

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

June 10, 2019

The City Council Meeting was called to order by the City Council President Ed Kosiur at 7:11 p.m. in Room 209, City Council Chambers at City Hall.

A Moment of silence was held for Karen Johnson, former Mayor of Schenectady and County Legislator, on her passing.

Mr. Kosiur asked Reverend Diana Fletcher to offer the invocation.

Mr. Kosiur then called on Boy Scout Troops No. 3357 & 3065 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: John Polimeni, Marion Porterfield, Karen Zalewski-Wildzunas, Leesa Perazzo, Vincent Riggi, John Mootooveren and Edward Kosiur.

Also Present – Deputy City Clerk Samanta R. Mykoo, Fire Chief Raymond Senecal and Corporation Counsel Carl Falotico.

Prior to the formal start of the meeting a promotion ceremony was held by the City's Fire Department.

At this point, Mr. Kosiur asked if there were no objections, he would like to take agenda item number 11 out of order. There were no objections.

Resolution No. 2019-135 A Resolution Recognizing Chuck Thorne and His Service as City Clerk

The resolution was moved by Mr. Kosiur and seconded by Mr. Mootooveren.

7:0:0

Voting AYE: Mr. Kosiur, Ms. Porterfield, Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas, Ms. Perazzo, Mr. Riggi, Mr. Mootooveren and Mr. Polimeni

Voting Nay: None

Abstain: None

The resolution was accepted by Chuck Thorne. He thanked the Council for their support and recognition.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Regarding a Proposed Local Law Banning the use of Plastic Straws in Schenectady

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

Ray Faughn – Stated that banning plastic straws are a step in the right direction. We need to stop wasting plastic and polluting the earth.

Mary McClaine – Right now there are weeds growing 3 feet high on the lawn of City Hall. The clocks in the building do not work. City streets are filthy with litter while on tonight's agenda Council wants input for a proposal banning the use of plastic straws in order to save the

environment. What am I missing here? The agenda item is typical of the “been there, done that, let’s move on to the next toy” mentality. That is prevalent in this administration. Other pressing issues already here, do not get the attention. Do you expect the business community to enforce this ban? One of the City’s business owners hasn’t kept his property cleaned since he opened his doors and the City allows him to operate that way. Council should find a better use for their time. The Don Quixote are tilting at windmills with this one.

Frances Callahan - There is an estimated use of five hundred million straws every year in the US. Plastic straws are too small to recycle and the best way to get them out of the environment is to reduce their usage.

Seeing no other speakers to come forward, Mr. Kosiur declared the Public Hearing Number One, to be closed.

2. Regarding a Proposed Local Law Updating Energize New York Benefit Financing Program

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

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Kosiur asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 29, 2019 Council meeting as submitted by the Deputy City Clerk. Mr. Mootoveren made a motion to approve the minutes and Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas seconded the motion.

COMMUNICATIONS PRESENTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Official:

From the Mayor, a list of appointments dated June 10, 2019.

From the City Engineer, a letter recommending the award of the “City Hall Window Restoration – Base Bid and add alternates 1 & 2” to Bunkoff General Contractors, Inc of Latham, New York in the amount of \$969,000.

General:

None

Petitions:

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

None

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS):

Mr. Kosiur invited all who wished to address the Legislative Agenda to come forward:

David Giacalone – Thanked Chuck Thorne for his responsiveness during his time working for the City.

Mary McClaine – Item’s No. 3 and No. 7. Item 3, Neighborhood Stabilization Coordinator. Who is going to get this position? Is it going to be a political appointment like the last City Council seat? Five years living in the City and she was told the City needed her leadership. The County gave a tourist director’s position to a 24 year old. Where has she been? What has she done to promote tourism? Will the stabilization coordinator know anything about beautification? A council member once said “Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder”. To that I say “There is such a thing as good taste and having class doesn’t hurt either”. Schenectady has a great model to copy from. Saratoga is a perfect place to get ideas. Check it out and hire the right person to do the right job. Item No. 7 Fee Waivers for Permits. I have been around long enough to know that a council member was dragged to court because he did not report the accurate size of the job listed on his permit and he was fined for it. This new bunch has waived permit fees for the last two years and it is on the agenda for a vote again tonight. Why does Council feel there is no need for this money? All year we were told there was no money for maintenance. Children are cleaning City Parks. Taxpayers are doing their share. You have the opportunity to receive income from these permits that can be used for maintenance and you vote to waive the fee. Address the issue of litter before you do anything else. Eastern Avenue is a hopeless cause. On Mother’s Day, the lower portion of that street was all filth. It was not a pretty picture.

Having no one else signed up to speak, Mr. Kosiur declared the privilege of the floor, regarding the legislative agenda, to be closed.

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

Mr. Kosiur made a motion that Council approves the Consent Agenda and the motion was moved by Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas and seconded by Ms. Perazzo.

Consent Agenda

- Resolution No. 2019-135.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-136.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-137.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-138.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-139.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-140.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-141.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-142.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-143.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-144.....Adopted Unanimously
- Resolution No. 2019-CS-03.....Adopted Unanimously

2019-145 A Resolution to Amend the 2019 Budget to include the position “Neighborhood Stabilization Coordinator”

A motion to introduce the legislation as was made by Ms. Perazzo and seconded by Ms. Porterfield.

The motion to amend the resolution adding the position shall not be filled by the Mayor unless the City receives grant funds to fully cover the salary of the position was made by Ms. Perazzo and seconded by Ms. Porterfield:

6:1:0

Voting AYE: Mr. Polimeni, Ms. Porterfield, Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas, Ms. Perazzo, Mr. Mootoveren and Mr. Kosiur

Voting Nay: Mr. Riggi

Abstain: None

A motion to vote on the original motion as amended was made by Mr. Polimeni and seconded by Ms. Perazzo:

6:1:0

Voting AYE: Mr. Polimeni, Ms. Porterfield, Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas, Ms. Perazzo, Mr. Mootoveren and Mr. Kosiur

Voting Nay: Mr. Riggi

Abstain: None

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Mr. Kosiur 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:

Anthony Peter Carota III – Announced that June was Pride month and that he was tired of PC, Liberal, Socialist and Political agenda of the community. He feels their agenda is being forced upon him.

Diablo – Expressed that it’s difficult to make a living selling art. Many businesses receive tax credits, tax breaks or grants, but artist communities do not. If we were more art friendly, more artists will come.

Thearse McCalmon – Communicated the concerns she has heard from the community who are feeling left out of the economic development. She would like to see economic unity and stated that we are at risk of overdeveloping without addressing the crumbling communities. She asked, with the economic flight, who are we building for? Then said that she would like to see more transparency in the budget and suggested the police receive diversity training. Then noted the need to support our small business, address our food sources, and decrease the taxes.

Patricia Smith – Reported that she has communicated via email with Chief Clifford regarding the loud neighbors she spoke about at the Council meeting two weeks prior. The Chief said he would look into it. She then recounted several other complaints from residents in her neighborhood regarding other quality of life issues and how these matters were addressed by the police. *Submitted photos of a neighbor’s window that was struck by a brick. She suggested that a small task force be assembled and either mediation or tickets are issued to address these quality

of life issues. Then invited everyone to the Mt. Pleasant Neighborhood Association meeting at the new library on Crane Street on June 13, 2019 at 6 p.m.

**See photos submitted.*

Tony Buonome – Stated that on Saturday afternoon the City crew was out filling pot holes and he spoke to some of the workers. He commends the whole crew for their kind consideration, they all seemed like great people. He then said that he got along well with Chuck. His former supervisor worked with Chuck and said that he came from a good family.

David Giacalone – Remarked on his displeasure of Lady Liberty not being returned to the Gateway Park. He does not understand why the decision was made by the Mayor and Mary Moore-Wallinger, the Council should have been included in that decision.

Mary McClaine – Thanked the administration for replacing the floor in the elevator.

Seeing no other speakers come before the City Council, Mr. Kosiur declared the privilege of the floor, regarding general City business, to be closed.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

Mr. Perazzo – Expressed her condolences on the passing of Karen Johnson to her family and friends. Then announced Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation will be kicking off their Hometown Heroes Banner Program at 11:00 a.m. on June 11th at the Armory. On Wednesday, June 12, 2019 the Vale Park Weenie Roast will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Nott Street entrance. Then said that Pride Month was off to a great start starting with the Pride Festival, following a march downtown to Gateway Plaza for the unveiling of a beautiful public art project. She Congratulated Chad Putman and his great team for putting it all together. Also, the Albany Symphony Orchestra came out here to play, there was so much going on and next weekend is the Strawberry festival on upper Union Street.

Mr. Mootoveren – Explained that the Permit Fee Waiver legislation that was passed began a few years ago and has received tremendous support from the neighborhoods as it allows for revitalization to that neighborhood. It is a small step, but it is well received from the community. Last year the permit fee waiver totaled approximately \$21,000.00 and thanked his colleagues for passing the program. He then announced that the Bridge Christian Church is holding a bike fix up day on Saturday, June 15, 2019.

Ms. Porterfield – Offered her condolences to friends and family of Karen Johnson, she will be greatly missed. Then announced that there will be a paint night at Electric City Barn on Tuesday, June 11, 2019, which is part of their Neighborhood Challenge. She then announced that the Community Fathers are holding their first gala at the Electric City Barn on Thursday, June 13, 2019 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Also this coming weekend is Juneteenth which begins on Friday evening at the African American Burial Ground. There is always a ceremony where stories are told about ancestors who have contributed to the community. This year Ralph Boyd will be honored, he passed away last year. She encouraged everyone to attend, it begins at 6:00 p.m. at Vale Park, State Street entrance.

Mr. Riggi – Recognized the passing of Karen Johnson and offered his condolences to her friends and family. She will be sorely missed and she will be remembered for the love that she had for this City.

Mr. Polimeni – Expressed his condolences to the friends and family of Karen Johnson. Then announced that the Bellvue Preservation Association will be holding their meeting at 7:00 p.m. at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church. They will also be holding a Flag Day ceremony on Saturday, June 15, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at Veteran’s Park where they will be raising a flag. He then thanked Corporation Counsel for work their work on creating tickets for the police department to use that addresses quality of life issues such as littering or loitering. Unfortunately many of these tickets are being dismissed by the judges and new ways to tackle these issues are being looked into. He then stated that City Hall has been colored orange for Gun Violence month. There have been many tragedies around the country and asked that a discussion on changes in the safety features at City Hall be added onto the agenda for the next Committee Meeting to ensure the safety of our staff and residents.

Chief Senecal – Acknowledged all the great things that Karen Johnson has done for the City and County and offered his condolences to her family and friends. He then reminded everyone of some of the things that are important to remember during summer. Kids will be out of school, please help them be safe by encouraging them to look both ways when they cross the road. Soon the 4th of July will be here and fireworks are illegal. Also, open burning is not allowed in the City, it’s a safety concern and with the warmer weather coming pace yourself, stay hydrated and try not to exert yourself. Also, check on your neighbors and family members, especially the elderly.

Mr. Kosiur – Offered his condolences to the friends and family of Karen Johnson. He has worked with her for many years and her passing is a sad loss for the entire community. He then thanked Reverend Diana Fletcher for attending the Council Meeting and offering the invocation.

Adjourned:

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Mr. Kosiur asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was moved by Ms. Perazzo and seconded by Mr. Riggi. The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

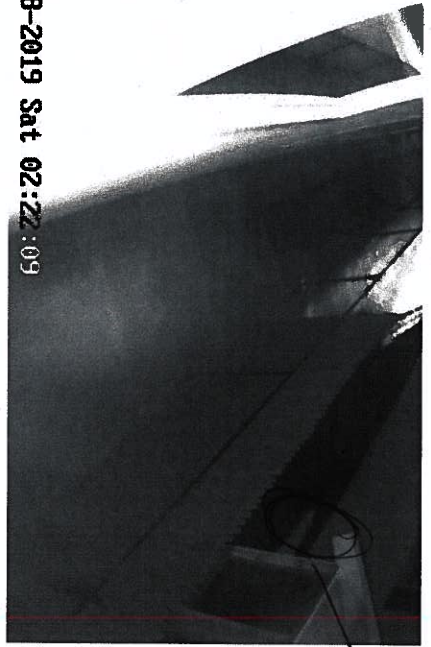
A true record

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Samanta R. Mykoo". The signature is stylized and cursive.

By Samanta R. Mykoo

Deputy Schenectady City Clerk

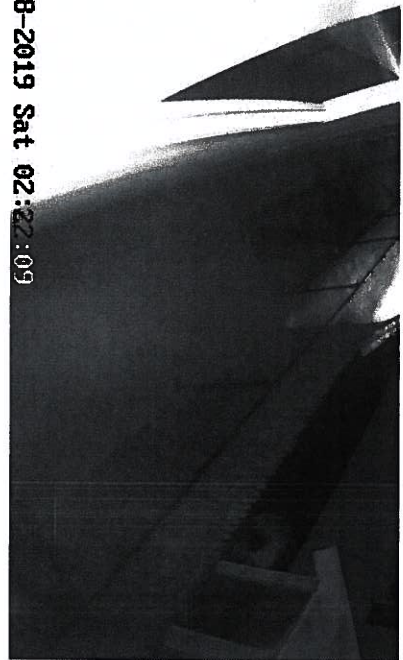
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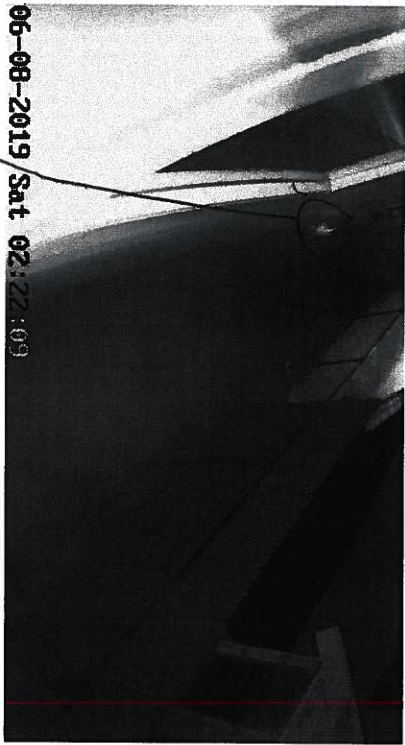
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