

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

February 28, 2022

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 Council Member John Polimeni to offer the invocation.

Ms. Porterfield then called on Council Member Carl Williams 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 Mootooveren, Doreen Ditoro, Damonni Farley, Carmel Patrick, John Polimeni, Carl Williams, and Marion Porterfield.

Also Present – City Clerk Samanta R. Mykoo and Corporation Counsel Andrew Koldin.

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

Resolution No. 2022-048 A Resolution Recognizing and Celebrating March 2022 as Women’s History Month

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

The resolution was accepted by Lauren Tunko the Women & Family Service Director of the YWCA of NorthEastern NY. She thanked the Mayor and City Council for the recognition.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Regarding Amending 2021-2022 HUD Annual Action Plan

See comments on file in the Office of Development.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Porterfield asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 14, 2022 Council Meeting as submitted by the City Clerk. Mr. Mootooveren made a motion to approve the minutes and Ms. Patrick seconded the motion.

COMMUNICATIONS PRESENTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Official:

None.

General:

From Lorena Harris, an email requesting support to increase the Collegiate Science & Technology Entry Program (CSTEP) and the Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP) funding by a total of 20%.

From David Giacalone, an email addressing March as being Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM) and requesting that the City Hall steeple be lit yellow on March 8th to represent “Shining the Light on Problem Gambling.” He also requests support in adoption of a proclamation for Problem Gambling Awareness Month.

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:

P. D. Voorhis – Stated that there were seven items in executive session that the public has no idea of what they are, there were real estate sales and claims, but no other details.

Bob Mantello - Stated that he has the knowledge and experience drafting budgets and it appears our golf budget lacks funding over the years. There has not been any foresight in escalating costs when creating the budget. He asks that the Council amend the Golf Course budget increase for senior residents to prevent this significant increase.

Seeing no speakers to 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, and the motion was moved by Mr. Mootoveren and seconded by Mr. Williams.

Consent Agenda

Ordinance No. 2022-02Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2022-049.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2022-050.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2022-051.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2022-052.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2022-053.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2022-054.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2022-055.....Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2022-056.....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.

Diablo – Spoke about the qualifications required to review the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) applications. How many people qualify? How are they selected? What is the process for selection? He would like some sort of referendum on the people that are selected. He would like assistance completing the application for the funding because he would like to open a gallery.

P. D. Voorhis – Stated that the 24-unit apartment building that was built on Barrett Street was occupied and filled with corporations and committee members of various boards throughout the City. Each one of them purchased two units in the building. She then stated that two-thirds of the employment at Union College are non-academic and they have parking issues. They have an alternative motive in buying two units. The City should have demanded a disclosure form.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

Doreen Ditoro – Stated that the Soup Stroll that was organized by the Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation (DSIC) was well attended. She then congratulated the winners – The Nest, Manhattan Exchange, and Backstage Pub.

Carmel Patrick – Announced that the Whitney Book Corner will be moving and there is a sale on their books and movies. She then encouraged everyone to go out and reduce their inventory.

Damoni Farley – Thanked his colleagues for attending the “My Brother’s Keeper” celebration. This celebration was attended by many community stakeholders, public officials, and concerned community members. This initiative helps close and eliminate opportunity gaps for young men of color in the City of Schenectady.

Carl Williams – Stated that although it’s the end of the Federally recognized Black History Month, the accomplishments and achievements of African Americans are vast. It’s necessary to congratulate and recognize the individuals that have been influential and impactful in our City every day. Then he announced that the Goose Hill Neighborhood Association will be hosting an event titled “The Role of Faith in the Life of Dr. Martin Luther King” it will be presented by Reverend Nicolle Harris and held at Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Parish on Rosa Road at 6 p.m. on March 9th.

John Polimeni – Announced some economic news regarding the inflation of current times and expectations of further increases. He advised that if you can and are able, to prepare for the rise and if you are having difficulty to ask for help. Reach out, don’t struggle; there’s lots of help available. If you don’t know who to call, please reach out to Council or City Hall.

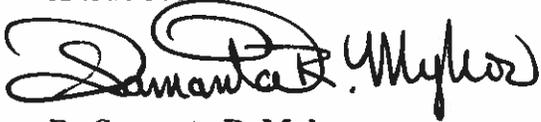
Marion Porterfield – Announced that the Mayor is at another meeting and that is the reason he is not in attendance. The Mayor’s Office sent out a memo regarding mask wearing being optional for City Hall and members of the public. This is in response to the latest CDC mask guidance and Schenectady County having been identified as an area of low risk. She then thanked the Chief of Police for inviting her and other Council members to the Procedural Justice training; it was very informative and looks forward to its’ continuation and the continuation of the Police Reform. The Police Department is having a Police Academy for Citizens; it’s a 13-week commitment. It begins the 16th of March and anyone who is interested may sign-up; the applications are available at the Police Department. She then addressed a comment that was brought up at the rail regarding the ARPA Advisory Committee and who should be on the panel and said that before this Council Meeting there was a special City Development & Planning Committee meeting that held which addressed all issues including conflicts and processes. The

Council is looking for volunteers for the advisory board and if anyone is interested in participating, they will need to contact the City Clerk by the 14th of March.

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. Williams and seconded by Mr. Farley. The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 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, looping initial "S".

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

Samanta R. Mykoo

From: Lorena Harris [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 28, 2022 12:34 PM
To: Samanta R. Mykoo
Subject: Please increase funding for the CSTEP and STEP Programs by 20%

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.

Lorena Harris
[REDACTED]
Schenectady, NY 12305

February 28, 2022

Dear Clerk Mykoo,

As we continue to navigate through the challenge of the Covid 19 pandemic, I want to thank you for your leadership through this extraordinary period in history.

In her proposed Executive Budget for 2023, Governor Hochul has proposed a 10% increase in funding for CSTEP and STEP and all of the opportunity programs. While I am grateful to the Governor for this proposed increase, I respectfully request an additional 10% for a total increase of 20% for CSTEP and STEP programs. I ask that you continue the commitment to double New York State's investment in the CSTEP and STEP programs.

CSTEP and STEP programs are nationally recognized and proven programs that address the regional shortage of professionals in STEM, health, and licensed fields. Funding for these important programs must be expanded if New York is to be prepared for the STEM-based economy of the future. Please support increasing current 2021-2022 funding levels for CSTEP and STEP by a total of 20%.

CSTEP and STEP programs provide key academic support and enrichment, training, internships and research opportunities, standardized test preparation, and support in applying to college and graduate and professional programs of study in STEM, health, and licensed professions. These services are necessary for the academic success of students, and expanding the state's investment in these essential programs is an investment in me and my future.

As you deliberate this year's budget, I urge you to support programs that work for New York State. CSTEP and STEP work for New York! Please increase CSTEP/STEP funding by a total of 20% and continue the state's investment in my future. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Lorena Harris

Samanta R. Mykoo

From: davidgiacalone [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 28, 2022 12:54 PM
To: Samanta R. Mykoo
Subject: Shine the Light on Problem Gambling
Attachments: Proclamation-Language-2022.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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.

To: Mayor Gary R. MvCarthy
Marion orterfield, President, City Council
Council Members

March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month [PGAM] and I ask that the City of Schenectady City join the cities and landmarks across the State that will be Shining the Light on Problem Gambling, March 8, 2022, by lighting our City Hall steeple in yellow that night. See the Press Realse below for more information.

The advent of Mobile Sports Betting has brought more urgency to PGAM, as MSB allows 24/7 sports betting from anywhere, on unlimited combinations and novel bets. Unlike revenue brought in at Rivers in Schenectady, none of the hundreds of millions of annual tax revenue from MSB is earmarked for Schenectady or Schenectady County.

Indeed, [Gov. Hochul has left Property Tax Relief out](#) from her proposed use of MSB tax renvenue for the next few fiscal years. Schenectady faces more residents (and their families and friends) dealing with the financial, emotional and social crises created by problem gambling, without more tax revenue, and perhaps with fewer gamblers bringing their gaming dollars in person to 1 Rush Street, and thus generating less local gaming tax revenue.

We hope that the public becomes more aware of both the hazards of problem gambling and the resources available to help prevent problem gambling, and treat the related problems for the gambler and his or her family.

Our regional Problem Gambling Resource Center is located in Albany and can be reached online at <https://nyproblemgamblinghelp.org/northeast/>

Please, in addition to Lighting our Steeple on March 8, please consider adopting a Proclamation supporting the goals of PGAM. A Sample is attached. For more information and details see <http://nyproblemgambling.org/pgam/>

Thank you for your interest in these important issues.

David Giacalone
Schenectady NY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Michelle Hadden

mhadden@nyproblemgambling.org

**From Niagara Falls to the Mario Cuomo Bridge:
NY Shines the Light on Problem Gambling**

March 1, 2022 – With the rapid expansion of gambling and the record-breaking introduction of mobile sports betting, there is no better time to bring the issue of problem gambling to the forefront. The New York Council on Problem Gambling (NYCPG) and its seven regional Problem Gambling Resource Centers (PGRCs) are calling on everyone to “shine the light” on problem gambling during Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM) this March.

The Council’s newest effort and a driving force behind this year’s Shine the Light theme involves several notable places in New York joining NYCPG and its PGRCs to recognize March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month. “Bringing statewide attention to this issue means supporting our friends and neighbors,” says Angela DiRosa, Program Manager for the Western NY PGRC. “We know that an increase in availability of any gambling leads to an increase of problems. Having access 24 hours a day and being able to place an endless number of wagers compounds that. We want to make sure that people know they’re not alone and there’s support available before people find themselves in a dire situation.”

The following landmarks will be lit up yellow on Tuesday, March 8, 2022:

- Niagara Falls, Niagara Falls NY & Canada
- Seneca One Tower, Buffalo
- Tower 280 at Midtown, Rochester
- Legacy Tower, Rochester
- One East Avenue, Rochester
- The Metropolitan, Rochester
- 3 City Center, Rochester
- Yates County Government Building, Penn Yan
- Syracuse City Hall, Syracuse
- National Grid Building, Syracuse
- Barclay Damon Building, Syracuse
- SUNY System Administration Building, Albany
- Gov. Mario M. Cuomo (Tappan Zee) Bridge, Rockland & Westchester Cos.

- Mid-Hudson Bridge, Poughkeepsie & Highland

During the five weeks in March 2022, the Council will be shining the light on problem gambling, focusing on one theme each week and encouraging partners, allies, and community members to take action that raises awareness themselves. Details and resources can be found at <http://nyproblemgambling.org/pgam/>.

Highlights of the statewide plans for March include the following:

March 6: Open Gamblers Anonymous Meeting via Zoom

March 8: Gambling Disorder Screening Day

March 8: Shine the Light Night

March 9-10: NYCPG Annual Conference

March 10: Shine the Light Rally

Multiple Webinars and Trainings, Facebook Live Events, and more.

Over 600,000 adults residing in NY are experiencing problems related to their gambling. According to the National Council on Problem Gambling, 2 million U.S. adults (1%) are estimated to meet criteria for severe gambling problems in a given year. Another 4-6 million (2-3%) would be considered to have mild or moderate gambling problems; that is, they meet one or more of the criteria and are experiencing problems due to their gambling behavior. The effects of problem gambling are not isolated to the individual who is gambling. It's been estimated that 8-10 additional people can be negatively affected by one person's gambling behaviors (Petry et al, 2005). These people include family members, friends, neighbors and even coworkers.

Not only do we all need to shine the light on the issue of problem gambling, we want our lights to be a beacon for anyone who might be negatively affected by a gambling problems – there is hope and help! To learn more, take action, or find help visit <http://nyproblemgambling.org/pgam/>.

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The NYS Problem Gambling Resource Centers (PGRC) are a program of the New York Council on Problem Gambling dedicated to addressing the issue of problem gambling within New York State. The vision of the PGRC is the positive transformation of lives harmed by problem gambling. The PGRC focuses efforts on increasing public awareness of problem gambling; connecting clients with treatment, recovery and support services; and promoting healthy lifestyles which foster freedom from problem gambling. Visit www.NYProblemGamblingHELP.org to learn more about the PGRC network.

The New York Council on Problem Gambling (NYCPG) is a not-for-profit independent corporation dedicated to increasing public awareness about problem and compulsive gambling and advocating for support services and treatment for persons adversely affected by problem gambling. NYCPG maintains a neutral stance on gambling and is governed by a Board of Directors. Find out more at

NYProblemGambling.org

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The text below is sample language for a proclamation for Problem Gambling Awareness Month 2022. Be sure to place text on official letterhead and replace highlighted sections with appropriate location(s) and organization(s). Thank you for your support in raising awareness of the problem gambling in the State of New York!

Problem Gambling Awareness Month 2022

Sample Proclamation

WHEREAS, problem gambling is a preventable public health issue that affects over 600,000 New York residents of all ages, races, and ethnic backgrounds, and causes significant societal and economic costs for families, businesses and communities;

WHEREAS, expanding availability and accessibility of gambling activities in New York State increase our collective risk for problem gambling;

WHEREAS, problem gambling is treatable, and treatment is effective in minimizing this harm to both individuals and society as a whole;

WHEREAS, promoting public awareness provides New Yorkers an opportunity to educate the public and policy makers about the warning signs and available support for individuals and families struggling with problems related to gambling activity;

WHEREAS, the New York Council on Problem Gambling and its partners have encouraged individuals, professionals and organizations to join the effort to raise awareness of this issue, support those struggling and become advocates for the cause through StrongerThanYouThinkNY.org;

WHEREAS, the New York Council on Problem Gambling, and the **Central Region Problem Gambling Resource Center** invite all residents of **[region/city/state]** to participate in Problem Gambling Awareness Month;

WHEREAS, the National Council on Problem Gambling, the New York Council on Problem Gambling and the **Central Region Problem Gambling Resource Center** have designated March 2022 as Problem Gambling Awareness Month;

THEREFORE, I, **(name and title of official)**, do hereby proclaim the month of March 2022 as

Problem Gambling Awareness Month in **[city/state]**

and encourage all citizens to support the New York Council on Problem Gambling, and the **Central Region Problem Gambling Resource Center** in their efforts to raise awareness and stimulate action for the issue of problem gambling with friends, family, clients and communities.

Signature

Date