The Johnstown Common Council held their Business Meeting on March 20, 2017 at 7:00p.m., in the Council Chambers, City Hall.

PRESENT:

Vernon F. Jackson : Mayor

Craig Talarico : Council Member-at-Large

Timothy Cellary : Council Member

Helen Martin : “ “

Kathi Iannotti : “ “

Bradley Hayner : “ “

Michael Poulin : City Attorney

Bruce Heberer : Fire Chief

Mark Gifford : Police Chief

Christopher Vose : City Engineer

Erica Wing : Library Director

Michelle Jones : Senior Center Director

Michael Gifford : City Treasurer

Cathy A. VanAlstyne : City Clerk

Mayor Jackson called the meeting to order and led in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL – all council members present.

PRESENTATION – Tina Dimitriadis, City Assessor, reported to the Council what her office has been doing in the past year. Right now they are preparing for the 2017 Tentative Tax Roll which will be filed on May 1st with Grievance Day scheduled for Tuesday, May 23rd. They have been doing field work and data collection. Anything they find that requires an assessment change then goes to GAR. Once it comes back from GAR she will review it again and make the changes on the tax roll. They have also been processing all exemptions. The State has implemented some changes this year. They have taken over new property owner’s exemptions as far as school tax is concerned. Her office still handles all other exemptions. The State may revert back to the way it was because there have been problems. Some people have received their checks and some not. She has been verifying all sales. This is very important. The State also verifies all sales. This affects our level of assessment. We are now at 100%.

PRESENTATION – Tricia Terleckey from Catholic Charities spoke to the Council about a Tobacco Free Communities Grant. This is a grant from NYS Dept. of Health Bureau of Tobacco Control and the grant is state wide. What they do is work with municipalities to help adopt a tobacco policy that could be a 25’ entry policy, tobacco free grounds or smoke free parks. This is to protect others from second hand smoke. Cigarette butts are the number one litter item. The City of Gloversville has a 25’ no smoking at all their city buildings and 100% smoke free parks. The Town of Johnstown also has a 25’ entryway policy. Their services are free. They can provide signage and do education. Ft. Plain parks are smoke free and last summer they held a free movie night.

Mayor Jackson asked the Council to consider this and let him know their thoughts.

PUBLIC SPEAKER – Jason Hammer, 101 Prindle Ave., spoke about the resolution for tonight to reject his offer for the property at 9-21 Hoosac St. He read an email that he had sent to Mayor Jackson last month. His original offer for the property was made in July of 2016. He said he had made several contacts with city officials and employees and had almost no response. His offer last July was never acted on and he accused the city of being incompetent. He is no longer interested in acquiring city property.

MINUTES – Council Member Martin made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 21, 2017 Business Meeting. Seconded by Council Member Hayner. Motion carried.

CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS – Council Member Iannotti made a motion to approve the bills and place on file in the City Treasurer’s Office. Claims are as follows: General Fund (A) unpaid $210,685.15; General Fund (A) paid $685,850.30; Sewer Fund (G) unpaid $1,891.66; Sewer Fund (G) paid $500,620.40; Voucher Fund (VO) paid $45,734.16 and Capital Fund 2012 (H12) unpaid $1,677.86. Motion was seconded by Council Member Hayner. Motion carried.

CITY OFFICIAL/LIAISON REPORTS

FIRE DEPT. – Chief Heberer reported the department has received training on CPR and basic first aid and they have three new members. The department received 49 calls for service that included 2 structure fires, 4 motor vehicle accidents, 14 hazardous condition calls, 8 medical assistance calls, 6 carbon monoxide calls and 15 calls for service. The Code Office issued 27 permits with an estimated cost of construction of $114,410 and permits fees totaled $2,410. Complaints and inspections totaled 462.

Chief Heberer reminded residents the burn ban is in effect March 15 through May 14.

POLICE DEPT. - Chief Gifford reported the department received 528 calls that resulted in 29 arrests, 38 traffic tickets, 22 parking tickets and 19 motor vehicle investigations. The all night parking ban had been suspended during the mild weather but has been reinstated until April 1st due to snow removal.

DPW – City Engineer Vose reported the department has been dealing with Mother Nature with the recent wind storms and last week’s heavy snow storm. The Bridge NY W. State St. Bridge project – letters went out to several DOT approved firms seeking a consultant for the project. The deadline to receive answers is March 31st, then a consulting firm can be appointment for the project. He is going to do more testing of the structure before they proceed.

SENIOR CENTER – Director Michelle Jones reported they have tax consultants in the building from AARP to assist anyone in need of help processing their tax return. AARP Defensive Driving classes are going on also with a couple of new instructors. On Saturday, April 1st, there will be a senior health fair at the center and JACC. The fair is free and open to the public.

LIBRARY – Director Erica Wing reported they are preparing for their annual fundraising on April 1st. The basket raffle drawing will be at 3pm.

CITY TREASURER – Treasurer Mike Gifford reported the 2017 City Tax bills have been mailed and are due on or before the end of April, 2017.

APPOINTMENTS – Peter Smith and George Nicholas were re-appointed to a three year term to the Planning Board. Helen James and Christine Krempa were re-appointed to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a three year term.

RESOLUTION No. 28, 2017 was presented by Council Member Talarico to accept an offer for the 2001 Dodge 1500 truck from Timothy Cheney. Seconded by Council Member Iannotti.

Ayes: 5

Noes: 0

RESOLUTION No. 29, 2017 was presented by Council Member Martin to reject an offer for 9-21 Hoosac St. from Jason Hammer. Seconded by Council Member Hayner.

Discussion: Mayor Jackson explained that Mr. Hammer made an offer on this property in July 2016, around the time Mayor Julius passed away. Council Member Iannotti spoke to Mr. Hammer on three occasions and referred him to the City Assessor. She tried to tell him that his offer was too low and the property was worth much more. Chief Heberer also spoke with him. He said that his first offer was only $500 and the city lost a lot of tax dollars with this property. We can’t give it away for free. Mr. Hammer had no real plans for the property.

Ayes: 5

Noes: 0

RESOLUTION No. 30, 2017 was presented by Council Member Cellary to commit to the Project for the 2016 Bridge NY to repair the W. State St. Bridge. Seconded by Council Member Martin.

Ayes: 5

Noes: 0

DISCUSSION

Council Member Iannotti asked how the foreclosed properties are coming. Attorney Poulin said the deeds were filed today so the City will own the properties. She asked when it will go on line. Mr. Poulin said probably next week.

Council Member Iannotti asked Chris Vose about the signs for Pleasant Ave. and when will they be ready. He said they have been ordered and should be here soon. He added that the flashing lights that are to be taken down are off and will be removed by this summer. In the mean time they will cover them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

City Hall will close at noon on Good Friday, April 14th and an Easter Egg Hunt will be held on April 15th from 10am-12 noon in the park.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Council Member Iannotti made a motion to enter into executive session at 7:32p.m., for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining. Seconded by Council Member Hayner. Motion carried.

Mr. Gifford stated we needed to determine the economic portion of the proposed contract. Decision was made for Mr. Gifford to provide to Elayne Gold, Labor Attorney.

At 8:02p.m. Council Member Iannotti motioned to come out of executive session seconded by Council Member Hayner. Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:03p.m., by Council Member Hayner and seconded by Council Member Martin. Motion carried.

Executive Session minutes provided by Mayor Jackson. (attached)

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy A. VanAlstyne

City Clerk