
5.	By Councilmember	Mr. Riggi	A RESOLUTION Amending Resolution 2014-160.	4 Votes	2014 - 181
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6.	By Councilmember	Mr. Riggi	A RESOLUTION Amending Resolution 2014-161.	4 Votes	2014 - 182
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7.	By Councilmember	Mr. Riggi	A RESOLUTION Authorizing the Settlement of a Tax Certiorari with Mian Associates.	4 Votes	2014 - 183
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8.	By Councilmember	Mr. Riggi	A RESOLUTION Authorizing the Settlement of a Tax Certiorari with Mahoutchian Enterprises LLC.	4 Votes	2014 - 184
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9.	By Councilmember	Mr. Riggi	A RESOLUTION Authorizing the Settlement of a Tax Certiorari Brought by Court Royale Apartments, LLC.	4 Votes	2014 - 185
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**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING
OF THE SCHENECTADY CITY COUNCIL**

July 28, 2014

The City Council Meeting was called to order by the City Council President Margaret King at 7:02 p.m. in Room 209, City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Ms. King called upon Rev. Moon Hawk River Stone to provide the invocation.

Ms. King called on Marva Isaacs to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Deputy City Clerk called the roll and the following members of the City Council answered to be present:

Present – Council members Mr. Erikson, Margaret King, Ed Kosiur, John Mootooveren, Ms. Perazzo, Marion Porterfield, and Vincent Riggi.

Also Present – Deputy City Clerk Chad Putman, Assistant Corporation Counsel Carl Falotico and Mayor Gary McCarthy.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. King asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 14, 2014, meeting as submitted by the City Clerk, with one correction noted by Mr. Mootooveren; Ms. Porterfield made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Mootooveren seconded the motion.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Communications Presented to the City Council for Monday, July, 28, 2014

Official:

From the Mayor a list of appointments dated July 28, 2014.

General:

None

Petitions:

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Ms. Porterfield, Health & Recreation – Noted she supports the call for a public hearing related to Steinmetz Park Fees. She extended her gratitude to the Goose Hill Neighborhood Association and Camille Sasinowski for their efforts related to the park.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS)

Ms. King invited all who wished to address the Legislative Agenda to come forward:

P.D. Voorhis, Schenectady – Noted she disagrees with the City's plan to contract with the town of Niskayuna for assessment services. She noted the school district is in chaos and added the Mayor was a City Council member and former board member for Metroplex. She noted the City

has vacant buildings which need to be renovated and suggested Niskayuna is experiencing problems at Mansion Square.

Jason Planck, Schenectady – Noted the tax certiorari regarding Main Associates accounts for a 59 percent tax reduction for the years 2009 through 2013. He noted these reductions include refunds to the school district and county. He noted this certiorari is evidence of the need for a city wide reassessment. He then indicated the Claims Committee went into executive session illegally on July 21 due to the lack of sufficient notice and information given to the public. He noted the City would be in trouble if the Gazette or someone else decided to investigate.

Carmella Ruscitto, Schenectady – Noted she was the previous treasurer for the Schenectady Neighborhood Watch. She noted the group had a lot of money and that she decided to get out of the group for personal reasons. She wonders where all of the money went that was in the treasury. She noted the group use to hold fundraisers and members would buy their own t-shirts and used police radios. She questions the decision of the Police Department to fund the purchase of similar equipment with funds from the JAG program.

Seeing no further speakers come forward, Ms. King declared the Privilege of the Floor on the legislative Agenda 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 seconded by Mr. Mootooveren.

Consent Agenda –

- Resolution No. 2014 – 178Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2014 – 179Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2014 – 180Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2014 – 181Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2014 – 182Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2014 – 183Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2014 – 184Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2014 - 185Adopted Unanimously

A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into an Inter-Municipal Agreement with the Town of Niskayuna regarding Assessment Services. 2014 - 186

The motion was moved by Ms. Perazzo and seconded by Mr. Mootooveren.

6:1:0

Voting AYE: Erikson, King, Kosiur, Mootooveren, Perazzo, and Porterfield

Voting NAY: Riggi

Abstain: None

Mr. Kosiur – Noted this agreement is in line with the Governor’s effort to encourage shared services between municipalities and that he supports the resolution.

Mr. Riggi – Noted the current Assessor had reported to him his interest in providing per diem assessment services to the City after his resignation takes effect on August 1, 2014. He noted he

would like to see the current Assessor provide this service which he believes would be cheaper for the City than the proposed contract with the town of Niskayuna.

RIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Ms. King 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:

P.D. Voorhis, Schenectady – Noted recent vandalism in Vale Cemetery and encouraged residents to contact cemetery officials if a relative's stone was impacted. She noted a semi-truck recently wedged itself under the Liberty Street railroad bridge coming from Erie Boulevard. She added the driver was released and it was reported the Department of Transportation was on hand to inspect the bridge for damage. She questioned why there was nothing in the paper about the incident.

Jason Planck, Schenectady – Noted his support of a city-wide reassessment and added the Mayor has reported a reassessment would cost the City \$3 million dollars. He questioned the accuracy of this figure noting the previous reassessment was done in-house and that the dollar amount is being used as a scare tactic. He advised the City to break the reassessment down into sections and stretch it out over a five year period. He added Schenectady homeowners are experiencing the brunt of the tax burden. He then noted Schenectady County is one of the worst counties in the state with regards to affordable housing and that the City is not in compliance with hiring persons with disabilities.

Tony Buonome, Schenectady – Questioned when the Oak Street Bridge repairs will take place and when the bridge will be reopened to vehicle traffic. He advised the City to stop the trains from passing under the tracks in an effort to speed up the time line for the bridge repair. He noted attending a town hall meeting Congressman Paul Tonko hosted back in early 2014 and that he was advised at the time that key officials need to have a meeting to expedite the bridge repairs.

Rebecca Cigal, Niskayuna – Noted her dog recently died following a dog on dog attack in the City. She called on the City to address dangerous dogs in the City by maintaining records of these dangerous dogs. She noted her support of Council member Mr. Riggi's advocacy regarding alerting residents where these dangerous dogs are located. She does not agree the argument that this alert registry of dangerous dogs would diminish property values and she encouraged the City to review this proposal further.

Marva Isaacs, Schenectady – Noted the Hamilton Hill Neighborhood Association hosted a successful neighborhood block party and she extended her appreciation to all those involved with the event. She mentioned specific individuals, groups and businesses including Price Chopper, SICM, Schenectady Bike Rescue and others. She then thanked the Mayor and City Council for the ceremonial resolution recognizing Bethel AME congregation on its 62 anniversary.

Carmella Rusitto, Schenectady – Noted she had walked over to the Front Street pool about two weeks ago and was surprised to see the pool is closed on Sundays. She noted she spoke with the life guard on duty and was told the change in hours had to do with budget cuts passed by the City Council. She noted it would make more sense to have the pool open on the weekends and closed on a week day when more children and parents would be available to attend. She asked the Council to follow up further.

Spero Zoulas, Schenectady – Noted Woodlawn Park has experience significant improvements thanks to the City staff in the Office of General Services. He noted City staff took great pride in resurfacing the concrete pad and constructing a new pavilion which is attached to the old pool

house. He added the park is hosting a pilot of the SICM free lunch program and summer youth program for kids and it is going very well. He noted the program runs on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 11: a.m. to 5:00 p.m. He closed by noting the Woodlawn Neighborhood Association will be hosting its annual cookout in Woodlawn Park on August 13 and a free movie night for kids on August 16th.

Frank Wicks, Schenectady – “I have not attended the last three meetings so the Council, Mayor and speakers from the floor could focus on proposed casino related issues. I thank the Mayor for conducting the wedding of my good friends on May 23, and graciously inviting my friends to explore the building. They posed for many pictures on the circular stairways. The Mayor is also to be commended for surprising Mona Golub with Patroonship for her 25 years of bringing in outstanding musicians for the free concerts that had been initiated by Mayor Karen Johnson. Also noted the audit for 2013 showed the Police Department was \$600,000 over budget, and it was driven by excessive police overtime. The Schenectady Police Department has history of police overtime scandals, including a police officer charging overtime when not on duty. An even more serious abuse is fabricating a traffic ticket, and then giving false testimony in court. It can also corrupt the District Attorney’s office and the City Court. The case in point is Patrick Morris with a base salary of \$71,899 increased to \$136,624 with overtime. Upon issuing a fabrication, the victim is offered, and should refuse, to agree to a lesser fabrication. Partick Morris then provides false testimony in City Court. Traffic Court Judge Mark Blanchfield terminates the session because of overtime. The victim confronts Patrick Morris outside the courtroom with his false testimony, and Patrick Morris says he can’t talk about it. The matter reconvenes at a later date. Officer Jonathan Moore who has nothing, and could have nothing to support Patrick Moore’s false testimony, but who had threatened the victim, as observed by another citizen, makes a second court appearance. Assistant district attorney, Kevin Cheung, has to argue for a conviction for a fabricated violation. The ethical position would be to refuse. Instead, Kevin Cheung resorted to the kind of trickery that is most egregious for a prosecutor. Traffic Court Judge Mark Blanchfield, who had been a candidate for Supreme Court, had an ethical responsibility to reject, and to inform Kevin Cheung that his trickery was not allowable. Mark Blanchfield shows he is unfit to be judge. Recommendations: The problem is that unscrupulous police offices, such as Patrick Morris, can now fabricate offenses. The result can be to drive up police overtime costs, and also corrupting the justice system including the office of the District Attorney and the City Court. Solution: The problem can be solved by simply requiring police officers to have evidence to support any traffic ticket that they may issue.”

eeing no other speakers to come before the City Council, Ms. King declared the Privilege of the Floor closed regarding City Business.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL

Mr. Riggi – Thanked the dog owner who spoke during privilege of the floor and encouraged the City not to wait for dangerous dog legislation to move through the State Legislature. He noted public safety is the number one priority. He noted the dangerous dog alert in a given neighborhood could be similar to a deer crossing sign found on the road side. He then noted concerns related to a zoning issue at 569 Ontario Street and also on Cleveland Avenue. He noted the property owners are running a car repair business and body shop at night and that the City needs to intervene. He then noted concerns related to the current condition of the Schenectady Little League field in preparation for the street naming ceremony taking place in late August. He noted the Bellevue Neighborhood Association will be hosting its 15th annual picnic in the park on August 9. He noted the Sherriff’s Department will be on hand to issue Child Safe ID’s and

there will be free food and music. He noted the Bellevue Farmers Market is taking place every Thursday and he encouraged residents to attend.

Mr. Erikson – Announced his resignation from the Schenectady City Council. He noted his family and obligations at work are the priority and that he does not have enough time to maintain his Council member responsibilities as well. He added he has enjoyed his time as a Council member and that he learned a great deal from his experience. He noted he would like to see more people get involved in local government and that this would be his last meeting.

Ms. Perazzo – Noted her support of the agreement between the City of Schenectady and the Town of Niskayuna regarding tax assessment services. She added this will give the current City Deputy Assessor, who holds an MBA time to complete requirements before stepping into the City Assessor position in approximately 6 months. She then extended her gratitude to the Schenectady Police Department and Parkview residents for their quick response to recent graffiti tagging which took place in Bellevue. She noted the graffiti was covered by the homeowners. She then invited the public to attend an Italian movie festival taking place on Friday nights at Perreca's Restaurant on Jay Street. She noted in the case of rain the movies will be shown on Saturday evenings.

Ms. Porterfield – She noted she will be looking into the concern brought forward during privilege of the floor tonight regarding the Front Street pool being closed on Sundays. She then added that the Hamilton Hill Neighborhood Association Block Party was a great success and a positive event for the community. She added members of the Schenectady Police Department will be participating in a basketball tournament with area youth on Saturdays from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Jerry Burrell Park. She closed by extending best wishes to Council member Mr. Erikson.

Mr. Kosiur – He recognized the departure of Council member Mr. Erikson and his leadership on the Finance Committee during his term of service. He then noted a recent water main break on Watt Street and he thanked City residents and departments for their quick response. He then spoke to a specific incident involving a grandmother who was faced with eviction following a broken water main at the residence. He questioned what options a resident would have in this situation and asked that the topic be addressed at the next Committee meeting. He then noted the pedestrian lights at the Corner of Albany Street and Brandywine have gone up and will improve pedestrian safety at that corner. He then noted the Schenectady school district will be holding public meetings regarding the redistricting plan on July 29 at Schenectady High School. He encouraged residents to attend and provide input. He then noted he would like to see the Park Advisory Committee reinstated to address concerns in City parks. He then gave examples of some of those concerns including food trucks leaking oil and using gas generators near the kiddy play land. He closed by noting the Woodlawn Neighborhood Association will host its annual picnic on August 13 and that it will be held in Woodlawn Park this year.

Mr. Mootooveren – Noted Mont Pleasant will be hosting a neighborhood garage sale on August 2nd and permits can be purchased for \$10 through the Neighborhood Association. He added the Mont Pleasant Merchant Association will be hosting a customer appreciation event on the same day. He thanked City staff for installing the pedestrian safety lights in at the corner of Albany and Brandywine. Regarding the Police Department JAG funding, he noted specific items will be purchased for the Neighborhood Watch group. He closed by thanking Council member Mr. Erikson for his service on the City Council.

Mayor McCarthy – Thanked Council member Carl Erikson for his service on the City Council. Regarding the Front Street pool he noted there was a recent pump that was broken and he was

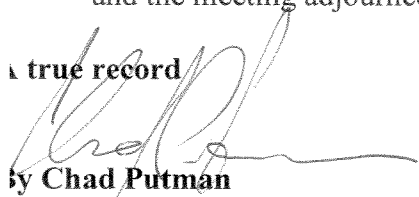
not sure if that is why the pool was closed on the above noted Sunday. He noted he would be following up on that further as well as the zoning issue raised by Mr. Riggi. Regarding dangerous dogs he noted the Court system maintains those records and that those records can be made available to the public by the court. He added he does not support identifying an entire block as host to a dangerous dog but would support a results oriented approach.

Ms. King – Congratulated Mona Golub on her receipt of the Patroon Award presented to her by the Mayor at the Music Haven Gala held recently. She then noted Schenectady residents should know the Central Park pavilion is safe and clean. Prior discussions related to pavilion renovations will be explored during the budget negotiation process but that residents should not be concerned about safety issues while using the pavilion in the meantime.

Adjourned:

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Ms. King asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was moved by Mr. Erikson and seconded by Mr. Mootoveren and the meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

A true record



by **Chad Putman**

Schenectady Deputy City Clerk