

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

August 8, 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 Pandit Dave Chetram to provide the invocation.

Ms. Perazzo then called on members of the All in the Wrist Basketball program 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, John Mootooveren , Leesa Perazzo, John Polimeni, Marion Porterfield, and Vincent Riggi

Excused - Edward Kosiur

Also Present – Deputy City Clerk Chad Putman, 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 7 & 8 out of order. There were no objections.

Resolution No. 2016-192 – A Resolution Recognizing the Retirement of Deb DeGenova. Deb DeGenova was on hand and she extended her gratitude for the resolution and recognition by the Mayor and City Council.

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

Resolution No. 2016-193 – A Resolution Recognizing "All in the Wrist" Basketball Camp. Organizers and participants were on hand and they extended their gratitude for the resolution and recognition by the Mayor and City Council.

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

At this point, Ms. Perazzo turned the meeting over to Mayor McCarthy who presented a \$100 cash award to George Marx who caught the alligator gar in Central Park's Iroquois Lake which made national news in the New York Times.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Perazzo asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 25, 2016 Council meeting as submitted by the City Clerk; Mr. Polimeni made a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. Riggi seconded the motion.

Communications Presented to the City Council for Monday, August 8, 2016

Official:

From the Mayor a list of appointments dated August 8, 2016

From Christopher Wallin, City Engineer a letter dated August 8, 2016 recommending the award of the "Fire Tower Perimeter Improvements" to Wickes Arborists.

General:

None

Petitions:

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS)

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

Mary McClaine, Schenectady – "Item #1 Amending Chapter 236 regarding taxi cabs. Section 16 of the code refers to a date of September 1. Should the amendment also include a year because section 21 refers to every other year after the application but it doesn't state the year it started. Item #9 Fire Tower Perimeter Improvements. While the city is addressing the perimeter of the fire training facility would you please give some consideration to the perimeter of the wooded area along Veeder Avenue. That area has been neglected for years. If the training area is important and in need of vegetation removal, so is the fallen debris along one of the city's main streets. The strip is across the street from the Firemen's headquarters. If the city can find \$17,000 to clean up some out of the way places there is also a need to improve one of the most important streets in Schenectady. Find the money for it, too."

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. Mootoveren.

Consent Agenda –

- Resolution No. 2016 – 194Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – 195Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – 196Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – 197Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2016 – CS - 14Adopted Unanimously

An Ordinance Amending Chapter 236 - Taxi Cabs - of the City Code. 2016 - 16

The motion was moved by Mr. Riggi and seconded by Mr. Ferrari.

4:2:1

Voting AYE: Ferrari, Perazzo, Porterfield & Riggi

Voting NAY: Mootoveren & Polimeni

Absent: Kosiur

Mr. Polimeni - Noted there is an error in the resolution related to the date, September 1. He added it should be July 1, as he recalled from prior discussions. He added this does not relate to

his objection. He then noted the ordinance change is a disservice to the residents of Schenectady. He added the changes are leaving revenue on the table and noted it would be proper to auction off the medallions. He noted the City should do things via an open market system and the auction process is a more efficient and the best way to do this.

Mr. Riggi - Noted concerns about Medicabs which he would like to see further discussion on.

Mr. Mootooveren - Noted concern regarding changes made to the ordinance not incorporating issues related to Medicabs. He added Medicabs are being used as taxis and are having a negative impact on actual taxis. He noted he would like to see language addressing Medicabs in this ordinance and not down the road. He added he will vote no because the City Council is not incorporating Medicab issues in this ordinance.

A Resolution Establishing the Maximum Number of Taxi Certificates in the City of Schenectady. 2016 - 198

Amended on the floor by Mr. Riggi from 60 medallions to 59.

The motion was moved by Mr. Ferrari and seconded by Ms. Porterfield.

4:2:1

Voting AYE: Ferrari, Perazzo, Porterfield & Riggi

Voting NAY: Mootooveren & Polimeni

Absent: Kosiur

Ms. Porterfield - Noted the Council's effort to look at the correct number of taxi cab medallions with the impending influx of visitors and new development taking place in the City. She added the Council plans to look at Medicabs in relation to medallions and that the Medicabs are being used for the intended purpose and not as taxi cabs.

Mr. Riggi - Noted he agrees with limiting the number of taxi cab medallions. He added if the companies want to grow they can make a pitch to the City. He noted other communities set the number of medallions based on the population. He noted that the Council received recommendations from Schenectady Police Department and added they are the experts.

Mr. Mootooveren - Noted that he disagrees with putting a limit on the number of taxi cab medallions in the City. He added this should be an open market system with room for growth. He noted putting limits on taxi cabs in the City limits their growth.

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 – Extended his praise to the Schenectady Fire Department. He then added he attended Schenectady's Night Out hosted by Schenectady's Neighborhood Watch. He then noted concerns related to quality of life and more specifically noise pollution. He added that vehicles and residents are blasting music at 6:00 p.m. and also at 2:00 a.m. He asked, what about the elderly?

Kini-Analysa McCalmon, Schenectady – Extended an invitation to the City Council and residents to the Create and Taste series taking place at the College Suites apartments at Washington Square. She noted the next session will be taking place on August 13 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. She added the event is about increasing awareness about the Underground Railroad Project of the Capital Region.

Bill Foss, Schenectady – Noted concerns related to a local priest who was approved by Bishop Hubbard. He noted this local faith leader has solicited money online for funeral services and last rights. He encouraged others to contact the Bishop to see what can be done.

Tony Buonome, Schenectady – Asked for an updated related to the Oak Street Bridge and expressed concerns that the casino will potentially be open before the bridge is repaired and re-opened.

Mary McClaine, Schenectady - "If you see something, say something," said Mr. Santabarbara at the last Committee meeting. I have been doing that for the last 11 years. If City Council had embraced the directives of the comprehensive plan, there would not be any zombie properties in Schenectady. In the comprehensive plan, every chapter calls for a beautification goal for all neighborhoods. Weeds are not beautiful. I understand the City purchased a new cleaning machine for the streets. It is working. It's a pleasure to drive through the city and see clean streets. The hanging flower baskets and planters downtown are very attractive and the coordinated color theme is very effective. I do think the Hometown Hero's banners should all be placed in Veteran's Park. Now that the city streets are clean, Onieda School is being renovated. That doesn't mean the lawn and weeds should not be cut, it's a mess. Grass is allowed to grow through the cracks of the sidewalk around the high school. Weed-be-gone would get rid of it. By the way, Mr. Galesi's Social Service building is no better. Everyone is hiding behind the casino and neglecting other parts of the City. Lower Union Street looks beautiful. Turn the corner on to Park Place, it becomes a jungle. This is not a flower. This is a weed. I pulled it from the flower bed of the City Hall lawn this afternoon. Weeds should not be allowed to grow 2, 3, 3, 8 or 10 feet high. Sanitation workers can keep them in the check as they make their weekly pick up trips. The city and school are the worse neighbors let's bump it up a notch and get rid of the weeds on the curbs, lawns and sidewalks. Blight means vegetation. Not a house with nobody in it."

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. Ferrari - Extended his congratulations to Anthony Ferrari who was recently named Finance Commissioner for the City of Schenectady.

Ms. Porterfield – Noted the passing of Malinda Myers a longtime community leader and member of NAACP who died recently at the age of 96. She also noted the Boys and Girls Club will host an event on August 18 with the artist behind Breathing Lights and added this will be an opportunity for residents to learn more.

Mr. Riggi - Also noted the passing of Malinda Myers a longtime community leader. He also noted the need for an update on the Watt Street Bridge and perhaps it's time to reconsider the legislation previously planned by the Council urging Amtrak to take action on rebuilding the bridge. He questioned whether the Rivers Casino will be open before the Watt Street Bridge is rebuilt and re-opened. He then noted the annual Bellevue in the Park event will take place on August 13 in Fairview Park starting at 12:30 p.m. He also noted the Bellevue's Farmers Market continues on Thursdays at 2176 Broadway. He added the corn is good.

Mr. Polimeni - Noted Bethel AME celebrated its 60th anniversary recently. He then noted Home Furnishing will be hosting a Bed Race fundraiser on September 17 on Union Street. He noted teams consist of six individuals who are 18 years of age or older. He added awards will be given out to top performers and most creative. He noted more information can be obtained by calling 346-2444 or email at homefurninc@aol.com. He also noted the event costs \$100 to enter and will start at 9:30 a.m. after the 5k taking place earlier in the morning.

Mr. Mootooveren - Extended his gratitude to the former Finance Commissioner Deb DeGenova for her service to the City. He also congratulated Anthony Ferrari on his new role as the Finance Commission and added he looks forward to working with him.

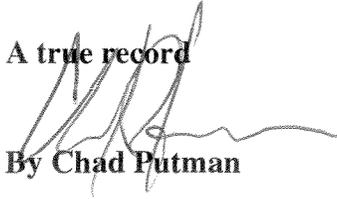
Mayor McCarthy - Noted the contract related to the Watt Street Bridge rebuild is in front of Amtrak for final review. He then encouraged City residents to stay cool in the August heat and humidity.

Ms. Perazzo – Noted the playground equipment in Vale Park has been moved to the front of the park allowing for ease of access. She noted the playground is almost ready for area children however it's just waiting for the woodchips to be delivered.

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. Polimeni and seconded by Mr. Mootoveren. The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

A true record



By Chad Putman

Schenectady Deputy City Clerk