

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

**March 25, 2019**

The City Council Meeting was called to order by the City Council President Ed Kosiur at 7:00 p.m. in Room 209, City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Mr. Kosiur asked for Reverend Abby Norton-Levering to offer the invocation.

Mr. Kosiur then called on Bill Frank 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: John Polimeni, Marion Porterfield , Karen Zalewski-Wildzunas, Leesa Perazzo, Vincent Riggi, John Mootoveren and Ed Kosiur.

Absent – None.

Also Present – Deputy City Clerk Samanta R. Mykoo, Mayor Gary R. McCarthy and Assistant Corporation Counsel Andrew Koldin.

At this point, Mr. Kosiur asked if there were no objections, he would like to take agenda item twelve out of order. There were no objections.

**Resolution No. 2019-060 A Resolution Recognizing Vietnam Veterans Day.**

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

Sullivan Allois accepted the resolution and thanked the Mayor and City Council for their acknowledgment to the Vietnam Veterans.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

**1. New York State Family Leave for City Employees**

Mr. Kosiur invited all who wished to address the Council regarding Public Hearing Number One to come forward:

**P. D. Voorhis** – Stated that there will be members of the public that are not being served when an employee is out then asked the City Council to examine this legislation because it is not free as stated.

**James Brodie** – Stated that as a former business owner he knows that it costs money to replace and employee with another employee. Then said that he has examined the City employee benefit package and questions the need for the additional leave when employees already receive sick time.

Seeing no other speakers to come forward, Mr. Kosiur declared the Public Hearing Number One, to be closed.

## **2. Increase in Taxicab Rates**

Mr. Kosiur invited all who wished to address the Council regarding Public Hearing Number Two to come forward:

Seeing no speakers to come forward, Mr. Kosiur declared the Public Hearing Number Two, to be closed.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mr. Kosiur asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 11, 2019 Council Meeting as submitted by the City Clerk. Ms. Porterfield made a motion and Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunns seconded the motion.

## **COMMUNICATIONS PRESENTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

### **Official:**

From the Mayor, a list of appointments, dated March 25, 2019.

### **General:**

None

### **Petitions:**

A petition received on March 11, 2019 from residents of DeCamp Avenue requesting the City rebuild sidewalks, repave roads and a "Slow Children at Play" sign.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Claims** – Mr. Riggi thanked the Law Department and the Assessor's Office for settling the 2500 Cambridge Road tax certiorari and saving taxpayers money.

## **PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR - LEGISLATIVE ITEMS**

Mr. Kosiur invited all who wished to address the Legislative Agenda to come forward:

**Wil Bernacet** – My name is Wil Bernacet, I've been the president of the Schenectady Babe Ruth since 2011 and a baseball coach at Schenectady High School (Current JV Head Coach) since 2012. I saw the City Council meeting on March 18 and heard about the discussion regarding city baseball. I am writing to correct inaccuracies stated during the meeting. First, Schenectady Babe Ruth does not ask to use the baseball fields at Central Park in order to sustain our teams. We use our field on Golf Road to house our Babe Ruth spring program and our summer/ fall Blue Jays team, which are made up of 100% Schenectady residents. Since I've been here we've been given about a half dozen dates per year at no charge that we are able to schedule games on after the city has completed their scheduling. We only use them to give our player the experience of playing there and if the available dates are compatible. We've only used the Central Park fields over the years for several revenue producing tournaments (Empire Cup, Blue Jays Strike Out Cancer Invitational, AABD/Babe Ruth State Tournaments) I helped organize. Schenectady High School also uses our field for practices, JV and some Varsity games at no charge. Secondly, the

Schenectady Rebels are not affiliated with our program in any way. We're surprised that our local little league continues to promote and sponsor these teams in Babe Ruth age groups, causing our numbers to take a hit along with considerable confusion. Teams like these have been contributing to the decline of kids playing community base baseball all over this area, so any statement made indicating that we have a surplus of players and a lack of field space is false. I wanted to address these inaccuracies before you voted on any legislation. For what it's worth, I also want to offer this opinion based on my unique perspective: I have been blessed with the privilege of sharing countless positive experiences with so many wonderful players and families in my time in Schenectady. All 5 of my kids will have played in Schenectady Little League after this year. Both of my sons are Schenectady Babe Ruth/High School graduates playing collegiate baseball this spring and they'll both tell you it's in large part because of their experiences playing here. I am looking forward to the continued building of this organization while working with the next generation of players coming up the ladder, which traditionally meant Little League to Babe Ruth around here. As I'm sure you all know, we work with youth that are disadvantaged in a variety of ways and we need all the help we can get to compete with the fully funded suburban schools in our conference and the many expensive, independent, youth travel baseball teams saturating the area. We'll continue to evolve survive only because of the relationship we have been able to maintain between city, school and youth organization – our greatest strength in my opinion. If the city allows an independent team to play on the same field as we do (figuratively & literally...) it would only harm our program. We would love for all our city's baseball players to play here and ask the Council to continue to endorse Schenectady Babe Ruth as the City's official youth baseball program for players ages 12-18. What hurts me the most about all of this is that if every kid in the Schenectady High School program played in our organization, we'd have the best 16u team in the area, and these kids are all best of friends.

**P. D. Voorhis** – National Grid will be asking for a double digit increase in rates because they will be asked to do lots of work due to the updated infrastructure.

Seeing no other speakers to come forward, Mr. Kosiur declared the Privilege of the Floor, regarding the Legislative Agenda, to be closed.

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

Mr. Kosiur asked for a motion that Council approves the Consent Agenda and the motion was moved by Mr. Mootoveren and seconded by Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas.

**Consent Agenda**

- Ordinance No. 2019 – 03.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2010 – 061 .....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019 – 062 .....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019 – 063 .....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019 – 064 .....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019 – 065 .....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019 – 067 .....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019 – 068 .....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019 – 069 .....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019 – 070 .....Adopted Unanimously

## **PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR - CITY BUSINESS:**

Mr. Kosiur 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:

**Joy Hall** – Stated that there numerous problems with the sidewalks, curbs and pot holes, they all need to be fixed before anyone is injured.

**Wil Burnacet** – Asked the City endorse the Babe Ruth league as the official baseball league for ages 12-18 in Schenectady.

**P. D. Voorhis** – Asked under what provision in the City Charter allows the Mayor to give a Key to the City to individuals and would like to know what it means and the scope; where do people think they can travel with it.

**David Giacalone** – Stated that March is Gambling Awareness Month. Addictive gambling hurts the whole community and a government that brings a casino into an urban area has a responsibility to help prevent addictive gambling as much as possible.

**Mary McClaine** – I was taken aback that the word diversity was mentioned in this chamber during the March 11, 2019 City Council meeting. There is less diversity on Council's side of the railing then there is in any other section of town. What is diverse about a legislative body whose members do not hold a 4 year college degree? What is diverse about a legislative body whose members receive full medical coverage for part-time jobs at taxpayers' expense? What is diverse about a legislative body whose members are double-dippers? On the other hand, is there anything more diverse than an 82 year old senior citizen seeking public office? I wanted John Ferrari's vacant seat. Council appointed someone who already held multiple jobs and that was after they approved an affirmative action program. You don't even believe in your own legislation. The Comprehensive Plan is another example of legislation gone awry. Council approved the plan. It cost \$500.00 to put together. Every chapter calls for the beautification of City neighborhoods. However, the goal is elusive. Under the current administration, filth has taken over this community. City officials ignore this major city problem. No one should live under the conditions that I saw this past Saturday on VanVranken Avenue. The slobs put the litter there and the city operatives allow it to stay there. Quality living is missing under this current administration. There is nothing beautiful about the ghoulish looking orange led lights on the light poles. Downtown decorations are a hodge-podge of this and that. The Rivers Casino doesn't have a buffet restaurant like other casinos. These outcomes are the results from the decision makers. You don't know what you are doing and the city is damaged by your poor decisions.

Seeing no other speakers to come before the City Council, Mr. Kosiur declared the Privilege of the Floor, regarding general City Business, to be closed.

## **MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL**

**Ms. Perazzo** – Announced that the Firefighters Cancer Foundation will be holding their annual "Run for Your Life" road race on Saturday, March 30, 2019. Also on that date, Create Community Studios will be holding a fundraiser for Public Art at Rob Alley at Proctors and the Hamilton Hill Art Center is having a fundraiser at College Park Hall at Union College. She then stated that there have been comments regarding the pot holes in the City and urged residents to take advantage of the *Citizen Request Tracker* on the home page of the City's website to report and inform the city of the locations of the pothole.

**Mr. Riggi** – Announced that yard waste pick up begins April 1<sup>st</sup> with your area’s regular trash day. He acknowledged Mr. Giacalone’s comments about gambling and the difficulties it can create if uncontrolled. Then responded to the comments made by Mr. Burnacet about the Schenectady Little League and said that we should do what we can to help the Schenectady based youth baseball teams. He also thanked all the Vietnam Veterans for their service.

**Ms. Polimeni** – Announced that the Bellvue Preservation Association will be holding their meeting on Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup> at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church and the speakers will be Police Chief Clifford, Assistant Chief Falvo and zone officers to speak about Codes. Then thanked the Vietnam Veterans for what they’ve done for the country. He then stated that there were some inaccuracies said about the youth baseball and suggested the groups get together and work out their schedule.

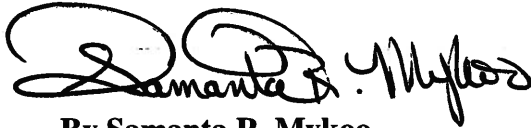
**Mayor McCarthy** – Announced that the Woodlawn Neighborhood Association will be holding their monthly meeting at the Ancient Order of Hibernians on March 27, 2019, he and the City Engineer, Chris Wallin, will be in attendance to speak about the replacement project for the Kings Road Bridge. Then on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> there will be community meetings for the FEMA Flood Mitigation study in the Stockade.

**Mr. Kosiur** – Encouraged everyone to attend the Woodlawn Neighborhood Association meeting. Then reminded everyone that the SJTA now have their summer youth job applications for ages 14-21 that reside in Schenectady County available and the deadline to apply is April 15<sup>th</sup>. Then announced that the sidewalk petitions are available in the City Clerk’s Office and the deadline is May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Adjourned:**

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Mr. Kosiur asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was moved by Ms. Porterfield and seconded by Mr. Mootoveren. The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

**A true record**



**By Samanta R. Mykoo**

**Deputy Schenectady City Clerk**