or near 0% increases in taxes for at least 8 of those years needs to recover as each year's budget on average increased between 2 – 3 percent, mostly due to mandates, despite the fact that personnel were cut through attrition in attempt to balance those budgets temporarily even though services were not reduced.

A sitting city council that has had some members go on record saying that they refuse to vote for a tax increase especially one in double digit percentages.

8 years of no increased aid from the State of New York to help with rising costs.

What did I do?

I first asked what the cost would be for a 2017 city budget that would be balanced not including any increase or decrease in personnel or services.

- A balanced city budget for 2017 that would include no rollover, which the city should have to make each future year budgets workable even if and when the economy might be sour, would be at least a 30.26% tax increase.

A city in its title alone provides services for its tax paying residents that traditionally towns do not receive from their local government.

I also realized the 30.26% would not be palpable for most people that live or own in our city.

I took the opportunity to not be conservative and not be liberal but to be responsible when it came to presenting the Mayor's proposed 2017 budget to this council.

Going line by line and speaking with then Finance Chairman Bob Ritchie about expectations I worked on this budget through the summer getting it down to 25.01% by reducing lines that would make it tighter on the already tightened belts but to save services and jobs.

I then got it down to 22.35% as I removed the sewer reserve and moved it to operational sewer repairs and chose to apply for grants and/or bond some of the major projects instead. I realized that there will be the need to increase the water/sewer bill from \$120.00 to \$130.00 a quarter to pay for the \$4 million dollar clarification plant that was placed on the city tax bill rather than the water bill which reduced the increase to 19.35%.

I examined some changes in employment salaries by line, including putting forward a 2% increase for all non-union employees. In addition I eliminated the Quality Bus Agreement that cost the city \$5,520 a year that allows on average less than 10 people per month to be transported to locations in New Jersey and Pennsylvania that brought the budget to 16.93%

Although the city had 20 patrol officers several years ago, the Common Councils of the past removed 3 of those positions through attrition to help with balancing those budgets. The most recently expired police contract agreed that city would have 18 patrol officers. They currently have 17 in which the existing contract negotiations allowed until 2018. I had the 18th officer position in this budget for a full year but moved its appointment to September 2017. I also asked about a few additional lines to reduce based on reasonable predictions bringing the increase to 12.46%

I then totally removed the 18th officer from the 2017 budget which brought down the increase to 12.10%.

At this point we (Mrs. Waizenegger and I) were stuck. Predicting a future budget only on 1/4 of the current year's revenues and expenses is not good management. We needed to wait until 3rd quarter reports came in to see where we could reasonable adjust the budget. Additionally, the city received unexpected revenue of \$50,000, during this time, that the council agreed to offer 5 employees eligible for retirement that fit a certain requirement each a \$10,000 incentives. This would certainly help bring the increase down. Only one employee took the offer, the caretaker of the watershed. I decided to split the fulltime recreation worker to also cover the duties of caretaker/manager of the watershed property while the water employees will take over the water duties of the water aspect of the position thus saving the city the need to backfill. That coupled with the adjustments we could reasonably make with the 3rd quarter reports allowed the budget to come down to 10.28%.

Still not enough of a palpable percentage for some I did NOT want to make predictions that would not come to fruition I wanted to be responsible. Therefore I looked at the Nutrition Program that we had originally intended to cut funding and let the county take sole responsibility as they must by law. I decided that we should contract with the county for 9 months thus helping offset the Nutrition Site Manager until her retirement. I also agreed to remove \$75,000 from the line that pays out benefits to those that might retire within the year based on actual retirement. This got the budget down to 9.29%

I had met earlier this month with the IT consultants who basically stated that the city is in an IT shambles and needs to start from scratch. After consulting with Mrs. Waizenegger we agreed to remove some of the IT funds from the General Fund as we hope to bond the IT project in 2017. This bond will include a complete citywide network that will reduce costs that are multiple

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throughout the city budget bringing the 2017 Mayor's proposed budget down to 8.95%. Lastly, I looked at city property that could be sold and Mrs. Waizenegger was comfortable with reasonably putting in \$50,000 for property sale on top of what is already owed (which could include the Advanced fuel property, Wells property, and multiple houses). This brought the Mayor's proposed budget to 7.71%.

7.71% on the average homeowner in Port Jervis is \$9.95 a month (based on a house that is assessed at \$60,300). Obviously if the assessment is lower the cost is lower and if the assessment is higher the cost is higher.

This proposal allows us to balance the city budget with some challenges still in fluid assets. It still leaves the city with a challenge in 2018 to fund the 18th officer, an IT person after the network is completed by an outside vendor through the bond, and revenue created short term by the sale of properties which already amounts to an approximate 5% increase.

What could help us in 2017 for the 2018 budget?

I am pretty confident that EIB (Energy in the Bank) will be up and running and providing us with our contracted service and delivery amounts in solar energy which immediately gives our fund balance a shot of \$400,000 plus a potential annual savings of approximately \$240,000 per year. If this comes to fruition, this will help the city tremendously get to the point of rollover and responsible councils could then keep increases to a reasonable number.

Examine the sanitation pickup issue as Middletown goes through the process and examine other villages similar in size to Port Jervis with the potential of privatization. I do urge warning when it comes to privatization that looks promising a first for about a decade but that could end up be more costly in years to come.

My last concerns are further cuts without in-depth talks with department heads. I am pretty sure that any further cuts by the council during the budget hearing process will result in cuts in manpower. Cuts in manpower will further slow our ability to move forward as a city and maybe more costly to our taxpaying public in the long run.

Having said what is needed to say, here I propose to the council the 2017 Mayor's proposed budget for the City of Port Jervis that provides no cut in services or personnel with an increase based on reasonable predictions for 2017 of 7.71%".

City Clerk Treasurer's Report-

The Mayors proposed budget will be available online and at the City Clerk's Office.

Mrs. Waizenegger reminded everyone to vote on November 8th.

Old Business:

Mr. Siegel-

Mr. Siegel was appalled by the recent newspaper article regarding downtown zoning issues and felt it was very one sided. He also has concerns about the lack of progress at 100 Pike Street Plaza and asks for updates from the IDA committee.

Mrs. Trovei-

A Monarch butterfly informational brochure is available in the Clerk's Office.

Mr. VanHorn- No comment

Mr. Foster- No comment

Mr. Bavoso-

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Addressed the recent newspaper article accusing the City of acting in a discriminatory manner. Mr. Bavoso does not agree with the article and is embarrassed that executive session material found its way into the paper. He urges the council moving forward to use discretion.

Mrs. Hendry- No comment

Mr. Belcher- No comment

Mrs. Fitzpatrick- No comment

Ms. Randazzo-

Informed residents of expected delays on the corner of Jersey Ave/Main Street for road contrctcion.

New Business:

Ms. Randazzo-

Encouraged residents to attend workshops and to vote on November 8th.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick-

Notified residents that the municipal parking lot across Sacco's Liquor will be closed on 8am-6pm October 29th for the Erie 80 event and invited everyone that the Mount Carmel Society will be holding a sausage and pepper takeout on November 5th from 4:00-8:00pm.

Mr. Belcher- No comment

Mrs. Hendry- No comment

Mr. Bavoso- No comment

Mr. Foster-

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Mr. Foster encourages residents to attend budget workshop meetings and is optimistic that the current council can work together and reduce the Mayors proposed budget.

Motion by Mr. Foster, seconded by Mr. Bavoso to allow Executive session to discuss, a personnel matter relating to the Police Dept., potential contracts or contractual issues relating to 46-48 Front Street, possible contractual matters or issues relating to the Port Jervis Ambulance Corps with invitation to include the Police Chief, William Worden and to seek advice of council regarding matters involving attorney/client privilege.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Mr. VanHorn-

Noted that the council has a lot to think about regarding the Mayors proposed budget and encouraged residents to attend budget workshops.

Mrs. Trovei-

Mrs. Trovei thinks the proposed Mayors budget is high and encouraged residents to attend budget workshops.

Motion by Mrs. Trovei, seconded by Mr. Siegel to approve a public hearing relating to the 2017 budget to be held on November 14th at 7:00pm.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Mr. Siegel-

Thanked Epoch Times for their continuous coverage of Port Jervis and wished them good luck in future ventures.

Attended National Food day at the hospital and thanked Ms. Decker for a great lunch. Mr. Siegel has concerns about the new sidewalks that O&R are installing on Main Street. He encouraged residents to attend the budget workshops, veterans parade on November 11th and reminds citizens to vote.

Public Comment-

Ed Degroat, 3rd Ward, suggested the Mayor find an alternative solution relating to the sale of property on Farnum Street.

Manny S., 2nd Ward, inquired about when new sidewalks will be installed on Kingston Ave.

Mayor addressed yes, new sidewalks would be installed in the spring 17' using funds from the safe sidewalk grant.

Randy Richards, 3rd Ward, believes that an open bidding process should be the procedure in which the City sells City owned property.

Motion by Mr. Foster, seconded by Mr. Bavoso to enter into executive session at 8:50pm.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Meeting Reconvened at 10:09pm

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Motion by Mr. Foster seconded by Mr. Bavoso to approve employee number 336 for light duty as authorized by physician as a return to work plan subject to be reviewed by workman's compensation.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Motion by Mr. Foster seconded by Mr. Bavoso to approve a waiver of a 6 month notice requirement and approve a 6 month unpaid leave of absence for employee #357 to be effective October 31st, 2016 with no accumulation of sick time during that period. Employee #357 will have the right of first refusal during the 6 month period should he desire to return to an available position.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Motion by Mr. Bavoso seconded by Mr. Belcher to authorize Mayor Decker to sign an easement agreement with O&R with respect to 50-52 Front Street pending Corporation Counsel review.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Motion by Mr. Bavoso seconded by Ms. Randazzo to authorize Mayor Decker to sign an indemnification agreement with respect to 46-48 Front Street, with related contract for the owners to perform an environmental services.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Motion by Mr. Bavoso seconded by Mr. Foster to approve an extension of a particular provision of the PPA agreement with Energy in the Bank, to allow them 6 months to finalize requirements, which is contained in paragraph 4d in the original agreement.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAY: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Meeting Adjourned –

Motion by Mr. Bavoso seconded by Mrs. Trovei to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 p.m.

AYE: 9 ABSENT: 0 NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 CARRIED

Robin Waizenegger
City Clerk Treasurer