

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
COMMON COUNCIL & RENSSELAER UTILITY BOARD
August 26, 2024**

The Common Council of the City of Rensselaer and Rensselaer Utility Board met on August 26, 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 Debbie Voss 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, Park Supt. and Interim Cemetery Caretaker Joe Effinger, Police Chief Matt Anderson, Utility Office Manager Heather Smart, Lead Line Foreman Garrett Welker, Street/Water/Sewer/Sanitation Supt. Bryce Black, Project Coordinator Jerry Lockridge, and Gas Supt. Carol Lockridge. Fire Chief Kenny Haun was absent.

Also in attendance were: Bob Schenk with Rensselaer Adventures, Debbie Voss, Cody Heldak, Heather Hall, and Harley Tomlinson with the Rensselaer Republican.

The minutes of the August 12, 2024 regular council meeting were presented. There was a motion by Overton, second by Rayburn, to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Comments and Petitions: None.

Ordinance 18-2024, Appropriation Reduction for 2024 Budget: Keys said this ordinance will reduce the 2024 total Motor Vehicle Highway (MVH) budget by \$71,990.00, so those funds can be utilized for the 2025 budget. There was a motion by Overton, second by Watson, to suspend the rules and waive the second reading. The motion passed unanimously. There was a motion by Rayburn, second by Watson, to approve the ordinance. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 20-2024, Transfer of Funds: Keys read a transfer of funds within the General Fund for \$2,000.00 and Public Safety-LIT Fund for \$20,000.00. There was a motion by Watson, second by Arnold, to approve the resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

Agreement for Consulting Services: Keys presented an agreement between the City and New Focus HR, LLC for the design and development of a legally compliant employee handbook in the amount of \$5,000.00. Keys requested approval to sign the contract. There was a motion by Arnold, second by Overton, to approve the request. The motion passed unanimously.

Burial Rights Request: Keys read burial rights requests for Carolyn & David Army and Estel & Deana George. There was a motion by Weishaar, second by Arnold, to approve the request. 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 Rayburn, second by Watson, to allow Phillips to sign the activity log. The motion passed unanimously.

Interdepartmental Agreement: Phillips asked permission to allow Welker to sign on behalf of the Electric Department. There was a motion by Overton, second by Watson, to approve the request. The motion passed unanimously.

Property Coverage Insurance Policy: Phillips said he sent council the property coverage insurance policy.

Scott Street Railroad Crossing: Phillips said he does not have an agreement yet from CSX or Amtrak regarding the amount they will contribute if a railroad crossing is closed. INDOT could possibly contribute \$40,000.00 and CSX would contribute an additional \$15,000.00. Arnold said his concern is once the crossing is removed, it's gone forever. Phillips said there are no signals at this crossing. There is a meeting set with CSX and Amtrak on September 3rd. Discussion was had and the item was tabled.

Brick Streets Pay App #5: J. Lockridge said this pay request is for \$145,566.90 and covers concrete work and ADA compliant curbs. There was a motion by Watson, second by Rayburn, to approve the pay request. The motion passed unanimously. Weishaar asked if the work will be complete by Oktoberfest. J. Lockridge said the streets will be able to be used for the event, but the entire project will probably not be complete yet.

Down Payment Request: C. Lockridge said Ordinance 19-2023 was passed last year to allow pre-payments. She was asking permission to pay \$13,468.00 to Sentry Roofing as they are requesting a down payment on replacing the gutters and downspouts. It is 1/3 of the project cost. If approve, the Clerk-Treasurer's office will issue a check tomorrow. There was a motion by Watson, second by Overton, to approve the request. The motion passed unanimously.

Administrative Comments:

Phillips said the Park Board approved his request for Heather Hall to be the new Park Superintendent. Phillips remembered Bill Hollerman and Rick Chambers for all the work they contributed to the City.

Keys had nothing.

Watson had nothing.

Weishaar had nothing.

Rayburn asked Watson for an update on the building trades program that Saint Joe is running. Watson said they broke ground today. Rayburn asked if schools were on board. Watson said they are working with Indiana Agricultural Technology who will provide 5-6 students. Rayburn said junk has accumulated on the corner of Franklin and Elm. He also said the pavilion at Filson Park looks good.

Arnold said the lights on the brick street look awesome.

Overton said he served with Hollerman for many years. He had a profound affect on the community and will be greatly missed. He also said Chambers was a great employee who wasn't afraid to get his hands dirty.

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

Superintendents Reports:

Police Dept: Anderson had nothing.

Law Dept: Sammons had nothing.

Utility Office: Smart had nothing.

Building Dept: Davis said there is a Redevelopment Authority meeting this Wednesday and a Redevelopment Commission meeting next Wednesday.

Fire Dept: Haun was absent.

Electric Dept: Welker said the lights on the brick street are up and operational.

Street, Sanitation, Water and Sewage: Black said 2 more employees have earned their CDL certification.

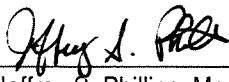
Project Coordinator: J. Lockridge said he has been working on fiber permits for Brightspeed.

Gas Dept: C. Lockridge had nothing.

Cemetery Dept: Effinger had nothing. Arnold told him the cemetery has had a noticeable difference since he started.

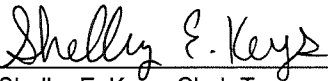
Park Dept: Hall had nothing.

There being nothing more to come before council, there was a motion by Watson, second by Weishaar, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.



Jeffrey S. Phillips, Mayor

Attest:



Shelby E. Keys, Clerk-Treasurer