

**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE
SCHENECTADY CITY COUNCIL – FEBRUARY 14TH, 2011**

The meeting was called to order by Council President Gary R. McCarthy at 7:15 P.M. in Room 209, City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Mr. McCarthy called upon the Rev. Paul Panos, St. George's Greek Orthodox Church, to deliver the Invocation.

Mr. McCarty then called upon Jason Planck to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present – Councilmembers Joseph L. Allen, Denise K. Brucker, Carl Erikson
Margaret C. King, Thomas Della Sala, Barbara Blanchard and Gary
R. McCarthy.

Absent – None

Also Present – Mayor Brian U. Stratton, City Clerk Eileen M. Versaci and
Corporation Council L. John Van Norden, Esq.,

At this point in the meeting Mr. McCarthy asked if there were no objections, he would like to take Agenda Items #17, #18 and #19 out of order. There were no objections.

Resolution No. 2011-17 Adopted Unanimously

Mr. Della Sala invited Kathleen “Katie” Ferguson to come inside the rail to accept a resolution recognizing and honoring the Accomplishments as Schenectady City School District as 2010 Teacher of the Year. Ms. Ferguson thanks the City Council for this Resolution.

Resolution No. 2011-18 Adopted Unanimously

Ms. King invited Dr. Michele Puloti, Jane Osterhout, Sister Stella Dillon and Miriam Cajuste to come inside the rail to accept a resolution honoring Women's History Month and the Schenectady Business and Professional Women's Club. They thanked the City Council for this Resolution.

Resolution No. 2011-19 Adopted Unanimously

Mr. Allen invited all the distinguished members in the audience to come inside the rail to accept a resolution recognizing and commending the Historic Achievements of African-Americans, declaring February, 2011 Black History Month. They thanked the City Council for this Resolution.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

COMMUNICATIONS:

Official:

From the Office of the Mayor, list of Appointments. (dist. 2/14/2011)

General:

Four letters of thanks from the following Veterans Organizations:

Polish American Veterans of Schenectady
American legion Post 1485
Jewish War Veterans Post 106
Veterans of World War II, Korea & Vietnam

Petitions:

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Mr. Della Sala - explained that now that we are consolidating all of our SNAP Operations at our Foster Avenue site the City will be accepting proposals from all interested parties for two buildings that have been used by SNAP. One is on Crane Street and the other is the former Fire House on Brandywine Avenue. We are hoping to get proposals and if anyone is interested or has questions about either of these sites they should contact Steve Strichman in the Zoning Office. Thank you.

Ms. Brucker - stated that Resolution #12, I would like to bring attention to it. It is authorizing the Mayor to accept a NYSDOH Grant for Smoke Detectors, as soon as this Grant comes though I would encourage people to look for announcements for these smoke detectors. This is a wonderful Grant and it is very crucial to fire prevention and safety. Keep an eye out for it and when the moneys come available please apply. Thank You

Ms. King - stated that we had two items in City Development and Planning. One is items #2, that allows us to contract with Care Inc. for services to continue services with our Continuum Care Application. The other one is item #3, the Sale of a small portion of St. Mary's Lane to Capitol Living Resources for a price of \$500.00.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS):

Mr. McCarthy called upon all who wished to address the City Council on any item of the Legislative Agenda to come forward. The following speakers rose to be heard and their remarks are summarized:

Wayne Harper, Schenectady, NY - I would like some information on #8, having to do with a loan to Villa Italia. The owners received a \$150,000 loan from the City of Schenectady and all payments were made in a timely manner and have an outstanding balance of \$79,000 to be paid off over the next five years. The bank is requesting that the City subordinate this loan to the Bank and to Metroplex, placing \$880,000 ahead of the City's \$79,000 loan. Now this loan is secured by the building appraised at \$1.2 million dollars; what I am asking is that the actual appraisal value?

Vince Riggi, Campbell Avenue - I see where we are going to do the buy-out with Chief Farstad. I hope this Council at some point, changes some legislation so that we can not accumulate so much sick time and vacation time to get these enormous buy-outs at the end of somebody's career. It is nice to have sick time if somebody needs it. This is all nice, but we cannot afford these buy-outs. Anyhow, that is my thoughts on that. Thank you.

Jason Planck, Schenectady - The item on the agenda pertaining the Schenectady PBA, well thank goodness for the Times-Union on Tuesday and the Gazette for breaking this story. This thing was done in Executive Session, without the eye of the public. What the public doesn't know is that you guys opened up the way to a 3% pay raise for the cops. You also gave them a no jobs lay-off provision. The City Council can't print money, if they have no money, how can you hire anybody or keep them on payroll. So having a no lay-off provision in the contract is unconstitutional so therefore it is out of the contract. You need to start standing up and start controlling the police and fire. This has got to stop because we are looking at an 8% tax raise in 2012, we cannot afford it. Thank you

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

An Ordinance 2011-07	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-17	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-18	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-19	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-20	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-21	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-22	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-23	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-24	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-25	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-26	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-27	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-28	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-29	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-30	Adopted Unanimously
A Resolution 2011-31	Adopted Unanimously

A Resolution 2011-32

Adopted Unanimously

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR: (CITY BUSINESS)

Mr. McCarthy invited all who wished to address the City Council on any matter of the City business to come forward. The following speakers rose to be heard and their remarks are summarized:

Barbara Katz, Schenectady, NY – Mr. Mayor, I'm sorry to see you go, I hope you like what I gave you. There seem to be serious problems on the bus stop on State Street, if you walk in the street; the people will try to run you over. Something must be done at this big bus stop. Thank you.

Jason Planck, Schenectady, NY - Section 105 of the Public Meeting law, Mr. Planck does not agree with the City Council on having Executive Session on matters pertaining to Union Business.

Elmer Birch, Niskayuna, NY - The reason for being here tonight is the announcement that the new nursing home is not being built in the City, should be something that is taken up as a serious issue. It does not serve the residents to be sent out in isolated places which the County consultants said the average resident is 80 years old. Who is taking care to visit these residents out in no-mans lands. How many people will be employed if they rely on public transportation, people who live in the city can they regularly get to the location, using public transportation, I would think not. This plan by the County is a preliminary plan, but it is not reasonable. The residents in this nursing home are totally isolated and feel like they are in prison. This is a bad decision, so I hope that you at least attempt to influence the County to consider an alternative in the City. Thank you.

Donald Birch, Schenectady, New York - Because I have been in trouble, a little bit since 2003, I have had contact with the Law, I am really trying to better myself, but the cops are on me everywhere I go.

Dave Bianchi, City of Schenectady - I want you to know that you have been misinformed by Mr. Strichman; he says that I have not paid taxes in years. I have paid tax bills from American Tax Funding; I have copies for everyone here. I would encourage the City Council to verify my story that the taxes were paid in full. There is something going on here, I don't understand how this can be. Thank you.

Vince Riggi, Campbell Avenue - Just quickly on that police contract, I have been coming down here for years, and it is always the same story. You have to hold your nose and vote yes, all the time that is what we always here. When are you going to get tired of it? Try job loss in some of these contract negotiations, I don't know, do we still have labor lawyers in these negotiations, enough is enough. I went to Social Security they told me, there has been no cost of living

increase since 2008, that is what the letter I got said. I don't know where they got the figures from, so no COLA, so why should anybody else get it. I understand your hands are tied; I have been hearing this for years and years. But we have to untie these hands and play the real hardball, threaten job loss, anytime there is any conflict in the public sector, and threaten job loss. During negotiations you will have to say sorry, we will have to lay some of you off and that's the way it works. Now I am a pack rat and I have been hanging to this for about twelve years, and since your name has been in the press lately, whether you are going to run or not run for Mayor. I have the official "McCarthy for Mayor" hat from twelve years ago, I had it on e-bay with a \$.99 but it didn't even make reserve. I'll hang on to this and maybe if you announce you can use it in your campaign. Thank you

Joy Hall, Schenectady, NY - It is very true the streets are not safe to walk on, the sidewalks are not clear and if you walk in the road the cars will run you down. We have to do something to clear up these streets and fix the pot holes.

Harry Brand, 2108 Van Rensselaer Dr., Schenectady, NY - first I would like to congratulate our Mayor on getting another job, he certainly worked hard for it for a number of years. I do wish him the very best. I would like to suggest that the new Mayor and the City Council change the way you work and that every City employee live in the City of Schenectady. You talk about revitalizing our neighborhoods; you don't have any money to do it. The money is just going out of the City and it needs to be changed. This also goes for the School Taxes, it is outrageous, and we can not afford this any longer.

P.D. Voorhis, City of Schenectady - This subordination of a preferred loan, this is just like preferred stock and common stock, this is just a flim flam and should not be allowed. When this Mayor came into office, he brought with him a John Paolino, as one of his top people and this man was an elected official in another Town, the subject was brought up and nothing was done about it. I dub this place the Holy Church of the No Gumption, and you really deserve it.

Wayne Harper - Schenectady, NY - First of all I want you to know Brian, I called your new boss and told him not to worried about a tax cap in Schenectady with you on board, there is always fees to add on. I just happened to watch the January 18th Committee Meeting where you folks agonized over where the OnRust was going to be docked. That's fine, but I wish you would agonize over how John Van Norden got to stay home all those months, with pay. I have asked for accounting before, maybe Kathleen Moore can fined out, how do you get there, how do you get to stay home that long with pay. Thank you

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

MISCELLANEOUS:

Mr. Allen: stated that he is still concerned by these bill boards in our community. It seems to me that is only minority participation in regards to "I'm Gay" apparently that only blacks are gay, there are no white's, no Hispanics. I am really concerned about it and that's one of the things, they put those things up and I don't know why they did put them up, because there have been different things in the paper where they were try to promote "safe sex". I went to a public forum and it seemed like everyone at this forum was Gay. I have no problem with that, but I think it should be an open forum to discuss his or her concerns, there was no opportunity to discuss my concerns.

Ms. King: Just a couple of things, everyone should know by now that Proctor's has taken over the Key Bank building and it is called Key Hall. The Schenectady County Chamber is doing after business hours on Thursday evening from, 5 to 7. There is no charge for this, but a donation of \$10.00 would be appreciated. Also, I would like to say to the Mayor congratulations on your new position; we all wish you all the best. It is a loss for the City because I do think you have done an outstanding job for the City. Thank you.

Mayor Stratton: First of all I want to thank all the speakers for coming down tonight and especially to Katie Ferguson, as teacher of the year. I didn't recognize her until I saw her tonight, her husband was Alex's Taekwondo teacher and Katie was there breaking boards and bricks, she is a great teacher, but you better not mess with her. I also want to thank Councilmen Allen for bringing the wonderful soloist. Thank you.

President McCarthy - I do want to wish you well Mr. Mayor and the citizens of the city do owe you a debt of gratitude for all the time and effort you have put into this, and sometimes on Monday Nights when we are sitting here it does not reflect the total mode of the community. Also, on the Villa Italia deal, the payments are up to date and the City is just taking a second position with some of the new banks in place. You have to remember that was a vacant garage and now generates somewhere in the neighborhood of \$21 to \$22 Thousand in taxes and that number is going up, because it is a PILOT Program. The PILOT Programs come up for discussion here and the 39 or so PILOTS that are place do generate something like 4.3 Million Dollars to local municipalities, schools and county government. The question about this body going into executive session, there was a law suit involved and going into Executive Session was the proper way to do it.

ADJOURNMENT:

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Mr. McCarthy declared the meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

A TRUE RECORD

**BY EILLEN M. VERSACI
CITY CLERK**