

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
COMMON COUNCIL
July 23, 2018**

The Common Council of the City of Rensselaer met on July 23, 2018 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 Rev. Elizabeth Hartmann with the First Christian Church and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Answering roll call were: Mayor Stephen Wood; Clerk-Treasurer Frieda Bretzinger; Council Members Scott Barton, Bill Hollerman, George Cover, Ernest Watson, Jr; City Attorney Mike Riley; Building Commissioner and Fire Chief Kenny Haun; Police Chief Matt Anderson; ~~Utility Office Manager Heather Smart~~; Gas Supt. Carol Lockridge; Electric Manager of Operations Steve Miller; Electric Lead Line Foreman Lenny Larson; Electric Plant Supt. Claude Grow; Street Supt. Andy Daniels; Project Coordinator Jerry Lockridge; Cheri Shelhart with the Rensselaer Republican. Council Member Rick Odle; Cemetery Supt. Kevin Cochran; Park Supt. Joe Effinger and Utility Office Manager Heather Smart were absent.

Also in attendance were: Robert Schenk with Rensselaer Adventures; Stace Pickering with C/I; Rev. Elizabeth Hartmann with the First Christian Church; Vince Sommers with Commonwealth Engineering; Randy Denton.

The minutes of the July 9, 2018 council meeting were presented. There was a motion by Barton, and second by Hollerman, to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

Citizen Comments and Presentation of Petitions: There were none.

Ordinance 12-2018, Write Off On-Account Utility Accounts: Wood read the ordinance to discontinue the accounts in On-Account. The total comes to \$-338.66. There was a motion by Watson, second by Cover, to pass Ordinance 12-2018. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

Ordinance 13-2018, Close On-Account Fund: Wood read the ordinance which states that due to the billing and software conversion causing a negative balance in the On-Account Fund and that Donald R. Frey software does not use this fund, the fund needs to be closed and the Sewage Operating Fund absorb the negative balance of \$-2,186.41. There was a motion by Cover, second by Hollerman, to approve Ordinance 13-2018. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

USDA Rural Development Funding Application: Vince Sommers said they are applying for USDA Rural Development funding. This is for a main lift station, and providing sewer service to Owen Street and Washington Street. Each state has money available and what each state doesn't use it goes back to a national pool and on August 1st it is opened up to states. He is looking at having the application in by August 1st. The proposed project is adding 41 new sewer services. This project is estimated at \$5,211,500.00. We should know within thirty days if we're approved. Watson said this is completely funded by the federal government and not going to be funded by the citizens. Sommers said yes it will be completely federally funded. Bretzinger asked if this is being completely federally funded why we are paying a bond council. Sommers said every large debt requires bond counsel. Barton asked if all engineering had to be done when we apply. Sommers said you will know exactly what the project is before any contracts are signed. There was a motion by Watson, second by Hollerman, to make the application with USDA. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

Amendment to Policies and Procedures: Wood wanted to address things that have come up. He's tired of employees running down to his office saying this is wrong and that's wrong. He and Cover have already discussed this. Cover said he would like to see what we allow per day and make it a per diem rate. Bretzinger said a lot of conferences provide breakfast and lunch so we are going to reimburse up to \$75.00 for dinner. Cover said yes. There was a motion by Cover, second by Hollerman, to change the travel food allowance from per meal to \$75.00 per day. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent. Wood said tipping for a cab ride was not reimbursed. Miller said cab ride from the airport to the hotel and thought his tip would be reimbursed. Tip can't exceed 20%. Hollerman made a motion to allow tipping for cab rides but not to exceed 20%. Cover seconded the motion. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent. Bretzinger said we received a letter from the city attorney stating it was allowable for two employees in the same department to have a personal relationship and may date or share a residence. On page 16 of the Policies and Procedures it is not allowed. Bretzinger said that particular paragraph needs to be removed. There was a motion by Hollerman, second by Watson, to remove that paragraph on page 16 that addresses a personal relationship on the advice of the city.

attorney. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent. The last item was Bretzinger said spouse charges are being charged on the city credit card and would like to see that practice stopped. Wood asked if they were reimbursing and Bretzinger said yes but the city credit card is tax exempt. Riley said if it doesn't cost the city money and the employee is reimbursing, it shouldn't be an issue. He said it's more of an accounting issue than a legal issue. Barton asked if there's an issue with the State Board of Accounts. Bretzinger said she hasn't asked. Miller said his spouse's ticket was charged on the city's credit card but he reimbursed the city. Bretzinger said we had to send five personal checks with the city payment of the card and she didn't think it was fair for Linda to have to go through that every month. Cover said even if it's ten, that's part of her job. Bretzinger said she is withdrawing her request.

Credit Card Activity Log Approval: Bretzinger said the council needs to make a motion to allow the mayor to sign the Credit Card Activity Log. There was a motion by Barton, second by Watson, to allow the mayor to sign the activity log. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

Mayoral Holiday: Wood said August 31st will be the Mayoral Holiday. There was no vote called for council approval.

City Picnic: Wood said the city's picnic will be on August 11th. He requested \$1,000 from Public Relations Fund to pay for it. There was a motion by Barton, second by Hollerman, to approve the request. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

Committee Reports: There were none.

Administrative Comments:

Barton had nothing.

Bretzinger had nothing.

Cover had nothing.

Hollerman had nothing.

Watson had nothing.

Wood had nothing.

Claims Approval: The claims were presented for payment. There was a motion by Cover, second by Watson, to approve the claims. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

Superintendents Reports:

Building Dept.: Haun said Autumn Trace will have a tech review next Tuesday.

Electric Dept.: Miller had nothing. Larson said Grace Street from Van Rensselaer to Front Street will be closed tomorrow from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. for pole replacement. Grow had nothing.

Fire Dept.: Haun had nothing.

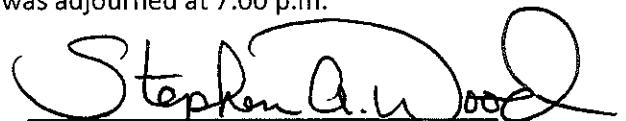
Gas Dept.: Lockridge had nothing.

Legal Dept.: Riley had nothing.

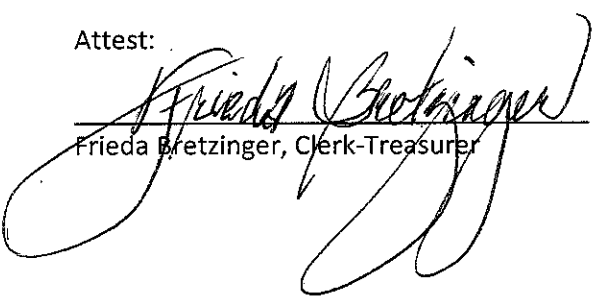
Police Dept.: Anderson said the landscaping is finished at the new police station. Right now they are going over the punch list. They ran in to a drainage problem with the east parking lot so they are trying to get drainage to Harrison Street.

Street, Sanitation, Sewage and Water Dept.: Daniels had nothing. Lockridge sent out a proposal to Town & Country Paving. They quoted \$21,695.00 to do Walnut Street from McKinley to Cullen. There was a motion by Watson, second by Cover, to approve the resurfacing quote. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

There being nothing more to come before council, there was a motion by Hollerman, second by Cover, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.


Stephen A. Wood, Mayor

Attest:


Frieda Bretzinger, Clerk-Treasurer