

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
COMMON COUNCIL
August 28, 2023**

The Common Council of the City of Rensselaer met on August 28, 2023 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 Michelle Bartel of the First Presbyterian Church and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Answering roll call were: Mayor Stephen Wood; Clerk-Treasurer Shelby Keys; Council Members Russ Overton, Kevin Arnold, Noelle Weishaar, Ernest Watson, Jr; George Cover; City Attorney Jacob Ahler; Building Commissioner Josh Davis; Park Supt. Joe Effinger; Police Chief Matt Anderson; Utility Office Manager Heather Smart; Lead Line Foreman Lenny Larson; Asst. Street Supt. Bryce Black and Harley Tomlinson with the Rensselaer Republican. Cemetery Caretaker Tony Baltes, Fire Chief Kenny Haun, Project Coordinator Jerry Lockridge and Gas Supt. Carol Lockridge were absent.

Also in attendance were Garrett Welker, Caleb DeJong, Jeff Rayburn, Michelle Bartel, Cody Heldak and Marc Ekstrom.

The minutes of the August 14, 2023 regular council meeting were presented. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Overton, to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Comments and Petitions: None.

Ordinance 18-2023, Appropriation Reduction for 2023 Budget: Keys said this ordinance is to reduce the 2023 MVH budget by \$47,000.00, so those funds can be utilized for the 2024 budget. There was a motion by Watson, second by Cover, to approve the ordinance. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 39-2023, ARPA Spending Plan to Amend Resolution 38-2022: Keys said this resolution will be to add the phosphorus building project to the ARPA spending plan resolution. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Watson, to approve the resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

Ratify Council Poll - Public Relations Requests: Wood said council was polled on August 15th to approve expenditures for Kid's Night Out in the amount of \$145.27. There was a motion by Cover, second by Overton, to ratify the poll approving of the expenditures. The motion passed unanimously.

Requests for use of Public Relations Funds: Wood said there is a reimbursement request in the amount of \$56.30 for Kid's Night Out expenditures from the public relations fund. There was a motion by Overton, second by Arnold, to approve the reimbursement in the amount of \$56.30. The motion passed unanimously. Wood said the company picnic did not take place this year. Since the Christmas Party last year was such a success, he would like to have one again this year. The request is for \$2,000.00 out of the public relations fund. There was a motion by Watson, second by Cover, to approve the request of \$2,000.00. The motion passed unanimously. Wood received a letter from the American Legion requesting a contribution for their annual Thanksgiving meal. They serve around 650 people. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Cover, to contribute \$500.00 out of the public relations fund to the American Legion in Rensselaer. The motion passed unanimously.

2024 City Contribution to Employee HSA: Cover said they have given \$1,800.00 in the past towards employee's who have opted for the HAS plan. With the 3% raise that was just announced, he feels \$1,800.00 is a fair amount. There was a motion by Arnold, second by Weishaar, to approve the \$1,800.00 HSA contribution. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Approval to Fill Mayor's Secretary Position: Wood said his secretary has put in her two weeks' notice and he is requesting to hire a replacement. There was a motion by Cover, second by Overton, to approve the request. The motion passed unanimously.

Credit Card Statement: Wood asked council for permission to sign the credit card activity log. There was a motion by Watson, second by Cover, to allow the mayor to sign the credit card statement. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports: None.

Administrative Comments:

Cover thanked the Street Dept. for picking up grass and limbs and doing a good job.

Watson said it's important to continue to look ahead. He knows there will be some individuals retiring in the next few years and asked who is up next for those departments.

Keys said the city auction brought in \$50,556.25. She also said one of her deputy-clerks will be retiring in January. Her position requires a longer training period as some job responsibilities may only occur twice a month. Keys will be advertising for the position in September and hiring in October. This will be a temporary full-time position until January, where it will become a permanent full-time position.

Wood had nothing.

Overton had nothing.

Arnold said he stopped by the auction and it was nice to see employees helping out and good job.

Weishaar had nothing.

Claims Approval: The claims were presented to council for its approval. There was a motion by Overton, second by Watson, to approve the claims. The motion passed unanimously.

Superintendents Reports:

Police Dept: Anderson said if anyone receives complaints regarding the guardrails between the high school and Laird's landing, he has been referring people to the State Highway.

Law Dept: Ahler had nothing.

Utility Office: Smart had nothing.

Building Dept: Davis had nothing.

Fire Dept: Ekstrom had nothing. Wood said he received a call from the Governor's Office regarding the grant the department got for a fire training site.

Electric Dept: Larson said his guys rebuilt a primary line behind the theater and reconducted the entire thing and the guys did a great job.

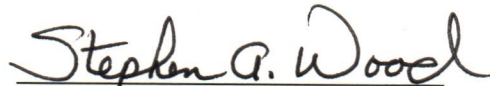
Street, Sanitation, Water and Sewage: Black said the Augusta St. resurfacing project costs have doubled due to the road being in more disrepair than expected. The cost is now closer to \$22,000.00 instead of \$11,000.00. They are currently pumping the new water main on Van Rensselaer St. and took the first bacteria sample. If all goes well, they should start putting services in on Friday. He also said there is a CSO audit with IDEM next week.

Cemetery Dept: Baltes was absent but Wood spoke on his behalf. A quote was provided for a 2017 Kawasaki Mule for \$5,400.00. There are funds available within the department's budget. The cemetery currently has one, but there is a need for another. There was a motion by Arnold, second by Cover, to approve the quote for a 2017 Kawasaki Mule in the amount of \$5,400.00. The motion passed unanimously.

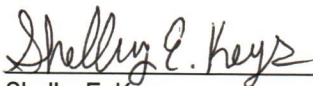
Gas Dept: C. Lockridge was absent.

Park Dept: Effinger said the Park Board and Corporation will meet next Tuesday at 6:00 pm.

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 adjourned at 6:26 p.m.


Stephen A. Wood, Mayor

Attest:



Shelby E. Keys
Clerk-Treasurer