

**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING
OF THE SCHENECTADY CITY COUNCIL
August 28, 2023**

The City Council meeting was called to order by the City Council President Marion Porterfield at 7:00 P.M. in room 209, City Council chambers at City Hall.

Ms. Porterfield called on Reverend Ronald Hunt to deliver the invocation prayer.

Ms. Porterfield then called on Michael Zabinski of Boy Scouts of America, Troop 357 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 - Councilmembers: John Mootoveren, Doreen Ditoro, Damonni Farley, Carl Williams, John Polimeni, and Marion Porterfield

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

Excused – Councilmembers: Carmel Patrick

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Porterfield asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 14, 2023 council meeting as submitted by the City Clerk. Mr. Farley made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Williams seconded the motion.

COMMUNICATIONS PRESENTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Official:

None.

General:

An email from Sophia Golemb requesting that the Schenectady City Council adopt a budget that prioritizes community well-being.

Petitions:

None.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS):

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

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

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

Ms. Porterfield made a motion that the Council approves the Consent Agenda, the motion was moved by Mr. Mootoveren and seconded by Mr. Farley.

Consent Agenda

- Resolution No. 2023-14.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-149.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-150.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-151.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-152.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-153.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-CS-18.....Adopted Unanimously

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

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

Mary Gilray – Expressed concerns and frustrations over large crowds gathering at Grout Park that have been causing disturbances in her family’s neighborhood as well as the surrounding areas of the city. Stated that whenever these gatherings take place, music is played at extreme volumes – often from various vehicles all at once. Gilmore described the atmosphere of the gatherings as one of a block party, stating that the tailgating taking place has become dangerous and unlawful. Claims Police are not able to effectively control the large groups and asks the Mayor and Council to take action to enforce the city’s noise ordinance.

Ed Laven, Jr. – States that it is the duty of the City Council to investigate matters of wrongdoing by City Court judges and employees and take appropriate action if necessary. Claimed the Mayor and Council are violating their oath of office by not doing that.

Wayne Harper – Voices frustrations had with fellow residents living in the Bellevue neighborhood, stating there are a multitude of homes that violate city code. Said Police and Code Enforcement should have a system that more efficiently allows them to report offenders when patrolling. Claimed that the neighborhood of Bellevue is in decline.

Seeing no other speakers come forward, Ms. Porterfield declared the Privilege of the Floor regarding City Business to be closed.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

John Mootooveren – Announced that he will be co-hosting a Naloxone (commonly known as Narcan) training session at Bridge Christian Church on Wednesday 8/30.

Damoni Farley – Reminded everyone that school will be resuming soon, asks people to be mindful of streets that will be crowded with children, and reduced speed limits in school zones.

John Polimeni – Let everyone know that preparations to finalize the city's budget will be happening soon and discussed factors of our current economy that may affect its outcome.

Mayor Gary R. McCarthy – Encouraged everyone to get out and enjoy the last few weekends of summer, and also reminded all to mark their calendars for Greek Festival, Little Italy Festival, and Caribbean Day Festival which will all be taking place in the city on September 9th.

Marion Porterfield – Thanked everyone for speaking; reminded everyone that Monday was Labor Day and the Committee meeting would be held on Tuesday the 5th. She then wished everyone a Happy Labor Day weekend.

Adjourned:

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Ms. Porterfield asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was moved by Mr. Mootooveren and seconded by Mr. Williams. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

A true record

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samantha R. Mykoo". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "S".

**By Samantha R. Mykoo
Schenectady City Clerk**

Samanta R. Mykoo

From: Sophia Golemb [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2023 11:33 AM
Subject: Concerns

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello, I am writing to demand that the Schenectady City Council adopt a city budget that prioritizes community well-being, and redirects funding away from the police and towards housing, jobs, youth programs, restorative justice and mental health workers to help the community.

In the 2020 budget, the City of Schenectady allocated an egregious \$34,368,057 to our police department. I demand that the City Council begin meaningfully defunding the Schenectady Police Department and re-allocate those funds to programs proven to more effectively promote a safe and equitable community. We need funding for community-based mental health services, substance abuse treatment services, and affordable housing programs. Police officers are not equipped to—and should not—be the first resource for every crisis. I demand a budget that reflects the actual needs of Schenectady residents.

History has shown that police “reform” is not enough. Policing in America was developed to protect the institution of slavery. More money and training programs will not only not fix our current system, they will cause future lives to be lost to police brutality. We must take a hard look at the way the current system in place fails to serve—and in fact actively harms—our community, and come together to reimagine the role of police in our city.

I am urging you to keep these things in mind for the budget for the upcoming fiscal year and to invest in the people, not the police.

Thank you for your time,
S G