

**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING
OF THE SCHENECTADY CITY COUNCIL**

January 11, 2016

The City Council Meeting was called to order by the City Council President Leesa Perazzo at 7:02 p.m. in Room 209, City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Ms. Perazzo asked Rev. Dave Chetram to provide the invocation.

Ms. Perazzo then called on Joy Hall to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Deputy City Clerk called the roll and the following members of the City Council answered to be present:

Present – Council members, John Ferrari, Edward Kosiur, John Mootooveren, Leesa Perazzo, John Polimeni, Marion Porterfield, and Vincent Riggi

Also Present – Deputy City Clerk Chad Putman, Corporation Counsel Carl Falotico and Mayor Gary McCarthy

At this point, Ms. Perazzo asked if there were no objections, she would like to take agenda item number 2 out of order. There were no objections.

Resolution No. 2016-4 – A Resolution Recognizing Sa'fyre Terry. Sa'fyre, family and friends were on hand and they extended their gratitude for the recognition by the Mayor and City Council.

The resolution was moved by Ms. Porterfield and seconded by Mr. Mootooveren The resolution passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Regarding Property Assessed Clean Energy Finance

Elyssa Rothe, Director of Municipal Membership, Energize NY - Provided a brief summary of the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program. She noted the program is in partnership with NYSERDA and provides funding for businesses to outfit their facilities with energy efficient products. She noted lower cost energy bills are attractive to businesses looking to open in the city. She noted the city would be responsible for collecting payments on the financing provided to the businesses and would do so through the tax collection process. She added Energize New York is a resource available to the city to provide support and guidance. There were no questions at this time.

Mary McClaine, Schenectady – “This item is listed as property assessed clean energy finance. That is a fancy title for baloney. The item never should have made the committee agenda let alone a public hearing for a City Council meeting. If property owners want to conserve on energy they can do it on their own without the city or third parties getting involved. Especially since the city is going to charge an added fee to the agreement. Although an outside party is going to handle the program the city is responsible for housing copies of all agreements. That means added labor, cost of new equipment such as filing cabinets, etc. There is also another setback. The program will encumber the sale of future properties because the cost of a defaulted loan will be passed on to a potential new buyer. Need I say more. Folks, stop buying new toys when you haven't paid for the old ones yet.”

P.D. Voorhis, Schenectady – Noted concerns related to the proposal coming from a company that is not local. She also questioned who approached who. She noted local municipalities are participating including Utica and Troy, New York. She then added that Congressman Paul Tonko was the former head of NYSERDA and then went onto Washington D.C. She noted concerns about the lack of a local representative and the additional expense the program will have on the city.

Seeing no other speakers come forward, Ms. Perazzo declared the public hearing to be closed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Perazzo asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 28, 2015 Council meetings as submitted by the City Clerk; Mr. Mootoveren made a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. Kosiur seconded the motion.

Communications Presented to the City Council for Monday, January 11, 2016

Official:

From the Mayor a list of appointments dated January 11, 2016

From David Fronk, Director of Operations recommending the award of Demolition and Debris Removal of 738 Albany Street to Bronze Contracting.

From Paul LaFond, Director of Water & Wastewater recommending the award of the Sodium Hypochlorite – 2016 contract be awarded to Surpass Chemical Company.

From Paul LaFond, Director of Water & Wastewater recommending the award of the Hydrofluocilic Acid- 2016 contract be awarded to Thatcher Company of New York, Inc.

From Paul LaFond, Director of Water & Wastewater recommending the award of the Chlorine Gas – 2016 contract be awarded to JCI Jones Chemical, Inc.

General:

None

Petitions:

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Ferrari, Public Services & Utilities - "The effect of fluoride on oral health over the past 70 years is undeniable. The Center for Disease Control identifies community water fluoridation as one of the "10 Great Public Health Achievements of the 20th Century." It is listed alongside of such achievements as, identifying tobacco as a health hazard, identifying risk factors for heart disease and stroke and improved motor-vehicle safety.

In the July-August 2015 issue of Public Health Reports, US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy stated that, "Community water fluoridation is one of the most practical, cost-effective, and safe measures communities can take to prevent tooth decay and improve oral health."

People looking to learn more about water fluoridation can go to the website of the American Dental Association and download their booklet "Fluoridation Facts." The report is written in a Q & A fashion and addresses many, if not all of the common concerns and questions people have about fluoridation. When you understand the facts, not only will you see the value in fluoridation, but you will feel as I do and see that any City or Town would be considered negligent to not add fluoride to their water supply."

Mr. Kosiur, City Development & Planning - "The demolition of 738 Albany Street is another step in the City's systematic plan of ridding the City of blighted properties and expanding development to improve the quality of life in the City's neighborhoods. We are continuing to focus on leveraging City resources with private, state or federal funding. Demolition of this property will be funded by Capital Region Land Bank, with monies made available through the Attorney General's "Zombie Property" program.

“Improving the quality of life in the neighborhoods begins with housing stock, whether through rehabilitation or the development new homes,” said Ed Kosiur, Councilmember and Chair of the City Development and Planning Committee, “Demolition of this property promotes both.”

Removal of this building will enhance the immediate neighborhood surrounding the development, which will begin later this year, on the new \$17 million Joseph L. Allen Apartments. The project will feature 51 new apartments."

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS)

Ms. Perazzo invited all who wished to address the Legislative Agenda to come forward:

P.D. Voorhis, Schenectady – Noted that 738 Albany Street is a substantial property and blends with Summit Towers. She noted the neighborhood around the property is a disaster. She added the property should be converted into a mall with a focus on energy efficiency, landscaping and parking.

Mary McClaine, Schenectady – “Item #4 - Just like clockwork, every January, Council spends money on an item that is not spent in other capital district communities. Albany never puts fluoride in its water. Other nearby communities stopped the practice six years ago. Schenectady City Council is not on the cutting edge of anything. Recently someone wrote a letter to the Gazette that suggests people talk about solutions to problems. My solution to the fluoride problem is for you to go to Albany, find out what they do about the drinking water and come back to Schenectady and do that same thing. You did it for the Muslim resolution. Likewise, go to Utica. Ask about their fleet of cars, do the same thing. Go to Amsterdam. Inquire as to how many part-time elected officials receive medical coverage at tax payers' expense. Copy what they do, for Schenectady. And we don't need an interim Police Chief. Commissioner Bennett was in charge of the entire New York State Police before he came to Schenectady. He certainly is capable of handling our city police force. Schenectady is in debt. Use the chief's salary to start paying off the debt to the Foster Avenue facility. The city has been paying interest but no principal since the garage was built. That is not a healthy way to spend taxpayer money. Those are my solutions to the city's indebtedness. As for item #3 - demotion and debris removal of 738 Albany Street. Why don't these contracts also include the removal of vegetation? The vegetation is still on the lot of the first property that was demolished on Eastern Avenue. When the work is done on these places, the project should be left in pristine condition. That is how this body will start to beautify neighborhoods.”

Seeing no other speakers come forward, Ms. Perazzo declared the Privilege of the Floor on the Legislative Agenda closed.

INTRODUCTION OF AND ACTION UPON LOCAL LAWS, ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

Ms. Porterfield made a motion that Council approves the Consent Agenda and the motion was seconded by Mr. Kosiur.

Consent Agenda –

- Local Law No. 2016 – 1Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – 5Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – 6Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – CS - 1Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – CS - 2Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – CS - 3Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – CS - 4Adopted Unanimously

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Ms. Perazzo then invited all who wished to address the City Council on any matter of City business to come forward. The following speakers rose to be heard and their remarks are summarized:

Anthony Carota, Schenectady – Noted his attendance at the State of the City address provided by the Mayor on January 1. He extended praise to the city fire department for their response to the manhole explosion on State Street. He also extended his praise to the city police department for a number of arrests made recently. Regarding the Mayor's State of the City he noted there are positives and the city is looking better. However he noted not all crime is down and then listed the number of arrests and sex offenders living in the city compared to the rest of the state. He held up a graph and noted Schenectady is higher than the average. He added the mayor may insist that crime is down, but the residents don't believe crime is down because they don't feel safe.

Jason Planck, Schenectady – Noted the deadline related to filing for the STAR exemption is six weeks away. He noted the City has a history of settling property grievances on average with a 25 percent property assessment reduction. He added this is evidence the city needs to complete a city reassessment. He then noted Council member Polimeni made Washington D.C. news related to a proposal for a bed tax. He added the Society of Travel Agents is concerned about this proposal for a bed tax given the potential the revenue will be used as a slush fund. He noted they are fighting hard against a bed tax and they asked him to stay in touch related to local efforts. He then spoke on the casino license and asked the City Council to be diligent related to securing an apprenticeship agreement. He noted that other municipalities have done this and the city needs to take a stance. He added the city also needs to establish a policy and procedure related to affirmative action and hiring practices.

Joy Hall, Schenectady – Noted the city has a problem with the condition of the sidewalks on Albany Street. She added there also needs to be lines for parking. She noted this needs to happen on Lark Street as well.

Mary McClaine, Schenectady – “I fail to understand how any member of City Council can stand in this chamber and tell the community that the departing president treated everyone the same. Can Council members see from where they sit at what moment that timer is activated on this podium? By the time I walk up to the microphone the seconds have been ticking away. Has that happened to council members? Are your comments limited to a specific time frame? Did a voice ever interrupt your train of thought? Are lights flashing in your faces during miscellaneous business? Not to my knowledge. She even asked the public to respect Council and this is what the taxpayers have sitting here. The help was always treated differently than those who pay their salaries. On another point, has the mayor and City Council noticed all the convictions state and local officials received because they were lured by the green stuff and they didn't even handle the money. They just thought about it and the temptation was too great. That is what is going to happen to casino workers when they are lead out of the building in handcuffs because they stole from the house and thank you Council members. You made it all possible by waving the lollipop in front of them. What lousy work.”

P.D. Voorhis, Schenectady – Noted this City Council meeting is the only meeting she attends that places a time limit on speakers. She noted that Rotterdam does not place a time limit on speakers and is able to conduct business. She noted they are also doing away with a clerk position and hiring more police officers. She then noted there is a lot of construction taking place around Harmony Hall. She also noted concerns related to additional traffic in neighboring

communities related to the future casino in Schenectady. She asked about a cost analysis and the walk ability of the planned property.

Seeing no other speakers to come before the City Council, Ms. Perazzo declared the Privilege of the floor closed regarding City Business.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL

Ms. Porterfield – Noted January is National Human Trafficking Awareness Month and Proctors hosted a recent event organized by SAFE, Inc. She also noted the National Alliance on Mental Illness based in Schenectady is hosting a peer to peer support program for veterans with co-occurring disorders. She noted the event is taking place on February 19 and is free for veterans. She added registration for the event is open until January 15 and interested parties can obtain more information by calling 626-5347.

Mr. Riggi– Reminded residents that March 1 is the deadline to file for the STAR exemption with the City Assessor's office. He then noted that Bellevue Preservation Inc. will host their monthly meeting on January 14 at 7:00 p.m. He added Assistant Police Chief Falvo will be the guest speakers. He then noted Jack's Place will be hosting a fundraiser at Mallozzi's in Rotterdam on January 20 from 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. and reservations are encouraged. He noted Jack's Place will help a lot of people and is a positive for the city.

Ms. Kosiur– Extended a welcome to new Council member John Polimeni. He then noted the Woodlawn Neighborhood Association will host its annual pasta dinner fundraiser at the Hibernian on State Street. The event will take place on January 13 and funds will benefit the redevelopment of Woodlawn Park. He also noted Sa'fyre Terry has touched the lives of so many people and he asked for volunteers to help with opening Christmas Cards at the warehouse location in Rotterdam. He noted volunteers are needed Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. He also encouraged residents to make reservations if they are planning to attend the Jack's Place benefit on January 20. He then noted the Schenectady Public Library will host a single-parent workshop at the Crane Street location. He added more information about this event related to school age children can be found on the library website. He later noted the Human Rights Commission will host a Martin Luther King Jr. celebration at the Mt. Olivet Baptist Church on January 17 at 2:30 p.m.

Mr. Polimeni – Noted he continues to make progress on bringing back the Central Park train. He noted he is enlisting the public's support to provide pictures of the small train and added that he has pictures of the larger train. He noted residents can contact him via his city email address. He then sent his best wishes to Marva Isaacs who is home recovering from surgery and is not in attendance tonight.

Commissioner Bennett – Noted updates related to the city search for a new police chief. He noted there are certain state mandates on the city including civil service examinations and requirements related to internal and external candidates. He added the deadline for applicants is January 19 and noted it could take months for the test results to be published by the state. He added Sa'fyre Terry is an angel who has touched so many lives. He later reported he and City Council President Perazzo will swear in five new police officers on January 12 at 11:30 a.m. here at City Hall.

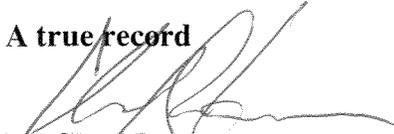
Ms. Perazzo – Extended a welcome to Council member John Polimeni. She then noted she will be participating in the battle of the bartenders on January 12 at Firestone 151 on Lafayette Street. She noted the event will benefit Schenectady Kiwanis Club. She also noted the Schenectady

County Human Rights Commission will host a Martin Luther King Jr. celebration and discussion. She added the celebration will be on January 17 at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church and the discussion will take place at Schenectady County Community College on January 14. She closed by noting the next City Council Committee meeting will take place on Tuesday, January 19 in respect of the MLK holiday on January 18th.

Adjourned:

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Ms. Perazzo asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was moved by Mr. Kosiur and seconded by Mr. Ferrari and the meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

A true record



By Chad Putman

Schenectady Deputy City Clerk