

**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING
OF THE SCHENECTADY CITY COUNCIL**

May 23, 2022

The City Council Meeting was called to order by the City Council President Marion Porterfield at 7:00 p.m. in Room 209, City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Ms. Porterfield asked Reverend Marc Thompson of the New Day Empowerment Center to offer the invocation.

Ms. Porterfield then called on Council Person Doreen Ditoro to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Present – Council Members: Doreen Ditoro, John Polimeni, Carl Williams, and Marion Porterfield.

Also Present – Mayor Gary R. McCarthy, City Clerk Samanta R. Mykoo, and Corporation Counsel Andrew B. Koldin, Esq.

Absent – Damonni Farley and John Mootoveren

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Regarding the Application of “OH” Overlay Historic District Zoning to 145 Barrett Street

Ms. Porterfield invited all who wished to address the Council regarding Public Hearing Number One to come forward:

Seeing no speakers to come forward, Ms. Porterfield declared the Public Hearing Number One, to be closed.

2. Regarding the Rezoning of 1276 Belmont Avenue, 1278 Belmont Avenue, and 1288 Belmont Avenue

Ms. Porterfield invited all who wished to address the Council regarding Public Hearing Number Two to come forward:

Seeing no speakers to come forward, Ms. Porterfield declared the Public Hearing Number Two, to be closed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Porterfield asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 9, 2022 Council Meeting as submitted by the City Clerk. Ms. Patrick made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Williams seconded the motion.

COMMUNICATIONS PRESENTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Official:

None.

General:

From Ellie Pepper, on online submission regarding allowing the Schenectady Urban Farms (FKA Vale Urban Farm) expansion of their flock and allow the farm to add additional chickens at their new locations.

From Suzanne McLaughlin, an online submission regarding allowing chickens at the Fehr Avenue Farm.

From P.D. Voorhis, an email requesting additional information for 135 Barrett Street. She asked if it is safe for anyone to enter and would like to know if the owner intends to use historic credits to restore the building.

Petitions:

None.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS):

Ms. Porterfield invited all who wished to address the Legislative Agenda to come forward or otherwise submit their comments to the City Clerk:

Seeing no speakers to come forward, Ms. Porterfield declared the Privilege of the Floor regarding Legislative Items, to be closed.

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

Ms. Porterfield made a motion that Council approves the Consent Agenda, the motion was moved by Ms. Ditoro and seconded by Ms. Patrick.

Consent Agenda

- Resolution No. 2022-134.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2022-135.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2022-136.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2022-137.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2022-138.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2022-139.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2022-140.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2022-141.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2022-142.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2022-CS-13.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2022-CS-14.....Adopted Unanimously

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Ms. Porterfield directed all who wished to discuss any items for City Business to come forward or otherwise submit their comments to the City Clerk.

Anthony Carota – Spoke about mental health awareness and that many people from different walks of life suffer with this illness. He asked that access to help and treatment for mental health be made readily available to those in need.

Beth Jacobs – Explained the importance of trees in neighborhoods and suggested that new property owners be required to plant trees.

Melissa Mackinnon – Food Manager for SICM, stated that they've collaborated with Vale Urban Farms to address food insecurities in the community. The chickens have been educational and provide eggs for food and she asked that chickens also be allowed at the Fehr Avenue farm.

Rev. Jeremiah Lennox – Stated that we have the power and the ability to engage in nurturing a better environment around us. The Schenectady Urban Farm provides sustainable activities that can provide food, education, and inspiration. He also addressed the need for mental health treatment in our community and also a need for trees to address physical health since it's all interconnected and interrelated.

Leah Gonaczyk – Farm Coordinator at the Fehr Avenue Farm site, asked for permission to allow chickens at the farm. She said that we are removed from the agricultural processes and bringing chickens would allow for further education to our community.

Chad Putman – Asked for support for SICM and Schenectady Urban Farms to allow them to have urban hens at Fehr and Vale Avenue sites. He added that there is pain, suffering and struggle that people go through, and animal therapy is real and it helps bring peace in a challenging world.

Seeing no other speakers come forward, Ms. Porterfield declared the Privilege of the Floor to be closed.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

Carmel Patrick – Announced that there are many Memorial Day observances this coming week in Schenectady County, but there are two in Schenectady; one at Vale Cemetery at 10:15 am and the other at Veterans Park at 11:00 am. She asked the community to show their support and attend these events.

Doreen Ditoro – Thanked Reverend Nicole Harris for organizing the candlelight vigil for the victims of the Buffalo shooting. She then recognized the Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation on the 7th year of their Hometown Heroes program. She also noted that there is a National Observance held every year at 3:00 pm on Memorial Day and asked everyone take a moment to thank our Lord for the men and women who go out everyday to keep our nation safe.

Mayor McCarthy – Thanked everyone for attending and asked that everyone stay safe.

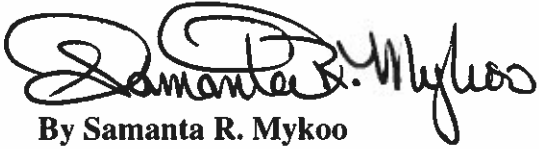
Marion Porterfield – Thanked everyone for attending and speaking, it's always good to hear the public's perspective on the various things going on in our City. She offered condolences to two of our staff members, Paul Lafond on the loss of his mother and Lindsay Kline on the loss of her father. She then congratulated the family of Veteran Morton R. Miller, who was recognized at the Schenectady County Honor-a-Veteran award ceremony on May 21, 2022. She announced that we have received new microphones and expects the audio issues will be rectified. Thanked a

good Samaritan, Mike on Wright Avenue, who had assisted her with car issues. She then announced the Pride Flag raising at City Hall, the Kids Art Fest, and the Stockade Sidewalk Sale will all be on June 4, 2022. Then on June 8, 2022, the Office of Cannabis Management will be hosting a presentation on obtaining licenses for those who were negatively impacted by drug laws. She then expressed her sadness with the shootings in Buffalo and asked that everyone be considerate of our neighbors and look out for each other. When did hate become so ordinary?

Adjourned:

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Ms. Porterfield asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was moved by Ms. Patrick and seconded by Mr. Polimeni. The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

A true record

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samanta R. Mykoo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "S" and "M".

**By Samanta R. Mykoo
Schenectady City Clerk**

Samanta R. Mykoo

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 12:22 PM
To: Marion Porterfield; Samanta R. Mykoo
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City Council Privilege of the Floor Submission Form

City Council Privilege of the Floor Submission Form

First Name	Ellie
Last Name	Pepper
Address	[REDACTED]
City	SCHENECTADY
State	NY
Zip Code	[REDACTED]
Phone Number	[REDACTED]
Email Address	[REDACTED]
Privilege of the Floor	CITY BUSINESS
Register to Speak during the Council Meeting	City Business - items not on the Council Agenda
Comments	<p>Six years ago, I joined Schenectady Urban Farms (FKA Vale Urban Farm). I live on Plymouth Avenue and the Farm is right around the corner. Right away, I fell in love with the setting, with the ability to participate in a group effort, with being able to eat food grown right in my neighborhood, and with the long term goal of adding livestock, just like a real farm. There is one other reason I fell in love with the Farm, the biggest one; the mission to teach lifelong residents of an urban area what it means to be a farmer.</p> <p>Each year, I have volunteered to take care of them. As part of that responsibility, I learned many things. I learned that chickens eat ticks, such an important aspect of their behavior since Lyme disease is on the rise. I learned that chickens come in all shapes and colors and lay different colored eggs, some are even green! While I knew that brown was a natural color for eggs, I hadn't known that white is also a natural color for eggs. Previously, I thought chicken poop was just a smelly byproduct</p>

but I learned that for composting, it is gold. I learned that eggs don't need to be refrigerated when they are taken fresh from the chicken; there is a coating that protects them until they are washed.

I also discovered some practical social and emotional benefits of having the chickens on the Farm. The children that visit the Farm love the chickens. They adore being able to get in the chicken run with them, to be able to actually touch them. Those chickens bring such joy to their faces as they giggle with delight. Throughout the summer, there were several neighborhood kids that would come by the Farm just to spend some time with the chickens. They all ask questions and want to know everything there is to know about chicken behavior and chicken life.

Personally, due to some long standing issues with spinal stenosis and arthritis, I discovered that spending time with the chickens helped me to relax. I could sit in the chicken run while they hovered around me, jumped in my lap, pecked at my belt loops. They help me focus on something other than my pain and allow me the opportunity to let go for a time.

Many of the Farm members are low-income residents in the City and having access to a regular supply of eggs is quite beneficial. I've included some pictures of members, neighborhood children, and other volunteers spending time with our chickens.

SUF now has the opportunity to expand the flock with a second of its' three locations at Fehr Ave. Despite repeated requests to Corporation Council, we have been unable to get permission to expand this most beneficial program. Please help us.

Many thanks,
Ellie Pepper

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

Samanta R. Mykoo

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Sunday, May 22, 2022 11:27 PM
To: Marion Porterfield; Samanta R. Mykoo
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City Council Privilege of the Floor Submission Form

City Council Privilege of the Floor Submission Form

First Name	suzanne
Last Name	mclaughlin
Address	[REDACTED]
City	schenectady
State	ny
Zip Code	[REDACTED]
Phone Number	[REDACTED]
Email Address	[REDACTED]
Privilege of the Floor	PUBLIC HEARING
Register to Speak during the Council Meeting	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Comments	Hello,

I am the SICM Vale Urban Farm Coordinator. My position includes helping in chicken care and educating guests and members about them. It is one of the most fun things I do. We have had adults, college and high school students and often small children with their parents get into the pen to interact and feed the chickens right out of their hands. No matter the age people love it. Parents tell me kids are much more excited about eggs when they have collected them from the nest themselves. The chicken are a totally positive addition to the farm, eating bugs, giving people knowledge and a new experience they may not otherwise get in the city and attracting people in general!

I appreciate your consideration in this matter of Chickens at Fehr Avenue Farm. In my experience it would be a wonderful addition.

Sincerely,

Suzanne C. McLaughlin

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

Samanta R. Mykoo

From: PD Ironclad [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 11:10 AM
To: Samanta R. Mykoo
Subject: surveymonkey.com, etc.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

May 23, 2022

Before your called public hearing regarding 135 Barrett St., Schenectady, NY, takes place, is that address a safe building for anyone to enter.? I know the public hearing is about a 'historic marker', however, does the owner intend to use these credits to restore the building?. Even better than that, has the owner already been using historic credits to reduce the assessment (\$45,000), the taxes, and fees related to vacant properties that have exposure to vagrants and vermin? This building has 3-6" between it and the law office on one side and is flush to a parking lot on the other side having a very large heat plant on the other side that continually discharges a downward flow of water in the direction of 135 Barrett St. building's basement?

Because of on the street parking issues, Clinton and Barrett Sts. are a disaster waiting to get worse.

Members of City Council, please show us a little respect and address these issues. I think there has become an enhanced interest in your meetings on government television. Could you please use the promises of technology to their fullest - including proper audios.

P. D. Voorhis