

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
COMMON COUNCIL & RENSSELAER UTILITY BOARD
June 9th, 2025**

The Common Council of the City of Rensselaer and Rensselaer Utility Board met on June 9th, 2025 in regular session in Council Chambers of City Hall. Mayor Jeffrey S. Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Answering roll call were: Mayor Jeff Phillips, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Chrissy Martin, Council Members Russ Overton, Kevin Arnold, Noelle Weishaar, Jeff Rayburn, Ernest Watson, Jr; City Attorney Todd Sammons, Cemetery Caretaker RC Cox, Fire Chief Kenny Haun, Police Chief Matt Anderson, Utility Office Manager Heather Smart, Lead Line Foreman Garrett Welker, Street/Water/Sewer/Sanitation Supt. Bryce Black, Gas Admin, Angie Haun.

Absent were Building Commissioner Josh Davis, Park Supt. Heather Hall, Gas Supt. Todd Wilson and Assistant Superintendent Josh Eldridge.

Also, in attendance were: Nicole from Baker Tilly, Lydia Arnold, Heath Malone, Stace Pickering, & Harley Tomlinson.

The minutes of the May 27, 2025 regular council meeting were presented. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Overton, to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Comments and Petitions: None.

Utility Reports- Nicole from Baker Tilly attended so summarize the detailed reports presented. Utility should ideally have 2 months of operating fund in them.

- **Water Utility-** Receipts show there was more usage of water in 2024 than anticipated, over \$303,476 due to higher than expected metered sales. Operating disbursements coming overbudget in due to costs of personnel and overtime at \$24,801. Capital expenses \$401,808 over budget, caused by several unplanned capital purchases made overall the Utility's fund balance decreased by \$392,976. A 50% rate increase is recommended with the assumption that the utility will continue the lead line replacements.
- **Sewage Utility-** Under recommended reserves. Receipts exceed budget by \$115,325 due to higher than expected meter sales, operating budget was \$320,680 under budget. Capital spending was \$893,319 below budget, overall the utility fund balance increased \$1,552,464 in 2024 due to the BAN proceeds not being spent, a rate adjustment of 20-25% is recommended to fund the anticipated debt payments.
- **Electric Utility-** Receipts show budget expectations were exceeded by \$792,918. Disbursements were \$610,386 under budget due to 11 purchase power payments being made instead of 12. Overall the balances increased by \$1,032,344 in 2024 ahead of budget.
- **Sanitation Utility-** Receipts exceeded budgets due to higher than expected collections by \$32,721. Disbursements were \$8475 over budget due to contractual services, and one-time unexpected payments. Capital spending was \$86,410 below budget due to not purchasing a recycling truck. Overall the balance increased by \$88,456 in 2024. Sanitation does not have cash reserves to fund capital improvements, civil funds could help fund projects in sanitation.
- **Gas Utility-** Receipts show \$435,031 below budget with a \$783,884 reduction in operating disbursements, purchase gas coming in under budget. Capital spending exceeded the budget due to unplanned meter replacements and truck leases. Overall the balance increased by \$631,095.

Resolution 15-2025, Gas Tracker: Haun stated the gas tracker reflects a .0037¢ decrease per 100 cubic feet. There was a motion by Arnold, second by Weishaar, to approve the resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 16-2025- Transfer of Funds- Martin read that there was a transfer request for the General Fund; Public Works & Safety of \$14,000.00. A transfer request from the Building Department for \$3500.00, as well as a Parks Department request for \$18,000.00. A motion to approve was made by Rayburn, 2nd by Watson. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 17-2025, Electric Tracker- Welker stated that the electric tracker reflects an increase of .00519 cents per kilowatt hour a typical monthly bill is 700 kilowatts increase of .36¢. A motion to approve the electric was made by Weishaar, with Overton second. The motion passed unanimously.

Utility Extension- Mayor Phillips initiated a discussion regarding the extension of utilities to the subdivision located behind St. Joseph's College. He expressed his desire for the City to extend water and all other utilities to the property line, pending City Council approval. Arnold made a motion to requesting to table the matter until an estimated cost could be determined, the motion failed for lack of a second. Weishaar inquired whether previous subdivisions had received similar utility extensions to their property lines, suggesting the City should encourage such development. Mayor Phillips emphasized that this project was well-planned, highlighting the strategic idea of investing in infrastructure and annexing the 147 acres to achieve a favorable rate of return. Council member Rayburn voiced his support for the extension and the potential for growth. Weishaar then asked if St. Joe would cover the sewer portion of the extension. Mayor Phillips clarified that the City's responsibility extends only to getting utilities to the property line. Arnold mentioned seeing a trencher through the property line, to which Mayor Phillips responded that St. Joe is responsible for the cost of the service line to the property. A motion to extend utilities to the property line for the St. Joe subdivision was made by Rayburn and seconded by Overton. The motion passed by majority, with Watson abstained, and Arnold opposed.

Burial Rights Request: Martin read one burial rights request. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Overton, to approve the request. The motion passed unanimously.

Claims Approval: The claims were presented to council for approval. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Watson, to approve the claims. The motion passed by majority, with Rayburn abstaining.

Administrative Comments:

Phillips Mayor Philips talked about annexing the farm ground, the 147 acres west of St. Joe College, Mark O'brien currently owns, the City has pockets of need, Mayor Philips pondered if the we should speak to the owner about opening it up. The ribbon cutting for the Amtrak Station was a great project, and the Mayor is very happy about how it went. Mayor Philips congratulated Fire Chief Kenny Haun on 20 years of employment.

Martin had nothing.

Watson had nothing.

Weishaar had nothing.

Rayburn had nothing.

Arnold. had nothing.

Overton had nothing.

Superintendents Reports:

Police Dept: Anderson said the Police Dept is hiring, they have had 13 applications turned in.

Law Dept: Sammons had nothing.

Utility Office: Smart had nothing.

Building Dept: Josh Davis was absent.

Fire Dept: Haun said the City truck is down again, the compressor is 10 years old and the tank has a leak. Firefighter graduation is Friday.

Electric Dept: Welker said an employee put their 2 weeks' notice in, and the department in continuing to work on the street light project.

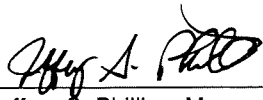
Street, Sanitation, Water and Sewage: Black said 7th should have plans in the next few days, the I-65 project is continuing easements are being acquired. Lead service line project is out for bid, which is an important part of phase III. City successfully received PCE equipment grant for apprentice Caleb DeJong. Eldridge was absent in his place Black said IDEM receptacle will be delivered this week, the county sidewalk is out for bid, with August being a possibility for east & north side drainage updates.

Gas Dept: Haun had nothing

Cemetery Dept: Cox had nothing


Park Dept: Hall was absent.

There being nothing more to come before council, there was a motion by Rayburn, second by Weishaar, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.



Jeffrey S. Phillips, Mayor

Attest:



Christina Martin, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer