

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
COMMON COUNCIL
January 12, 2015**

The Common Council of the City of Rensselaer met on January 12, 2015 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 Councilman Overton and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Answering roll call were: Mayor Stephen Wood; Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Linda DeMoss; Council Members Scott Barton, Bill Hollerman, Russ Overton, George Cover, Ernest Watson, Jr.; City Attorney Mike Riley; Park Supt. Joe Effinger; Cemetery Supt. Ron DeMoss; Building Commissioner and Fire Chief Kenny Haun; Police Chief Jeff Phillips; Utility Office Manager Heather Smart; Gas Supt. Carol Lockridge; Electric Lead Line Foreman Lenny Larson; Electric Plant Supt. Claude Grow; Street Supt. Mike Murphy; Project Coordinator Jerry Lockridge; Robert Blankenship with the Rensselaer Republican. Clerk-Treasurer Frieda Bretzinger and Electric Utility Coordinator Donna Cochran were absent.

Also in attendance were: Stace Pickering with Consolidated Insurance; Robert Schenk; Mayor's Secretary Monica Maienbrook; John Johnson and Susan Gaines with Creekside Apartments; Ned Speicher and Curt Craig with Rensselaer School Corp; Mary Brown with Cornerstone; Jen Grawcock with United Consulting; Butch Claussen; Kevin Kelly with JCEDO; and Kyle, Karnae, Arrianna, Meela and Ava Whisker.

The December 22, 2014 regular council minutes were presented and approved unanimously with a motion by Overton, second by Hollerman.

Ten Year Award: Utility Clerk Karnae Whisker was recognized for her time and dedication of ten years to the City of Rensselaer starting as a 911 Dispatcher and now Utility Clerk.

Citizen Comments and Presentation of Petitions: **RCSC:** Speicher introduced Curt Craig as the new Assistant Superintendent. They will be starting e-learning days in February. He thanked employees for getting things going in the mornings and that helps them. They had an amazing football season and the city pitched in and helped with that. **CreekSide Apartments:** Wood said they came to him with a leak and requested an adjustment. Johnson asked for compensation as they spent over \$25,000 for the leak which went on for three or four months. Lockridge tried to help find the leak. They called Rayburn and they couldn't find the leak. They finally called a company out of Indianapolis that found the leak. All of the water was absorbed into the ground and didn't go down the drain. Smart said the ordinance doesn't allow for adjustments. The problem started in April and went through September and even part of October. She said an apartment complex is harder to determine use than a single family home. Cover asked if there had been an adjustment to sewage and Wood said no and added that water is a metered service so that's not adjusted. Sewage, on the other hand, has been adjusted for single family homes if it is proven that it didn't go down the drain; never for an apartment complex. Cover said we would be setting precedence if this were adjusted. Lockridge said they opened the manhole and could visually see the water running through the sewer. He added that activity and the wastewater plant increased starting in April as well. Smart left the meeting to go get figures, so the Mayor moved on to the rest of the agenda.

Resolution 01-2015, Gas Tracker: Carol Lockridge said the tracker was an increase of 6¢ per 100 cubic feet. There was a motion by Hollerman, second by Barton, to approve Resolution 01-2015 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Ratify Council: DeMoss stated that Clerk-Treasurer Bretzinger needed to poll council to pay a claim for Spring Tuition for an employee. Bretzinger was able to get ahold of Council Members Ernest Watson Jr, Scott Barton, Bill Hollerman and Russ Overton with the exception of George Cover. The four council members said yes. There was a motion by Hollerman to accept the ratification of the poll, second by Barton. The motion passed unanimously.

Vacate Alley: Haun said the property that has the alley is owned by Harry Sullivan. Sullivan has sold this property and they have found that there is an alley that runs through the middle of the house. What they are asking for is to vacate that portion of the alley on the property. Mary Brown was at the meeting to represent Mr. Sullivan because he lives in Minnesota. Brown said that a quarter after five she received a call from Land Title Agency and the surveyor did not mark a corner because there is a section that is an area of discrepancy that is between Sullivan's lot and the neighboring lot which belongs to Martin Wade Shuey. Land Title said they need to get a quick claim deed from Shuey to give up any footage that is in discrepancy. Wood said that the city has some easements through there too. Riley said if they do not have the legal description, they can't approve to vacate the alley. Cover asked if Mr. Shuey had any problem with giving up the little piece of land. Brown said that has not been discussed, but they had the opportunity to be at the meeting. Riley said it needs to be tabled till the surveyor gives the full legal description. Hollerman made the motion to accept Riley's advice to table the vacation of the alley, second by Cover. The motion passed unanimously.

Smart returned to the meeting.

Utility Office Remodel: Smart said she would like to have some remodeling done to bring her office up to ADA compliance and OSHA requirements. Smart said they have a high incident of shoulder issues. Smart said that they need to lower the counters on the customer side. They also need to improve the ability to hear through the windows. They would like to remove the built-in work stations and get desks that are height adjustable. Smart is asking for permission to get quotes for this project. A motion was made by Cover to get a cost estimate for the remodel project, second by Hollerman. The motion passed unanimously.

Continuation of Creekside Apartment Discussion: Smart said she could not get the figures they needed. Wood said they could not operate without the figures. Wood said that they would form a committee to look over the cost figures and they would make a recommendation at the next meeting. Cover and Watson volunteered to be on the committee.

Committee Reports: There were none.

Administrative Comments:

Cover had nothing.

Watson had nothing.

DeMoss had nothing.

Wood had nothing.

Barton had nothing.

Hollerman thanked everyone for the cleaning of the streets this morning.

Overton thanked everyone for support for his brother-in-law Steve Roberts.

Claims Approval: The claims were presented for payment. There was a motion by Barton, second by Watson, to approve the claims. The motion passed unanimously.

Supt Reports:

Building Dept: Haun told council the Plan Commission will be tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m. to finalize the plat for the new fire station.

Electric Utility: Larson said they are busy trimming trees. McAllister is hooked up. Grow had nothing.

Fire Department: Haun reported they are about 88% complete with the design of the new fire station.

Gas Dept: Lockridge said they are dealing with the cold weather and some minor issues.

Legal Dept.: Riley had nothing.

Park Dept: Effinger had nothing.

Police Dept.: Phillips asked for permission to attend the Indiana Chief of Police Conference on January 27, 28 and 29th. There was a motion by Barton, second by Hollerman, to approve the request. The motion passed unanimously. He said Coffee with a Cop will be at the Willow Switch on January 27th beginning at 8:00 a.m.

Street, Sanitation, Water and Wastewater: Murphy said they've been busy with snow removal. Lockridge had nothing for council.

Utility Office: Smart had nothing.

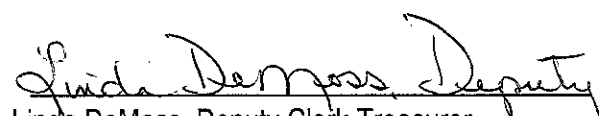
Weston Cemetery: DeMoss had nothing.

Discussion of Sidewalk/Bicycle Path to the Fairgrounds: Butch Claussen said about a year ago he and Steve Roberts discussed the need for a sidewalk/bicycle path to the fairgrounds. He asked if council had any objections before he started asking landowners about objections putting a sidewalk/bicycle path in starting at Abigail Street. Wood said they've started putting sidewalks in as businesses such as Dollar General come in but we have to stay out of the highway right-of-way. Claussen said he talked to Jack Eldridge and he's in favor of it. Wood said he's on the opposite side of the road. Claussen said he would like to see it on the South side of the road so people aren't crossing the highway to get to the fairgrounds. Cover said he wouldn't object if the people involved are willing to share in the cost. Wood said most of the people that would use the path would be Community Corrections.

There being nothing more to come before council, there was a motion by Watson, second by Cover, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.


Stephen A. Wood, Mayor

ATTEST:


Linda DeMoss, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer