

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

August 26, 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 Reverend Brad Jones of Christ Church to offer the invocation.

Mr. Kosiur then called on Council Member Vince Riggi 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, Vincent Riggi, and Edward Kosiur.

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

Absent – Leesa Perazzo and John Mootoveren.

Mr. Kosiur then asked for a moment of prayer in remembrance on the passing of Helga Schroeter, a longtime community volunteer, and Alex Stratton, the son of former Mayor Brian Stratton.

At this point, Mr. Kosiur asked if there were no objections, he would like to take agenda item number 12 out of order. There were no objections.

Resolution No. 2019-190 A Resolution Recognizing Donna Riggi's 42 Years of Service in the City of Schenectady

The resolution was moved by Ms. Porterfield and seconded by Mr. Riggi.

The resolution was accepted by Mrs. Donna Riggi. She thanked the Mayor and Council for their recognition. She also thanked her husband Vince Riggi for bringing her to work and making her breakfast each morning.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Regarding the Proposed DSAD / DSIC District Property Expansion

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

Tom O'Connor – Vice President of Government Relations at the Chamber of Commerce of Schenectady County spoke in support of the downtown expansion. This expansion all the way down to Little Italy makes sense. This connection brings people into the downtown area.

Jim Salengo – Executive Director of the Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation spoke about the connection of Mohawk Harbor through Little Italy into downtown. He explained that it revitalizes downtown and benefits those that will receive services. It will bring a stronger and more unified downtown.

Carmel Patrick – On the Board of Directors of the Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation spoke in favor of the Downtown Schenectady Assessment District Expansion. She stated that the current boundaries were drawn 40 years ago and it is time to adjust those boundaries to include Mohawk Harbor, Little Italy, and Broadway, allowing downtown to be redefined. Making the expansion will make Schenectady a prime destination for visitors. Then she submitted two letters, one from David Buicko and Vincent Nevasini.*

** See letters submitted.*

Michael Burns – Part Owner of Mopco Improv Theatre on North Jay Street stated his support of an expanded downtown. Downtown looks great and is now a great place to be partly because of the success of the Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation.

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

2. Regarding Amending Chapter 248-85 of the City Code to include Campbell Avenue among the list of City Streets where Trucks, Tractor and Tractor Trailer Combination of Certain Gross Weights are Excluded

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.

3. Regarding Amending Chapter 248, Article IV of the City Code to Include Alternate Side Parking Restrictions on Willett Street between Main Street and Francis Avenue from November 1st to April 30th

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

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Kosiur asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 12, 2019 Council meeting as submitted by the City Clerk. Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas made a motion to approve the minutes and Ms. Porterfield seconded the motion.

COMMUNICATIONS PRESENTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Official:

From the Mayor, a list of appointments, dated August 26, 2019.

General:

From David Buicko, President & CEO of the Galesi Group, a letter in support of the Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation's proposal to expand the Downtown Special Assessment District service area.

Petitions:

From the businesses, homeowners and renters around the 1100 block of Albany Street, a petition against the deli/grocery store at 1100 Albany Street.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

None

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS):

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

Having no one signed up to speak, 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 made a motion that Council approves the Consent Agenda and the motion was moved by Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas and seconded by Ms. Porterfield.

Consent Agenda

Resolution No. 2019-191.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-192.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-193.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-194.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-195.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-196.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-197.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-198.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-199.....Adopted Unanimously

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

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:

Chad Putman – Stated that 2 years ago he secured permission to have chickens at the Vale Urban Farm and it has been an educational and rewarding experience. Chickens serve many purposes beyond educational, entertainment or artistic purposes that the City Ordinance currently allows. Hens also serve nutritional purposes, produce natural fertilizer, and help with reducing food waste. He urged the City to pass legislation similar to that in the City of Albany that would be more urban backyard friendly in relation to homeowners keeping hens. *

** See legislation submitted.*

Fred Durocher & Fred Durocher Jr. – Noted that learning about chickens had been easy, complicated, and fun. He and his son share their responsibilities and now have a greater appreciation for chickens. Fred Junior explained that he used to have a very strong dislike for eggs, but the fresh eggs taste better than the grocery store eggs and he is no longer opposed to eating them. They're both are in support of backyard chickens.

Ellie Pepper – Stated her support of backyard chickens in the City of Schenectady. Chickens are good for the environment; they serve as great composter which means less waste. Chickens are more nutritionally beneficial and chicken manure is the gold standard in fertilizers. She also said that they provide stress release. She then urged Council to pass legislation similar to that recently passed in the City of Albany, allowing residents to raise chickens in their backyard.

Dean Mirabito – Noted that there are various positive aspects to raising chickens and supports legislation to have backyard chickens in the City of Schenectady.

Sharon Astyk – Director of the Vale Urban Farm and cited the positive and practical aspects of raising chickens in an urban setting. She supports backyard chickens.

Spero Zoulas – Thanked the Mayor and Council for their support of the splash-pad at Woodlawn Park. He also thanked Mike Cerrone from the Office of General Services for always being attentive to their needs in regards to this project. He then encouraged the Mayor and Council to include additional human services in the budget next year. He also invited everyone to the Woodlawn Neighborhood Cookout on Thursday, August 29th at 5:30 p.m. Then he announced his support of backyard chickens.

Jeff Hotaling – Stated that it is important for urban families to experience and learn about farming and stated his support of backyard chickens.

Savitree Rajkumar – Expressed her support of backyard chickens. Then she announced that there has been a lot of speeding on Duane Avenue and a problem with too many people not cleaning up after their dogs, she asked the Mayor and Council for help with both issues.

Sri Devi – Communicated her support of backyard chickens. She and her kids visit the chickens almost every day and found that feeding the chickens helps reduce the food waste.

Seeing no other speakers 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. Porterfield – Announced that the tribute for former County Legislator and Mayor Karen Johnson will be held on Thursday, September 5th at 1:00 p.m. Proctors on State Street and invited all to attend. She then expressed her condolences to the families of Helga Schroeter and former Mayor Brian Stratton. She then congratulated the Woodlawn Neighborhood on the new splash pad in their park and then thanked the those who came out to the Hamilton Hill Neighborhood Association Block Party.

Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas – Expressed her concerns and disappointment regarding the straw ban. We need to be mindful of our environment.

Mr. Riggi – Explained that the Woodlawn Park Splash Pad was a great accomplishment from the Woodlawn Neighborhood and it shows what great things can be accomplished when people work together. Perhaps that backyard chickens are the next step. He then expressed his condolences to the Johnson and Stratton family for their losses. Then stated that at the Hamilton Hill Block Party there were officers out in the community and listening to the people. He then said that there were a few businesses on Broadway that were hesitant about the Downtown Assessment District Expansion. They have been spoken to and now they are now at ease. He then thanked his wife, Donna Riggi, for her many years of service to the City of Schenectady.

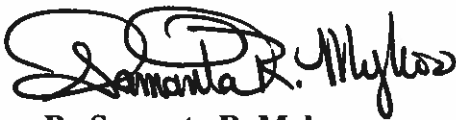
Mr. Polimeni – Congratulated Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas on her son’s wedding. Then invited everyone to the Bellevue Little League at 11:00 a.m. on September 8th for the clean-up day. He then thanked the City workers for their work cleaning up after the storms. Then announced that the event “Coffee with a Cop” was well attended. Then stated his disappointment with the plastic straw issue. He asked that bicycle safety be added to the agenda for Monday’s Committee meeting since he and Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas have a list of resolutions that will address the gangs of kids riding recklessly.

Mayor Gary R. McCarthy – Expressed his sympathies to Brian and Lisa Stratton on the passing of their son, Alex, and to the family of Helga Schroeter. He thanked Donna Riggi for her years of service to the City of Schenectady. He then announced that there will be a public hearing on Thursday, August 29th at 6:00 p.m. at the library about the proposed redesign of the intersection of Nott Street, Rosa Road, and Wendell Avenue.

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 Mr. Riggi and seconded by Ms. Porterfield. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

A true record



By Samanta R. Mykoo

Schenectady City Clerk

8/23/19

MCGREGOR AUTO SERVICE LOCATED AT 1015 ERIE BLVD

THIS LETTER THAT MR SALENGO WILL SPEAK ON MY BEHALF DUE TO CONFLICTING SCHEDULES I COULD NOT ATTEND TONIGHT'S MEETING.

THIS PUBLIC HEARING CONCERNING DSAD EXPANSION.

I AM THE OWNER OF MCGREGOR AUTO [VINCENT] WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY THOUGHTS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS TERRITORY EXPANSION-

I'VE OWNED THIS SHOP FOR 20 YRS AND TAKE GREAT PRIDE OF MY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND APPEARANCE OF MY PROPERTY AS I DO MY DUE DILIGENCE KEEPING UP WITH REPAIRS AND CURB APPEAL.

BUT I HAVE NOTICED OVER THE YEARS -CONSTANTLY PICKING UP DEBRIS FROM PAPER PRODUCTS, PAPER CUPS, BOTTLES AND BROKEN GLASS THATS ENDS UP IN MY LOT.

ERIE BLVD HAS TAKEN ON A NEW APPEARANCE IN THE LAST 4 YRS. INVESTMENT IN APTS AND ROADS AND THE NEW CASINO DOWN THE ROAD FROM MY SHOP, SO WHY WOULDN'T THE CITY OR GROUP GET INVOLVED IN TRYING TO KEEP THIS SECTION CLEAN AND LOOKING GREAT!!

THIS IS A HEAVILY TRAVELED ROAD WITH NEW FACES FROM DIFFERENT COUNTIES AND I HAVE HEARD DIFFERENT OPINIONS WHICH WOULD NOT WANT TO MENTION ABOUT SCHENECTADY. DURING THE WINTER MONTHS SNOW IS NEVER REMOVED FROM INTERSECTION OR UNDER THE RAILROAD BRIDGE THAT CROSSES OVER ERIE BLVD MAKING IT UNSAFE FOR PASSERSBY.

WHY ARENT TRASH CANS CHAINED AT INTERSECTION TO NEAREST POLES USED FOR TRASH INSTEAD OF THROWING DEBRIS ON THE GROUND?

SO AS A BUSINESS OWNER I BACK UP THIS PROPOSAL 100% AND HOPEFULLY THE COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER THIS OPPORTUNITY AS A MUST.

Let'S KEEP DOWNTOWN AND ERIE BLVD LOOKING GREAT! THANK YOU VINCE NEVASINI





August 26, 2019

Mr. Ed Kosiur, President
Schenectady City Council
105 Jay Street
Schenectady, NY 12305

Dear Ed,

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of the Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation's (DSIC) proposal to expand the Downtown Special Assessment District (DSAD) service area. I believe this effort would have a very positive benefit for all of Mohawk Harbor, which in a few short years has become a prime regional destination for business, living and recreation.

As a major property owner in the core of downtown, the Galesi Group has supported the efforts of the DSIC financially for many years and understands first-hand how their programs contribute to the vibrancy of the district and benefit our tenants including Johnny's, the Bow-Tie Cinema, MVP Health Care and the Paul Mitchell School. Recent improvements on Erie Boulevard north of Union Street have upgraded that corridor's infrastructure. If the DSIC can provide their services to keep this area clean, maintained and promoted more regularly, it will be a win-win for the businesses along the street and the entire Mohawk Harbor complex.

Thank you to you and your colleagues on the Schenectady City Council for all of your hard work to improve the quality of life for residents and businesses. Again, I urge you to approve the expansion of the DSAD service area to ensure we have a more unified downtown that reflects the many positive changes that continue to transform our city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David M. Buicko', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David M. Buicko
President & CEO