MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING
OF THE SCHENECTADY CITY COUNCIL
November 25, 2019

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

Mr. Kosiur asked Pastor Jason Cooper of Redemption Church to offer the invocation.

Mr. Kosiur then called Council Member Marion Porterfield 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: Marion Porterfield, Vincent Riggi, John Mootoooveren, and Edward Kosiur.
- Also Present – City Clerk Samanta R. Mykoo, Mayor Gary R. McCarthy and Assistant Corporation Counsel Andrew Koldin.
- Absent – John Polimeni, Karen Zalewski-Wildzunas, and Leesa Perazzo,

At this point, Mr. Kosiur asked if there were no objections, he would like to take agenda items number 12 and 13 out of order. There were no objections.

Resolution No. 2019-246 A Resolution Recognizing National Authors’ Day

The resolution was moved by Ms. Porterfield and seconded by Mr. Mootoooveren.

The resolution was accepted by a Carlos Carabello, Miki Conn, Willie Dean, Jr., Marsha Mortimore, and William B. Patrick. They thanked the Mayor and Council for their recognition.

Resolution No. 2019-247 A Resolution Recognizing Alpha-1 Awareness Month

The resolution was moved by Mr. Riggi and seconded by Ms. Porterfield.

The resolution was accepted by Richard Lovrich. He thanked the Mayor and Council for the recognition and bring awareness about such a rare disease.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Regarding Regarding the 2020 Downtown Schenectady Assessment District Budget

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

P. D. Voorhis – Questioned the City’s involvement with the Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation. She stated that keeping the streets clean is a function of the City.

Jim Salengo – Executive Director of the Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation stated that they operate as any district in the area and also provide additional cleaning and marketing for the people who live, work or visit here. He then announced a few upcoming festivities.

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

Mr. Kosiur asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 12, 2019 Council meeting as submitted by the City Clerk. Mr. Riggi made a motion to approve the minutes and Ms. Porterfield seconded the motion.

COMMUNICATIONS PRESENTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Official:
None

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:

Having no one 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 Mr. Riggi and seconded by Mr. Mootooveren.

Consent Agenda

Ordinance No. 2019-14 ................................Adopted Unanimously
Ordinance No. 2019-15 ................................Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-248.................................Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-249.................................Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-250.................................Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-251.................................Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-252.................................Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2019-253.................................Adopted Unanimously
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:

**Rebecca Garrard** – Statewide Organizer for Housing Justice with Citizen Action and the Upstate Coordinator for the Housing Justice for All campaign. She spoke about the housing legislation that was passed in June and what is still needed to protect residents in Schenectady. She asked that the legislative body pass a resolution maintaining Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act (HSTPA) and supporting Good Cause Eviction and Home Stability Support (HSS).*

**Sara Couch** – A member of 1199 SEIU Union spoke about the proposed State health care cuts and their affects to residents. She stated that she will be reaching out to get a resolution done to send to New York State.

**Tamara Elzubair** – A member of 1199 SEIU spoke about the proposed cuts for health care and the obstacles it presents to many residents in nursing homes and those that rely on home health care.

**Crystal Perry** – A member of 1199 SEIU asked that legislation be passed to prevent the draining of New York’s Medicaid program. She then spoke about the importance of protecting tenants’ right and her experience as a tenant.

**Bev Miller** – A member of 1199 SEIU spoke about tenant rights and asked to help pass the tenant protection legislation.*

**Marva Issacs** – Spoke about trash that was put out too early on Duane Avenue and the mess it created when it was strewn around by animals.

**Chad Putman** – Communicated his experience with homelessness and his support of HSTPA, HSS and Good Cause Eviction. He then asked for legislators to support the resolution and keep their promise to end homelessness.*

**William Rivas** – Director of the Altamont Program, a homeless shelter in the City of Schenectady, stated that supporting the resolution will help set a standard throughout New York State and create a real and tangible change.

**Ellie Pepper** – Explained her concerns regarding the comments that were made by the members of SLIC at a previous Council Meeting. She then urged City Council to look at the resolution and to pass legislation that will further protect tenants.*

**Rev. Dustin Wright** – Communicated and expressed his support of the resolution for tenant protection, there are too many people that do not have housing.

**Rev. Nicole Harris** – Introduced herself as a new resident in Schenectady and the Pastor at Duryee Memorial AME Zion Church on Hulett Street. She intends to not only serve the church, but also the community.

*See document submitted.*

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. Riggi – Thanked everyone for coming out and spoke about some of the calls he has received regarding tenants that were afraid of getting evicted or reporting their landlords to Code Enforcement. People deserve to live in a habitable home. He then wished everyone a blessed Thanksgiving.

Ms. Porterfield – Thanked everyone for coming out and said that she appreciated hearing both sides from both tenants and landlords. We do want the best for all of our residents regardless of their economic status. We should also look at the hotels that people are being housed in that are in poor condition. She then wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Mr. Mootoooveren – Announced that the Mt. Pleasant Merchant Association along with the members of the Bridge Christian Church will have their Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony on Saturday, December 7th. Then thanked the Mayor for the Smart City outreach meeting for the community and encouraged everyone to attend. He then wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Mayor Gary R. McCarthy – Thanked everyone for coming out and raising the awareness of the issues in the housing market. Thanked everyone that helped work the Holiday Parade and all who attended. He then wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Mr. Kosiur – Thanked everyone for their comments this evening. He then announced that there will be a new Council President in January but would like to make sure that the tenant rights issues are addressed and suggested that a joint meeting with the County Legislature. He then wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

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. Porterfield and seconded by Mr. Mootoooveren. The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

A true record

By Samanta R. Mykoo
Schenectady City Clerk
RESOLUTION NO._
November 25, 2019

RESOLUTION MAINTAINING HSTPA AND SUPPORTING GOOD CAUSE AND HSS

WHEREAS, according to Census Bureau data, 21% of residents in the City of Schenectady live below the poverty line, which is significantly higher than the national average of 13.4%; and

WHEREAS, according to Census Bureau data, more than half of the residents of the City of Schenectady are renters; and

WHEREAS, the homeless population in Schenectady County increased 24% from 2017 to 2018 according to a community needs assessment conducted by the Schenectady Community Action Program; and

WHEREAS, the Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act (HSTPA) of 2019 provides protections for renters that limit excessive fees, extend eviction processes, and provide some safeguards against predatory practices by property owners; and

WHEREAS, the Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act (HSTPA) of 2019 allows for any municipality in New York State that meets the criteria to opt-in to the rent stabilization system outlined in the Emergency Tenant Protection Act (ETPA) of 1974; and

WHEREAS, the Good Cause Eviction and the Home Stability Support (HSS) bills did not pass the New York State Legislature in 2019;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Schenectady City Council calls upon our leaders in Albany to preserve the integrity of the HSTPA so that current tenant protections can be maintained and any city can access ETPA if they so choose; and

BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Schenectady supports and endorses S2892/A5030 which would bring the right to a lease renewal with limited rent increases to all renters in non-owner occupied buildings in the state as outlined in the Good Cause Eviction legislation; and

BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Schenectady supports and endorses S2375/A1620 which would create a new statewide rent supplement for individuals receiving public assistance and who are facing eviction, homelessness, or loss of housing due to domestic violence or hazardous conditions homelessness as outlined in the Home Stability Support Act.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Clerk is directed to send a copy of this resolution to U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senator Charles Schumer, Governor Andrew Cuomo, New York State Senator James Tedisco, New York State Senator George Amedore, New York State Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara, New York State Assemblyman Phil Steck, Senate Housing Chair Brian Kavanagh, and Assembly Housing Chair Steven Cymbowitz.

Introduced: ____________________
Seconded: ____________________
Approved: ____________________

Gary McCarthy, Mayor