

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

February 22, 2016

The City Council Meeting was called to order by the City Council President Leesa Perazzo at 7:03 p.m. in Room 209, City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Ms. Perazzo asked Rev. Hawk Stone to provide the invocation.

Ms. Perazzo then called on Rev. Horace Sanders to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

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

Also Present – City Clerk Charles Thorne, Corporation Counsel Carl Falotico and Mayor Gary R. McCarthy

At this point, Ms. Perazzo asked if there were no objections, she would like to take agenda item number 8 out of order. There were no objections.

Resolution No. 2016-38 – A Resolution Recognizing Union College Basketball Player, Ryan Whelpley, named to CoSIDA Academic All-District Team. Ryan Whelpley was on hand and he extended his gratitude for the recognition by the Mayor and City Council.

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Perazzo asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 8, 2016 Council meeting as submitted by the City Clerk; Ms. Porterfield made a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. Riggi seconded the motion.

Communications Presented to the City Council for Monday, February 22, 2016

Official:

From the Mayor a list of appointments dated February 22, 2016

From David Fronk, Director of Operations recommending the contract award of demolition and debris removal of select properties to Cristo Demolition.

General:

None

Petitions:

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Porterfield, Health & Recreation - Noted the committee will host a special meeting on February 24th at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall in room 110. She noted agenda items include a presentation on food coops in relation to public health. The second item relates to the November 2015 Tobacco Free Coalition presentation and following up on a smoke free zone around municipal buildings.

Mr. Kosiur, City Development & Planning - Noted two additional property sales including one on Eagle Street and Campbell Avenue to owner occupied buyers. He added the combined assessed value for the two properties is \$49,550. He noted aside from moving properties the city is also in the process of taking down blighted property. He added the Council is in the process of awarding the contract to Cristo Demolition, Inc. The contract includes the demolition of six properties on Emmett Street, Summit Avenue and Duane Avenue.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS)

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

None

Seeing no 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:

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

Consent Agenda –

- Ordinance No. 2016 – 03Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – 39Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – 40Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – 41Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – 42Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – 43Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – 44Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – 45Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – CS - 6Adopted 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:

Marva Isaacs, Schenectady – Noted at one time there was a traffic light at the corner of Duane Avenue and Craig Street. She noted concerns about the intersection being dangerous and added the light needs to be replaced or there will be another accident.

Jason Planck, Schenectady – Noted he has heard city staff question whether the city needs to comply with affirmative action. He added the law says you have to comply even if it's not on the form. He noted the city is also required to include an apprenticeship program. He noted concerns related to the city using CDBG funds to pay back a loan. He stressed that he believes the city doesn't know what it's doing. He added local representatives report creating 7,000 jobs, he asked

where are they? He also noted if the city is benefiting from billions of dollars in new investment, why is Hamilton Hill falling apart? He added other neighborhoods are struggling as well. He also noted four weeks ago the council president claimed how great center city is. However, he noted she didn't mention the \$2.5 million of federal grant money that went into the project. He added the college is paying for space and Metroplex is renting from the developer at Center City as well.

Tony Buonone, Schenectady – Noted he signed up but intended to speak on the public hearing related to the ALCO sight and the proposed street names. He then shared his family history related to the old factories on the site which relatives use to work for. He added something needs to be done to honor the history of the site. He then noted the Planning Commission recently granted approval which allows the new apartment complex off Erie Blvd to construct 52 parking spaces. He added families often have more than one car and he asked where will they park? He noted the overflow vehicles won't be able to park on Erie Blvd. He asked does that mean they will park on Front Street? He closed by advising that the city ensure there are barricades to prevent people from sneaking out the back.

Patricia Smith, Schenectady – "Mont Pleasant Neighborhood Association came to the city with a serious safety issue in the area of Grout Park and surrounding neighborhoods. The Grout Park tunnel was being used as an escape route before, during and after criminal activity. With petitions, speakers at council meetings and television news spot, we brought our issues to the public and the city. We recognize that DOT also had a say in this issue and that it was not the city alone to make the decision. We are happy to announce that the grout park tunnel is now gated and closed. We appreciate the signs and barricades that inform pedestrians of the permanent detour. There is also the Orchard Park grant that encompasses demotion of buildings on Crane Street and Second Avenue. We look forward to revitalizing that park for the many children in the neighborhood who have not had a safe place to play for too long. Mr. Strichman spoke at our last meeting and fully explained what work would be done with the grant and we are very happy with that. The Congress Street demolition near Sunset left a large space and we hope we can help the city develop an idea for that space, to enhance the neighborhood. MPNA is working hard to put the pleasant back in Mont Pleasant and these projects are giant steps towards that goal. MPNA looks forward to continued collaboration with the city, for the betterment of the Mont Pleasant Neighborhood. We appreciate the city listening and working with us. So to all the officials and city workers who made these projects a reality, from the Mont Pleasant Neighborhood Association. Thank you, thank you, thank you."

Rev. Horace Sanders, Jr., Schenectady - Noted he is in attendance on behalf of a local group of clergy in the community who are fighting for education in Schenectady county. He noted he was unclear if the city representatives were made aware that the Schenectady city school district only receives 55 percent of the foundation aid it is allocated by law. He added if the school district received 82 percent, this would decrease school taxes by a third. He noted the children are being hurt by this injustice. He noted that he came tonight to share this information and that others will speak as well. He asked the council and mayor for their support. He noted there is a groundswell which will bring about this needed change. He closed by noting February is Black History month and then shared a quote from Dr. King.

William Rivas, Schenectady - Noted he is here to speak on the fight for equal education funding for Schenectady. He then thanked city council members who have already been out supporting the effort. He added Assembly member Santabarbara was present at the last meeting hosted by the group and intern they were invited to join the Assembly member at the capitol on February 24. He noted there will also be a lobby day to fight for education funding at the capitol on March

7. He noted the group is looking to collect 50,000 signatures on a related petition drive. He noted the community is aware of the effort and appreciates the support. He closed by noting the group is also in the process of making inspirational video's related to the campaign as well.

Rev. P. Grigsby, Schenectady - Noted he is the Director of Schenectady Inner City Ministries and he is here to speak on behalf of the fight for equal education funding. He provided the council with a sample resolution. He also extended his gratitude to Council members Mr. Mootooveren, Mr. Kosiur and Ms. Porterfield. He added the group is organizing a strong coalition which includes an effort to collect 50,000 signatures on a petition drive. He noted the resolution can be signed by individuals and groups and more information is available on their website at schoolfairfundingny.net He added the group is planning to offer transportation to Albany on March 7 for the lobby day. He noted the bus has room for 44 people but he hopes more will be available to attend. He asked interested residents to rsvp by emailing joinssd@gmail.com. He closed by noting that SICM will be hosting a public hearing on February 23, at the food pantry location on Albany Street, related to City Development Block Grant funding allocations and all are welcome to attend.

Mary McClaine, Schenectady - "At the last council meeting, council members acted like the southend of the northerbound mule. Regarding the sustainable energy program who said anything about risks? I said, city employees should not be expected to prepare and store paperwork for homeowners and business people who want to borrow money to install solar panels to their own properties. The energy loan is a state wide program. Only two cities voted for it, Troy and Schenectady. If it was such a good deal why didn't all the cities jump on it? Mr. Polimeni is a quick study, but he is learning the wrong things. Need I remind this council that Mr. Galesi is not your constituent. Regarding the sale of houses - I don't own a computer. I asked this body when listing a sold house to include the buyer's name plus the sale price with the address on the agenda. Why is that difficult? Another item - board vacancies. An expired term doesn't mean a vacancy. Council pulled the same baloney for the golf course concession. The person who was there wanted to review her contract. Council tried to push her out until the nasty business blew up in their faces. I went to the Manhattan Exchange restaurant to ask questions. I'm not going to tell you the answer you already know it. Final item - at the last meeting I did not know Matthew Cuevas was being dropped from the planning board. He is a man of faith, honesty and integrity. A caring son and loving brother who gives all his spare time to the community and never receives a dime in return. Matthew is my neighbor. Everyone should have a neighbor like him. There would be peace in the world. What you did to Matthew was cruel. You folded to a modern day Caligula."

Kanana Haynes, Schenectady - Noted she is also in attendance related to the fight for equal education funding for Schenectady City School district. She added the group will be hosting a petition drive from February 24 to the 27. She noted on February 27 volunteers will be at the main branch of the Schenectady public library from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. She encouraged residents interested in supporting the campaign to stop by and sign the petition. She closed by asking the mayor to offer a location inside city hall to collect petition signatures. She noted she can have volunteers available to work the table if approved.

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

Mr. Mootooveren– Extended his appreciation to the speakers in attendance tonight and noted his support behind the fight for fair education funding. He added it's time for fair funding and

added he has two daughters in the school district. He then noted the STAR exemption deadline is approaching and he encouraged homeowners to take advantage of this opportunity, including veterans. He then noted the Phyllis Bornt Branch Library and Literacy Center on State Street will host a grand opening on February 27 at 12 noon. He encouraged residents of Hamilton Hill, Vale and Central State to utilize the library.

Ms. Porterfield – Extended her appreciation to the speakers in attendance tonight related to fair funding for the school district. She added she is glad to see the clergy and young community leaders stepping up and leading this campaign. She then called out three of the young leaders including Bernard, William and Kanana and added they have her support. She noted the fair funding for education fight would likely extend to include the option to lower school taxes in the district. She added the lack of funding impacts services for our youth. She spoke about how the lack of education funding impacts social issues including teen pregnancy. She then noted this past weekend, Dr. Bernard LaFayette, an associate of Dr. Martin Luther King was in town for a speaking engagement. She added that she was able to be in attendance and was able to hear his experience. She noted the Southern Christian Leadership Conference is looking to bring him back to the community. She closed by reiterating Council member Mootoveren's announcement related to the grand opening of the Phyllis Bornt Branch Library and Literacy Center on February 27.

Mr. Kosiur – Noted how important it is to support all our children and added Schenectady City School District School Board President Cathy Lewis is in attendance tonight. He then noted the City Council will be putting forward a resolution of support for fair education funding from the state to the City of Schenectady's school district. He added this campaign is very important. He then noted the monthly Woodlawn Park & Preserve meeting will be taking place on February 24. He added the general Woodlawn Neighborhood Association meeting will follow. He noted the Discover Woodlawn banner program will be presented by Deputy City Clerk, Chad Putman and the special guest speaker will be Mayor McCarthy. He then noted a public hearing related to CDBG funding allocations will take place on February 23 at SICM on Albany Street at 6:00 p.m. He added there will also be a meeting hosted by Jackie Mancini, Director of Development to provide technical assistance for applicants on February 24 at City Hall in room 110 at 2:00 p.m. He noted applications are available online and due on March 16. He then noted the Phyllis Bornt Branch Library and Literacy Center will host an open house on February 27. He closed by noting Schenectady's Restaurant Week runs tonight through February 28. He added for \$25 you can get a three course meal at 25 participating restaurants. Menus and additional information is online at the Capital Region Chamber website.

Mr. Riggi - Extended his appreciation to the speakers who came out to speak on fair funding for our schools. He added this is an important need for all of us to get behind. He then noted the Bellevue Preservation Inc. will hold its next meeting on March 10 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Paul's Church. He added Jackie Mancini, Director of Development will be the guest speaker.

Mr. Polimeni - Extended his appreciation to the speakers who came out to speak on behalf of fair funding for our schools. He added that he is a graduate of Schenectady City School district. He noted 12309 Neighborhood Association will host its next meeting on February 29. He added the meeting kicks off with a business meeting followed by the general meeting which takes place on the Ellis McClellan Campus at 600 McClellan Street. He closed by addressing an earlier speaker and noted other downstate communities have signed up for the energy assist program.

Mayor McCarthy - Extended his appreciation to all the speakers and those in attendance at the Council meeting tonight. He noted his plan to continue to highlight the funding shortfall the Schenectady city school district continues to experience and hopefully this year the district will

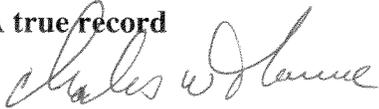
receive some attention at the Capitol. He added the effort is focused on bringing equity to the funding formula to allow the district to make necessary improvements. He then noted a city resident tax bill is 20 percent collected by county, 30 percent by the city and 50 percent goes to the school district. He added if the school district had equity in foundation aid residents would see a reduction in school taxes. He closed by noting he is looking forward to working with the coalition and hopes the outcome will be favorable.

Ms. Perazzo – Noted she was honored to witness Dr. Layfette's recent discussion and that it was a special opportunity to witness and to take in the history that he shared. She then gave a shout out to Yaya's House which hosted its grand opening on February 9. She encouraged residents to check out the new restaurant at 170 Lafayette Street in downtown Schenectady. She then noted the discussion related to parking in downtown has gone back in front of the Planning Commission for their recommendation. Once that has occurred she said the item would come back before the City Council and will be followed by a public hearing.

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. Mootoveren and seconded by Mr. Polimeni. The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

A true record

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Charles W. Thorne".

By Charles Thorne

Schenectady City Clerk