

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
COMMON COUNCIL
February 27, 2023**

The Common Council of the City of Rensselaer met on February 27, 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 Pastor Kenin Smith with the Hope Community Church and the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Also in attendance were Robert Schenk with Rensselaer Adventures, Pastor Kenin Smith, Malik Hemphill, Nathan Swafford, Miranda Patino, Nadia Hemphill, Frieda Bretzinger, Russ Martin, Pat Fox, Lisa Ohanis, Abi Ohanis, Kevin Arnold and Caleb De Jong.

The minutes of the February 13, 2023 regular council meeting were presented. There was a motion by Overton, second by Cover, to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed by majority, with Hollerman absent.

Citizen Comments and Petitions: None.

Resolution 04-2023, Authorized Designated Signatory: J. Lockridge said this resolution would allow him to sign off on pay requests that are sent to SRF for the water tower and service line replacement projects. There was a motion by Watson, second by Cover, to authorize J. Lockridge as an authorized signatory for the SRF pay requests. The motion passed by majority, with Hollerman absent.

New Police Officer Swearing In: Keys performed the swearing in of new police officer Malik Hemphill.

Little Cousin Jasper Festival Request: Fox said that due to the downtown renovation, LCJ will not be held on the courthouse lawn this year. After looking into other sites and talking with the parks department, Fox said she thinks they can make it work at Potawatomi Park. Fox requested the use of the Front Street parking lot for food trucks and to close Front Street from Washington Street to Kellner Boulevard for game trucks. She has talked with the electric department and they can supply the electric to the proper areas. Wood asked if there would be a parade. Fox said yes, it will be altered to work for this year, but they are going to give it a try. Weishaar asked if the Front Street road closure would be from Friday to Sunday. Fox said the food and game trucks would actually get there Thursday afternoon and that the road closure would be from Thursday to Sunday. Weishaar said she wondered how many businesses that would affect. Fox said she has talked to all the businesses on that street and they were fine with it. There was a motion by Cover, second by Overton, to allow the use of the Front Street parking lots and the closing of Front Street from Washington Street to Kellner Boulevard from Thursday to Sunday. The motion passed by majority, with Hollerman absent. Fox added that they are very short on volunteers and would welcome new people who would like to help.

USDA Rural Development Annual Report: J. Lockridge said this is an annual report required by USDA for the loan that was given for the high rate treatment plant. It is a financial outlook for the sewage department for 2023. He requested permission for the Clerk's Office to sign off on the report once it is reviewed and complete. There was a motion by Watson, second by Weishaar, to allow the Clerk's Office to sign the report. The motion passed by majority, with Hollerman absent.

Fire Department 5K Event: Smart said the Women's Auxiliary is wanting to put together a 5K fundraiser this year with the money to be used for educational purposes. It will take place on May 20th at the JNF Park. The route will go down Sparling Avenue to Mt. Calvary, loop around through College Woods and then back to JNF Park. Smart has talked with Anderson and Effinger and neither one had any concerns. There was a motion by Cover, second by Overton, to allow the 5k event to take place. The motion passed by majority, with Hollerman absent.

Credit Card Activity Log: Wood asked council for permission to sign the credit card activity log. There was a motion by Watson, second by Overton, to allow the mayor to sign the log. The motion passed by majority, with Hollerman absent.

Burial Rights Request: Keys read a request for burial rights for Marvin Olson and Guyanne Day. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Watson, to approve the request. The motion passed by majority, with Hollerman absent.

Committee Reports: Keys said the policies and procedures would be sent out to council to review before the next meeting.

Administrative Comments:

Cover asked how far in advance we need to talk to the railroad about getting crossings fixed. J. Lockridge said he would reach out to them.

Watson said there is lots of water.

Keys had nothing.

Wood said he had a discussion with the county and they are going to redo their two sides of the courthouse square. Wood said the city got \$2,000,000.00 in grants to replace lead service lines. Won't be able to do all of them, but it's probably going to be mandatory in the next few years and we will have a head start on it.

Overton had nothing.
Hollerman was absent.
Weishaar had nothing.

Claims Approval: The claims were presented to council for its approval. There was a motion by Overton, second by Weishaar, to approve the claims. The motion passed by majority, with Hollerman absent.

Superintendents Reports:

Police Dept: Anderson had nothing.

Law Dept: Ahler had nothing.

Utility Office: Smart had nothing.

Building Dept: Cochran had nothing.

Fire Dept: Haun had nothing.

Electric Dept: Willhite had nothing.

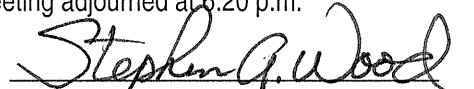
Street, Sanitation, Water and Sewage: Black had nothing. J. Lockridge said the bids for the Community Crossings package for resurfacing the streets are due March 13th. They will be opened at the next council meeting. Signed contracts are due to the state by April 6th.

Cemetery Dept: Baltes had nothing.

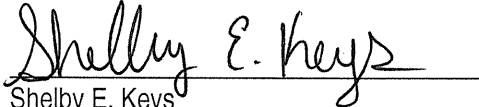
Gas Dept: C. Lockridge had nothing.

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

There being nothing more to come before council, there was a motion by Cover, second by Watson, to adjourn. The motion passed by majority, with Hollerman absent, and the meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.


Stephen A. Wood, Mayor

Attest:


Shelby E. Keys
Clerk-Treasurer