 Johnstown Common Council

Business Meeting

Council Chambers, City Hall

Monday, April 17, 2023 @ 6:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

This meeting was broadcast using Facebook Live. The public was able to view the meeting from the official City of Johnstown Facebook page: City of Johnstown, New York

The proceedings of this meeting were taped for the benefit of the City Clerk; the minutes are not a verbatim record of the proceedings, therefore the minutes are not a word-for-word transcript.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Amy Praught, Mayor

ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL – Carrie M. Allen, City Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Amy Praught, Mayor | Thomas Herr, City Treasurer |
| Scott Jeffers, Council Member-at-Large | Michael M. Albanese, City Attorney |
| Bradley Hayner, Council Member Ward 1 | Carrie M. Allen, City Clerk |
| Scott Miller, Council Member Ward 2 | Bruce Heberer, Fire Chief |
| Eric Parker, Council Member Ward 3 | David F. Gilbo, Chief of Police |
| Max Spritzer, Council Member Ward 4 | Christopher J. Vose, City Engineer  Diedrie M. Roemer, Director, Senior Citizens Program |

ABSENT – N/A

PUBLIC SESSION

* Robert Subik of N. Perry Street spoke on the resolution to demolish the railroad bridge and why he is against it. He created Fulton Railroad Properties, Inc. in 1991 to preserve the Right of Way. He brought up several points including that the bridge existence doesn’t cost the City any money in maintenance, the bridge is an asset and resource that could be utilized in the future should they City ever want to restore rail traffic. He provided a map of NYS, pointing out that every county, but Fulton County, is serviced by a railroad. He feels it important to have a rail connection and if the trestle is destroyed there will never be another. He feels its an asset to attract businesses that deal in bulk goods. He’s heard complaints over the truck traffic and feels that if the bridge is destroyed the city would not have the option to use railroad to eliminate the increase in truck traffic. He made mention of the accidents at the site but pointed out to the council that the accidents resulted in property damage and no serious injuries were involved, a NYS DOT problem to properly sign the roadway. Mr. Subik stated the bridge is well constructed as he has looked at it and feels it will be standing for several hundred more years.

PRESENTATIONS – N/A

PUBLIC HEARINGS – N/A

PROCLAMATION – N/A

APPROVE MINUTES

* March 20, 2023

Motion to approve – Council Member Hayner

Seconded – Council Member Miller

Discussion: None

Ayes: 5

Noes: 0

Absent: 0

Abstain: 0

APPROVE CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS

* Motion to approve, upon review – Council Member Parker

Seconded – Council Member Hayner

Discussion: None

Ayes: 5

Noes: 0

Absent: 0

Abstain: 0

REPORTS FROM CITY DEPARTMENTS

* Reports are attached hereto and made part of the meeting minutes.

Chief Gilbo:

* Spritzer brought up his concerns about Knox Field and the amount of high school age kids being abusive to parents and others. Police have had to be called. Wants to know what can be done. Gilbo stated as he has in the past that the police cannot patrol private property. Residents have to approach school district. There is no order from the school to the police for them to enforce anything on school property. Mayor told Spritzer that the Superintendent put a group together last year (she was on the committee) but they’ve only met once, and nothing further has been scheduled. Spritzer would like to get the talks going again.

Clerk:

* Parker asked about a $38k permit and inquired as to what it was for. Allen explained that this was for a street opening permit issued to National Grid. Vose provided further detail that National Grid would be digging in the street on S. William Street (Montgomery to Potter).

Christopher Vose:

* Parker asked Vose about the Lead Replacement Project with CT Male and if the letters have gone out yet. Vose stated that he received the draft today and the letters would be going out soon. Parker asked if a homeowner would be able to tell if their pipes are lead. Vose confirmed.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL LIAISONS

* Eric Parker; Joint Sewer Board
* New hire; attendant. They are now close to full staffing.
* They feel they have enough people now to mow the premises this year
* Public Hearing is scheduled for May 26th @ 6:00pm to discuss the proposed 5% increase in sewer rates
* Scott Jeffers, Planning Board
* Second Wind Coffee Public Hearing was tabled until the applicant provides plans to the Codes Office
* Scott Miller, Assessor
  + Working on the 2023 roll, will be on file with the City Clerk and on the City’s website by May 1st
  + Grievance day is May 23rd 4-8pm

LOCAL LAW – N/A

ORDINANCE – N/A

MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS – N/A

RESOLUTIONS

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| 28. | Agreement with DOT for Route 30A Street lighting | | | | | | | |
|  | Presented by Councilmember | Hayner | | Seconded by Councilmember | | | Spritzer | |
|  | Discussion: Parker wanted confirmation that the city doesn’t pay for installation only the maintenance. Vose agreed. | | | | | | | |
|  | Ayes: 5 | | |  | | |  | |
|  | Noes: 0 | | |  | | |  | |
|  | Absent: 0  Abstain: 0 | | |  | | |  | |
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| 29. | PILOT Agreement; Hillside Place Apartments | | | | | | | |
|  | Presented by Councilmember | Miller | | | Seconded by Councilmember | | Jeffers | |
|  | Discussion: Hayner asked why the City continues to enter into PILOT Agreements with new owners of properties. The Mayor stated the individuals who are living there are lower income and if the PILOT wasn’t continued then that could mean increases to rent; need to keep affordable housing. Term was originally 40 years at 1%, Mayor negotiated to 25 years and 2%. | | | | | | | |
|  | Ayes: 5 | | |
|  | Noes: 0 | | |
|  | Absent: 0  Abstain: 0 | | |
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| 30. | Budget Transfer | | | | | | | |
|  | Presented by Councilmember | | Parker | | | Seconded by Councilmember | | Hayner |
|  | Discussion: None | | | | | | | |
|  | Ayes: 5 | | | | |  | |  |
|  | Noes: 0 | | | | |  | |  |
|  | Absent: 0  Abstain: 0 | | | | |  | |  |

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| 31. | Aspen Hills Water Agreement | | | |
|  | Presented by Councilmember | Spritzer | Seconded by Councilmember | Jeffers |
|  | Discussion: Parker feels the agreement is well written and detailed. Asked if this still needs to go to the Town. The Mayor stated she, Chris Vose and John Denmark sat down with Jack Wilson. The water portion of the contract expired in 2012 and repair & maintenance expired in 2017 and some things were added that were never addressed prior. | | | |
|  | Ayes: 5 | |  |  |
|  | Noes: 0 | |  |  |
|  | Absent: 0  Abstain: 0 | |  |  |

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| 32. | NYS DOT; Bridge Removal - TABLED | | | | | | |
|  | Presented by Councilmember | Spritzer | | Seconded by Councilmember | | | Hayner |
|  | Discussion: NONE | | | | | | |
|  | Ayes: 5 | | |  | | |  |
|  | Noes: 0 | | |  | | |  |
|  | Absent: 0  Abstain: 0 | | |  | | |  |
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| 33. | Accept offer for city-owned property; 237 N. Perry Street | | | | | | |
|  | Presented by Councilmember | Hayner | | | Seconded by Councilmember | | Parker |
|  | Discussion: Miller questioned what Mr. Stock was doing with the property. The Mayor stated that Parker and Spritzer met with him and went over his plans. Spritzer said it is going to be a vehicle charging station. Parker stated that if his plan doesn’t come to fruition he will make it green space and clean up the property. Hayner thought it a good plan for the North end of Johnstown. Miller asked about the fair market value of the property> Mayor stated she believes it to be $17k. He wanted to know the benefit of selling it for $1,500. Hayner stated we won’t know the value until the project comes to fruition. Miller felt that the city should have asked for the market value of the property or at least ½. The Mayor explained that he will be working with National Grid and investing upwards of $250,000 in this property and will be good for tourism. Miller would like to have known what the tax revenue would be for this property. Heberer told the Council that the assessed value would remain at $17,000 no matter who buys the property until such time that the property is re-assessed. | | | | | | |
|  | Ayes: 4 | | |
|  | Noes: 1 (Miller) | | |
|  | Absent: 0  Abstain: 0 | | |
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| 34. | NYS DOT Acquisition / Offer of Settlement for St. Hwy. 247; Warren Creek-Red School House. Map 29, parcel 1 for Culvert Replacement and Maintenance | | | | | | |
|  | Presented by Councilmember | | Miller | | | Seconded by Councilmember | Jeffers |
|  | Discussion: | | | | | | |
|  | Ayes: 5 | | | | |  |  |
|  | Noes: 0 | | | | |  |  |
|  | Absent: 0  Abstain: 0 | | | | |  |  |

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| 35. | Establish standard work day for employees and appointed officials | | | |
|  | Presented by Councilmember | Parker | Seconded by Councilmember | Hayner |
|  | Discussion: | | | |
|  | Ayes: 5 | |  |  |
|  | Noes: 0 | |  |  |
|  | Absent: 0  Abstain: 0 | |  |  |

DISCUSSION

Mayor Praught asked for a moment of silence for the remembrance of Shirley Luck and all that she has given to the community.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Springtime Soirée at City Buzz Connects to benefit Johnstown Midsummer Concert Series – Saturday, May 22nd @ 7pm
2. National Day of Prayer – Thursday, May 4th; Bandshell 7-8pm
3. City Wide Garage Sale – May 12th – 14th
4. City Wide Clean Up – Prindle Ave., behind the Senior Center, on May 18th 11-7, May 19th 11-7 & May 20th 7 – 1
5. Business Meeting – Monday, May 22nd @ 6pm
6. Memorial Day Parade – Friday, May 26th @ 6:30 pm Applications are available online or from the City Clerk’s Office.
7. Curbside brush pickup continues through Friday, May 21st .Put brush on the terrace and not in the street.

DISCUSSION – N/A

EXECUTIVE SESSION

* Council Member at Large Jeffers made a motion to enter in to executive session at 6:45 p.m. for the purpose of discussion of a personnel matter.

Seconded – Council Member Hayner

Discussion: None

Ayes: 5

Noes: 0

Absent: 0

Abstain: 0

No action was taken during executive session.

* Council Member Spritzer made a motion to come out of executive session at 7:25 p.m.

Seconded – Council Member Hayner

Discussion - None

Ayes: 5

Noes: 0

Absent: 0

Abstain: 0

MOTION TO ADJOURN at 7:26 p.m.

* Council Member Hayner

Seconded – Council Member Spritzer

Discussion: None

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| Ayes: 5 |
| Noes: 0 |
| Absent: 0  Abstain: 0 |
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Respectfully submitted,



Carrie M. Allen, City Clerk