

**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE
SCHENECTADY CITY COUNCIL
May 9, 2011**

The Meeting was called to order by the Council President Gary McCarthy at 7:08 p.m. in Room 209, City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Mr. McCarthy called upon Father Paul Panos of St. George Greek Orthodox Church, Schenectady, New York to deliver the invocation.

Mr. McCarthy called upon John Polimeni 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 Joseph L. Allen, Denise K. Brucker, Carl Erikson, Gary R. McCarthy, Thomas Della Sala, Barbara Blanchard and Margaret C. King.

Absent – None

Also Present –Deputy Clerk Charles W. Thorne and Corporation Counsel L. John Van Norden.

At this point of the meeting Mr. McCarthy asked, if there were no objections, he would like to take Agenda Items numbers 7, 8, 9 and 9A out of order.

Resolution No. 2011-96

Ms. King called Janet and John Hutchison inside the rail to accept a resolution marking the 40th Anniversary of *The Open Door Bookstore*. Ms. Hutchison thanked the Council and recalled downtown 40 years ago and how pleased she was to be part of the downtown resurgence. She also invited everyone to the anniversary celebration on Friday.

Ms. King moved the item and it was passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 2011- 97

Ms. Brucker called Catherine Hedgemen and Jim Salengo inside the rail to accept the resolution. Ms. Hedgemen said she was looking forward to working with Schenectady, Albany and Cohoes.

Ms. Brucker moved the item and it was passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 2011 – 98

Mr. Della Sala called Reverend Grigsby and representatives from the Postal Service. Reverend Grigsby and the postal workers thanked the Council was thanked for bringing attention to this worthy effort.

Mr. Della Sala moved the item and it was passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 2011 – 99

Mr. Erikson called County Legislature Gary Hughes, Don Ackerman, and several gardeners inside the rail to accept a resolution recognizing the gardeners who maintain public spaces throughout the city.

Mr. Erikson moved the item and it was passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

There were no minutes to approve.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Official:

From the Acting Mayor a list of appointments (dist 5/09/11).

A letter from the Deputy Directory of Water and Wastewater recommending the award for the Engineering Service for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations Contract assessment to Camp Dresser & McKee.

General:

An email from Bellevue Preservation Inc. announcing their monthly meeting on Thursday May 12, their neighborhood Garage Sale on Saturday and Sunday June 4th and 5th and the Bi-Annual Bellevue Community Flag Raising Ceremony and Memorial Service on Saturday, May 21st at 11 a.m. at Veteran's Park the top of Broadway Hill at Guilderland Avenue.

Petitions:

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance - Mr. Della Sala – Made a donation to Re-Tree Schenectady, saying, it was apparent from testimony at the CDBG Hearing residents supported giving more money to Re-Tree Schenectady. He asked that others join him in donating to the organization.

Mr. Erikson – Applauded the upcoming workshops on “How to Sell to Government” and reported that “Recyclution,” the campaign to raise waste recycling awareness, has resulted in a measured increase of recycled waste in the test districts 1 and 2.

Public Safety – Ms. Brucker – Spoke about the added benefits of 911ai.com the enhanced 911 service. The service will enable emergency responders to have

more information, such as existing medical conditions, office layouts in larger buildings and other pertinent conditions.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS)

Mr. McCarthy invited all who wished to address the Legislative Agenda to come forward. The following speakers rose to be heard and their remarks are summarized:

Jason Planck, City Resident – Stated that CDBG needs more accountability. He said the reports were the same “cut and paste” from previous years. He also questioned why the City was interested in the search for a Hamilton Hill Arts Center Executive Director.

Reverend Phil Grigsby, SICM – Spoke regarding the Consolidated Plan and stated he was sorry it was on the consent Agenda. He was hoping for additional public discussion. He questioned “Public Service” monies going to the Police Department and Code Enforcement. He felt people think of “Public Service” more in the context of agencies and an additional \$100,000 would be available to organizations such as Hamilton Hill Arts and others.

P.D. Voorhis, City Resident – Agreed with most of what Reverend Grigsby said, especially in regard to hearing more CDBG discussion.

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

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

Consent Agenda –

Ordinance No. 2011 – 11	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2011 – 100	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2011 – 101	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2011 – 102	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2011 – 103	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2011 – 104	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2011 – CS-07	Adopted Unanimously

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Mr. McCarthy 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:

Miriam Cajuste, City and County Affirmative Action Officer – Spoke to publish the upcoming Small Business Workshops relating to doing business with government.

Mary McClaine - Over the past three to four months this city spent \$29,000 to run the assessor out of town, gave the retiring fire chief \$74,000 based on a document that did not apply to his position and yet, according to today's Gazette, doesn't have money to remove graffiti from vandalized property. I hope the citizens of Schenectady are paying attention to what is happening in this city. One person now holds the position of Mayor, Council President, City Council member and Candidate for office. If this condition is positive for the city, enlighten me because I don't get it. The city wants to sell the Mayor's car. So what happens to the money? The city could have saved Stratton's left over salary but what did Council do? Members spent the money to give a job to their neighbor. Is that how taxpayers get more bang for their dollar? And then there is the quality of life issues, namely graffiti. Is cleaning graffiti listed as a job description for union employees? It's not as if volunteers would be painting signs that call for union labor. Cleaning vandalized property is something different. If volunteers can clean debris in City Parks, then those who vandalize city property should be expected to clean what they destroy without cost to the taxpayer. What is positive about cleaning graffiti with union labor when the work can be done free of charge. Enlighten me. Who should clean graffiti is a legal call and not a decision to be made by a park manager. This body is responsible for quality of life issues. Our representatives are also accountable for the expenditure of city taxes. They make financial decisions for us. The city needs to rein in spending and get real about taxes saving means save; not save on one project and spend money on something else. Less costs means more savings.

Barbara Katz, Downtown Resident – Complained about being treated rudely by some merchants and called names.

Jason Planck, City Resident – Cited Michael Lamendola's May 1st news article in the Daily Gazette regarding minorities in government workforce. He stated there is no program for the severely disabled and he took issue with Miriam Cajuste's statement saying that the make-up of the people taking the civil service exams is a sign of progress and a start.

Spiro Zoulas, Kings Road, Schenectady – Announced that the Woodlawn Park 1st Annual cleanup was a success and a repair day is scheduled for Saturday May 21st.

Tony Buonome, Bellevue Resident – said he heard Joe Allen complaining about people who put their trash out too early and said he has been complaining about this issue for years. He voiced concern about the pedestrian crossing on Brandywine and State Street. He is pleased that the new Assessor is working with residents.

Vince Riggi, Bellevue – Criticized using volunteers to clean-up the Fehr Avenue parking lot, saying the clean-up should have been performed by City employees.

James Weaver, Property owner in Bellevue – Offered a \$500 reward for information leading to the arrest of the person painting graffiti on buildings in the Bellevue neighborhood. He also stated that parking is a problem near the park pool and people are pulling up on the grass. He asked for monthly feedback for department heads to residents.

Chad Putman – Displayed the “Slow Down” signs that were posted along Kings Road in an effort to slow-down trucks on the road.

Roger Hull – Congratulated President Obama on “taking out” Osama Bin Laden. He then called for the resignation of Acting Mayor McCarthy stating that his holding of two positions in city government created a conflict of interest regarding Residency Board decisions.

P.D. Voorhis, Downtown Resident – Read a passage from a book entitled “Marathon.” She also wanted Metroplex informed that there is lights out on Jay Street.

Vickie Hurewitz, City Resident – Stated that a grocer is coming to the downtown area. She has also found a source on to buy affordable local produce to sell through the Food Pantry. Last year’s program was well received and will be continued this year.

Wayne Harper, City Resident – Asked if it is right that city employees accrue 10.5 hours of sick time a week. He also stated that top city salaries should be frozen.

Miscellaneous Business of the Council

Mr. Della Sala – informed all that Acting Mayor McCarthy has paid for all production cost related to programs, which are not City business, that he has had broadcast on OSM TV.

Mr. Erikson – Was happy to hear of a grocer coming into the city and stated it is very important.

Ms. King –

Acting Mayor McCarthy – Announced there will be a cleanup in the Central Park, A-Diamond Parking lot.

Adjournment:

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Mr. McCarthy declared the meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

A true record

**By Charles W. Thorne
Deputy City Clerk**