

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

August 9, 2021

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

Mr. Mootooveren asked Reverend Mark Thompson to offer the invocation.

Mr. Mootooveren then called on Council Member John Polimeni 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: Carmel Patrick, John Polimeni, Marion Porterfield, Karen Zalewski-Wildzunas, and John Mootooveren.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Mootooveren asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 26, 2021, Council Meeting as submitted by the City Clerk. Ms. Porterfield made a motion to approve the minutes and Ms. Patrick seconded the motion.

COMMUNICATIONS PRESENTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Official:

From the Mayor, a list of appointments dated August 9, 2021.

General:

From Burk Ketcham, a letter regarding the Ellis Hospital merger with St. Peters requesting they protect the availability of abortions.

From Haley Viccaro, an email stating that she strongly disagrees with changing the City Council start time from 7 p.m. up to 5:30 p.m. Secondly, she stated that moving the City Hall hours to 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. year-round seems to limit the ability for residents to conduct city business and get in touch with staff as needed. Lastly, she added that the Federal COVID relief funding should have public input so that everyone has a say and a fair and balanced chance for some funding.

Petitions:

A list of 16 signatures from Nick Malandrucolo to have opposite street parking and a stop sign on the end of Broad Street and Austin Place.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

City Development & Planning – Ms. Porterfield spoke about the tabled item regarding the amendment of the 2020-2021 Annual Action Plan budget and contract with BCNI. She relayed her discussion and concerns with the BCNI Elmer Gardens project and the funding that would be received as part of the development fee. She and Mr. Mootooveren met with members of BCNI and after some discussion had developed a plan to have a community development agreement that would make sure that the funds would continue to benefit the community.

Finance – Mr. Polimeni explained the details for use of the American Rescue Plan Act funding (ARPA). He spoke about the guidelines and limitations of ARPA funding.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS):

Mr. Mootooveren invited all who wished to address the Legislative Agenda to come forward or otherwise submit their comments to the City Clerk:

Seeing no speakers to come forward, Mr. Mootooveren declared the Privilege of the Floor regarding Legislative Items, to be closed.

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

Mr. Mootooveren made a motion that Council approves the Consent Agenda, and the motion was moved by Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas and seconded by Mr. Polimeni.

Consent Agenda

- Ordinance No. 2021-12.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-169Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-170Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-171Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-172Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-173Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-174Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-175Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-176Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-177Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-178Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-179Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-180Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-181Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2021-CS-08.....Adopted Unanimously

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Mr. Mootoveren directed all who wished to discuss any items for City Business to come forward or otherwise submit their comments to the City Clerk.

Diana Hogan – Narrated her experience with dealing with an individual from Focus Construction. She is in danger of losing her home which she has contracted to purchase. She is seeking assistance from the City regarding this matter.

Paul Callahan – Spoke about the City foreclosures process that was once four years before homeowners were foreclosed upon that are now a two year process; if you are two years behind on your taxes, you may lose your home. He asked the City to allow considerations for individuals based on their ownership of the properties and circumstances of the foreclosure. There should not be a one size fit all situation.

Mary Ann Ruscitto – Spoke about a property located at the corner of River and Front Street being a nuisance; the garbage cans are always left on the sidewalk. She has reported this issue to the Code Enforcement Department and nothing was resolved.

John Polster – Communicated similar issues with which Paul Callahan spoke about previously. He said that there are many times which the circumstances will prevent residents from turning the situation around in a timely fashion. He asked that discretion be granted to Corporation Counsel as it will benefit the City to work out an agreement where the property can be redeemed by the property owner.

Seeing no other speakers come forward, Mr. Mootoveren declared the Privilege of the Floor to be closed.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

Carmel Patrick – Complimented the Stockade Neighborhood Association and the Schenectady Historical Society for the Stockade Art and Garden Tour this past weekend. They partnered with Living Resources and displayed the art of many of their clients.

Marion Porterfield – Thanked everyone who attended the March for Jesus and the Churches that coordinated this event. She thanked Cycle Schenectady and the Electric City Bicycle Rescue for organizing the Bicycle Bash.

Karen Zalewski-Wildzunas – Announced that Music Haven will be holding three shows on the last three Sundays in August; it's an excellent venue in Central Park. Mohawk Harbor will also have a few free concerts, please look at their website for details. She then announced the beginning of Schenectady Restaurant week, details of can be found on the Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation's website. She then added that she is looking forward to having further discussion around illegal gun issues that is plaguing all of New York. One approach is to push the State of New York to take action to having safe streets. Lastly, she said that she looks forward to having Home Rule granted to us to address traffic issues in the City; there is technology available to enforce the rules of the road to make our streets safer.

Mayor Gary R. McCarthy – He thanked everyone for coming out to the public meeting and announced that with the uptick of Covid everyone should use some common sense. Wear a mask, wash your hands frequently, and maintain a social distance.

John Mootoveren – Encouraged everyone to get the Covid vaccination and follow the CDC guidelines when out in public.

Adjourned:

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Mr. Mootoveren asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was moved by Ms. Porterfield and seconded by Mr. Polimeni. The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

A true record

By Samanta R. Mykoo
Schenectady City Clerk