

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
COMMON COUNCIL & RENSSELAER UTILITY BOARD
September 22, 2025**

The Common Council of the City of Rensselaer and Rensselaer Utility Board met on September 22, 2025 in regular session in Council Chambers of City Hall. Mayor Jeffrey S. Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and an invocation offered by Sean Johnson.

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: Nicole Grzybowski and Tyler Coffel(virtual) with Baker Tilly, Stace Pickering and Harley Tomlinson.

The minutes of the September 8, 2025 regular council meeting were presented. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Overton, to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Citizen Comments and Petitions: None.

Water Rate Study: Tyler Coffel virtually presented 3 options for the water rates. Option 1 is to fund the capital improvements plan. Option 2 is to fund the capital improvements plan and the lead service line project based on IFA's original funding offer. Option 3 is to fund the capital improvements plan and pursue the \$2,000,000.00 LSL project with IFA SRF at a rate increase of 16.82% over 2 years. The IFA offer is 0% for 35 years. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Weishaar, to approve option 3 and have the Mayor sign the Baker-Tilly contract. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Ratify Poll: Mayor Phillips said he polled council for payment of claims that were skipped over last meeting. 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.

Salary Recommendations: Weishaar suggested a 2% raise for all full and part-time employees, increase the on-call stipend to \$250.00, leave the HSA contribution the same but pay out all of the contribution in January to employees who have been here 5+ years and continue to pay quarterly for employees who have been with the city less than 5 years. Numerous other positions were listed off to delete or change the salary of. Keys will take these recommendations and incorporate them into a salary ordinance to be presented.

I-65 Connection Requirements Letter: Phillips suggested waiving the tap; fees for residential customers, but not for commercial customers. There was a motion by Arnold, second by Overton, to approve the suggestion and sending out the connection letters specifying that. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Acceptance of the Rensselaer Housing Plan: Phillips said this will be tabled until the next meeting.

Ordinance 18-2025, Electric Manual Meter Reading Rates: Malone presented a first reading of the ordinance and said since starting the AMI project some residents are concerned with the advanced meters and the radio frequencies they put off. This ordinance is to include a residential and commercial rate for those who do not want advanced meters. There will be a monthly additional charge along with requiring the customer to purchase a manual meter.

Ordinance 19-2025, Fees for Copying Records and Documents: Keys said copying fees for black and white/color printing have been increased from .10 and .25 to .50 and .75. These fees have not been updated since 2010. Chief Anderson said he updated fees for body and dash cameras to \$150.00 per officer video and police incident/criminal reports to \$5.00 per case. This was the first reading of the ordinance.

Ordinance 20-2025, Employee Handbook: The final version of the employee handbook was presented. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Weishaar, 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 handbook. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent. Arnold said there are some things he doesn't agree with but he hopes they will be reviewed in the future.

Resolution 28-2025, Transfer of Funds: Keys read a transfer of funds within the General Fund for \$14,700.00. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Arnold, to approve the resolution. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Burial Rights: Keys read burial rights requests. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Overton, to approve the requests. 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 Rayburn, second by Overton, to allow Phillips to sign the activity log. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

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

Administrative Comments:

Phillips had nothing.

Keys gave a reminder that the BMV Public Hearing for closing the Rensselaer branch is October 2nd at 6:00 PM at Van Rensselaer Elementary School. She also said the new timekeeping application is officially live.

Watson was absent.

Weishaar had nothing.

Rayburn had nothing.

Arnold said Memories Alive was on Saturday and that both the Historical Society and Weston Cemetery crew did a great job.

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 said 1,400 feet of water and 2,000 feet of sewer has been installed for the I-65 project. The water main at 7th St. is installed. He reiterated the water rate increase for the LSL project is for state roads, residential work will still be done in house. Discussion was had on the 7th St project. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Overton, to transfer property ownership for those lots that the City owns over to the Redevelopment Commission. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent.

Eldridge said we have been moved to the 2nd phase of the IDEM recycling grant. The new water/wastewater truck has been delivered. Pacer rating for the 2026 CCMG should be complete soon.

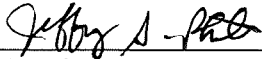
Gas Dept: Wilson had nothing.

Cemetery Dept: Effinger was absent.

Park Dept: Hall said the golf outing sign ups are due Friday. 8+ park events are upcoming. The pickleball fence will be installed soon. Concrete pad for the gazebo at Hal Gray Park is poured. Sidewalks being installed at Milroy Park to the new gazebo soon.

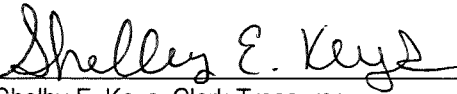
Stace Pickering said Oktoberfest is Saturday night from 5:00-11:00 PM.

There being nothing more to come before council, there was a motion by Rayburn, second by Weishaar, to adjourn. The motion passed by majority, with Watson absent, and the meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.



Jeffrey S. Phillips, Mayor

Attest:



Shelby E. Keys, Clerk-Treasurer