

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
COMMON COUNCIL & RENSSELAER UTILITY BOARD
August 25, 2025**

The Common Council of the City of Rensselaer and Rensselaer Utility Board met on August 25, 2025 in regular session in Council Chambers of City Hall. Mayor Jeffrey S. Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and an invocation offered by Lisa Ulrich.

Answering roll call were: Mayor Jeff Phillips, Clerk-Treasurer Shelby Keys, Council Members Russ Overton, Kevin Arnold, Noelle Weishaar, Jeff Rayburn; City Attorney Todd Sammons, Fire Chief Kenny Haun, Police Chief Matt Anderson, Utility Office Manager Heather Smart, Manager of Electric Operations Heath Malone, Park Supt Heather Hall, Street/Water/Sewer/Sanitation Supt. Bryce Black, Gas Supt. Todd Wilson and Assistant Superintendent Josh Eldridge.

Council Member Ernest Watson, Jr. and Cemetery Caretaker Joe Effinger were absent.

Also in attendance were: Angie Haun, Eric Walsh with Baker Tilly, Alina Misch, Jerome Wyrobek, Harley Tomlinson, Harley Houghton, Stace Pickering and Henry Molden.

The minutes of the August 11, 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: Jerome Wyrobek said he is the new Business Development Coordinator for Saint Joseph's College and passed out business cards.

Henry Molden, President of The Fraternal Order of Eagles, requested to close the road from the alley to Front St on September 6th from 8 AM-11 PM. They will need barricades and a dumpster. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Overton, to approve the request. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Rensselaer Comprehensive Spending Plan: Eric Walsh presented a city-wide economic plan and gave updates on the current legislative changes.

Ordinance 13-2025, Establishing a DORA: The second reading of Ordinance 13-2025 was presented. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Arnold, to approve the ordinance. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Ordinance 15-2025, Authorize Use of Surplus 2017 Bond Proceeds for Waterworks Project: Smart said there is a surplus of \$75,64541 remaining from a 2017 bond. Proceeds are to be used on a water utility project. This ordinance would allow for the funds to be spent on a project not originally outlined in the bond ordinance. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Rayburn, to approve the ordinance. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Ordinance 16-2025, Security Light Rate Amendment: Malone said this would be to update rates for security lights. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Overton, to suspend the rules and waive the second reading. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Arnold, to approve the ordinance. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Ordinance 17-2025, Appropriation Reduction for 2025 Budget: Keys said this ordinance will reduce the 2025 total Motor Vehicle Highway (MVH) budget by \$143,450.00 and Local Road & Street (LR&S) budget by \$38,000.00, so those funds can be utilized for the 2026 budget. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Overton, to suspend the rules and waive the second reading. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Weishaar, to approve the ordinance. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Resolution 25-2025, Transfer of Funds: Keys read a transfer of funds within the General Fund for \$2,825.00. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Weishaar, to approve the resolution. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Health Care Renewal Decision: A decision for health care policies is needed by September 5th. Weishaar recommended staying with the same policies, besides changing to Vision Plan 4. This would allow for new lenses and frames more often. Arnold recommended changing Employee Life to Plan 2 for more of a benefit. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Arnold, to approve Medical Plan 7, Dental Plan 1, Vision Plan 4 and Employee Life Plan 2. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

ADA Plan Approval: Black said the plan that was submitted did not include sidewalks. He is requesting approval for the Mayor to sign and submit all documentation to INDOT. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Overton, to approve the request. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

ADA Title VI Approval & Signature: Black said we were not in compliance and grants the City is applying for requires this documentation to be submitted. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Weishaar, to approve and sign the documentation. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Design Certification Waiver for Utilities for Saint Joseph's College Building Trades Home: Mayor Phillips said Commonwealth Engineers created the certification. It is certifying that the project is complete. Arnold asked if this is the City accepting the utilities into our inventory. Phillips said yes. There was a motion by Arnold, second by Rayburn, to allow the Mayor to sign the certification. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Credit Card Statement: Phillips asked for council's permission to sign the credit card activity log. There was a motion by Arnold, second by Rayburn, to allow Phillips to sign the activity log. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Ratify Poll: Mayor Phillips said he polled council to get payment for the last easement for the I-65 extension project. There was a roll call vote to approve the poll for paying the easement claim. Roll call vote: Weishaar=yes, Arnold=yes, Overton=yes, Rayburn=yes. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Burial Rights: Keys read a burial rights request. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Weishaar, to approve the requests. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

I-65 Connection Requirements: Phillips said in the past residents tap fees have been waived in certain instances. This area is predominately commercial and he wanted to discuss with council their feelings on waiving the tap fees. Discussion was had, no decision was made.

Administrative Comments:

Phillips said there is a meeting for the trails grant soon. The trail would be from Brookside Park to the Fairgrounds.

Keys said there will be a health insurance premium holiday in November.

Watson was absent.

Weishaar had nothing.

Rayburn had nothing.

Arnold had nothing.

Overton had nothing.

Superintendents Reports:

Police Dept: Anderson had nothing.

Law Dept: Sammons had nothing.

Utility Office: Smart had nothing.

Fire Dept: Haun had nothing.

Electric Dept: Malone had nothing.

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

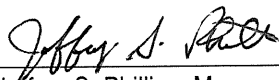
Gas Dept: Wilson said the Gas Department open house is September 4th.

Cemetery Dept: Effinger was absent.

Park Dept: Hall said money was raised for tee pads on 9 holes of disc golf.

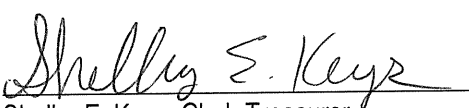
Stace Pickering said there are caps on the fountain wall and they are working on the algae issue.

There being nothing more to come before council, there was a motion by Rayburn, second by Watson, to adjourn. The motion passed by majority and the meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.



Jeffrey S. Phillips, Mayor

Attest:



Shelby E. Keys, Clerk-Treasurer