

## **No Tax Increase for City of Watervliet Residents in 2023**

City of Watervliet Mayor Charles Patricelli announced at the most recent City Council Meeting (Nov. 17) that city residents, per the 2023 budget proposal, will not have their taxes increased for the second year in a row.

“As 2022 comes to a close, the City Council understands the continued financial stress homeowners are under because of inflation,” Mayor Patricelli said. “There were many things that we accomplished during this past year, several enhancements to our parks, over 8,300 linear feet (more than 1.5 miles) of streets paved and several improvements being made to City Hall (new windows, soffit, and fascia as well as a new boiler system). Looking forward to 2023, this momentum will continue with several projects planned to again improve the city and save taxpayers money.

“We expect 2023 will be another productive year and with that, it is with great pride that the City Council, Barb Diamond, Chris Daus and I, General Manager, Joe LaCivita and Director of Finance, Amanda Austin, are ecstatic to announce that the 2023 proposed budget has no increase in tax rate for the second year in a row,” Mayor Patricelli added.

Projects planned for 2023 include:

- The City of Watervliet Filtration Plant will receive additional upgrades, which started this year with security fencing placed around the property.
- The city is preparing to commence with Phase I of the of the combined sewer outflow separation, which when completed, will save taxpayers \$60,000-to-\$70,000 in annual fees paid to Albany County for storm water treatment.
- The city street paving program will continue in the spring and summer of 2023 and will include new ADA-approved curbs and improvements to city alleyways. In 2021, the city developed an analysis of city streets and prioritized each street as to the level of need. This replaced the “who-complained-the-most” method. In doing so, we feel we’re better able to properly pave the most needed streets in a fair and defensible method.
- With the assistance of Equinox, and a grant, the city will add a Domestic Violence Detective to the police force, increasing the number of officers on the force to 26.

- The city will continue to maintain the same level of fantastic support for the fire department and DPW department while adding two positions, an events coordinator and program manager.

“For the past several weeks, the council reviewed the budgets of each department to determine how best to maintain the services and keep the residents in mind of any tax burden on them,” Mayor Patricelli said. “It was extremely difficult to maintain our line items within budget because of inflation climbing at record levels. Some line items we have no control over such as insurance rates, electricity, and gasoline. Again, we had to make difficult decisions, but we made the best decisions for city residents.

“We’ve accomplished so much here in the city, with little to no expense to the residents, because of the generous support of others. The donation we received from Scott Earl and Mark Angona for the creation of our splash pad - something that this city hasn’t seen in our lifetime - is a credit to the trust and capability of our administration. We’re excited about the year ahead, and the city’s future, now that we have stabilized the city’s finances and have rebuilt the city’s general fund, all without increasing taxes.”