

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

February 10, 2020

The City Council Meeting was called to order by the City Council President John Mootooveren at 7:05 p.m. in Room 209, City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Mr. Mootooveren asked Council Member John Polimeni to offer the invocation.

Mr. Mootooveren then called on Lt. James Sanders 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: Edward Kosiur, Carmel Patrick, John Polimeni, Marion Porterfield, Karen Zalewski-Wildzunas, Leesa Perazzo, and John Mootooveren.

Also Present – City Clerk Samanta R. Mykoo, Corporation Counsel Andrew Koldin, and Assistant Corporation Counsel James Commodore.

Absent – None.

At this point, Mr. Mootooveren asked if there were no objections, he would like to take agenda items number 10, 11, and 12 out of order. There were no objections.

Resolution No. 2020-017 A Resolution Recognizing Black History Month.

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

The resolution was accepted by Schenectady NAACP President Dr. Odo Butler. He thanked the Mayor and Council for their recognition and said the African American / Black History is American History.

Resolution No. 2020-018 A Resolution Recognizing the League of Women Voters on their 100th Anniversary.

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

The resolution was accepted by Ann Hatke, President of the Schenectady County League of Women Voters. She thanked the Mayor and Council for their recognition.

Resolution No. 2020-019 A Resolution Recognizing Lt. James Sanders' Graduation from the FBI National Academy.

The resolution was moved by Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas and seconded by Mr. Polimeni.

The resolution was accepted by Lt. James Sanders. He thanked the Mayor and Council for their recognition.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Regarding Zoning Change for Multiple Properties on Revere Avenue.

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

P. D. Voorhis – Asked for more details such as a map that shows where Revere Avenue is located.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Mootoveren asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the January 27, 2020 Council meeting as submitted by the City Clerk. Mr. Kosiur 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 February 10, 2020.

General:

From James A. Wilson of the 27th Division American Legion Post 1002, a letter dated January 27, 2020 thanking the Mayor and Council for awarding funds to be used toward their rent and also for their support.

From Nils Hedlund of the American Legion Post 1485, a letter dated January 29, 2020, thanking the Mayor and Council for their support and funds to maintain their rooms.

From Commander Chuck Shannon, Schenectady VFW Post 357, a letter dated January 29, 2020, thanking the City of Schenectady for the financial assistance that will be used to help local veterans.

From Robert S. Albee of the Schenectady Veterans WWII – Korea & Viet Nam at 718 Union Street, a letter dated January 28, 2020 thanking the Mayor and Council for monetary aid that will continue to maintain the home of the Schenectady Veterans of WWII, Inc.

From Commander Paul S. Zondeman of the Jewish War Veterans of the United States, Schenectady Post 106, a letter dated January 29, 2020 thanking the City of Schenectady for their generous contribution that will help with the expense of renting space for meetings and for the support of their organization.

From Commander Leonard Porcaro of the American Legion, Broderick – Fuller – Nekola Memorial Post 1005, a letter thanking the Mayor and Council for their donation and support.

Petitions:

None

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS):

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

Mary McClaine – Why is public art taking over the City? Our Dutch architecture should be promoted and celebrated. Instead, public art was pushed for the downtown revitalization it was proposed for the historic Stockade and tonight it is on the agenda for a new City project – namely the Craig – Main Connection Streets Plan. I think public art is loud, garish and cheapens the urban surroundings. Why should someone’s art be forced on the general public? Who is to say that an individual’s slop of gook is more important than the architect who designed the building in the first place? Why destroy his original intent? The building designer spent many years in school learning his craft. Leave it alone. Anyone who wants to paint should invest in a canvas and hang his or her work indoors. Those who are interested will know where to view it.

P. D. Voorhis - Spoke about the issue of the abandonment of Pine Street. She looked at what the surveyor has reported and asked if it can be used as a paper street? She also asked who is taking over the street, neighboring property owners or Delaware and Hudson taking it over? She also asked if it will be usable.

David Giacalone – Questions the Ardsley Road legislation stating that it is still 25% higher than what Mr. Polimeni originally stated. Then asked if residents have the opportunity to say no if prices are too high. There was no discussion on regarding what makes sense.

Kristin Diotte – Director of Development thanked the Mayor and Council for their support in the adoption of the Craig-Main Connection Complete Streets Plan and stated that the community’s vision was supported by the plan.

Having no one signed up to speak, Mr. Mootoveren declared the privilege of the floor, regarding the legislative agenda, to be closed.

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

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

Consent Agenda

- Ordinance No. 2020 – 02..... Adopted Unanimously
- Ordinance No. 2020 – 03..... Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2020-020..... Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2020-021..... Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2020-022..... Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2020-023..... Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2020-024..... Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2020-025..... Adopted Unanimously

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Mr. Mootooveren 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:

Mary McClaine – My name is Mary McClaine, resident, taxpayer, U.S. Citizen. I was expecting a statement from this administration regarding the incident in the City Council Chamber on January 13th. Obviously it will not be forthcoming so I will do it myself. My husband is a veteran. He served in the Korean War. His two brothers served in World War II. His father served in World War I and his ancestors fought in the Civil War. Because of people like them, every American has inherited the right to speak any place in this country. What happened to me in this chamber on January 13th is worse than gargling with razor blades. Anyone responsible for the TV blackout should try it. January 13th was a dark day for Schenectady. An indelible mark was made on its history. Democracy was abandoned. A thumb nose was given to parliamentary procedure. Another's private space was invaded. Hostility reared its ugly head and all past resolution given to Veterans for Veterans Day were reduced to nothingness. For shame, for shame, for shame. Mayor, this is not a smart city. You are saddled with dumb.

Anthony Peter Carata, III – Stated that there are issues with bed bugs that need to be addressed. Tenants cannot use their money to pay for pest control. It is the responsibility of landlords.

P. D. Voorhis. – Stated that she agreed with Mary McClaine, January 13th was a travesty. Over the years the people have been reminded that Council does not need to invite the public at the meetings and stated that the law needs to change.

David Giacalone – Stated that this year was the third anniversary of the casino being in the City of Schenectady. At the last meeting it was announced that the Casino has kept their promise to our City. We didn't ask enough of them and they need to pay more as they have done for other communities.

Diablo – Part 5 about how difficult it is to make a living selling art and friends helping friends in the City of Schenectady. Stated that Proctor's has unethical methods of obtaining funds that should be presented to the City. He then stated that entities that come into the City and do business should be required to make a donation toward art or a museum.

Seeing no other speakers come before the City Council, Mr. Mootooveren declared the privilege of the floor, regarding general City business, to be closed.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas – Commended the Development Department on the Craig-Main Connection Streetscape Plan. Then spoke about the Thriving Neighborhoods project in Mt. Pleasant and congratulated the Merchant's Association and others involved with bringing it forward.

Ms. Porterfield – Thanked everyone who came out to speak tonight. She then reminded everyone about the tax preparation program called CASH. She announced that starting March 1st is the beginning on the ban on plastic bags. Then asked everyone to participate in the 2020 Census and be counted.

Ms. Patrick – Spoke about the public information sessions that are being held regarding the Community Choice Aggregation and that the City is working with MEGA. There will be

informational table at the Schenectady Greenmarket. She then announced that Hotel week is coming up and then spoke about the Thriving Neighborhood project in the Eastern Avenue area.

Mr. Kosiur – Thanked the Schenectady Foundation for the Thriving Neighborhoods Challenge; the Cub Scouts were awarded for their idea in the Woodlawn neighborhood. He announced that the New York State Nurses will be holding an informational picket on February 14th in front of Ellis Hospital. Then announced that Elvis will be present at the Schenectady Senior Center on Thursday, reservations will be needed. He then thanked the street crew for plowing the streets and keeping it clean.

Mr. Polimeni – Stated that the Bellevue Little League program was funded and looks forward to seeing the field revitalized. He announced the meeting date for the Bellevue Neighborhood Preservation Association and stated that the speaker will be from the Schenectady Foundation. He then announced the new Butterflies and Blooms exhibit at Mi-Sci.

Mr. Commodore – Stated that the City does hear its citizenry and there are many people who work in City Hall that work daily to address these various concerns. He then spoke about the 2020 Black History theme being about voting and that as a substantial community with a substantial African American and minority population we vote and be counted in the 2020 Census as well. He then quoted his fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha, “A vote less people is a hopeless people” so let’s make sure we are counted.

Mr. Mootooveren – Congratulated Assistant Chief Falvo on his retirement. He then on behalf of the Guyanese community he invited all to attend Guyana’s Golden Jubilee celebration on February 17th.

Adjourned:

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Mr. Mootooveren asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was moved by Mr. Polimeni and seconded by Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas. The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

A true record

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

By Samanta R. Mykoo
Schenectady City Clerk