

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

April 11, 2016

The City Council Meeting was called to order by the City Council President Leesa Perazzo at 7:04 p.m. in Room 209, City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Ms. Perazzo asked Lynne Gilmore Director of the Lunn Resource Center for Non-Profits and with the First Reformed Church in Schenectady to provide the invocation.

Ms. Perazzo then called on Rocky Mann 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, Edward Kosiur, John Ferrari , John Mootoveren, Leesa Perazzo, John Polimeni, Marion Porterfield, and Vincent Riggi

Also Present – Deputy City Clerk Chad Putman, Corporation Counsel Carl Falotico and Mayor pro-tem Anthony Ferrari

At this point, Ms. Perazzo asked if there were no objections, she would like to take agenda item number 12, 13, 14 & 17 out of order. There were no objections.

Resolution No. 2016-073 – A Resolution Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Friends of the Schenectady County Library. Representatives from the Friends of the Library 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. Mootoveren. The resolution passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 2016-074 – A Resolution Recognizing National Crime Victim's Rights Week. Representatives affiliated with Crime Victim's Rights Week were on hand and they extended their gratitude for the recognition by the Mayor and City Council. They also noted the Ceremony of Remembrance of Homicide victims will be held in the Central Park Rose Garden on April 13 at 12:00 p.m.

The resolution was moved by Mr. Riggi and seconded by Mr. Ferrari. The resolution passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 2016-075 – A Resolution Proclaiming April 2016 as Fair Housing Month in the City of Schenectady. Ahmad Yusufi, Fair Housing Officer for the city of Schenectady was on hand and he extended his gratitude for the recognition by the Mayor and City Council.

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

Resolution No. 2016-076 – A Resolution Recognizing the Month of April as National Autism Awareness Month. Representatives from the Autism Society of the Greater Capital Region were on hand and they extended their gratitude for the recognition by the Mayor and City Council.

The resolution was moved by Mr. Ferrari and seconded by Mr. Mootoveren. The resolution passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Ms. Perazzo invited all who wished to address the City Council regarding the following public hearing to come forward:

1. Regarding Changing Hours of Operation for Certain City Parks

Joseph Pallotolo, Schenectady - Noted he is a member of the Bellevue Neighborhood Watch and that he supports the proposed change in park hours. He was joined by his wife, Toni who added the police are powerless with regards to enforcement after dark. She noted the City Code indicates the city parks are open until 9:00 p.m. regardless of daylight and time of year. She added nefarious activities are taking place in the park after dark including drug use. They closed by encouraging the City Council to act on the proposed changes to city park hours.

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 March 28, 2016 Council meeting as submitted by the City Clerk; Mr. Riggi made a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. Ferrari seconded the motion.

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

Official:

A letter from Paul LaFond, Commissioner of General Services, recommending the contract award of Automotive Tire Changing and Balancing Equipment Purchase, Installation and Training to Total Tool, Ltd., of Castleton, NY.

A letter from Richard McIllevy-Ackert, Purchasing Supervisor, recommending "Fertilizers, Pesticides and Turf Supplies for the 2016 Golf Season at the Schenectady Municipal Golf Course."

General:

None

Petitions:

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Porterfield, Health & Recreation - Noted updates related to further discussion and actions around smoking in and around municipal buildings. She added Corporation Counsel is looking at developing legislation and the item will come back before the council. She noted further discussion and action is expected in relating to the sale of tobacco near schools within the city. She then highlighted a stop smoking campaign entitled, The Butt Stops Here taking place from April 26 to June 7, 2016. She also reported there is a free support group for those looking for additional help to quit smoking which is held at the City Mission in Schenectady on Monday's at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Kosiur, City Development & Planning - Noted the proposed changes to the City Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from 2014-2015 are related to the city's paving program, to provide disability access improvements, address blighted property and provide funding for the summer youth program. With regards to the 2016-2017 CDBG funding proposals he noted there is more

information available on the city website. He then noted there are four property sales on the agenda tonight amounting to nearly \$300,000 in assessed property back on the tax rolls. He added one of the properties is being sold to a small business owner who will transform the property into his business headquarters.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS)

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

Jason Planck, Schenectady - Noted CDBG funds have been used for paving and economic development projects in the city. He noted concerns about CDBG funds which were earmarked for Hamilton Hill and later reallocated to the city's development program. He added he hopes this does not happen again. He then raised concerns related to due process and the grievance process. He added due process is very important. He then commended the city for offering a ceremonial resolution related to fair house and then noted the city does not have a Fair Housing Officer. He added the city is building luxury apartments and doing nothing in relation to fair housing. He then noted church lots need to address access issues by building ramps into their facilities. He added perhaps they can partner with Better Neighborhoods Inc. for assistance.

Mary McClaine, Schenectady - Waiver of Building Permit Fee - "Fixing something does not necessarily mean improvement or beautification. What does the city expect to gain from waiving fees. The city fixed my street. The road was covered with blacktop. The shoulder was never touched. Part of the street looks new. Another part is old. It is a permanent condition that was caused by city council's decision. I'm going to give you an update about my street. Since the street was paved last summer, one of the neighbors had the shoulder re-done in front of her home. The contractor didn't smooth the blacktop where the shoulder meets the street. It looks like a big scar on the road. That would not have happened if all the work had been done at the same time. Waive permit fees and what happens? I'll give three examples. My property borders along the backyards of the homes on Nott Street. A Guyanese family bought the property. First they removed all the sod and grass from the back yard and put down blacktop. It's like a parking lot. Then they enclosed the entire property with a lacy looking wrought-iron fence and painted the medallions pink. The house is yellow and the side of the garage was painted orange. By your standards is that an improvement? Example #2 - Across the street a Guyanese family bought a big two story flat for an investment. Renters live in it. The new owners installed new aluminum siding on the house. Cream panels with burgundy trim. They never fixed the detached garage which is old yellow paint with rotting doors. Would you call that an improvement? Example #3 - On Park Place, two front doors were installed side-by-side. Each door is different. The city needs a 5 year program that encourages homeowners to fix their properties without being re-assessed. That is key. No re-assessment. Keep a check on the work being done. If the program is successful, extend it. Homes get repaired. The city doesn't take a loss on waivers. Don't reward bad behavior. In all my three cases, what was beautified? What was improved? Waiving building permit fees is nuts."

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:

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

Consent Agenda –

Ordinance No. 2016 – 07	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2016 – 77	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2016 – 78	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2016 – 79	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2016 – 80	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2016 – 81	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2016 – 82	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2016 – 83	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2016 – 84	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2016 – 85	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2016 – 86	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2016 – CS - 08	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2016 – CS - 09	Adopted 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:

Jason Planck, Schenectady – Reminded residents the city will offer a grievance day to residents interested in challenging their property assessments. He added developers are submitting grievances and receiving reductions in their property assessments. He then warned residents to be cautious when contacted by individuals reporting to be affiliated with National Grid. He added that he spoke with National Grid and they reported they would not engage in solicitation calls. He also warned against residents giving out personal information over the phone. He encouraged residents to call the clerk's office if contacted by someone impersonating a National Grid representative, to say no or not to answer the call.

Joy Hall, Schenectady – Noted cars are parking illegally and blocking street access at times. She mentioned Francis Avenue specifically. She also stressed concerns related to potholes and cars blocking fire hydrants. She closed by asking the city to do something about it and asked drivers not to speed.

Rockie Mann, Schenectady – Noted he purchased one of the properties on the council agenda tonight. He added he will be using the property as his headquarters for his business along with warehouse space. He noted he had three choices related to the selection of this property and he chose Schenectady over other local towns. He noted that he lives in Schenectady and started his business in the city and he appreciates the open doors he has encountered during the process. He added he will be looking to engage residents in the neighborhood to teach and train them construction skills. He noted his business has been very successful and he needs to train employees for these good jobs.

Joseph Pallotolo, Schenectady – Noted concerns related to vacant properties and street lights not working in the Bellevue neighborhood. He provided council members and the clerk with his business card and noted residents can contact Bellevue Neighborhood Watch to report issues or concerns in the neighborhood. He then suggested that county dispatch should consider setting up a non-emergency email address for county residents to use in addition to the non-emergency phone number.

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

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL

Mr. Riggi – Noted Bishop Gibons will be hosting an open house on April 14 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. He added it's a good school with a graduation rate of 100 percent. He added the seniors also receive scholarships as they head off to college. He then noted Bellevue Preservation Inc. will host its monthly neighborhood meeting on April 14 at 7:30 p.m. with guest speaker Molly MacElroy, city Assessor. He added the city will be hosting grievance days related to property assessments which will be open to the public. He then noted Bellevue will host its annual garage sale event on June 4. He also noted the former Bellevue Little League field will host volunteers to lay a new grass infield in the park. He noted the field is seeing a lot of action and is home to a baseball league for youth ages 10-12. He noted Fairview Park and Central Park Rose Garden experienced down trees following the recent storm. He added city personnel were able to clean up the down trees quickly. He also reflected on the Crime Victim's Right Week event that will be taking place on April 13 in the Rose Garden and added viewing the list of victims each year is very powerful experience. He noted later the change in city code related to park hours will assist police with enforcement related to activities in the parks after dusk.

Ms. Porterfield - Noted Hamilton Hill will host its monthly neighborhood association meeting on April 14 at 6:30 p.m. at Bethel AME Church on Mumford Street. She also noted on April 29, Friendship House will host a health fair at 955 Albany Street from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. She added the event is free and open to the public with health screenings available to participants. She also reported there will be a ground breaking for the Joseph L. Allen Apartments on May 5 at 1:30 p.m. at the corner of (780) Albany and Hulett Street. She added the event is open to the public and the complex is being named after former council member Joe Allen.

Mr. Ferrari - Noted the Millennial Council will be hosting a Heroin Task Force forum on April 22 at 6:00 p.m. at the Schenectady High School Black Box Theater. He noted the event is open to the public.

Mr. Polimeni - Noted ongoing discussions related to addressing value added in relation to property improvements. He noted changes would encourage neighborhood revitalization and increased property values. He then noted that he is working with Councilmember Mootooveren on the building permit process and other items looking to help homeowners and improve the neighborhood. He added it's good to see improvements taking place at the former Bellevue Little League facility and he appreciates the Valley Cats stepping up to help with the improvements.

Mr. Mootooveren - Noted ongoing advocacy related to his proposal to waive the permit fees for exterior work under \$25,000 on properties with 1-4 units. He noted more information on the effort will be available at the public hearing related to the proposed fee and application waivers. He added the waiver would be in effect from June until August 2016. He closed by noting the effort will have a benefit on the neighborhoods. He closed by encouraging residents to come out to the public hearing and speak in relation to the proposed program.

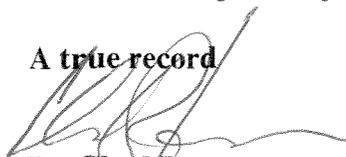
Ms. Perazzo – Noted she attended the re-dedication mass at St. Anthony's where Council member Ferrari was the Canon for the ceremony. She noted the event was impressive and meaningful and also hosted a dinner at the Glenn Sanders with great community support. She then congratulated Schenectady Gazette's Haley Viccaro is a finalist for Associated Press New York award. She also congratulated Rain Drops Closet which hosted its grand opening on April 9. She noted the business accepts gently used items at Emanuel Friedens Church on Tuesdays and by appointment by calling 417-9284. She noted 845 Broadway recently received the Preservation League of New York State award for excellence in historic preservation. She added the former factory now provides housing to 155 residents. Relatedly, she noted President Obama recognized Schenectady for being one of only three cities in the country to end veteran

homelessness in the country. She listed the partners affiliated with the Broadway renovation project which turned a once blighted building into a facility which serves our most vulnerable.

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. Ferrari and seconded by Mr. Polimeni. The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

A true record

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chad Putman', written over the printed name.

By Chad Putman

Schenectady Deputy City Clerk