



## THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE NEW YORK

### PUBLIC HEARING 2011 BUDGET

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**Monday, November 1, 2010**

**6:00 pm**

**City Hall**

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**Joe Rich, 91 Gerald Drive-** Mr. Chairman, the budget proposal to eliminate garbage pickup for housing units up to four or more is not a good idea, to say the least. The second ward would suffer more than any other ward with this strange proposal. The vast majority of second ward residents would be harmed. Those residents who see their rents increased or their fees increased at least with property taxes one often gets an income tax deduction. But there is no income tax deduction for increased rents. I believe our seniors and low-income folks will be forced to take the hit for this strange proposal. Those folks are the least able to afford increases. Also, the city will have to enforce private garbage pickups to avoid more litter and more rats. The city has no plans to hire more inspectors, so enforcement is problematic. Collecting fines will increase our legal costs, which are already far too high. Private carter fees are in part related to density of customers. There is currently not much competition in the private garbage collection field. Our city will become dirtier, more rat-infested and less appealing to businesses and people considering relocating to our city. Other cuts in the proposed budget are less hurtful for example, other cuts that I propose in the budget rather, are less hurtful. This is my suggestion, instead of doing what you are thinking of doing. In 1988, there were two full-time city attorneys. In 2009, the number was increased to three. I suggest you return to two attorneys, which is the standard for cities our size. We also contract out many legal services to local firms—ask those firms to reduce their billing rates. If they refuse, seek other attorneys and or law firms that will take a lower rate. Perhaps we can ask our police and fire unions to agree to wage freezes now to protect their youngest members from future layoffs. If shown the financial difficulty of their generous employer, perhaps the unions can convince their membership to help our city. If a private employer's profits are not fair, private employees raises are problematic. It is a tragedy that our city has been given \$13,000,000 for a new Hoffman Street bridge and \$3.8 million for new doors and windows at our train station, instead of money to save city jobs and services. A new bridge and renovated train station are good ideas—no one can say they are not, but should await the concern of better economic times. Services to our residents and current employees of the city deserve the government first, before bridges and doors and windows. Thank you for your attention.

**Mark Rafael, President of River Management, 297 Mill Street-** I own and manage over 50 investment properties in the City of Poughkeepsie, 80% of which are non-homestead properties. The proposal to eliminate garbage collection and disproportionately raise the taxes for non-homestead properties 36% higher than non-homestead properties is unfair and discriminatory towards investment property owners in Poughkeepsie, who are already shouldering the tax burden in Poughkeepsie. The proposal will add a greater burden to property tax owners, who in the past few years, have seen a drop in rental income, tenants who are defaulting because of the poor economic climate, and an increase in expenses including taxes and utilities. This will only lead to greater mortgage defaults and foreclosures. I urge the Common Council not to eliminate garbage collection to non-homestead properties.

**Theresa Rotunno, 160 Academy Street, Executive Towers-** I am speaking for our residents as President of the Board of Directors, as well as for myself personally. I am here tonight to urge all of you again to vote down the proposal to eliminate garbage pickup service to our building and many like it. Adding the cost of private hauling to our taxes would be an incredible financial burden to our residents, both owners and renters. Contrary to the opinion of some, we are not rich. Are we comfortable? Yes. Because we did what so many Americans probably should have—we bought what we could afford. We live in studios and one and two-bedroom apartments. Anyone passing by this fall and seeing construction vehicles repairing our terraces knows we maintain our property. Executive Towers is an asset to the City of Poughkeepsie. To lessen our appeal and devalue our building by making it financially impossible to live there would be a mistake. We are not asking for favors or any other extras not provided to other city residents. We are simply asking for what everyone gets—services for our taxes. Our taxes that are calculated at a percentage high above single-family homes. It is unconscionable to ask us to pay this rate, and then be denied services. We just expect to be treated fairly. Thank you for your time and your attention.

**Eileen Smith-Brooks, Executive Towers-** Like you, the board has worked hard to keep expenses down over the years, so we certainly appreciate what you are going through. But I would ask, just for myself, I am only speaking for myself, that you would consider to continue the garbage pickup at Executive Towers. As stated, we are really just a normal, simple building—studios, one-bedrooms. However, there are 136 apartments in the building, and these apartments are primarily occupied by one person. The garbage is compacted, so if you can compare that to what 136 single-family homes with typically three to four people would be generating, our garbage is really a lesser amount. We are definitely not a commercial enterprise. We are certainly not a profit organization. We are a home to 136 apartments, but 85% of those actually only owner-occupied, there are just a few rentals in that building, all tax-payers. We really are 136 family units under a single roof. I thank you very much.

**Diane Duplessis, 160 Academy Street, Executive Towers-** May I please share with the councilmen, the 108 signatures to vote no on the proposal of eliminating garbage collection in our building. There seems to be a problem here, and I do not understand where it lies. Has our building been zoned incorrectly? And if so, should this be corrected and not compound the issue by being taxed at a higher rate, loss of service, and to

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continue to be taxed after that loss. And we can look forward to a property increase in 2011. Where is the equality and justice in your proposal? I thank you for your time.

**Ken Stickle, Catharine Street-** I came to the last meeting, and I will state it again: If you take away the garbage pickup, you are going to make the City of Poughkeepsie a slum. There is no way of putting it. Look at Main Street on the weekends. I keep saying I wish the Council would start down on lower Main Street when you leave here and drive all the way up to the Arlington district. Look at the garbage laying around. This city has approximately, I believe, 27% non-profit buildings that is not being taxed. I watch organizations come out of their front door and use the waste containers on Main Street. If the Council would like to find out who they are, I will speak about it later. The problem is we give, we give, we give, yes, but it is not fair to take and punish somebody who has been investing in this city. We are going to turn around, we are going to drive the new investor, who comes in here to buy a four-unit building, who is trying to fix it up, and we are going to say you got to pay a higher rate. You are going to drive the little contractors out of business as well as the little investors that come into the city. We need to find other ways of cutting the budget, yes. You know what, I keep saying to everybody. I said it to the school board and I will say it to the Common Council: If you are going to cut, make it a cut across the board. I do not care who gets cut, everybody gets cut. You know what, there is no reason for a tax increase of 8%. If you have to, cut out a few of the programs. Go after the non-profits and let them pay for their own garbage pickups. Let them pay for a few of the special things that the city gives them. I do not care anymore. I have been squeezed every year, and I own a one-family house, but I do a lot of work for the city for property owners. And let me tell you something, the fifth ward knows, our councilwoman from the fifth ward knows, how much garbage is dumped over in her ward. Let me tell you something, her ward will be the worst ward in the entire, out of every eight, hers will be the worst. We will go back to seeing the 80's again where we have the corner lots filled with tires, couches, T.V.'s, right on down the line. It will happen again, and it will not only happen in her ward, it will happen in the eighth ward, it will happen in the first, second, third, fourth and fifth, right on down the line. We have to do something about this. So, all I know is I think it is cut it across the board, make everybody suffer a little bit, and you know what, you do not have to raise taxes and you do not have to cut out the garbage.

**Rose Rudden, 55 Taylor Avenue-** Thank you for letting me speak, this is my first time, so forgive me if I make any mistakes in your procedure. I am speaking personally as a landlord on 55 Taylor Avenue and my family who has lived on Taylor Avenue, and we are in the process right now of purchasing a four-family and my sister presently owns a four-family. Most of you who know Taylor Avenue, it is a residential street. It is not a commercial street at all. I think there is one business that has been there for a long period of time. I think that I absolutely oppose the garbage elimination of four-family homes. And the three or four people who spoke before me, I can ditto everything that they have said. I believe everything that they said is actually what will happen in the city. Basically I can tell you that my family has about 14 apartments. We rent among five or six different houses. We rent mainly to singles, young families with children. They are usually long-term rentals, they usually do not leave us until they buy their first homes in the City of Poughkeepsie. We keep our rents low so that we can attract people without really high-paying jobs, but two wage earners that can maybe buy a one-family home in a few years.

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They can save money and still have a decent place to live. Our utilities, our taxes, our upkeep has really, just like the gentleman said, we have seen lower rents, and just to pay our properties, it seems more difficult than ever before. What I would say, I am concerned about the enforcement of the fines. Right now I think that when you drive up any city street and it is a collection day, you know enforce whether the cans are out whether they are there, what type of bags that they are in now, I do not know how you will enforce that with different carting services, with different schedules for the city. I am concerned for how the streets will look. With the Walkway, I think we just had an article that over 700,000 people have come to our city in the past year. These are people that will notice park, what the city looks like, so I am concerned about that. My suggestion for increasing revenue would be maybe, like the gentleman before me, maybe have the garbage pickup once a week instead of twice a week. I know personally, that I could have garbage pickup once a week, that I could make that work. So maybe that is a consideration, that instead of having garbage pickup twice a week, you have it once a week for everyone, and that would maybe decrease the costs. Or maybe find a way to attract more businesses in the area to leverage off of those 700,000 people to increase some revenue. Thank you.

**Tony Brewer, 29 Taylor Avenue-** I own a four-family at 29 Taylor Avenue. Basically I can say that I agree with most of what has been said tonight. The few points I just want to reiterate were I have had this property since 1985. It is primarily a property I rent to single people and young families with small children. We have tried to keep the rents reasonable. The elimination of the collection of garbage will increase my expenses which will also impact the rents of the property, and basically I think this proposal is something that is not good for the city. I think, what has been reiterated before, maybe a different approach with reducing the garbage pickup to once a week, something that I certainly can accommodate. I think an across the board cut in services were everyone is impacted feels like a more fairer approach than singling out landlords and property owners with four or more dwellings. I have heard a lot tonight that I can identify with. I think we do have to tighten our belts, I think we do have to do something, but it should be an approach that is fair where everyone is participating and sort of helping to reduce the costs. Again, I hope the city reconsiders the attraction of more businesses. My property being especially close to the Walkway, as my sister had mentioned previously, I am concerned about the way the city looks and it is important to keep it clean and neat. I think this proposal should be voted down. Thank you.

**Mark Pastreich, 249 Main Street-** I think we should go to the once a week thing, and at the worst, people will have to buy one more pail or something like that. But for them to pay for their own garbage would make a much messier city. I also believe that it is pulling one thread out of a budget, and maybe there should be some kind of a whistleblower on a demi-scale that if anybody sees something that can be saved in the city should get rewarded, even though we are a very small city, on the same way that whistleblowers get paid a percentage of what they can save. Maybe you can save \$20,000 or \$30,000 this way. And yes, whatever the percentage, I think it is 10 or 15% for the first year, that they give it to that person who really establishes and improves the saving, and that may keep it. But you cannot pull one thread out of the budget which is the garbage, and put it on the backs of the least of the affordable people which are the one to four-family homes. Thank you.

**Constantine Kazolias, 47 Noxon Street-** I live in a single-family house but I am not one of those wealthy people. First of all and foremost, I want to congratulate the presentation that was made this evening by Assessor, DiMarco. I found it very enlightening. We are only talking about 5% of the properties in the City of Poughkeepsie under that one category, 401 or which ever it is, 4-11 my mistake, the non-homestead. Also, let's keep in mind that 98% of the properties in Poughkeepsie are off the tax rolls. I will say this about 160 Academy Street, when they were doing the homestead and all like that, I think from my information, they had a chance to opt in as a homestead instead of non-homestead. So in other words, let's look at the leadership down there, but I am not interested, I almost moved there myself just to let you know. As far as the not for profits which bugs me a lot, one of the head directors makes close to \$100,000 in these not for profits. A lot of these are under the 4-11 properties, four or more. And you know who picks up the subsidies? The tax payer does. Let's talk about 4-11. There are other cities, like Kingston, Newburgh, Beacon, Middletown, I do not know about Peekskill and all like that, all the 4-11's they are not picked up by the municipalities. Therefore, why should we be separated, discriminated against, why should we pick up the 4-11's when the surrounding municipalities are being picked up by private collection. All 4-11 properties are income producing properties, which the rents can be increased to cover the expenses. He is getting short staffed. Then again another question is how many of these 4-11 properties are section 8 when they only pay 25% of their income? These not for profits, it would be interesting to know. I am just asking because I say follow the money and that is what I am doing. How many of these 4-11 properties have pilots, which is a fraction of what they would pay, many of these do not pay school taxes. They fall in the non-homestead people as far as I am concerned. I am going to say something here, there was a black cloud hanging over this garbage, my brother said it 50 years ago, the problem is going to be with the municipalities and the garbage. It is easy to say pick up the garbage once a week, listening to the previous speakers, it just makes a good idea. But still you do not know your tax fees will probably be the same. So let's look at it whether you pick it up twice a week, or you pick it up once a week, the tipping fee is going to go up. Mark my words, they are going to go up because the contract runs out and this way you are going to look at an increase. Let's talk about what is coming down the pipe. The New York State's cutback was what, 50% of the State Aid, and the state is running into a deficit in the next three to four years which means the city can expect nothing. As far as I am concerned, speaking as a lifelong citizen of Poughkeepsie, everybody is getting laid off. Let's tell it like it is because there are no jobs out there. Let's look down the pipe.

**Roberta Roy, 160 Academy-** My son owns some property on Hooker Avenue. My Son is a small businessman, and I really do not know what a non-homestead property is. Can somebody define it for me? (Chairman Klein explained that this time was for public comment not Q and A and the Chamberlain provided materials). If non-homestead property includes small businesses, they are struggling, believe me, to survive. They do not need to have their, more pressure put on them. I also feel that they should not drop the garbage pickup anyplace in the city. I think they should continue to do that wherever throughout the town. My real question is, how is it that you are lowering the overall tax rate and making everybody so uncomfortable? So I guess I have a lot of questions. I just do not understand. It says there is a decrease in 2.09% on the overall tax rate-- is that accurate? I did not realize that being five minutes late made it impossible for me to make

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a point that was clear. And I do not know what non-homestead is and I am concerned that you would cut taxes overall by pressuring people who need more support than you would provide them if you would take away garbage collection, if you raise the rates on taxis \$5 minimum. What I would suggest is you do not drop the tax rate overall, that you keep the services all in place, and you charge every visitor \$1 to go up the stairs or whatever to go over the Walkway. You would have \$700,000 and life would be a lot better.

**Ken Levinson, 24 Garfield Place-** I know it is a very difficult decision, we are all trying to cut costs and try to preserve things. I certainly appreciate all the effort that the Common Council, the mayor and the staff and all the people who have gotten behind. I would like to tell you thank you very much for not cutting the garbage in my house. I appreciate it. Having said that, what makes this city a great place is the diversity of the citizens. We have got African Americans, we have got Mexicans, we have got Hispanics, we have got students, we have got young people, we have old, we have got Italians, we have got Polish, we have got Jewish, a tremendous spectrum, as seen on the Common Council and as seen in the audience here today. It is really important that everyone is treated equally. Now when you look at garbage pickup and you decide that certain properties, non-homestead let's call them, residences where people live do not get a certain that other people do get—I call that discrimination. There are a higher percentage of African Americans, Hispanics, students, working class, living in rental properties than living in single family homes. They deserve the same services that single-family residences deserve. I think it is discriminatory when you single out a particular class of individual who does not get a service that someone else does get. What is ironic here is, we are raising the taxes for the 4-11 non-homestead property, so they are paying more money but they are getting less services. I would suggest that this is probably a legal challenge. In Nassau County when the homestead and non-homestead first came to being in 1981, the presumption was that the non-homestead properties used much more services than residential properties (homestead). Non-homestead properties would pay a slightly higher tax rate because of their increased services. That is what is happening here. The non-homestead are paying a higher tax rate because the reassessed values have gone down disproportionately as the Assessor said, so they are paying a higher tax rate than they were last year while basic services such as garbage pickup are being taken away. This is blatantly unfair and double taxation. I would like to tell you that a lot of the people here today in the City of Poughkeepsie vote. They may not own, but they rent, they are good citizens, they hold jobs, they employ people, they work, they have families, they have kids like you and I. I have heard someone say, well it is only \$10 or \$15 a month for them to pick up garbage. That may be the case, but how would each of you like to pay \$10 a month out of your pocket for garbage pickup when you do not have to, but you are proposing that some of the citizens of Poughkeepsie do need to do that. That is not fair. I would propose to the Common Council that this city is much more densely populated than Middletown and Kingston and Beacon. I would wonder what New York City, Yonkers, New Rochelle would look like if you stopped picking up garbage in multi-family properties. Do you want Poughkeepsie to look like that, with no garbage pickup? Very bad idea. I urge each of the Common Council people today to understand that if you vote in favor of this proposal, there are going to be a lot of people out there that are not going to want to support you in the coming election. Because there are an awful lot of people that are dependent on garbage pickup, and these folks vote, and I would suggest that if somebody runs against you and says, you voted to get rid of my garbage, and

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someone does not, that can be a real battle. So I ask you to do that as well. In conclusion, there are other solutions. You can spread garbage pickup everybody evenly across the board. I have put in your mail boxes two weeks ago a suggestion that asked to raise revenue for certain kinds of garbage pickup--commercial entities with front loaders. That is the bulk of the tipping fees, it is quantifiable, you know exactly what it is, and it would be a lot less money than if they went to royal or waste management. So there are other ways to equalize things and not pit certain categories of citizens against others. Thanks very much for your time.

**Kevin Stevenson, 122 Academy Street-** August 31, I have just moved here. I think this is a beautiful place to live, it is gorgeous up here. I am here to express my opinion about what we are dealing with, this issue. I believe that there are ways to cut the budget or increase revenue. We just have to use fair judgment as to where to cut or where to increase. A lot has been said about what we should do and I think we should consider where to cut, where to add or where to take away. It just takes using wisdom as to what you are going to do. Definitely as far as making renters pay for garbage disposal and not charging everybody else, is unfair. In this present economic climate, anything as we know not only locally but nationally, that is done where it causes a ruckus, causes such a problem, everybody is going to be affected by it. We are, you are, and we just need to use careful consideration here about what we are going to do. I am definitely against the garbage pickup, the charging of, splitting it, or charging one group and not the other. Like I said, as far as the budget, it just takes some fair judgment and careful wisdom about what we are going to do. Thank you.

**Lisat Munslat, 19 South Hamilton Street-** I want to present the signatures of all the tenants in the building at 19 South Hamilton Street opposing the garbage elimination pickup. I am also a renter at 17 South Hamilton Street, which is right next door. I rent commercial property. I relocated my business from Yonkers, been in Poughkeepsie for the past ten months, almost a year, and I love it. My business is picking up and I do not think it is fair. If this proposal goes through, I will be hit twice. 19 South Hamilton and 17 South Hamilton, and I do not think it is fair. Thank you.

**Betty Chaplan-** Mostly you are all new on this council. I want you to realize that every year the sanitation department is the one who gets the boot. You would think that this is the only department in this city to always get cut somehow. Now it is the garbage that they want to cut down, they will not need so many people in sanitation. Every year, the same thing, we have to go through the budget and everybody has to cut sanitation somehow. We got other departments in here you know.

**Shawna Horton, 171 Manson Street-** I just moved there. It is my second month there, and I think it is just absolutely crazy because just coming out of public housing and this is my first apartment in 20 years. My husband works very hard and my landlord is a great landlord, and for him to own several properties here in Poughkeepsie, I think he is a wonderful landlord, but he is going to have to do what he has to do when it comes down on him, he is going to have to raise our rent. We are paying nice rent, the house is beautiful, I love it. I cannot just see it, coming out of New York City, moving up here to this beautiful area, and me, I love to keep the neighborhood clean. What is going to happen when people are not getting their garbage picked up? It is going to be so crazy. I

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am from Brooklyn, I know what it looked like down there. I have been through Harlem, I have seen the rats, and I do not want to see that happen here in Poughkeepsie. It is a beautiful neighborhood, we have the garden there in the square, where you can get fresh fruits and vegetables there. I want to keep it that way, and I tell you to get this off the table. Thank you.

**James Bergran, 10 and 16 Holmes Street-** These are one-bedroom apartments, so effectively I am talking about eight people. I would like you to have a look at the taxes I have paid. In 2006 city taxes for these two buildings was \$5,156. This year the taxes I am paying for these two buildings are \$9,062. That is an 84% increase in four years. I ask you, what is increasing? I do not see an increase in services. I do not see any new services or better services. What is increasing is overhead. The city has gotten fat. What I am saying is what you need to do I think the focus is wrong here. Eliminating this service—if you eliminate the service, you follow that logic, you keep eliminating services to balance the budget, you will have no services to offer, just overhead, and the city will die. I also question the legality of what is going on here. You are proposing to eliminate \$400,000 worth of costs. I think that savings ought to go to the people from whom you are eliminating the service. We are the ones who are paying for it. We do not play a shell game, and that is what it is—a shell game here. If you are going to give us some savings, give it back to the people from whom you are taking the service. My tenants have been advised that their rents are going to go up if this passes. I am going to pass this directly through. My rents are already very high. Speaking on behalf of my eight tenants, I strongly object to what is being proposed here. I also question whether or not you have analyzed other alternatives. Cutting administrative and support jobs, cutting salaries across the board, cutting work hours, work days, work weeks, consolidating tasks, becoming more efficient. It was suggested earlier that you have one trash pickup per week rather than two. My buildings could easily accommodate that. You are not going to have anymore trash—trash is not going to accumulate. That could easily be accomplished. There is one more thing I want to caution you on, and that is how will you possibly implement this? The large, multi-story buildings are easy to identify, but I will challenge you—I think it was mentioned that there are over 340 qualifying locations. I will say that at least 200, maybe even more, are buildings that you cannot identify as four-family. They look like two-family. They look like single-family. They are sandwiched in among all the other single-family dwellings. You cannot identify them. What you will have to do, if you intend to implement this thing, is you are going to have to paint the sidewalks, put a big “X” on the building, or do something that says “no, do not pick trash up at this building.” I am serious, this is a real problem. If you look at my buildings, they look like two-family dwellings, but they are four families in them because their entrances are in the rear. You have got that problem throughout the city. It is a major implementation problem.

**James Sams, 160 Academy Street-** I have been pretty much discriminated my whole life. I never thought it would come down to just garbage. There are a lot of people on 160 who are on budgets, and I do not see how you are taking care of 100 people, we are one stop. It is not like you are stopping at 100 houses. You do not need a whole bunch of manpower or you are wasting a lot of fuel. You are coming to one stop, you are taking care of 100 people. Fifteen years ago I made about three times what I made fifteen years ago, but fifteen years ago it seemed like my money stretched longer when I made less.

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We are just getting taxed, we are getting hit with fees and surcharges. New York is a place I want to stay and I do not want to have to move down south. A lot of people are forced to move down south because they just cannot afford to live up here anymore. The middle class is becoming poor. There is going to be poor and rich. We have to fight so people can at least have a dream if they become middle class they can have some. But now the middle class is just a place to struggle. This garbage thing is just not right. Like I have said, I have been discriminated for years, never been in trouble, just because of the color of my skin. I have a nice car and I worked my whole life—get pulled over all the time by the cops. This garbage thing, I do not know when it is all going to end.

**Arnold Baretta, 116 Forbes Street-** I am a senior citizen single-family homeowner. You have a very difficult task, but I would like to compliment the mayor on proposing a budget that really does not raise taxes for senior citizens who own single-family homes, for middle class citizens who do not own single-family homes. If you are going to restore and certainly hope you do not do it, if you are going to restore \$400,000 to the budget, to take care of these 4-11 commercial properties. That is exactly what you are going to do. You are going to raise taxes on the 65% of the people who pay the bulk of the taxes. Now if you can somehow find the \$400,000 somewhere else in the budget. I understand where you are coming from because I sat in your position there. It is very difficult to do. \$400,000 is a lot of money and it is going to have an impact on as they said on the budget, and it is going to affect your senior citizens, your middle class single-family homeowners. You have to remember, your senior citizens have not received a social security cost of adjustment in, this will be the second year. The State of New York and the governor have taken away the Star Rebate that was given to senior citizens. All of these things add up. If you keep raising taxes on single-family homes, the senior citizens, and here I am talking as a senior citizen, the senior citizens are going to be the ones that are affected the most. You have a very difficult decision, but do not put \$400,000 back into the budget because that would be a disaster to the rest of the residents of this city.

**Todd Simms, 42 Canon Street-** I am here to discuss as a landlord and as a small business owner. I have talked to some of you individually about this issue. Just obviously taking the other end of it, as a small business owner in this economic climate, from the federal level, to the state level, to the city level, everyone is taking their hits, obviously. To pass another burden onto the small business owner is going to be extreme and is going to be difficult. As some other people alluded to, attracting new business to the city, keeping the businesses that are here, in this environment is that much more difficult with yet just another burden. As I look across at a very smart, educated council, some of which are business owners, they can relate to that. It is not a republican issue, it is not a democrat issue, it is not an independent, it is just obviously you are working with a budget, doing the best you can, but again it will be another hit on the small business owner. Thank you for your time.

**Bruce Dorris, 41 Wilson Boulevard-** I am also vice president of the CSCA union. Like I said two weeks ago, bar none, the best service the City of Poughkeepsie has is the trash pickup. These guys work all hours in every climate, whether it is hot, 90 degrees, 95, cold, they are out there five days a week picking up trash. I just want to also say that not only do they pick up the trash, but they also pick up the leaves, they also plow our snow. That is why we need all of our garbage men. They just don't pick up garbage. They do a

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lot of other tasks in the City of Poughkeepsie, so we need every one of them. Also, they City said that you are going to save \$400,000. I would like to address that issue in saying I think that is a high figure. I have the print out of the truck that does the toters in the apartment complexes, and that whole truck will just generate on the 4-11's the complexes with the big dumpsters, the six charters, \$210,000. That is it. That is my figure. The rest are the 287 apartments that are considered four-dwellings, five-dwellings, things like that. It is a far stretch to think that those apartments are going to generate \$200,000 worth of garbage. I believe, prove me if I am wrong, show me your figures, I'll show you mine, that is probably closer to \$300,000 or lower. We talked about savings across the board. In the past I have been asked to help save the city money and look for savings. I think I have done it pretty good in the last two to three years. We have consolidated services, we have taken in extra contracts, we have taken in...Sanitation does a lot of this. Sanitation does the violations now, which brings in well over \$100,000 in violations that was contracted out. Now this year we took it in, in the last year, two and a half years, and we are generating revenue there. That is what the mayor is saying when he says generate revenue. We also saved the city \$250,000 on grass cutting—sanitation helps us do that. We have helped the city and in the past I have helped consolidate services. Looking at the budget this year, I have only had it for a week or so, Ralph had a savings of \$50,000-\$60,000 already. I was listening to him in the budget and he picked it up right away. I knew it and I was going to present it to Ralph or the council. I look at this budget, and I will save you \$100,000 right away. Now you say that is chump change, but \$100,000 is a lot of money so we can save on other avenues. You just have to ask the right people, ask for help, and just think out of the box. Also, if you get rid of garbage, I just want to say in closing, if we get rid of garbage, and the city manager passed out a memorandum today about charges, and just \$10, if you were to charge \$10 for every single-family house, and I am not advocating this, I am just saying if you want to generate revenue, if you charge just \$10...Royal is charging \$30 for a single household. If you just charge \$10, you will raise several hundred thousand dollars. I am just saying, if you get rid of garbage, you are potentially getting rid of the revenue of up to \$3 million. It is a whole lot cheaper doing it in house than out of house. Whole lot cheaper. Royal is in business to make money—that is their job. We could do it cheaper, we could do it a lot better, and a lot more efficient. One gentleman over here said how are you going to find out what household? Some households unfortunately are going to sneak it over and take it someplace else, sneak it, drop it in the park. We are constantly picking up trash in the park. That is illegal. I just want to say that our garbage department is the best, bar none. Cops and fire always say they are the finest and bravest, I just want to say our sanitation guys are the strongest—they are the best, bar none, pound for pound, they are the best employees in the City of Poughkeepsie. I have told management this all the time. Pound for pound, dollar for dollar, you get more bang out of your buck right there. I urge you to look closer in the budget and find savings. If you need some help, I will help you. Thank you.

**Roger Christenfeld, 103 South Hamilton Street-** I did not mean to say anything. I came here to listen, but I am compelled to make just one comment. In listening, I have heard very powerful arguments on enlightened self-interest. As might be predicted, people who live in condominiums and people who rent and landlords and business owners would not like to pay more for garbage. I have heard from single-family dwellers who think that maybe it is quite a good idea for people who rent to pay more. I think the city could do very well if everybody operated on the basis of enlightened self-interest. However, there

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is another principle of commenting of the concern for the city as a whole, of concern for one's neighbor. I am a single-family house holder. I do not have any four-unit rental properties nor any business in the city, and yet, there is something within me that recoils at something which is promoted as a tax saving but which is in fact passing this tax along to those who can least afford to pay it. This is a thinly disguised regressive tax on people who rent in this city that this garbage fee will very quickly be passed down to them. I feel that there is something wrong with this on a strictly cold-blooded political basis. You may easily calculate, there are more voters who live in single-family houses than people who live in condominiums and rent. I can tell you however, that my own feeling as a single-family house owner, my feeling of shared community with everyone who lives here. My feeling of revulsion at a regressive tax is not unique to me and it is something that you might want to consider. Thank you.

**Bruce Finlasen, 1036 Druville Road, Brewster, NY-** I agree with basically everybody. What I would like to say is you all have individual homes, probably most of you have fixed incomes. You run the city like you would your own homes. Since you cannot get anymore money coming into your homes, you would start cutting things out. If you start cutting things out, simple thing is cablevision, example. You cut that way back, you expect to pay more for less. I am my own apartment house owner. I will pass it along. My tenants will have less money, will be able to spend less money in the city—it is the domino theory. You are doing no good by jacking everything up. Somebody earlier said there were two lawyers, now there is three. Get rid of one or two. Pay one lawyer more or get rid of one lawyer and just have two. It is that simple. When you own your own residential house, some of you must have a single-family home. You have kids, right? Sooner or later, if you do not stop the kids, I am sorry to politicians, they will run the cell phone right out the door and bankrupt you. Stop the spending at the top, and when you have cut to the bone, then come back and come to us, the taxpayer, who is ultimately paying the salaries of the politicians and everybody else. I heard it somewhere that you are the servants of the people. We are the people and we were all talking tonight. I also read something that was very cute. A fine is nothing more than a tax increase for doing something wrong. A tax is nothing more than a fine for doing something well. I am in business. I do well. I pay my taxes. If you raise my taxes, I will have to pass it along to my tenants which will spend less money. I heard something about taxi, can I talk about that? (Chairman Klein told him this was specifically about the budget). If you raise my taxes, my tenants will have less money to spend on taxis. They will go out of business, the stores will go out of business, except for the strong. It will be the survival of the fittest. The problem is there is only so many fittest. Can't we collect taxes on people who are not paying taxes? All the abandoned properties that are empty that you do not think are paying, or if they are abandoned but paying their taxes, they can tear them down. There is one right next door to the police station a few houses down. There is a big huge warehouse, completely empty. There is one out by the circle, I do not know the street name, it has been empty for years. It is just a hallow shell. Tear them down and then sell them. Make some money off of the revenue of the empty places. We do not have the answers, but run it like a simple little person, that I am, and just cut to the bare bone on all of your expenses. Thank you.

**John Leonard, 4 Keith Place-** I have lived here all my life, still working. I am a landlord, Mayor Tkazyik knows, a very near neighbor. It has been a great opportunity for

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me to buy property on Mill Street. Several buildings that I have owned, that I have repaired, and I take a great deal of pride in this. A lot of the people here do the same I am sure, but I am out there everyday. I retired from my profession, I was a hairstylist for 37 years but I was also working two jobs at the same time so that I could to where I am today. When I retired I dedicated myself to being a fulltime landlord. The bottom line, which I do not want to grow into a lengthy process, is that when you do have property you do have to invest in it. You always have to invest in keeping them up or otherwise they are just not going to stay there. It is not going to be something that is good for the city. I always felt that I took pride in what I had, and it made the neighborhood look good. I was always concerned with the neighborhood. I am very lucky to be where I am on Mill Street. It is a great little area near the tie end of Mount Carmel Square and I grew up in Poughkeepsie. I knew that neighborhood, I went there as a kid. Here I am, owning property that I never thought I would, when Ms. McKenny was the owner of the restaurant there and the Barrone family owned that building. As I said, I have been very fortunate to buy these properties. The garbage issue—I am afraid what is going to happen is that people are going to put things out. If they can't afford the garbage, then where is it going to go? It goes on the street and then it becomes somebody else's problem. I have seen it time and time again and it annoys me to no end, because I do take pride in what I have. I see them put a couch out, a tire left somewhere, and many times I picked up other people's garbage and put it on my truck. I am forever putting things on my truck to get rid of it because I do not want to see garbage on the street. We are the pathway to the train station, we are very near to the Walkway and the one thing we want to do at this point, which is the worst thing I think we could be thinking of, is eliminating garbage when we are trying to really beautify the city so that everything looks good. When you are up there on that walkway, you can look down and you can see everything. To me the garbage issue is extremely important and it is important to everybody. Not just to commercial but to everyone. If I have to raise my rents—I have lowered my rents, some of them \$100 a month. Because of the economic environment we are in, a lot of people are out of work and can't pay their rents on time. You are getting it three weeks late but if the people are good, you wait. Landlords are taking a....That's the issue here. We can't lower them. We can't lower the rents so the landlords are going to have to take another shot and provide some other kind of pickup.

**Dated:** Wednesday, May 18, 2011

I hereby certify that this a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Public Hearing held on November 1, 2010.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Deanne L. Flynn  
City Chamberlain**