

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

September 9, 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 Pastor Patrick Singh of Trinity Lutheran Church to offer the invocation.

Mr. Kosiur then called on Council Member Leesa Perazzo 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 Edward Kosiur.

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

Absent – none.

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. 2019-200 A Resolution Recognizing the “riseHigh” Program in Schenectady High School

The resolution was moved by Ms. Perazzo and seconded by Ms. Porterfield.

The resolution was accepted by Ms. Omayra Padilla De Jesus. She thanked the Mayor and Council for their recognition.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Kosiur asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 26, 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 September 9, 2019.

General:

From Kathryn Donovan, an email objecting the Downtown Schenectady Assessment District Expansion.

Petitions:

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

None

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS):

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

Joy Hall – Stated that there are four individuals that she misses, Karen Johnson, Melinda Myers, Brad Port, and Jimmy Stanford and suggested that either some streets or building named after them. She then spoke about the need for certain trees on the Boulevard and Mallard Street that should be cut down or trimmed before an accident occurs. Then said that there are potholes and sidewalks that need to be repaired and there needs to be a turn arrow on the corner of Union Street and Erie Boulevard.

P. D. Voorhis – Spoke about Items #3, 4, and 11. Stated that the Waste Water Treatment Plant construction has been going on for a number of years and all of a sudden they need eight million dollars. The tax reduction was half of one percent, the budget was for thirty point seventy-five million dollars, and the money left in the rainy day fund is three point six million dollars.

David Giacalone – Spoke about the accrued sick leave for the police chief and stated that the contract is clear and the police chief knew what he was getting into when he accepted the position.

Having no one else 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. Perazzo and seconded by Mr. Mootooveren.

Consent Agenda

- Resolution No. 2019-200.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-201.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-202.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-203.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-204.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-205.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-207.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-208.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-209.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-210.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-CS-08.....Adopted Unanimously

2019-206 A Resolution Calling for a Public Hearing in Relation to Amending Chapter 87 of the City Code Regarding Uniform Compensation and Benefits for Public Safety Managers

A motion to move the public hearing to Tuesday, November 12, 2019 was made by Ms. Perazzo and seconded by Mr. Riggi:

7:0:0

Voting AYE: Mr. Polimeni, Ms. Porterfield, Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas, Ms. Perazzo, Mr. Riggi, Mr. Mootooveren, and Mr. Kosiur

Voting Nay: None

Abstain: None

7:0:0

A vote on the original motion as amended:

Voting AYE: Mr. Polimeni, Ms. Porterfield, Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas, Ms. Perazzo, Mr. Riggi, Mr. Mootooveren, and Mr. Kosiur

Voting Nay: None

Abstain: None

Item #11: A Resolution Re-appropriating the Adopted City 2019 Budget to Authorize the Sick Time Benefit Accrual Compensation for the Police Chief

A motion to table the legislation as was made by Mr. Polimeni and seconded by Mr. Mootooveren.

The motion to table the legislation and bring it back to Committee was made by Mr. Polimeni and seconded by Mr. Mootooveren:

5:2:0

Voting AYE: Mr. Polimeni, Ms. Porterfield, Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas, Ms. Perazzo, and Mr. Mootooveren

Voting Nay: Mr. Riggi, Mr. Kosiur

Abstain: None

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:

Ed Varno – Reported on the great turnout at the Bellevue Little League clean-up. There were 100 volunteers and they were able to bring the park up to what it was 20 years ago in a matter of 8 hours. He then thanked City staff for their help with taking away the garbage.

Marva Isaacs – Expressed her frustration on the discussions regarding bicycle safety. She said that currently the community has a great relationship with the police and now through the suggested legislation you are asking the police to take away the bicycles from the kids. This will only destroy the relationship that has been developed.

Patricia Smith – Mt. Pleasant Neighborhood Association President thanked Linda Sweet in the Mayor's office and Roberta Kelly from the Code Department regarding the complaints they had about a backyard party. She clarified that there was a three day backyard party that was going on about a block and a half away and that on one of the nights approximately 10:30 p.m. not only was she disturbed but she was getting calls from neighbors. She stated that if there is a need for anyone to have a party in their backyard with live music, a DJ and speakers and microphone then they need to get a hall. She suggested that legislation be made to rectify this quality of life issue.

Daniel Garro – Stated that kids that are riding their bicycles should not be punished and asked that a deterrent is found instead. Then he spoke about the Police Chief's sick time compensation, he said that if you do for one you should do for all even if the contract says otherwise. The chief should not be punished for stepping up to the plate.

John Conklyn – Reported that he received a notice for working without a permit and believes it to be unfair. He stated that he had contacted Code Enforcement before performing the work and was told that one was not needed. He would like to see the \$50.00 fine dismissed.

Mary McClaine – I am a product of a community center. I am passionate about community centers. Obviously no one in this administration feels as I do or the Carver Community Center would have re-opened a long time ago. The “Miracle on Craig Street” folks have been knocking themselves out to bring a community center to the neighborhood but city officials have been throwing road blocks in their way. This administration keeps sending them back to the drawing board. The entire City should have gotten behind the Craig Street effort. It should not take so long to open the center. For every month that the building stays closed it is a lost opportunity for youngsters to develop skills and enrich themselves. Give the Miracle people that building now and stop dragging your feet. Furthermore, no Council Member with an active real estate license should have anything to say about city-owned property. Nor should she be in the room when city real estate is discussed. There is a big, fat conflict of interest with her real estate license and her position on City Council. Has anyone seen her commercial listing across the street from City Hall? Go take a look at the lettering, what does it mean?

P. D. Voorhis – Stated that Council Members used to attend all the board meetings so that they know what is going on, but now there is Google. There was a building that was taken down because it was an eyesore, there is fencing around the lot and only the people that live across the street at the luxury apartment are allowed to park.

David Giacalone – Explained that it has taken 18 months to find out where the Mayor is putting the Statue of Liberty. It has been 2 years since she’s been away and no one cleaned her up. The new location is silly. She is close to an underpass where she may get tagged. It is a distraction on one of the scariest intersections in the City.

Ellis Pepper – Commented on the Bike Safety and is happy that Councilman Kosiur stated that legislation needs to go through Corporation Council before it is approved. It seems that it is common sense that if you get tough with kids and scare them with legal action that you could deter them from future bad acts, but there is no strong evidence to indicate the effectiveness of such tactics. She suggested the Council review an article named “Scared Straight and Other Juvenile Awareness Programs for Preventing Juvenile Delinquency: A Systematic Review of the Randomized Experimental Evidence” by Anthony Petrosino, Carolyn Turpin-Petrosino, and John Buehler. On average scared straight tactics had a harmful effect on kids versus kids that did not receive it. Positive reinforcement works with teens and engages them; negative reinforcement generally pushes kids away. Regarding Miracle on Craig Street, they have jumped through every single hoop that was put up; they have demonstrated the viability of the program and asked that they are given site control to move onto the next step of the program.

Dean Mirabito – Expressed that site control for Miracle on Craig Street should be granted. Then stated that having punitive measure for bicycle safety is a bad idea, try to find positive things for them to do.

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. Perazzo– Stated that she is bothered by the sound issue and would like the sound ordinance to be used more effectively. The City does have two decibel meters that can be used for this quality of life issue. She then remarked on the pride-filled week in the City that started out with the Schenectady and Me art installation. There was Karen Johnson’s Memorial on Thursday that was amazing, the following day was the branch dedication of the library. Then there were a large number of people in the City for all the activities this weekend – the Little Italy Festa, Stockade Art Show, The Greek Fest, and the Caribbean Day in the Park. She then announced that the Friends of the Greenhouse will be having their plant sale on Saturday, September 21, 2019 and encouraged everyone to go and support their efforts.

Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas – Expressed her thoughts on Karen B. Johnson’s memorial and dedication, it was a great ceremony and it was a wonderful way to remember our former Mayor and Legislator. She then said that along with all the weekend activities there was music at the Harbor. Then stated that she attended Congressman Tonko’s forum last week and he is committed to ensure that everyone gets counted for the upcoming census.

Ms. Porterfield – Stated that it was good to see everyone out and interacting with each other. We have a diverse population with many different cultures. She also attended Karen Johnson’s memorial and expressed her appreciation of the tribute. She then spoke bicycle safety and thanked everyone who came out to speak about it. She agrees that we should not target our youths and make the law punitive. She then later added that it would be in everyone’s best interest to see the Miracle on Craig Street be moved forward.

Mr. Polimeni – Announced that the Bellevue Little League Clean-up was remarkable. There were over 100 people that came out and the work they did was tremendous. He thanked the Mayor, Floyd Slater and Paul Lafond for their assistance with the clean-up. Then he clarified, the agenda items of Police Sick Time and Policy was asked to be tabled. He then spoke about bicycle safety and suggested that a bike park be explored.

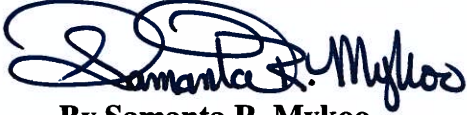
Mayor Gary R. McCarthy – Complimented Karen Johnson’s sons on the presentation and memorial for their mother. Then clarified that for the Miracle on Craig Street, he suggested transferring the building to them for \$1 and they declined that offer, they have been given access to the building which effectively gives them site control. The only thing he declined to do was turn on utilities since there was no inspection from Code Enforcement and may be a safety issue. He then commented on this past weekend events. There were many people in attendance from the City and from outside the City. These events did not compete with each but complimented each other, there was the Stockade Art Show, The City’s Health Fair, Little Italy Fest, the Greek Fest and Caribbean Day – there was something for everyone.

Ed Kosiur – Congratulated Carl Williams on his appointment and acceptance to the Civilian Police Review Board and thanked his colleagues for moving the appointment. He then announced that the Senior Center is back open every Tuesday and Thursday at the Ancient Order of Hibernians located at 1748 State Street from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. and lunch is served promptly at 12:00 p.m.

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. Mootoveren and seconded by Ms. Porterfield. The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

A true record

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Samanta R. Mykoo". The signature is stylized with large, overlapping loops.

By Samanta R. Mykoo

Schenectady City Clerk