



CITY OF ANSONIA  
BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
*Regular Meeting – February 8, 2011*

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***Call to Order***

The Regular Meeting of the Ansonia Board of Aldermen was called to order at 7 p.m. by Aldermanic President Stephen Blume. All those present rose and pledged allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

***Roll Call***

The secretary called the roll:

Edward Adamowski, D1- absent  
Robert Duffus, D1 - present  
Jason Bender, D2 - present  
Peter Danielczuk, D2 - present  
Joseph Jeanette, D3- present  
John Marini, R3- absent  
Robert Beall, D4 - present

Jerome Fainer, D4 - present  
Spero Jordanides, D5 - absent  
Jay Fainer, D5 - present  
Scott Nihill, D6 - absent  
Gene Sharkey, D6 - present  
David Knapp, D7- present  
Stephen Blume, D7 - present

President Blume declared a quorum of 10 present, 4 absent.

***Deviate from the agenda -***

Alderman Sharkey explained that he is scheduled to appear before the Board of Apportionment and Taxation at 7 p.m. He MOVED to DEVIATE from the agenda to put off hearing the Committee Reports until his return. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

Alderman Sharkey left the meeting at this point, 7:02 p.m. - 9 present, 5 absent.

***Consideration of Previous Minutes***

Alderman Jerome Fainer MOVED to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 11 if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Knapp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

***Public Session***

President Blume asked three times if any member of the public wished to address the Board.

*Public Official Session*

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Mayor James Della Volpe

I just want to update you on the snow removal. To date we've gotten 62 inches of snow. Overtime costs, we've spent \$102,359 - obviously we're over the budgeted amount. Mike Schryver from Public Works is attending the Apportionment and Taxation meeting tonight trying to get more money transferred into the Overtime account.

The sand and salt material, we do have enough. We've used close to 2,600 yards so far this winter; we still have half the winter to go.

I sent a letter to the Water Pollution Control Authority asking them to look into an option of dividing the annual payment of the \$285 assessment into two or more installments. Our administration will work to further mitigate the local costs of this upgrade. Our legislative delegation has already successfully negotiated with the State authorities to renegotiate the bonding costs. We are in discussions with Derby to encourage their use of our facility when their needed upgrade is mandated. We've reached out to Derby to let them know that we're willing to discuss it with them. Hopefully the Board will strongly consider this request with regard to the budget and the \$285.

We have a problem now with potholes - there have been some calls coming into City Hall today to the Mayor's Office. We've been dealing with snow removal - we're trying to get out to each street and widen the streets. Public Works is doing the best they can, but now the issue is potholes throughout the City. I'm asking that the residents be patient and we'll get out there and try to fill them as quickly as possible. As we all know there is water in them and we have to get the water out and put the asphalt in. We're working on it. I would ask that you monitor each ward for this and call Public Works when you see one that needs to be fixed.

President Blume thanked Mayor Della Volpe.

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Attorney Fran Teodosio, Acting Corporation Counsel

I recommend we do the one item marked for Executive Session in Regular Session.

President Blume thanked Attorney Teodosio.

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Lieutenant Andrew Cota

We don't have anything new to report as far as calls for service - it's been relatively quiet. Most of our service calls have been for motor vehicle accidents and we're really working on assisting Public Works and the City with abandoned and snowed-in cars. We're getting the streets tagged so that Public Works can get in there and widen the streets. There have been no serious calls for service since the last meeting.

President Blume thanked Lieutenant Cota.

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Joseph Miller - Comptroller

Alderman Sharkey is over at the Board of Apportionment and Taxation. He will address the budget issue later on. I'd like to commend the Finance Committee of the Board of Aldermen for all the work they put in, meeting at least once a week and sometimes twice weekly to come up with the budget that they've come up with.

President Blume thanked Mr. Miller.

### ***Municipal Reports / Annual Reports***

Alderman Danielczuk MOVED to accept all municipal and annual reports, dispense with the reading and place them on file; SECONDED by Alderman Knapp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

### ***Tax Refunds***

Alderman Danielczuk MOVED to accept the report of the Tax Collector and grant the refunds for the month of January in the amount of \$683.27 if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Knapp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

### ***Accidents and Claims***

Alderman Bender MOVED to forward Claim 1-11-774 - Salazar, to the Claims Committee and Corporation Counsel Blake; SECONDED by Alderman Beall. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

### ***Communications***

Alderman Jerome Fainer MOVED to accept all of the communications, dispense with the reading, and place them on file. If an Alderman wishes one read or acted upon, the communications will be brought up individually in their order

on the agenda; SECONDED by Alderman Knapp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

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Communication #1

From: Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake  
Re: Flood Insurance

President Blume stated, the cost of the Flood Insurance is \$750 and it's foolish not to get it.

Alderman Jeanette MOVED to pay the \$750; SECONDED by Alderman Danielczuk.

Alderman Jeanette stated, I believe this is to be paid out of Claims.

President Blume stated, Corporation Counsel Blake is on top of it.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

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Communication #2

From: Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake  
Re: Items from Public Hearing:  
Police Assistance Agreement / Proposed Revision to City Code Sec.2-169a

Alderman Knapp MOVED to approve the Police Assistance Agreement between the City of Ansonia and the Town of Seymour; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

Alderman Knapp MOVED to approve the proposed changes to Ansonia City Code Section 2-169a concerning ARMS and to have it published; SECONDED by Alderman Jay Fainer. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

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Communication #3

From: Chairman Bartholomew Flaherty, Planning and Zoning Commission  
Re: 8-24 Referral

Alderman Knapp MOVED to accept and to send Communication #3 to Corporation Counsel Blake; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

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Communication #4

From: Chairman Bartholomew Flaherty, Planning and Zoning Commission  
Re: Proposed Land Use Fees

President Blume stated, this is a fee schedule from the Planning and Zoning Commission. We had a few questions on it and we did check with the neighboring towns. Of course, Bart has done a great job. It is right in line with the other towns. That was the only question we had last night. It has been checked and it's in line with the other towns. Our fees are so low; they just needed to be brought up.

Alderman Jeanette moved to approve the new fee schedule; SECONDED by Alderman Bender. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

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Communication #5

From: Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake  
Re: Director - EMS Account Executive

Alderman Knapp MOVED to approve the changes to the job description of Director - EMS Account Executive; SECONDED by Alderman Jerome Fainer. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

[Alderman Sharkey returned to the meeting at this point, 7:11 p.m. 10 present, 4 absent.]

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Communication #6

From: Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake  
Re: DiGiorgi Workers Compensation

Alderman Knapp MOVED to TABLE; SECONDED by Alderman Sharkey. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

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Communication #7

From: Alderman John Marini  
Re: 2011-12 Tentative Budget

Alderman Fainer MOVED to accept Communication #7 and place it on file; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

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Communication #8

From: Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake  
Re: 4 Howard Avenue - Taxes

President Blume stated, Communication #8 had been slated for Executive Session. Attorney Teodosio asked that it be taken up in Regular Session.

Attorney Fran Teodosio stated, I am here tonight because I need to help you as a town clarify the action taken I believe in November or December regarding a tax issue on 4 Howard Avenue. You approved a transaction between a party

and that transaction effectuated the sale of the tax responsibilities for that property.

I need to step back from that for a second and explain to you that there are three ways to handle tax responsibilities in a town.

- One is a foreclosure. That was not a foreclosure that you were dealing with that evening.
- One is a tax sale. A tax sale is a process that is handled through the Tax Collector's Office. It's a very specific process that is covered by Statute in great detail and lays out a protocol that needs to be followed in order for a tax sale to occur because at end of that process effectively what happens the Tax Collector is given the power to transfer the property to a third party because the party that was supposed to have paid the taxes has not. With regard to 4 Howard Avenue, that's how your process had started.
- There's a third way to deal with taxes, in addition to the tax sale and the foreclosure, and that is the sale of tax liens. It is my opinion that when you moved to sell the taxes at 4 Howard Avenue to the purchaser, that truly what you were doing is effectuating the sale of the tax lien, and it's clear from your minutes that that is what you were doing, as opposed to effectuating or ending the tax sale that had been started by the Tax Collector.

There were a number of reasons why you decided to do that, which are not germane right now. But in order to clarify what happened so that the buyer can clear his title, we need to put something on the minutes to indicate that you had essentially abandoned the tax sale and gone over to the sale of the tax liens.

Let me explain why that's important. There are only two parties can release tax liens - the Tax Collector and your Corporation Counsel. The Tax Collector can only release a lien if she's given money for the lien, or the lien is compromised through a foreclosure process - possibly paid in full or compromised. Your Corporation Counsel can release a lien if there is a mistake as to why the lien is on the land records. The liens that we're talking about for 4 Howard Avenue were by no means a mistake. Those are the only two people in a municipality that can release liens.

If you sell a tax lien, you are effectively giving the power to release that lien to the party that you sell it to. In this case, that would be the party that you sold the bundle to for 4 Howard Avenue.

So if it's clarified in the minutes that you've sold those tax liens, then he, through his attorney, can release those liens. Remember, I said there's nobody in the town that can release those liens. The Tax Collector can't release those liens and your Corporation Counsel can't. That gentleman expected to have a clear title to his property when he bought it, and I'm sure that's what you were

trying to give to him. The minutes are not clear that that is what happened. Unless you have any questions, I have a suggested motion for you to make in order to clarify.

Alderman Knapp MOVED that the action taken by the Board of Aldermen to approve the tax issue regarding 4 Howard Avenue be corrected and clarified to indicate and reflect that the sale and purchase was for tax liens and not an early tax sale; SECONDED by Alderman Sharkey. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

Alderman Jay Fainer MOVED to take up Committee Reports at this point; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

### ***Committee Reports***

#### ***Finance Committee - Alderman Gene Sharkey***

Alderman Sharkey stated, I would like to formally present the Budget to the Board of Aldermen for their approval and further, have the Board of Aldermen send this budget on to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation so that they may start the budget process.

I gave each member of the Board of Aldermen a copy of the budget tonight. I have other copies here for people in the audience.

First, the Finance Committee consists of myself as chairman, Steve Blume, Jerome Fainer, Dave Knapp, John Marini, and Robert Duffus. I say that and introduce the Committee at the beginning because as usual, we spent long hours and we really worked hard to get the budget to this point. This, especially, is difficult because of the condition of the economy and the money that we may or may not get from the State, so we had to take all that into account. We also had some unexpected expenses that showed up in this year's budget.

I would like to, before we formally adopt it, I would like our notes read into the minutes that accompany it. We feel the budget itself is not self-explanatory so we really have to let you know how we arrived at the decision that we did.

#### NOTES ON THE 2011-2012 BUDGET

The Finance Committee of the Board of Aldermen has completed its tentative budget for the fiscal year 2011-2012. In accordance with the Ansonia City Charter, the preliminary budget will soon be passed on to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation for review and finalization.

Along with the tentative budget, the Committee has established a list of official recommendations to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation and the Mayor's

Office. It is our intention that, if implemented, these cost-saving recommendations will constitute a tremendous benefit to Ansonia's taxpayers.

You will note that the tentative budget represents an increase from the previous year. However, we are confident that this increase can be offset, before the budget is finalized, by the implementation of this Committee's recommendations.

### The Tentative 2011-2012 Budget

The Finance Committee reduced the initial budget requests of the City departments by over \$1.5 million. Specifically, we were able to cut \$1,592,243 out of increases proposed by the City departments. This was accomplished via in-depth discussions with department heads and by time, energy and soul searching on our behalf.

The tentative budget totals \$58,890,690. This equates to an increase of \$1,257,877 or .92 mills. If this budget is adopted by the Board of Apportionment and Taxation, the mill rate will increase from 25.75 to 26.67.

The following is an explanation of notable items in the budget:

- Insurance and Debt Service reflects an unavoidable increase in the cost of insurance:

Medical (net-after EE copay)	\$305,720 increase
Dental	\$11,890 increase
Workers Compensation	\$166,347 increase
Buildings and Liability	\$30,750 increase

- The Police Department increase as noted on your budget sheet is due to the State of Connecticut's percent rate increase for the City's contribution to the State pension plan. I think it went from 10.5 to 13.5 if I'm not mistaken.
- The Senior Center custodian salary was not included in the 2010-2011 budget. The City transferred the custodian job back to the Senior Center from Public Works as of January 1, 2011, which explains the relatively large increase in Senior Center.
- City Government has increased by \$1,633,941 to centralize all utilities. However, please note that this is offset by reductions in Public Works Department. So, City Government did not increase by that much, it was just moving from one to the other.

- The Ansonia Library budget has been reduced due to staff reduction.
- The estimates in the tentative budget are based on the Committee's projection of a zero percent increase in union employee salaries for the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

#### Finance Committee's Recommendations

In addition to the tentative budget, the Finance Committee is proposing cost-saving recommendations to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation and Mayor's Office. These recommendations are being made for the benefit of Ansonia's taxpayers.

The following are several notable recommendations:

- Several City departments have requested necessary capital improvements. This includes performance of a State-mandated (but not funded) levee re-certification. Rather than place these capital improvement items in the budget, which would raise the mill rate substantially, we recommend referring these projects to bonding.
- The implementation of citywide furlough days during the 2011-2012 fiscal year. Each furlough day is expected to save taxpayers approximately \$28,149.27.
- Reducing the workweek for all non-essential service departments to 32 hours. This would save taxpayers an additional \$50,000.
- Increasing health insurance co-payments for all employees in the City of Ansonia.
- Negotiation of a zero percent increase in union employee salaries for the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

I also have some specific notes that we have on the budget. I know it seems like a long time, but gentlemen, please bear with me. If you saw the nights and the hours we worked to get to this point, you'll give us a couple of minutes. I have a one-sheet recommendation page here.

[Alderman Sharkey then distributed the following recommendations to the Aldermen and the members of the public].

#### RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE 2011-2012 TENTATIVE BUDGET

In connection with the Tentative 2011-2012 Budget, and pursuant to Section 42 of the Charter of the City of Ansonia, the Ansonia Board of Aldermen hereby proposes the following budget recommendations.

I. Recommendations to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation

First, that all reasonable efforts be made to achieve a final budget that represents a zero percent increase from the 2010-2011 budget;

Second, that all necessary long-term capital improvements requested by city departments, be omitted from the 2011-2012 budget, and incorporated into a municipal bonding proposal. At this time, the Board of Aldermen specifically recommends the following projects proceed to bonding:

- a) The levee re-certification project proposed by the Department of Public Works.
- b) All essential repairs and renovations to buildings controlled by the Ansonia Board of Education, including school roofs.
- c) Any necessary upgrades to the city's emergency service equipment. Let me explain that is not ambulances, it is not fire trucks, it is not police cars. We need to upgrade our generator system, tying it into all the City's schools. We presently do not have the capability, if there was any sort of necessary problem that we had to move people to the schools, we could not heat them. We only have the generator right now at the High School that is capable of running the High School. We need to put one at Prendergast, one at Mead, and we need to upgrade the one at the Ansonia Police Department that is not capable of handling the whole building. We also have the generator that powers the antenna at Prendergast School, and that is only for radio communications and ARMS, Police Department, and Fire Department all use that antenna and the generator is over 30 years old. The one time we had to use it, about a year ago, it failed. So we really need to upgrade our generator capabilities here in the City of Ansonia.

Those are the recommendations that we, as a Board of Aldermen, would make to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation.

II. Recommendations to the Office of the Mayor

First, that the City of Ansonia implement citywide furlough days during the 2011-2012 budget year.

Second, that the workweek for all non-essential service departments be reduced to 32 hours. Non-essential service departments include, but are not limited to: the Nature Center, the Senior Center, the Department of Economic Development, the Assessor's Office, and the Ansonia Library.

Third, that health insurance co-payments for all employees in the City of Ansonia be increased.

Fourth, that a bonding effort for necessary long-term capital improvement projects be established.

Fifth, that a zero percent salary increase be negotiated for union employees in the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

Alderman Beall MOVED to accept the two reports; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

Alderman Sharkey MOVED to accept the City tentative budget as prepared by the Finance Committee, and formally turn it over to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation; SECONDED by Alderman Jay Fainer. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

Alderman Sharkey MOVED to send the Finance Committee's recommendations to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation and to the Office of the Mayor; SECONDED by Alderman Knapp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

Alderman Gene Sharkey - Finance Committee

Alderman Sharkey MOVED to pay all bills if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Danielczuk. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

ARMS Committee - Alderman Jerome Fainer

Alderman Jerome Fainer reported that for the month of January, ARMS responded to 234 calls; did 174 transports of which 82 were advanced life support; we assisted the Fire Department on 12 calls; we had income of \$69,315.32. The new ambulance is in operation.

Alderman Knapp MOVED to accept the report; SECONDED by Alderman Beall. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

Fire Committee - Alderman Gene Sharkey

There is no report on fire activity this month. I would like the Aldermen to be aware that the Fire Department was asked to assist the Board of Education in removing snow from their roofs. They have spent days, I personally went along with them on three of the days. They used the ladder truck to raise snow blowers to two different roofs at the High School, using it as a crane, which it is very capable of doing, and snow-blowing two different levels at Mead School, those were done on Friday, and one to the gymnasium at the Middle School.

On Saturday we were requested by the head of Maintenance to see if our tower truck would be capable of washing the snow off the sloped roofs of the high school. We brought that truck up and it was quite an endeavor, first to dig out the hydrants and get it done. We ended up having to bring another pumper

and then request more manpower. We were able to do it. We were able to wash most of the snow off the sloped roofs because they weren't able to put snow blowers on there. The Ansonia Fire Department assisted them for most of the day on Friday and then again most of the day on Saturday. Today they received a request to go back and take all the snow blowers off of the roofs. There was no charge to the City and the head of Maintenance told me that they wouldn't have been open on Monday if they didn't get all of this done this weekend. The departments are working together, hand in hand.

President Blume stated, it was a tremendous endeavor. I was only part of it Sunday morning, but they worked all day long. They worked in the rain, they had tents set up, heaters set up, this was not a fun deal for the weekend.

Alderman Knapp MOVED to send a letter of recognition to the Fire Commission commending and thanking them for a job well done; SECONDED by Alderman Duffus. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

***Revisions to Appointments made at the Board of Aldermen meeting of January 11, 2011***

Town and City Clerk Madeline Bottone read aloud Mayor James Della Volpe's ***revisions to appointments*** made at the Regular Meeting of January 11, 2011 as outlined in his letter of February 3, 2011 as follows:

Board of Building Appeals

Reappointment - Nicholas T. Macero, Jr. of 5 Bennett Terrace, term to expire 12/31/2014.

Community Development Forum

Reappointment - Jacqueline Blout of 80 Hull Street, term to expire 2/28/2012.

Historical Commission

Reappointment - Eileen Krugel of 36 Cedar Street, term to expire 11/30/2012.

Reappointment - Loisann Marazzi of 195 Pulaski Highway, term to expire 11/30/2012.

***Rescind the appointments*** of Louis Macero, Susan A. Nargi, Patricia Fers and Ellen Troy, all members of the Board of Assessment Appeals, ***as their terms do not expire until December 30, 2011.***

President Blume stated, these were mistakes in the dates. The January minutes will be amended by the Secretary.

Alderman Knapp MOVED to accept the letter and amend the January minutes to reflect the appropriate appointments; SECONDED by Alderman Beall. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

[Alderman Sharkey left the meeting at this point, 7:39 p.m.]

### ***Appointments***

Town and City Clerk Madeline Bottone read aloud Mayor James Della Volpe's appointments as outlined in his letter of February 3, 2011, as follows:

#### Community Development Forum

Alderman Danielczuk MOVED to reappoint Julius Douglas of 66 Hull Street, term to expire 2/28/2012; SECONDED by Alderman Duffus. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

Alderman Knapp MOVED to reappoint William (Peter) F. Gray of 27 Hoinski Way, term to expire 2/28/2012; SECONDED by Alderman Duffus. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

#### Fair Housing Committee

Alderman Danielczuk MOVED to reappoint Diane Stroman of 66 High Street, term to expire 2/28/2012; SECONDED by Alderman Duffus. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

[Alderman Sharkey returns at this point, 7:40 p.m. - 10 present, 4 absent]

Alderman Danielczuk MOVED to reappoint Jeremiah Kennedy of 12 Jason Wright Drive, term to expire 2/28/2012; SECONDED by Alderman Knapp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

Alderman Duffus MOVED to reappoint Julia Maher of 24 Park Place, term to expire 2/28/2012; SECONDED by Alderman Beall. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

Alderman Knapp MOVED to reappoint Judy Nicolari of 167 Pulaski Highway, term to expire 2/28/2012; SECONDED by Alderman Jay Fainer. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

Alderman Knapp MOVED to reappoint Michele Gandy of 15 Tomlinson Street, term to expire 2/28/2012; SECONDED by Alderman Sharkey. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9 Yes, 1 No (Duffus).

Economic Development Commission

Alderman Jerome Fainer MOVED to reappoint Sandro "Vito" Epifano of 26 Clarkson Street, term to expire 2/28/2016; SECONDED by Alderman Sharkey. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

***Unfinished Business***

None presented.

***New Business***

Alderman Jeanette stated, I just want to let the Board know how good the City is plowing the streets. The people are doing a heck of a job with all the snow we've had.

***Executive Session***

None presented.

***Adjournment***

Alderman Sharkey MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED by Alderman Beall. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10-0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Bruder, Secretary  
Ansonia Board of Aldermen