

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
COMMON COUNCIL
July 8, 2019**

The Common Council of the City of Rensselaer met on July 8, 2019 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. Jeff Cover of the First Presbyterian 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 Jacob Ahler; Cemetery Supt. Kevin Cochran; Park Supt. Joe Effinger; Building Commissioner and Fire Chief Kenny Haun; Police Sergeant Dan White; 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. Absent were: Council Member Rick Odle.

Also in attendance were: Robert Schenk with Rensselaer Adventures; Russell Overton; Rev. Jeff Cover with the First Presbyterian Church, Nancy Klockow with the Ritz Theater; Michelle Martineau with Unique Finds; Noelle Weishaar.

The minutes of the June 24, 2019 council meeting were presented. There was a motion by Barton, second by Hollerman, to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

Citizen Comments and Presentation of Petitions: Nancy Klockow said she is at the meeting to discuss the effects of closing Van Rensselaer Street during Little Cousin Jasper Festival and she is representing the businesses along Van Rensselaer Street from Washington to Harrison; that being Moonshiners, Unique Finds, and the Ritz Theater. She said they have endured large trucks and trailers sitting in front of their businesses, blocking their signs and businesses. She said the effect on the Ritz Theater of closing the street is that she pays up to \$3,000 for a movie and she has to recoup that money on the weekends. She can't recoup that through the week. She said about four years ago she watched an elderly woman with two canes with her two adult children on each side, struggle to get to the theater while the streets were closed during Little Cousin Jasper. She proposed to keep Van Rensselaer Street open and make it all handicapped parking. She also talked to Tammy Culp with the Farmer's Market and she has agreed to allow the traveling businesses for Little Cousin Jasper to use the opposite side of the street from where the Farmer's Market sets up. She suggested closing that street since it only has one business on it. She was also told that the county parking lot couldn't be used for any festivities because that was where the committee parked during the festival. Cover said he thought Harrison Street was closed anyhow. Bretzinger said it is. Martineau said a semi truck blocked her business last year and when she went out the driver was yelling at her. She went and got Pat Fox and she made him move the truck. Bretzinger asked if he was the one that had the 9/11 Memorial and Martineau said no. He had a children's ride. She said opening Van Rensselaer and making it handicapped parking is an easy solution. Bretzinger said she talked to Chief Anderson about opening the street and he was concerned that if it were opened he would be concerned about people going back and forth across the street during the festival. Klockow asked why that was different than the highways being opened and people crossing them. Bretzinger said when there are children's rides on Van Rensselaer people will go back and forth. Klockow said to move them on Harrison. Bretzinger said Harrison is used by food vendors and others. White said the police wouldn't legally be able to enforce handicapped parking violations. Haun said as the City's ADA Coordinator with temporary parking there would still have to be ramps all along Van Rensselaer. That is federal law. Watson said this is something we'll have to look at since it's coming up and we're not going to get everything taken care of before then. There was a motion by Hollerman that the mayor takes this under advisement. White said it's not an issue of watching the parking; it's enforcing the parking and that can't be done without an ordinance. Wood asked Hollerman to amend his motion to establish a committee. Hollerman amended his motion to include the mayor appointing a committee. Barton seconded the motion. Wood appointed Hollerman and Cover to the committee. This is for next year. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent. Wood said the street closings were approved at the council's May 28th meeting.

Resolution 14-2019 Gas Tracker: Lockridge said this tracker is a 5.5¢ increase per 100 cubic feet of gas. There was a motion by Barton, second by Watson, to approve Resolution 14-2019 as presented. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

MainStreet Requesting Approval to Hold Oktoberfest September 28, 2019 and Street Closing Request: There was a request to hold OktoberFest on Saturday, September 28, 2019 and to close Van Rensselaer Street from in front of City Hall to Washington Street and Harrison Street from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. There was a motion by Barton, second by Cover, to approve the request. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

Tree Removal Proposal: Lockridge submitted a proposal from Practical Tree Service to remove 18 trees at a cost of \$14,800.00. Barton asked where the money is coming from and Lockridge said from the

EDIT Fund. There was a motion by Hollerman, second by Barton, to approve the proposal. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

Cemetery Deed Request: Bretzinger presented a cemetery deed request for Brett and April Wireman. There was a motion by Barton, second by Hollerman, to approve the request. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

Authorize the Mayor to sign for the Purchase of Mark O'Brien Land: Ahler said the purchase agreement is ready. There was a motion by Cover, second by Hollerman, to allow the mayor to sign the purchase agreement. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

Public Relations Request: There was a request to purchase flowers for an employee's sister that passed away. It will not exceed \$75.00. There was a motion by Barton, second by Hollerman, to approve the request. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent.

Committee Reports:

Administrative Comments:

Cover had nothing.

Watson had nothing.

Bretzinger had nothing.

Wood had nothing.

Barton said it was nice to see the artwork going up around town.

Hollerman had nothing.

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

Superintendents Reports:

Building Dept.: Haun said there is a Plan Commission meeting tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m.

Cemetery Dept.: Cochran had nothing.

Electric Dept.: Miller had nothing. Larson had nothing. Grow had nothing.

Fire Dept.: Haun said he had two probationary firefighters graduating Thursday at Wheeler High School.

Gas Dept.: Lockridge had nothing.

Legal Department: Ahler had nothing.

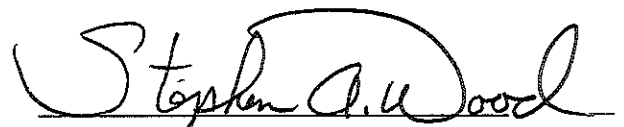
Park Dept.: Effinger had nothing.

Police Dept.: White said they are opening the hiring process for a crossing guard.

Street, Sanitation, Sewage and Water Dept.: Daniels had nothing. Lockridge said Peerless-Midwest pulled the pump and motor from Well #6. They will be using the materials from Well #8. Bretzinger asked how old Well #6 was and Lockridge said it was installed in 2009.

Utility Office: Smart had nothing.

There being nothing more to come before council, there was a motion by Barton, second by Watson, to adjourn. The motion passed by majority, with Odle absent, and the meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.


Stephen A. Wood, Mayor

Attest:


Frieda Bretzinger, Clerk-Treasurer