

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
COMMON COUNCIL & RENSSELAER UTILITY BOARD
December 23, 2024**

The Common Council of the City of Rensselaer and Rensselaer Utility Board met on December 23, 2024 in regular session in Council Chambers of City Hall. Mayor Jeffrey S. Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. followed by an invocation offered by Russ Overton and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Answering roll call were: Mayor Jeff Phillips, Clerk-Treasurer Shelby Keys, Council Members Russ Overton, Kevin Arnold, Noelle Weishaar, Jeff Rayburn, Ernest Watson, Jr; City Attorney Todd Sammons, Building Commissioner Josh Davis, Cemetery Caretaker Joe Effinger, Fire Chief Kenny Haun, Police Chief Matt Anderson, Lead Line Foreman Garrett Welker, Park Supt Heather Hall, Street/Water/Sewer/Sanitation Supt. Bryce Black, Project Coordinator Jerry Lockridge and Gas Supt. Carol Lockridge. Utility Office Manager Heather Smart was absent.

Also, in attendance were: Bob Schenk with Rensselaer Adventures, Matt Gunter, Ben Dispennett, Eric Walker, Caleb DeJong, Josh Eldridge, Angie Haun, Todd Wilson and Stace Pickering.

The minutes of the December 9, 2024 regular council meeting were presented. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Watson, to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Comments and Petitions: None.

Ordinance 29-2024; Write Off Non-Collectible Utility Accounts: Smart said this ordinance is to write-off accounts older than six years, those who have filed for bankruptcy or are deceased. There was a motion by Watson, second by Arnold, to approve the ordinance. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 33-2024; Electric Tracker: Welker said this tracker reflects a \$4.64 decrease per 1,000 kWh consumed. There was a motion made by Overton, second by Watson, to approve the resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 34-2024; Request for Encumbrance: Keys read requests from department heads to encumber 2023 funds to be used in 2024. Requests within the General Fund for \$153,954.52, MVH for \$3,500.00, Local Road & Streets for \$7,350.00, EDIT for \$210,281.00, PS-LIT for \$5,658.76, CCI for \$38,181.15 and CCD for \$80,000.00. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Arnold, to approve the resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Appointments: Weishaar read recommendations to appoint Kevin Smith and Jeff Webb for a 1-year term to the Redevelopment Commission and Mike Lyons for a 4-year term to the Board of Zoning Appeals. There was a motion by Arnold, second by Overton, to approve the recommendations. The motion passed unanimously.

KIRPC Board Appointments: Phillips said he needs council's permission to appoint him to a 1-year term on the KIRPC board. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Watson, to approve the request. The motion passed unanimously.

Utility Budgets: 2025 budgets for city utilities were presented. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Watson, to approve the budgets. The motion passed unanimously.

Determination of the Petitions to Vacate: Davis said Attorney Walker was unable to make it to the meeting and requested the item be tabled until the next meeting. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Watson, to table the discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Housing Action Plan & 5-Year Parks Plan Agreement: Ben Dispennett and Eric Walker from HWC Engineering were present. A park master plan is needed. In addition, housing is a major issue. The housing action plan would also review the zoning code. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Weishaar, to allow the mayor to sign contracts for both. The motion passed unanimously.

IDEM Recycling Grant: Eldridge said the city was awarded grant funding to install 15 trash cans and 25 recycling receptacles for the downtown area. The grant total is \$62,861.00 with \$15,715.00 coming from city recycling funds.

FMLA Request: Keys said there were two FMLA requests. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Watson, to approve the requests. The motion passed unanimously.

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

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

Administrative Comments:

Phillips announced Matthew Gunter as the Safety Director. He recognized Carol Lockridge for 28 years of service and Jerry Lockridge for 44 years of service. Their retirement party will be January 3rd at City Hall.

Keys thanked Jerry and Carol for all their help.

Watson thanked the Lockridge's.

Weishaar said it's been a pleasure working with both Jerry and Carol. She also added she loves the downtown lights and decorations.

Rayburn said congratulations to the Lockridge's on this next step.

Arnold thanked Jerry and Carol. He inquired about mass notifications and if it has been looked into any further.
Overton thanked Jerry and Carol for being dedicated Rensselaer employees.

Superintendents Reports:

Police Dept: Anderson had nothing.

Law Dept: Sammons said Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. He also congratulated Jerry and Carol.

Utility Office: Smart congratulated Jerry and Carol.

Building Dept: Davis said the ADA improvements to the front door are complete.

Fire Dept: Haun said he submitted a \$10,000.00 grant and he should know if March if it's awarded to the city.

Electric Dept: Welker said the digger truck is ahead of schedule and they are wanting pre-payment.

Street, Sanitation, Water and Sewage: Black congratulated Jerry and Carol. A liquidated damages letter has been sent to the attorney to review. There are some warranty issues with the Brick Streets that Grimmer will be looking at. Eldridge thanked Jerry for the many years of working together.

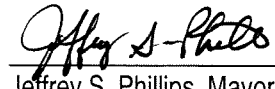
Gas Dept: C. Lockridge said thank you to the city and to everyone who has assisted over the years and congrats to Matt on the Safety Director position.

Cemetery Dept: Effinger said Wreaths Across America was well attended.

Park Dept: Hall said congratulations to the Lockridge's and thank you for the support since she has started. The office in the light plant has been framed and they will be moved-in before the end of the year. She is looking at winter programming and a disc golf tournament.

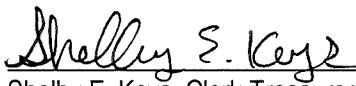
Jerry Lockridge said the city has a good team and is in good hands going forward. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

There being nothing more to come before council, there was a motion by Rayburn, second by Watson, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.



Jeffrey S. Phillips, Mayor

Attest:



Shelby E. Keys, Clerk-Treasurer