

**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE
SCHENECTADY CITY COUNCIL – JANUARY 8, 2007**

The meeting was called to order by Council President Mark W. Blanchfield at 7:00 P.M. in Room 209, City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Mr. Blanchfield called upon Rev. Thaddeus Williams, Consecration Temple Church of God in Christ, to deliver the Invocation.

Mr. Blanchfield then called upon Jean Gordon to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Present – Council members Joseph L. Allen, Frank J. Maurizio,
Margaret C. King, Gary R. McCarthy, Denise K. Brucker,
Barbara Blanchard and Mark W. Blanchfield

Absent - None.

Also Present – Mayor Brian U. Stratton, City Clerk Carolyn Friello and
Corporation Counsel L. John Van Norden, Esq.

At this point in the meeting, Assemblyman Paul Tonko swore in Margaret C. King and Denise K. Brucker.

Margaret C. King – Holding the Bible for her was County Legislator Gary Hughes.

Denise K. Brucker – She was joined by her sister, Karen. Holding the Bible for her was her husband, Cliff.

At this point, Mr. Blanchfield asked if there were no objections, he would like to take Agenda Items #10 and #11 out of order. There were no objections.

Resolution No. 2007-01 Adopted Unanimously

Resolution No. 2007-02 Adopted Unanimously

Mr. McCarthy invited Steve Kuring and Wendy Race to come inside the rail to accept a resolution congratulating them for their contribution to the City of Schenectady. Also, Police Chief Michael Geraci and Assistant Police Chief Mark Chaires joined.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. On Local Law Intro. #7-2006 to increase the maximum allowable income for the Seniors and the Disabled of the Real Property Tax Law.

Mr. Blanchfield invited all who wished to speak on Public Hearing #1 to come forward (7:20 P.M.). Seeing no speakers, Mr. Blanchfield declared Public Hearing #1 closed (7:21 P.M.).

2. Regarding the approval of the 2007 budget for Upper Union Business Improvement District.

Mr. Blanchfield invited all who wished to speak on Public Hearing #2 to come forward (7:22 P.M.). The following speaker rose to be heard and his remarks are summarized:

Mike Mastrianni, Upper Union Street BID, thanked everyone for their support. The budget is funded by the 65 property owners who pay the assessment. We will continue in 2007 what was started in 2006.

Seeing no other speakers, Mr. Blanchfield declared Public Hearing #2 closed (7:24 P.M.).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Maurizio moved that the minutes of the City Council meeting of December 11, 2006 be approved as submitted by the City Clerk. It was seconded by Ms. King. Hearing no objections, Mr. Blanchfield declared the minutes approved as submitted.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Official –

From the Mayor, a list of appointments.

From the Water Department, three (3) letters accepting the bids of and awarding the contracts to:

- AMREX Chemical Co., Inc. for the purchase of “Liquid Chlorine” in the amount of \$29,640.00;

- Thatcher Company of New York for “Hydrofluosilicic Acid” in the amount of \$25,280.00; and
- Layne Christensen Company for “Repair of Well #10” in the amount of \$61,170.00.

From the Water Department, one (1) letter rejecting the bid for “Ortho Phosphate Corrosion Inhibitor”.

General (Public Announcement) –

The Bellevue Preservation Association will hold its monthly meeting on Thursday, January 11 at 7:00 P.M. at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 1911 Fairview Ave. The Guest Speaker will be the Schenectady County Historian, Don Rittner. The public is invited.

PETITIONS: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Mr. Maurizio stated that the City Development & Planning Committee met; he explained Agenda Item #8. These are permits issued to small businesses. He also explained Agenda Item #3. The plan remains a work in progress so we will pull it off the agenda and continue to work with the neighborhoods.

Ms. King stated that the Public Service & Utilities Committee met; she explained Agenda Item #4.

Mr. McCarthy stated that the Public Safety Committee met; he explained Agenda Items #1 and #6.

Mr. Allen stated that the Health & Recreation Committee met; we have several events in the city. MUNY was rated as one of the best courses to play on.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS):

Mr. Blanchfield invited all who wished to address the City Council on any item of the Legislative Agenda to come forward. The following speaker rose to be heard and her remarks are summarized:

Linda Crandall, 1601 Bradley Street, stated that the Comprehensive Plan is a ploy to alienate parkland on Oregon Ave. The people have spoken – all you have to do is listen. Tell us what you plan to do with the Oregon Ave. area

The residents don't want the parkland, sold, traded or developed.

Seeing no other speakers to come before the City Council, Mr. Blanchfield declared the Privilege of the Floor on the Legislative Agenda closed.

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

Consent Agenda –

Ordinance No. 2007-01	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2007-03	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2007-04	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2007-05	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2007-06	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2007-07	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2007-08	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2007-09	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2007-CS01	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2007-CS02	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2007-CS03	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2007-CS04	Adopted Unanimously

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Mr. Blanchfield 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:

Michael Iacobucci, 11 Alvey Street, asked – Why are you even considering developing the park? Also, I have had many problems with the garbage pickup.

I have called the Mayor's Office and Carl Olsen's Office and I haven't got no where.

Elaine Willi, 1571 Bradley Street, opposes the sale or development of any parkland as stated in the Comprehensive Plan. Not too many years ago, Mayor Jurczynski and George Robertson wanted to develop this parcel of parkland along Oregon Ave. – maintenance garage. Mayor Stratton, then a City Council member opposed the sale and development of this same parcel. Many residents had been fighting this proposal all along. Now, Mayor Stratton wants to trade this same parcel, which is parkland for development. I have obtained and submitted at least 700 signatures to the city and River Street planning, at least 300 of which consists of Woodlawn residents of at least 50 in the immediate area stating opposition to the sale or trade of parkland for development. These voices stand firm now as in the past! Yes, many who attended this Comprehensive Plan agree to cleaning up the maintenance garage – keep in mind that the property in disarray all these years does not constitute an excuse for selling or trading parkland. Furthermore, it is not necessary to confuse the issue by assuming development of this parcel with selling or trading parkland. Our voices stand firm – still now as in the past. “We do not want the sale or trade of any of our parkland!” What part of these words does this city not understand?!

Katherine Delain, 214 Liberty Street, opposes the sale or development of parkland. The people are the heart and sale of Schenectady and you need to listen to us.

Robert Sanders, 2821 Halsey Drive, stated that the people who live on Kings Road are being disturbed continually by tractor-trailers. Also, the Woodlawn Preserve is not Parkland. The city owns it. It's not a preserve and it's not part of Pine Bush.

Harry Brand, 2108 Van Rensselaer Drive, stated that you have no right to sell parkland. Also, appoint people who are electable. I suggest that you set a 2-year term limit on elected officials.

Catherine Greene, 15 Barney Street, stated that in the Comprehensive Plan, Vale Village is described as the community boundaries of State St./Catherine St./Vale Park and Nott Terrace. In our plan that was Phase I, eventually to extend from Nott Street to Brandywine Ave., some people feel that they were left out. I want to say “Thank You” to the administration for working with us and putting our funds to use. Vale Village will meet on Thursday at 7:00 P.M. to reorganize our forces.

Leonard DeMasi feels that Union College should have an educational pilot rather than a cash pilot.

Vince Riggi, Campbell Ave., stated that the tone of the letter that we received from Assessment was not friendly. It was very intimidating. If a re-assessment is going to be done, let's do it the right way. All tax exempt properties need to be done. The City of Schenectady is the "trustee" of parkland. You have to take care of it. Also, the Stop Signs near Immaculate Conception Church needs to be corrected.

Pat Zollinger, 150 Clement Ave., stated that the first order of business should be dealing with the Mayor's salary. Now is the time for the Finance Committee to raise that salary. Deal with this in a honest, open manner.

H. William Roth, 1154 Barrett Street, stated that several business owners on Jay Street are being ticketed when loading or unloading supplies. In regard to homelessness – why can't abandoned houses be turned into Eco-Lodges. In regard to trash pickup and disabled persons, if the owners of apartments provide a receptacle in front of the house for garbage cans, can there be a \$13.00 tax reduction?

Mary McClaine said – I commented - it would be nice if the Council recognized the citizens regularly during the meetings. They could include the Council-member or citizens who do much for the community. Well done – Mr. Allen and Ms. Blanchard for their "No" vote against the Brucker appointment. They were smart and honorable. There are issues regarding this appointment. One – has yet to be addressed and the first time that it becomes obvious, the Council will hear about it. Also regarding experience, whenever anyone wins elective office for the first time – he or she goes into the position "Tabula Raca". The votes are willing to give the newcomer a chance; the Council was not willing to do that. As for her electability, she will have to prove it twice because the 4 "Yes" voters bought themselves a Primary.

Seeing no other speakers to come before the City Council, Mr. Blanchfield declared the Privilege of the Floor closed.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Mr. McCarthy stated that the Assessment letter and the Comprehensive Plan should be bringing us together. We don't want an Assessment role that's out of whack or inequitable. The Comprehensive Plan is really a "wish list" of things that we would like to do in the city. No one has made a definitive

decision. The letter that was sent out was factual and to the point and shouldn't divide us. If you have questions, call – so conflicts can be resolved. The same thing applies to the Comprehensive Plan. It's still an open process. Lastly, I would ask that the Council President submits – for the next committee cycle, the concept of televising our committee meetings. Sometimes, we get questioned on what we are doing. The Privilege of the Floor is democracy. We have a wide range of people here. We get people with good ideas. I would like to start the process of televising our committee meetings.

Ms. Blanchard supports Council member McCarthy in televising the committee meetings. It would keep the residents better informed. I hope that it can be arranged. Also, I encourage everyone to make their thoughts about the Comprehensive Plan known to the Council or Development. The plan will be adopted in the Spring. “Thanks” to Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Allen for sending the Comprehensive Plan out to the neighborhoods. Also, Dr. Vandelloo and Don Rittner are both city residents.

Mr. Maurizio stated that Margaret Irwin will join us on February 12th at 5:30 P.M. I suggest that everyone who has questions – to join us – to see how the draft was obtained. If you feel that your suggestion or your neighbor's suggestion weren't addressed, please join us.

Mr. Allen spoke in regard to the garbage situation. It's illegal to store garbage in front of your house. If people have problems getting their garbage out, I'm sure we can work on that to get it taken care of. I also agree that an educational pilot rather than a cash pilot for Union College is good.

The Mayor congratulated Council members King and Brucker. I look forward to working with the Council. In regard to Mr. Iacobucci's comments, I don't recall him calling the office regarding the garbage issues. Finally, Schenectady has received a \$1,000,000.00 grant for the Lead Hazard Identification and Control Program. We are among 12 cities nationwide who received this from the Department of Federal Housing and Urban Development. It will make 200 homes lead safe in Hamilton Hill and Vale.

Mr. Blanchfield stated that he is honored by your vote tonight by which I became Council President again. I am not a perfect person, but, I will make the same promise to you that I made to the citizens of this city – which is to work hard and do my best at this job.

City Council Mtg.
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8

ADJOURNMENT:

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Mr. Blanchfield declared the meeting adjourned at 8:31 P.M.

A TRUE RECORD

**BY CAROLYN FRIELLO
CITY CLERK**