

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
COMMON COUNCIL  
July 10, 2023**

The Common Council of the City of Rensselaer met on July 10, 2023 in regular session in Council Chambers of City Hall. Mayor Stephen Wood called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. followed by invocation offered by Lisa Ulrich and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Answering roll call were: Mayor Stephen Wood; Clerk-Treasurer Shelby Keys; Council Members Russ Overton, Bill Hollerman, Noelle Weishaar, Ernest Watson, Jr; George Cover; City Attorney Jacob Ahler; Building Commissioner Josh Davis; Park Supt. Joe Effinger; Cemetery Caretaker Tony Baltes; Fire Chief Kenny Haun; Police Chief Matt Anderson; Utility Office Manager Heather Smart; Electric Lead Line Foreman Lenny Larson; Asst. Street Supt. Bryce Black; Project Coordinator Jerry Lockridge; Gas Supt. Carol Lockridge. Harley Tomlinson with the Rensselaer Republican arrived after roll call.

Also in attendance were Robert Schenk with Rensselaer Adventures, Carol Minter, Kevin Arnold, Angie Haun, Zyan Miller, Stace Pickering with Consolidated Insurance, Garrett Welker, Sara DeYoung, Joel Roper, Jeff Rayburn, Jeff Phillips, Cody Heldak, Juanita Saucedo.

The minutes of the June 26, 2023 regular council meeting were presented. There was a motion by Overton, second by Cover, to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

**Citizen Comments and Petitions:** Sara DeYoung introduced herself as Executive Director of Jasper County Economic Development and said she is looking forward to working together with the city.

**Resolution 24-2023 July Gas Tracker:** Lockridge stated the gas tracker reflects 79¢ increase per 100 cubic feet. There was a motion by Cover, second by Watson to approve the resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

**Resolution 25-2023 Transfer of Funds:** Keys read a transfer of funds within the Building Department. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Overton, to approve the resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

**Councilman Hollerman's 23 ½ Years of Service Recognition:** Mayor Wood presented Hollerman with a key to the city and thanked him for his service. There was a standing ovation for Councilman Hollerman and his dedication to the city.

**Protective Coating for City Hall's Mural:** Wood said it will cost \$1,624.00 for a protective coating for the mural that is going on the walls in the back of City Hall. There was a motion made by Overton, second by Watson to pay for the protective coating out of EDIT funds. The motion passed unanimously.

**Transitioning from WTH to Beacon (Schneider Corp) for GIS Needs:** Davis said he went to the last County Commissioners meeting and they requested that the city look into the mapping service connection between the county and the city, because we are on two different mapping platforms. Davis will continue to work with the county as they upgrade their system to troubleshoot any problems that occur with the weekly synchronization between Beacon and WTH. Wood said that the superintendents want to stay with WTH. Haun stated that the 911 system is set up with WTH for addressing and they use it every day. Haun said he spoke with the 911 director and the director felt the city would be making a wrong decision to switch. Watson asked if the county was switching over to Beacon and Davis said they already have it. Joel Roper said that the Electric Dept. uses WTH for work orders and street lights, plus the company doing the field inventory has already contacted WTH. The city is heavily invested in WTH, Roper said.

**Recommendation for Downtown Alley Concerns:** Davis said, as was discussed at the previous meeting, the owner of Unique Finds has had the building damaged by traffic driving through the alley. Davis proposed limiting access to the eastern 150 feet of the alley located in the South 100 Block between Van Rensselaer & Front Streets to only pedestrians and city utility vehicles. Black said that there are temporary bollards that are movable, if needed, and would limit access to the alley. Lockridge said with the change in parking that will happen with the Brick Streets project, it will be more difficult to pull out of the alley with the parallel parking. Watson asked if this would affect any of the businesses? Davis said no. There was a motion by Cover, second by Overton to limit access to the alley located in the South 100 Block between Van Rensselaer & Front Streets to only pedestrians and city utility vehicles. The motion passed unanimously.

**For the Record - Board Appointment Updates:** Wood said they will be updating the city website to show who is on what board. The Advisory Plan Commission consists of Joe Effinger, Bryce Black, Justin Wilson, Stan Haines, Cliff Wood, Deana Rule, Jeff Rayburn, Mike Davis and Sean Cawby. The Board of Zoning Appeals consists of Scott Malone, Chad Gutwein, Stan Haines, Rob Dobson, Jeff Rayburn and Sean Cawby. The Rensselaer Redevelopment Authority consists of Cliff Wood and Loren Berenda, there is one position left to fill. The Rensselaer Redevelopment Commission consists of Stan Haines, Estel George, Robert Brenneman, Kenny Haun, and Janice Deno (nonvoting membr). There is one position left to fill.

**Public Relations Request:** Wood made a request to reimburse \$224.80 for Hollerman's reception and gift. There was a motion by Overton, second by Watson to approve the Public Relations request. The motion passed unanimously.

**Burial Rights Request:** Keys read requests for burial rights for Stephanie McClung, Michael and Mary Ann Hilbrich, and William and Sandra Swartz. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Watson, to approve the burial rights. The motion passed unanimously.



**Committee Reports:** None.

**Administrative Comments:**

**Cover** was thankful they fixed the railroad crossing. Cover also said that he has received several calls about Rensselaer Septic on Cullen St. The complaints are that you can't see around the corner with the. Chief Anderson said he would contact them.

**Watson** had nothing.

**Keys** had nothing.

**Wood** had nothing.

**Overton** had nothing.

**Weishaar** had nothing.

**Claims Approval:** The claims were presented to council for its approval. There was a motion by Overton, second by Watson, to approve the claims. The motion passed unanimously.

**Superintendents Reports:**

**Police Dept:** Anderson said cruise night was busier than the last couple years. They have received a lot of complaints about fireworks. Anderson said state is very rigid on limiting of when fireworks can be set off. The city can't restrict fireworks during the days and times set by the state.

**Law Dept:** Ahler said the statute is clear and you can't prohibit fireworks on those days. There is not a lot the city can do about it.

**Utility Office:** Smart had nothing.

**Building Dept:** Davis reminded everyone that there is a Plan Commission and a BZA meeting Thursday. He is working on sending out information to all candidates for the upcoming city election regarding sign requirements.

**Fire Dept:** Haun said the burn ban has expired. Fire department is prepping for fair week. The fire department has made 62 runs more this year than this same time last year.

**Electric Dept:** Larson had nothing.

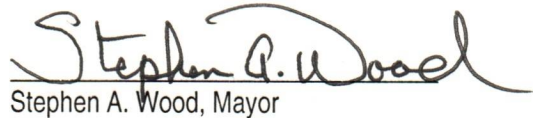
**Street, Sanitation, Water and Sewage:** Black had nothing. Lockridge had nothing.

**Cemetery Dept:** Baltes had nothing.

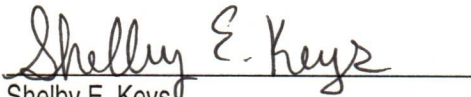
**Gas Dept:** C. Lockridge had nothing.

**Park Dept:** Effinger said they have a park board meeting on Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.

There being nothing more to come before council, there was a motion by Cover, second by Overton, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

  
Stephen A. Wood, Mayor

Attest:

  
Shelby E. Keys  
Clerk-Treasurer