

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATERVLIET  
THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2012 AT 7:00 P.M.**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Michael P. Manning at 7:00 P.M.

Roll call showed that Mayor Michael P. Manning, Councilwoman Ellen R. Fogarty and Councilman Nicholas W. Foglia were present.

Also present from City Administration were: Mark Gleason; General Manager, Yorden Huban, Corporation Counsel, Bruce A. Hidley, City Clerk and Clerk to the Council, Rosemary Nichols, Deputy General Manager of Economic Development and Planning, Mark Gilchrist, Assessor/Building Inspector, Fire Chief Scott Skinner and Police Chief Ron Boisvert.

A motion was made and seconded to dispense with and accept the minutes from the previous City Council Meeting.

**REPORT OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES**

**ITEM #1** – Mark Gleason, General Manager explained to the Council that City of Watervliet is once again participating with Hudson Valley Community College's Intern Program. Mr. Gleason then introduced Rebecca Cullen the intern from Hudson Valley Community College. Mr. Gleason stated that Ms. Cullen started on Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>. She is an individual studies major and hopes to go onto Law School. Mr. Cullen has been interning for 6 hours per week during the spring semester. She has already worked on the Watervliet Organic Waste Program. Ms. Cullen has done a lot of research work for Mr. Gleason on the NYSDOT and OSHA regulations. Ms. Cullen has also been researching on how many places have boathouses that rent out for sculling. She was able to ride in the salt truck from the City's most recent snow storm. This is a great program that Hudson Valley has.

**ITEM #2** – Mark Gleason, General Manager explained to the Council that he wanted to discuss a Department of Public Works project which includes the Highway Department, Water Department, Sanitation Department and the Recreation Department. The City will be updating the DPW Staff on training and safety procedures. The City has been in contact with the NYS Department of Labor to visit our DPW sites. The NYS Department of Labor has offered to advise our employees on safety practices which may need to be implemented. They also offer free training on subjects such as confined space, excavation and trenching along with heavy and light equipment use. The City will begin this program in March. The whole program will be done in approximately six months.

**ITEM #3** – Mark Gleason, General Manager explained to the Council that in the Fall of 2007 the City of Watervliet worked with the Albany County Department of Health to establish a Community Dispensing Plan. The plan outlines the procedures for the delivery of timely medical counter measures. This would include vaccines and antibiotics to the municipal employees, family members and residents. The planning is critically important in the event of a wide spread disease threat to our citizens. On Wednesday, February 29, 2012, the County performed a call down drill. Basically they got in touch with Chief Skinner.

The drill was not successful and the calls were not made. The County tried again today in the form of an e-mail which the City did respond to. The City told the County that our Point of Dispensing (POD) Site is the Watervliet Senior Citizens Facility. It takes only a matter of minutes to open. The key is kept in the Watervliet Police Department 24 hours a day. There will be a copy of the plan available on the City's website as soon as it is updated.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**ITEM #1** – Mark Gleason, General Manager explained to the Council that on February 17, 2012, he met with Robert Hogan of FEMA. Mr. Gleason noted that Mr. Hogan was our FEMA representative, the meeting was an exit interview concerning the City's request for reimbursement for damage done by Tropical Storm Irene. The City's total reimbursement request from FEMA equals about \$55,000. The major reimbursement items requested were Police & Fire labor costs, equipment rental costs, replacement of the flashboards at the reservoir in Guilderland, NY and electronic work at the Pumping Station. The City will receive 75% of those costs from FEMA. The City will make applications to NYS for an additional reimbursement of 12.5% or \$9,000.00. Mr. Gleason noted that the FEMA check will not get here until sometime in the summer months.

**ITEM #2** – Mark R. Gilchrist, Assessor/Building Inspector explained to the Council that he wanted to discuss the revaluation program which is ongoing in the City. Mr. Gilchrist stated that the impact notices went in the mail on Wednesday, February 29<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Gilchrist noted that the total assessed value in the City for July 2011 was \$545,000,000.00. After the revaluation the City's assessed value will be \$721,000,000.00. The taxable assessment went from \$247,000,000.00 to approximately \$407,000,000.00. As a result of the taxable assessment going up so high you can see on the handout what the tax rates were. The City was \$15.79, if these new assessments had been in place for this past January tax bill the tax rate would have been \$9.58. The City will use the new \$9.58 to figure out the County and School tax amounts. On page two the report shows the shift in tax dollars. There were 253 residential properties that the taxes went up over \$600.00. That makes up 11% of the residences. On the other end of the scale 5 ½ % or 130 residential properties their taxes went down \$600.00 or more. Additionally, 20% of the residences were plus or minus \$100.00. As expected there was some shift from commercial properties to residential properties. The shift turns out to be only 2.88%. Every residence's taxes went up due to this shift without doing anything else. There was also a shift from lower valued properties to higher valued properties. 50% of the residences their tax dollars went up or down 10%, 25% of the residences their taxes went up 25%, 10% went up 25% or more. Prior to the revaluation the residences paid assessed value was 70% of the value of the City now it is 73.47%. The Assessor's Office will have reports for the public on the website and at the J. Leo O'Brien Facility. Everyone's assessment, address, type of property it is, square footage of living area, dollars per square foot, style of house, grade of construction, condition of property and number of baths is all listed.

The back of the books has all of the sales along with the information noted above. This book has every single sale to value the properties. The date of the sale, how big the house is, where it is located and how much was paid for the home. This is all available to the public and on the website. The City has set aside 7 days to have informal hearings with the public. A resident may call, fill out a form and make an appointment. The resident can then tell the City why the assessment is wrong. The City will then review the complaint and will send out another letter stating what was done. The public can then appear before the Board of Assessment and Review in May. Mayor Manning questioned what would happen if a challenge is successful how does that ripple thru the whole process. Mr. Gilchrist responded by saying the total taxable valuation and the total valuation would go down. The tax rate would be affected immediately. The Assessment Roll becomes final in July 2012. Mr. Gilchrist explained that the values of the properties were from July 2011, a cutoff date of sometime is needed. Mayor Manning thanked Mr. Gilchrist for his update.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

**RESOLUTION NO. 8814** – The Council of the City of Watervliet hereby authorizes Hacker Murphy, LLC, David R. Murphy, Esq. of Counsel to effectuate a voluntary settlement and discontinuance of the special proceedings for assessment review regarding the petitioner Saint Gobain Group, 2520 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Waterliet, New York 12189. Before voting Mark Gilchrist, Assessor/Bldg. Inspector explained to the Council that this is a negotiated settlement between the City of Watervliet and Norton Company on their assessment. Yorden Huban, Corporation Counsel also stated that this Resolution deals with future assessments up to 2015. Upon motion of Councilman Foglia, seconded by Councilwoman Fogarty, this Resolution was approved and adopted.

**APPROPRIATIONS AND ACCOUNTING**

**NONE**

Mayor Manning noted that the ambulance revenue has spiked up over what was budgeted for 2011. The approximate amount over budget was \$20,000.00.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

**NONE**

There being no further business to come before the Council a motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bruce A. Hidley  
City Clerk and Clerk to the Council