

**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING
OF THE SCHENECTADY CITY COUNCIL
February 27, 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 asked Reverend Ronald Hunt to offer the invocation.

Ms. Porterfield then called on Councilmember Carmel Patrick 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, Carmel Patrick, John Polimeni, and Marion Porterfield

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

At this point, Ms. Porterfield asked if there were no obligations, she would like to take agenda item ten out of order. There were no objections.

Resolution 2023-038 Recognizing Women's History Month

The Resolution was moved by Ms. Patrick and seconded by Mr. Farley. The resolution passed unanimously.

The resolution was accepted by Kim Siciliano, Chief Executive Officer of YWCA NortheasternNY. She spoke about her organization and what they do for the community and thanked the Mayor and Council for their support and recognition.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Regarding Amendments to Chapter 161 of the Schenectady City Code Regarding the Collection of White Goods

Ms. Porterfield invited all who wished to address the Council regarding the Public to come forward.

Seeing no speakers come forward, Ms. Porterfield declared the Public Hearing to be closed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Porterfield asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 13, 2023 council meeting as submitted by the City Clerk. Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Mootoveren seconded the motion.

COMMUNICATIONS PRESENTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Official:

None.

General:

From Mabel Leon, an email addressing the difficulties she had emailing the individual Council Members and another email expressing her strong support of the Clean Slate Act.

From David Giacalone, an email regarding questions on the creative outdoor advertising (bins and ads) and suggested that the City improve the sidewalks rather than having a handful of neighbors decide.

From Donald H. Davis, a letter requesting the Lady Liberty statue be moved back to Freedom Park and the possibility of funding for this endeavor.

From Harold and Debbie Schneiderwind, an email requesting that all garbage and white goods continue to be picked up weekly. They also ask that yard waste be collected beginning in March. Services are dwindling and becoming difficult to access.

Petitions:

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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 Council approves the Consent Agenda, the motion was moved by Ms. Patrick and seconded by Mr. Mootoveren.

Consent Agenda

- Resolution No. 2023-038.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-039.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-040.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-041.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-042.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-043.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-044.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-045.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-046.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2023-047.....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.

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

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

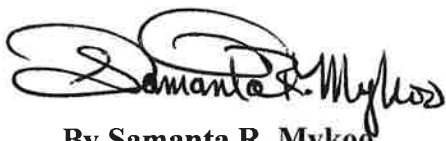
Mayor McCarthy – Offered his condolences to the Humphrey family for the tragic loss of their daughter. Also cautioned everyone to inclement weather that will be affecting the city soon and asked that everyone be safe.

Marion Porterfield – Thanked everyone who were able to come out to the meeting, and offered her condolences to the Humphrey family. Also thanked everyone who attended The Bridge Church for the Black History commemorative program.

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. Mootoveren and seconded by Mr. Williams. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

A true record



By Samanta R. Mykod
Schenectady City Clerk

Samanta R. Mykoo

From: Mabel LEON [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2023 5:53 PM
To: Samanta R. Mykoo
Subject: Clean Slate Act

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.

I attempted to send an individual email to each Schenectady City Council member and they were returned to me as undeliverable. I used the email addresses listed for each City Council member listed on your web site. I am unable to attend the City Council meeting tonight and wanted to reach out to each member individually to support a very important issue. I found this unsettling . I will forward the memo I wrote to each member and ask that it be shared with each of them . I am also requesting a call back about what blocked this email from reaching City Council members.

Mabel Leon
[REDACTED]

Samanta R. Mykoo

From: Mabel LEON [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2023 5:54 PM
To: Samanta R. Mykoo
Subject: FW: Vote in favor of the Resolution to support the New York State Clean Slate Act

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.

Since I am unable to attend the City Council meeting tonight on February 13,2023, I am reaching out to each of you by email. I want to express my strong support for this resolution being discussed this evening. The Clean Slate Act would ensure that convictions would not permanently follow New Yorkers. This act would assure that people with convictions are not punished for a life- time. Convictions often result in difficulties acquiring housing and can greatly restrict the job opportunities of a person trying to re-enter our community as a productive citizen. This Act would support individuals, our economy, and benefit all of us.

Vote in favor of the Resolution to support the Clean Slate Act.

Sincerely,
Mabel Leon

[REDACTED]

Samanta R. Mykoo

From: John Mootooveren
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 4:20 PM
To: Samanta R. Mykoo
Subject: Fwd: important QQs not answered re Sidewalks and Bins with Ads

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From: David Giacalone [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 6:38 PM
To: [REDACTED] John Polimeni <JPolimeni@schenectadyny.gov>; Carl Williams <cewilliams.schenectady@gmail.com>; Damonni Farley [REDACTED]; John Mootooveren <JMootooveren@schenectadyny.gov>; Carmel Patrick <CPatrick@schenectadyny.gov>; Doreen Ditoro [REDACTED]
Subject: important QQs not answered re Sidewalks and Bins with Ads

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.

Dear Council Members,

I was finally able to watch the Meetings video for Feb. 6, 2023 today. I was again very disappointed in the quality of answers you were given to assist you in making important decisions. You ARE the Legislative and Policy-making body for this City and have every right, and responsibility, to demand clear, thorough answers, and claims backed up with believable numbers.

- **GENERAL SUGGESTION:** When asked to discard or ignore restrictions that are in our Code, please ask why the restriction was imposed, and how that goal will be preserved or disserved (safety, aesthetics, good taste, etc.) without the restriction.

CREATIVE OUTDOOR ADVERTISING [Bins with Ads]:

1. **REVENUE?** You were never given ANY estimate of expected revenue from this program. Percentage numbers without gross revenue is useless. Were you given numbers somewhere else?
2. **TRADEOFFS.** Thus, you were not told what the tradeoff will be for allowing our streets to be cluttered with advertising that otherwise would not be allowed under our Code. Just a few added dollars? Some likely reduction in Litter/
 1. Will Schenectady really be more beautiful or safer with large trash bins along the streets? Lines of sight are already greatly jeopardized for all those walking or driving downtown. Too many people just toss items into or near existing receptacles; how will larger bins that are closed improve that problem?
 2. We limit the number of signs a business can have and we ban off-premises signs [§264-62] to remove distractions and visual pollution. More signs right up in our faces does not seem to jibe with an improved Schenectady, whether you say we are in a period of Renaissance or Enlightenment, or still in

the Dark Ages. [* see the bottom of this email, where I have inserted the provision in our Code presenting the INTENT of our regulation of signs.]

3. NOTE: Mr. Diamond from COA made it sound like there will be a minimum of 40 of these large bins.
3. NEGOTIATE WHAT? The Council has not indicated what role it expects to play in deciding:
 1. Where the Large bins with ads on both sides will be located.
 2. Whether to have those 6-ft. wide bins used solely for litter. [Does litter include all the plastic containers we see all over our streets and parks?]
 3. Whether Schdy is ready to adequately service those bins (collection and dumping) so we can reap 15% of the unspecified revenue stream, rather than merely 5% if COA does it. If the City does it without increasing pick-ups, we may find some very Creative trash structures around and on those bins
 4. Which segments of our economy will be allowed to advertise. COA's representative says it will not permit smoking or alcohol, but the City should decide on marijuana (and what about gambling? Unions?). Corporation Counsel Koldin, who has not yet researched whether we need to change our Sign Code, says we should not ban any lawful product or service on those Bins. Do you agreed? BTW: what can be advertised near schools and bus stops?

BASICALLY: Why get into all these issues for a tiny (or even a large) revenue stream?

Rules Of The Road

- ❖ COA's recycling stations are exclusively located on Municipal property.
- ❖ 100% complete and absolute control of the program in the hands of Municipal officials.



Creative **Outdoor** Advertising

228

SIDEWALK SUBSIDIES

Important questions were not really answered in any satisfying way.

1. HOW MUCH PER PROJECT will it Cost the City and its taxpayers?
 1. In January 2020, the City charged the folks on Ardsely Ave. about \$55 per linear ft. And it therefore paid 2/3rds of the total price, over \$96.000 trying to assuage the Ardsley Rd. owners. It is fair to say given construction inflation since then, that the City will be paying **far over \$100K** per similarly sized project.
 2. CURRENT COSTS. Mr. Wallin stated without much conviction that current marketplace costs are \$80 to \$100 per linear foot. Given the customary optimism voiced in front of the Council when selling a proposal, I'm betting that means \$120-\$140 /plf.
 3. WHO BENIEFTS? Should a handful of property owners on a block be able to create that much of an expense for the City for something that does not really benefit others in the community? Do we really want to continue neighbors browbeating eachother to sign a Petition?
 4. TREES: Losing large healthy trees is a real cost to our community. Our Engineering Department seems to believe any big tree whose roots are cut must come down. That surely reduces the quality of life in that neighborhood in many ways. Shouldn't a real arborist be consulted on each tree, since the need to remove the tree is so dependent on the actual tree and its situation?
2. HOW MANY LIKELY BIDDERS? We seem to be presuming there will be competition among bidders that will bring prices down. Only one firm bid on Ardsley Rd. What has changed in our local economy that makes us believe bidders will be lining up, especially attracted to sidewalk reconstruction when it is so difficult to find workers these days, and Federal infrastructure dollars are creating much work in the industry?
3. HOW MUCH INTEREST IS THERE OUT IN THE COMMUNITY? The Mayor says there's a lot of interest, but gave no idea whether a lot is 3 blocks or 30.

Instead of leaving it up to handfuls of neighbors to instigate a sidewalk project, why not have the City use Sidewalk Funds to ITSELF choose andrepair the worst stretches of sidewalk in town, or the places where improvement wil best serve residents and visitors? Will the fund is being depleting by the City intentionally spending money in the optimal way, it can be working on a plan, like Rochester and Syracuse to systematically improve a portion of the City in a cycle that gets the whole municipality improved over a reasonable time frame?

SUMMARY: Is there really a majority of Council members ready to say they know enough about Sidewalk financing and improvement and having Ads on Bins to hand the matter over to our public servants?

Thanks for your time and consideration. Please reply with any questions.

David

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* §264-69B: **Intent.** The article is intended to protect property values, create a more attractive economic and business climate, enhance and protect the physical and historic appearance of the community, preserve the scenic and natural beauty, enhance the pedestrian environment, and provide a more enjoyable and pleasing community. The article is further intended hereto to reduce sign or advertising distractions and obstructions that may contribute to traffic accidents, reduce hazards that may be caused by signs overhanging or projecting over public rights-of-way, provide more visual open space and improve the community's appearance.

Judson Meadows, Apt 114

[REDACTED]
February 5, 2023

Mayor Gary R. McCarthy
105 Jay Street
Schenectady, N. Y. 12302

Dear Mayor McCarthy:

I am a 94 year- old retiree now living at Judson Meadows. I had a 39 year career as a design engineer with the Large Steam Turbine division at GE starting in 1951. I have a fond regard for the city where I spent most of my working life. These were among the happiest days of my life. I am interested in seeing the city revitalized as I know you are. I'm writing to you today to make a plea for moving the small statue of Lady Liberty back to Freedom Park where she was originally placed. Let me explain what this statue and its location means to me and my family.

One of my daughters married the son of an Italian immigrant whose family found employment here in the area after passing through Ellis Island. The statue of Liberty meant a great deal to them. In the heyday of the GE and Alco there were hundreds if not thousands who made their way to Schenectady and got good jobs here. The replica of Lady Liberty in Freedom Park was a fitting tribute to those workers who were so important in the growth and prosperity of Schenectady.

My late wife achieved her life- long dream of a college education, and as explained in the attached Gazette article, realized that dream when she attended Schenectady Community College. Her essay on how the replica statue influenced her education is printed in the Gazette article. She herself was an immigrant from Canada.

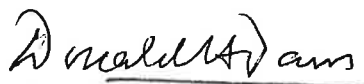
Beyond my personal and family feelings about the location of the statue I have discussed the subject with my friends at Judson Meadow and elsewhere. Those who remember the park as it was all express their dismay that the statue was moved from its original location. I believe the original location is ideal for the statue; especially now that the area has been revitalized with new apartments and surrounded by the college. Its proximity to the Schenectady Historical Society, and the Stockade, ties in with the historic meaning of the statue.

I can visualize a new Liberty Park with the statue and appropriate signage explaining how the statue came about and its meaning for the city and education. The park with benches will provide a quiet place where visitors, tourists, and especially students, can relax and reflect on the history around them.

I am certainly aware that this project will require funding. The relocation will include the design of the park as well as building a new base for the statue and its relocation. I am confident that given the green light to go ahead my friend, Lance Jackson, and his group, will find ways to substantially help fund the relocation and make it a reality. They have been planning for this for a long time.

If you have any questions please call me at [REDACTED] or E-mail me at [REDACTED]

Yours hopefully,


Donald H. Davis

Cc: City Council and Chris Leonard,

Copy of Article Published Gazette
Oct 13, 2020

To the opinion editor of the Gazette:

My late wife, Marilyn D. Davis, was a woman of many interests: homemaker for four children, community volunteer, GE employee, and active in statewide Libertarian politics. She had a lifelong dream of pursuing a college education. In 1986 at age 56 she achieved it. She completed two degrees while there, first as a paralegal and second in English including a creative writing course. All her courses were completed with highest honors. Also while at SCCC she was employed by the college as a tutor and mentor for fellow students.

Our family has recently been in the process of preserving family records, and it was during this work we rediscovered Marilyn's essay. It is my hope that a new location for the statue will be found to inspire future students as it did my wife.

Donald H. Davis, Charlton, N.Y.

THE GOLDEN DOOR

By Marilyn Dawn Davis 1987

Facing Schenectady County Community College in Liberty Park is a replica of the statue of Liberty. Much smaller than her majestic sister in the New York harbor, she is scarcely noticed by passers-by or students hurrying to and from classes. She stands silently, holding her torch on high and gazing serenely at the College across the way. She is a particularly apt symbol, I believe, not only of the freedoms usually associated with the Statue of Liberty, but of another freedom: the freedom of educational opportunity. This one freedom leads to most of the others each of us holds so dear.

Education is the foundation we need in order to achieve our greatest dreams and to reach our potential. It is a rock to build our castles on. It is the golden door to the future. Each one of us holds the key to the golden door; from the first day of school, through elementary school, high school and college, we are preparing ourselves for the future by setting goals and visualizing the kind of person we want to become. It is only through our own efforts that we will achieve our goals; by working for them and letting nothing sway us from the path to achieving them; by always searching for the right way. Sometimes the way seems hilly and uneven, with twists and turns and dead ends, but we must keep on in spite of disappointment and set-backs. Along the way we will find our greatest values. We will find ourselves. We will discover who we are and what we are capable of accomplishing. The only limits to our dreams and ambitions are self-imposed ones; the limits we place on desire, perseverance, and hard work. We who have the privilege and opportunity must take advantage of it so that the bright future we could have had

will not slip away into what "might have been".

Since the year just past has been the occasion for a memorable and emotional one-hundredth birthday celebration for the Statue of Liberty, this is a fitting time to consider the freedoms that education can bring to each of us. These freedoms include freedom from ignorance, fear, and poverty; and freedom to grow into personal independence, confidence, self-esteem, accomplishment, and self-fulfillment.

To me, the torch of the Statue of Liberty represents the light of knowledge dispelling the darkness of ignorance and despair, and the last line of the poem written by Emma Lazarus for the Statue of Liberty seems to me an especially significant one for all students:

"I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Marilyn D. Davis 1987

Samanta R. Mykoo

From: John Mootooveren
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 4:16 PM
To: Samanta R. Mykoo
Subject: Fwd: Waste Disposal/white goods etc.

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From: Debbie Schneiderwind [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2023 4:21 PM
To: John Polimeni <JPolimeni@schenectadyny.gov>; Carl Williams <CWilliams@schenectadyny.gov>; John Mootooveren <JMootooveren@schenectadyny.gov>; Marion Porterfield <MPorterfield@schenectadyny.gov>; Carmel Patrick <CPatrick@schenectadyny.gov>
Subject: Waste Disposal/white goods etc.

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.

As residents of Schenectady, we request that all garbage and white goods continue to be picked up weekly. We also ask that Schenectady yard waste be collected beginning in March as has been the case in the past. Residents need to be aware of where to dispose of tires, paint, and technology items as well. We did NOT receive any mail in December that had been sent out from the waste department.

Services are always dwindling and becoming more difficult to access in Schenectady. Please do not cut more benefits as our taxes are already quite high. Parking is inconvenient and becoming more so, especially for those with physical disabilities. City Hall is difficult to get into for help. Schenectady is not resident friendly by any means. Please don't reduce our disposal days. Please give us advanced notice on how to get rid of all waste. Many of us in Schenectady are low-income and cannot afford the service of a commercial entity.

Thank you for the time you have taken to listen to our comments.

Sincerely,

Harold and Debbie Schneiderwind
[REDACTED]

P.S. Please address the situation of begging that is going on in front of the college (SCCC), and at AllTownFresh. It has gotten very much out of hand and has become dangerous!