

**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE
SCHENECTADY CITY COUNCIL – OCTOBER 10, 2006**

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 Father James Brooks-McDonald, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, to deliver the Invocation.

Mr. Blanchfield then called upon Dick Yager 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 – Councilmembers Joseph L. Allen, Frank J. Maurizio,
Gary R. McCarthy, Margaret C. King, Barbara Blanchard
and Mark W. Blanchfield

Absent - None

Also Present – Mayor Brian U. Stratton, City Clerk Carolyn Friello and
Corporation Counsel Alfred L. Goldberger

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Regarding an amendment to the Adult Business Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Blanchfield invited all who wished to speak on Public Hearing #1 to come forward (7:00 P.M.). The following speakers rose to be heard and their remarks are summarized:

Joseph J. Seelaus, 2 Morris Ave., stated that he is socially and politically opposed to this ordinance.

Richard R. Rheingold, 107 Elmer Ave., stated that this is a business and I'm happy that you have drafted legislation. Would you want this next to you?

Dana Swalla, 1017 Phoenix Ave., said – When it becomes a business and it infringes on others, than I am against it. There's no requirements for minors or ID's in these businesses.

Bill Drake, Schenectady resident, stated that there has been acts of vandalism against those who spoke out against the Bed and Breakfast. Who will pay the tab for damages? I ask that you pass this Ordinance and keep Schenectady a nice place to live.

Bud Mazurek, Ardsley Road, stated that the Bed and Breakfast is located in our backyard and we want it removed.

Gerald Plante, 227 Front Street, said – I support Mr. Alexson and his running of the Bed and Breakfast. I am more concerned about the children having to walk through metal detectors while entering their school, or drug and gun gangs or School District property taxes.

Matt (?), Schenectady resident, said – I agree with the legislation, but, let's move on and cleanup the rest of the city.

Frederic Lee, 706 Stanley Street and President of SUN, spoke on the pending legislation on Sexually Oriented Businesses. I feel that this work is important for several reasons and I commend you, the Law Department, the city agencies and the residents that worked and gave input on the law before you. First, this legislation is important because it represents the partnership between elected officials and residents; Second, it's important because people on the street came to and you listened and responded to their concerns; and Third, perhaps most important, it is an important step in achieving something this city has need for more than a decade---balance. Balance between the needs of the average homeowner, resident and business owner and the tide of deviant behavior, which has reached almost every neighborhood and left them awash in undesirable behavior. This behavior in some neighborhoods caused people to hide in their homes, draw their blinds, live in fear and in some cases – just give up and move away. Our US Constitution was used as a battering ram against families and left them with the feeling that the rights of the few outweighed the rights of the many. For those who have chosen a lifestyle on the **margins**, there is little reason to be in the **middle**. Even Las Vegas, that openly markets its reputation as “Sin City” in a state that has found fit to legalize gambling and even prostitution, has the good sense to put its famous “Mustang Ranch” on the outskirts of civilization. The Youth of American are bombarded by TV, Film and music images that attempt to mainstream—deviant behavior, and marginal lifestyles appear normal. What they view in the neighborhoods should allow them to contrast fantasy from reality. We applaud your efforts. We encourage prompt passage of this legislation. We await enforcement and the **balance**—this historic city needs to continue its renaissance and the proud future that the 21st Century holds.

Seeing no other speakers, Mr. Blanchfield declared the Public Hearing closed at 7:45 P.M.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Official –

From the Mayor, a list of appointments.

From the Engineering Department, a letter accepting the bid of and awarding the contract to Skyway Roofing, Inc. for “Roof Replacement on the Compost Administrative Building” in the amount of \$77,800.00; and

A letter rejecting all bids that were received on 9/27/06 for the “Bevis Hill Reservoir Repairs”.

General –

The Bellevue Preservation Association will hold its monthly meeting on Thursday, October 12th at 7:00 P.M. at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Fairview Ave. (Courtyard entrance). The Association will again sponsor “Meet the Candidate Night”. Two debates will be held. Margaret King and Vincent Riggi, candidates for the Schenectady City Council and Harry Buffardi and Michael Moffett, candidates for the Office of Sheriff will be answering written questions from the audience. All of the public is invited.

The Bellevue Neighborhood Association will not meet on Thursday, October 19th, as previously scheduled. Instead, a meeting will take place on Thursday, October 26th, at the Bellevue Reformed Church to accommodate guest speaker, Mayor Brian U. Stratton’s Budget Presentation. The Mayor requests that members of both Bellevue groups attend.

PETITIONS: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Mr. Maurizio spoke in regard to the Bed and Breakfast – there was a core group neighbors who worked with us and the Law Department over 10 months ago. We believe that it’s a good piece of legislation. I will put it on the City Development and Planning Committee meeting for Monday night for any fine tuning. I expect to vote on it at our next meeting. Thanks also to Mr. Van Norden and Mr. Goldberger for going above and beyond. This was not an easy one. We wanted to make sure that it would hold up in court and everyone’s rights were protected. Mr. Maurizio explained Agenda Item #6.

Ms. King stated that the Public Service & Utilities Committee met. She explained Agenda Items #3 and #5.

Mr. Blanchfield explained the budget sessions that have taken place so far – On 10/3, Revenue/Anticipated Expenses; On 10/5, Office of General Services; and on 10/10, Law Department, Development and Finance. Also on 10/12, we will meet with Public Safety.

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 his remarks are summarized:

Vince Riggi, Campbell Ave., spoke in regard to Agenda Item #4. Why is the city liable for contamination in the cleanup of 1705 Broadway?

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 –

Resolution No. 2006-215	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2006-216	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2006-217	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2006-218	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2006-219	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2006-220	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2006-221	Adopted Unanimously

Consent Agenda (Continued) -

Resolution No. 2006-CS38

Adopted Unanimously

Resolution No. 2006-CS39

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:

Harry Brand, 2108 Van Rensselaer Drive, wished to give compliments to the administration for putting several downtown businesses back on the tax rolls. Also, I don't agree with appointments to the City Council, I believe that the Councilmembers should be elected, not appointed.

Vince Riggi, Campbell Ave., commends the administration for taking a "hard line stance" on the Police Contract. Also on Euclid Ave., there's a gentleman who is causing several problems. He is actually terrorizing people. We have to have action on this. He is holding a street hostage.

Marion Porterfield, Schenectady Weed and Seed, stated that this Friday, we are doing a Community March in Hamilton Hill. We will meet at Charles Mills at 5:45 P.M. Everyone is invited to attend.

Sam Hotaling, 1836 Campbell Ave., stated that he is glad to hear that Hillhurst Pool will be open next year.

J.R. Hotaling, 1836 Campbell Ave., said – I would rather not see Denise Brucker back on the Council. I wish all these appointments to the Council would stop. More citizens need the right to have a say on this.

Tony Buonome, Bellevue resident, stated that he is glad to see more Code Enforcement Officers in the budget. What has happened to the Ford Focus's that were to be for Code Enforcement purposes? Also, we have people on that side of the rail talking about the trash out. Are they being turned in? Also, there are boats parked on the streets and have been for months. The city officials pass these all the time and still they are there. We pass laws and no one enforces them.

Mary McClaine, Schenectady resident, stated that a recent headline read – 2 women vying to replace Barbara Strangfeld who resigned 10 days after the deadline for putting the candidates on this year’s ballot. Then, the city made her a patron, thereby, reducing the Patron System to nothingness. It would make any military father and son very proud to know that his daughter and mother cause the disfranchisement of an entire American city. That’s what soldiers fight for. If I had to choose between a government that gives me free access to the ballot box or one that concentrates on revitalizing a downtown area, I will choose the former. For me voting is a serious matter. As for the 2 women vying for Barbara Strangfeld’s seat – make that 3 – I am interested.

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

MISCELLANEOUS:

Ms. King stated that there will be one more meeting concerning the Schenectady Plans Concerned about downtown’s future will be on Tuesday, October 24th at 6:30 P.M. Also, October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. I would like to commend everyone involved in the Pink Ribbon around Nott Memorial. It’s a great way to call people’s attention to the issue.

Mr. Allen stated that this coming Friday is the last day to register to vote in this November election. Also, absentee ballots are available through the Board of Elections.

The Mayor stated that also, today, we heard that Bechtel Industries which is in the former 2 Guys with 300 good paying jobs, has decided to relocate most of its operations to Pittsfield, Pennsylvania within 2 years. This was a surprise to me, as well as our local Congressmen. Bechtel is a defense operation – 35th largest in the country. I called upon members of Congress to help us and like me, they are not conceding anything. I’m not giving up these jobs until the people in Washington get some answers. Why are they being moved? Senator Charles Schumer, Congressman Michael McNulty and Senator Hillary Clinton are prepared to help us.

Mr. Blanchfield spoke in regard to the Wireless Communication Tower legislation – we should have that available for review. Also, the Public Hearing on the Budget will be October 23rd in Room 209; on October 12th, we will be having a Council work session dealing with Public Safety. We will schedule

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more sessions thereafter. We are saddened by the Bechtel news, but, some folks are being called back to G.E. Energy Systems. There are some new orders coming in. As a Schenectadian, I am proud of the people who work at G.E. "You can't keep these people down --- you can't keep this company down". No matter what anyone has tried to do to G.E., there's a demand out there for what's produced there. I hope that this will do something to offset this Bechtel news which is very disappointing.

ADJOURNMENT:

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Mr. Blanchfield declared the meeting adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

A TRUE RECORD

**BY CAROLYN FRIELLO
CITY CLERK**