

January 6, 2014

City Council

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Proceedings by Authority

State of New York  
City of Jamestown                   ss:  
City Council Chambers

A recessed meeting of December 30, 2013 of the City Council of the City of Jamestown, New York was held on Monday, January 6, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present:     Council President Greg Rabb, Council Members, Steve Szwejbka, Tony Dolce, Michael Taylor, Marie Carrubba, Maria Jones, Paul Whitford, Kim Ecklund, and George Spitale

Others Present:       Mayor Samuel Teresi, Director of Financial Services/City Clerk James N. Olson, Director of Public Works Jeff Lehman, Deputy Fire Chief Chet Harvey, Corporation Counsel Marilyn Fiore-Lehman, Police Chief/Director of Public Safety Harry Snellings, Director of Youth Services Vickye James, Executive Assistant to the Mayor Matt Hanley, Director of Development Vince DeJoy, City Court Judge John LaMancuso, County Legislator Charles Nazzaro. County Legislator P.J. Wendel, County Legislator David Wilfong, County Legislator Paula DeJoy.

Council President Rabb: Thank you for coming out on this remarkably cold night. As the City Council president for the last two years, I've spent a lot of time listening, tonight I'll speak briefly. Once, while attending a neighborhood picnic in the fourth ward a lady came running up to me saying, "There's the councilman who gets things done" and gave me a big hug. At first, I looked behind me to see who was coming. When I realized she was talking about me, I very humbly asked her to repeat what she'd just said only louder, so everyone on the street could hear and she did. I then replied by saying, "Thank you, but we are a city council who gets things done". And so I want to thank this city council and everyone on it, especially our committee chairs for getting things done. Especially two difficult consensus budgets, working with our mayor and his department heads. Not what I would call "smoke and mirror" budgets like some governments pass, I won't mention who, but real budgets sometimes with real pain in the face of never ending challenges, but our city is better for it. Some of us two years ago came here with "R's" after our names and some came with "D's" after our names, but that gets checked at the door every Monday night when we meet as everyone on this council has always consistently put Jamestown before everything else and I want to thank you all for that. We don't always agree, but that's our strength and that's why we're here. Not to argue pointlessly and endlessly, but to make the strongest case for what we know to be right and again, I thank you for that. My students at the college in my other job often ask, "How do I get an 'A' in your class"? I tell them come to class prepared, ask questions, do your work well and on time and the grade will take care of itself. I'm happy to say that this has been a city council that came to meetings prepared, that asked the hard questions, that did their work well and on time and our city is better for it. I

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once again want to thank you for the privilege of being Jamestown City Council president. Thank you.

Is there any unfinished business Mr. Olson? Any new business? Are there any announcements or comments from other council members?

Councilman Szwejbka: Yes, Mr. President, I'd just like to briefly say thank you. I served the City of Jamestown as a police officer almost 21 years, 8 years as a City Councilman. I love this city. I loved it the day I first came here in '64 with my grandfather he took me to a restaurant on 4th right off of Main. I can't remember the name of it for the life of me, but it had the best apple pie. My grandfather used to walk me around Jamestown and I was awed. We also went to Buffalo. He was a salesman and I didn't like Buffalo much. I'm not sure what it was, but Jamestown had a special place in my heart so it was a true privilege, it was truly a privilege for me to come here. To serve, to move to the city, to serve the city as a police officer, the people, everything I did was for the people. I never took the job any other way. To help somebody, to help the people, an arrest was the last thing. I never wanted to make an arrest. I always wanted to talk to the people; let's compromise, let's do something. I found the same on city council. We work together, I was not easy sometimes, I was very difficult. My dean at the college told me I need some lessons in diplomacy. I think he's right, but I always stood up for my principles and I want to thank the Mayor for the ability to serve on the council. It was a pleasure Mr. Mayor and I enjoyed all the city officials that I worked with. I'll never forget the arguments with Jim Ventura and some of the comments made. I loved serving with Lillian Ney and Mr. McElrath. It was a great group and it's a great group here. And it's a great couple people coming on. Brett's going to do a great job and so will the other person coming on board. Again, all I ask is please, remember the taxpayer I always tried to do that. Sometimes I got my way, sometimes I didn't. But I always, I think I feel good because I stood by my principles. If I felt one way, I believed it was best for the taxpayers, I went with it. But again, thank you. I really appreciate the opportunity to work for the City of Jamestown in both capacities.

Councilman Taylor: If I may, first I'd like to say, it's kind of sad where this is pretty much my last week in Jamestown. I look forward every other Tuesday to getting my eggs Benedict at Liscandro's Restaurant. And prayers to that family for what they're going through with there and the Pub just a landmark for the city and hope they can rebuild quickly. We support them. In addition, just a side note for any animal lovers, if anyone knows anybody that would like to find a home for three lovely cats, please let me know as soon as possible.... These ones are special. I'll try to be as brief as I can. A lot of reflection over 8 years. I hope everybody enjoyed the holidays. Enjoyed Christmas and had a Happy New Year. I just want to address for a moment the honorable Mayor Teresi, his staff, this council. A welcome back to Brent. To my successor, Tamara Dickey. A personal note to Tamara, I apologize, we had our time constraints, we never had the lunch we were going to have. But, to congratulate you again and to let you know that you've told me several times that this was God's will for you to represent the 3<sup>rd</sup> ward. The 3<sup>rd</sup> ward for the City of Jamestown, though it may have the least voter turnout, it has the largest amounts of needs and problems that need to be addressed. As long as you said, you put the Lord

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first and as long as you put the people first. As long as you stand up for them, and you do what's right for them and do what's right with your voice and your heart, you will go far, you will do fine. You're a fine woman and you will be a great council woman and I'm very glad that you will be serving the 3<sup>rd</sup> ward. In addition to that I would really like to which I have not done for a long time, really giving honor to God, who truly, truly is the head of my life. I say that not as a politician trying to reel in religious people, not like entertainers or athletes who say it in terms of competitiveness, but it's very true. And I've had the blessing and the honor to serve for 8 years as the city councilman with the blessings of this community through thick and thin and for that I am very thankful. I bring a blessing to everyone here, from my grandparents former county legislature Lula Taylor and councilman Vivian who mean a lot to many of you in this community, but at the same time in their words, you mean five times as much to them. Between the three of us, we have served in politics in Chautauqua County from 1975 to the present and for the first time in thirty-seven years no one in our family will be representing the people of Chautauqua County. We're very thankful for all you've given all for our family and what you've allowed us to do for you. In 2005, I was the first choice I think of Chuck and Lori Cornell to succeed my grandparents, one of their offices and I was a choice of the Mayor and Matt Handley and Vince DeJoy. I mean, I was young, immature, a free spirit, a loose cannon, somewhat androgenous, a little unbalanced. But, at the same time, they saw my heart and they saw my desire and saw that I could represent and serve the community and I thank you for standing behind me and giving the opportunity. Even if I've given you a reason to maybe regret that decision for 2 to 4 weeks, or maybe a month. At the time, I was working hard as I got into St. John's University in New York City and that's where I was headed. But then I had this opportunity to serve this community and I didn't know what I was going to do. But the final decision came when a good friend and a mentor and one of the most zany and outspoken women whom I've ever met came to me, my good friend Mary Lou Edwards. And she said Michael, if you have anything to give this community if you have anything to say, if you have anything to offer you do it right now while you can because tomorrow is not promised. So she says you could make a living there, you could make a living here, but I think you should stay. So I did stay and I thank Mary Lou for that. And even though the Lord called her to heaven I think about her every day. She continued to be a mentor and a friend. Just to give a little reflection on some of the people that I've served with on this journey, our council president John Calamunci when I came on. Thanks for his support who put me on public safety and housing. Dr. Lillian Ney who became a very good friend who taught me humanity and humility and she taught me how to center my aura. Lynda Albert who taught me how to look at all sides of an issue, when to take the emotion out of politics and how to compromise, another major factor in running for this office was the opportunity to serve with this man, Tony Dolce. Introduced to me by a good friend Rich Carlson at an Expos game in the summer of 1989. Little did I know two months later when I walked into the classroom at Washington Middle School on his very first day as a full teacher, I was in his study hall. From then on, we went to JHS together as a student and teacher. As class president, student organization president, we did almost everything together, most notable where we sat side by side in the audience on television for two episodes of the Jerry Springer Show. We certainly did.

Councilman Dolce: It was different back then

Councilman Taylor: It was getting there. He was the first to try and get his "Jerry Beads". No, just kidding. But also we stood in front of 15,000 strong and sang the Star Spangled Banner at a Chicago Bulls game with all eyes watching and that was pretty amazing. Also, to Mr. McElrath

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a long time principal as I was given the honor to be the one to announce that the new gymnasium was the Jim McElrath arena, or gymnasium rather. Not quite an arena. But I looked forward and never thought that I would be able to serve with those fine men just twelve years later after leaving high school. To Jim Ventura, for his outspokenness, for his zeal, he gave his all to this council and that was an honor. To Steve, who on election night, you and I stood together as only two people that night that were very victorious. And it truly was an honor to work with you and you forever will be and I've said this all along; that you are the upmost expert on public safety. Good luck in all you do in academia and it was an honor to serve with you. To Kim, my homegirl, I probably have talked with you about politics and life more than anyone up here. You are a friend to the end and I love you to the core. There were some times and there were issues and I was warned that by supporting you or being with you could hurt me in ways later on. It didn't matter. Friendship before politics doing what was right based on what I know. I regret nothing. I thank you for your honesty and your hard truths in times others weren't. I love you and I thank you for that. To councilman Rabb, I was the first person when you won that election finally, the charm. To shake your hand and give you a hug and say finally you did it. It was an honor to serve you as well. In spite of ups and downs we've worked hard and I am proud to sit up here with you. I thank you very much. But at the same time (tongue in cheek) I must say this as well, we've been to many functions where you've addressed George Spitale and said how you call him the enforcer. Well, please let the record show that I'm the one who gave him the name of the enforcer, because he enforces his beliefs. Not with a lot of tact, not with a lot of words, but he is the enforcer with his heart. He is the enforcer with his gut, he stands by his convictions and that's why I made him my tag team partner why he and I, together, were the tag team champions of the world for the City of Jamestown. George, I'm going to miss you. To Paul and your beautiful family, thank you for all support earlier on. What's inspiring for me was especially the things you have been through in recent years, that you are able to serve your community like no other. And it's just a blessing and a testament for what you've been through, that we can walk side by side in each of these Christmas parades, Memorial Day parades. You're the one that brought the candy, you're the one who had the outreach. And it's an honor to serve, and I thank you as well. Councilwoman Carruba, if I have any regret at all by not running for re-election, is the fact that we didn't have longer time to serve together. You are a great friend and if I could think of any person in this whole community that was already custom made, ready-made to sit in that seat and serve, it is you. You have done good things before and you will continue and I thank you a lot. And on a personal note, please continue to be a good friend and look out for my mother. To Maria Jones, my associate pastor, and not so distant cousin, through thick and thin you stood by me and I will do right by you through support and prayer. Yesterday was an emotional day of church. It was probably the most emotional day for me personally since the week the glass got shattered a couple years ago, but that's another story. I'm going to do right by you, I'm going to do right by our community and again, like you told me in the same way Mary Lou said years ago "it's your time" you said that yesterday and yes it is and I'm going to do right by it. As great as a mayor as we have, he is only as great and good as the people around him. To Jim and Joe, to Jeff and Marilyn, to the greatest Memorial Day parties ever, I hope I can continue to come back for those. To the rest of the staff in development housing, and all the other departments, who would drop everything at the drop of a dime to help us, for council people and our constituents. You're the ones who make the city run and I thank you very much. For the honor to serve with both Police Chiefs Rader...I look at you sometimes, and I'm just like "you've come a long way" and I thank you. It's been an honor the ups and

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downs I've had in my life, personally, but for your support and the things that I was able to do. And I want police and fire and everyone to know that, no matter what, I hope you'll always remember me not so much for anything bad that may have happened, but for the fact that through it all I stood by your departments even when it wasn't popular, and that the needs of this the community and public safety is always important. And it was very proud and I thank you for all you've done for me and help you've given through good and bad times I'll always be thankful. I'll shorten some of this now I didn't think all these people would be here as it's just a midterm and... To the mayor and his family there were times that you acted as a friend, at times as a father when you said you were not being a father and there were times when you had to walk a fine line whether it was for political reasons or social reasons or for the good of the city. I never really fully understood those things, but age and maturity, I understand that. Sam, you're a good man, ok? You really are a good man and you're a great mayor. And proof of that is this, when I think of the '07 election especially. I think in terms of when, I would talk to people that would say, "Sam's no good", or "we need to get him the hell out of there" or "I'm going to write this check to bounce him out of office" and "I'm going do this or that alright". In spite of it all, the same people that said even admitted that, "when I get behind that curtain, no one could control what I could do and I'm going to support him and I guess he's best for business and the best for the city. So, it's allowed you to come back again and again and again. And that being said, to the point where there's nobody at all the last time around, ultimately. It's just a testament to who you are and what you've done for the city. I thank you for everything that you've done. I would just like to say in closing, finally..... I just want to give some final thoughts to this community and to the council. All my life, I was guided by the last three and a half minutes of Martin Luther King's speech. He talks about being a leader through following others and he talks about how he wants to be remembered when he dies, as a drum major for justice, a drum major for speed, not speed, but for righteousness, and a drum major for peace and many other things. I used to live my life by that, but you see, there were times when I got away from that and I got away from that salvation and my path in life and that's when things kind of got haywire in my personal life. Now, the mistakes I have made, I've owned up to them. I own those mistakes. I own for what happened during those days and those months. I own those personally, but I also own the successes that not that I did on my own, but the successes that we as a council and we as a community have done together. Whether this was implementing enhancements for the parks and the youth, initiating ways for the constituents for this community. Better ways to take place. Protecting the elderly against aggressive neighbors, stating the community to fight for the youth. Raising money for cancer, AIDS, other causes, different programs with the things that have arisen over the years. Marches against bullying, marches against suicide. Supplying the money the funds necessary to revitalize this community. These are just small matters, small measures that all of us have done together and that we all own together as a community, as a city council, as city workers, the city of Jamestown, everybody does anyway, but as long as everybody keeps the community number one in their hearts. Look for better ways in things for the youth. Look for ways to expand the youth bureau, the youth programs, to consolidate some of these things together, find ways to enhance working together, get everybody more involved. We do it anyway, but we could always do a little bit better, The things I'm most proud of aside from being one of the three grandchildren others being Shaquille and Claudine to say that they are a grandchild of Vivian and Lula Taylor. I am proud of the blessing that I have been given the opportunity to serve as city councilman for the City of Jamestown. I leave now as I've given everything that I knew to give and have. I don't think I could personally give any more. That's

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why it's necessary for me to say "so long, hometown" and walk away for a little while. I thank you for everything that you've given me for thirty seven years of my life. And I promise that I'm going to come back here and I'm going to come back with ten times more resources, ten times more than you've given me, I'm going to give back and I'm going to give back to this community. I thank you for your time, I truly love you all from the bottom of my heart and I love the city of Jamestown and I thank you.

Councilman Dolce: Just briefly as a senior member of the council, I was going to say some nice things about you, but you said them already. You took my time up. It will be strange to have new neighbors to my right and my left. I just want to wish Steve all the best, it's been great working with you we go back a long way from our time running a lot of races and doing a lot of things in the community and we'll see you in church every week I'm sure so you'll be around. Michael, I wish you the best. We do go back a long way back to Washington Middle School in 1989 I think it was you were sitting in class and Jamestown High School. All the fun times we had and all the trips we took for school trips and so forth. It's been a pleasure working with you, it's been interesting at times and we've had fun. I wish you all the best in your endeavors in moving out of the community and don't be a stranger, come back and say hi to us. We thank you for the service that you have given to our community.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

James N. Olson, Director of Financial  
Services/City Clerk