



CITY OF ANSONIA
BOARD OF ALDERMEN
Regular Meeting – March 8, 2011

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

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

President Blume declared a quorum of 11 present, 3 absent.

Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed in honor of the passing of Lester Hale and Jerry Pertoso.

Consideration of Previous Minutes

Alderman Jay Fainer MOVED to accept the minutes of the Public Hearing/Special Meeting of February 8 and the Regular Meeting of February 8 if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Knapp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention (Marini).

Public Session

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

Ken Plavnicky, 15 Mountainview

I got a question. I was wondering, are we paying volunteer firemen to shovel in front of hydrants? What's that? What else is there?

Alderman Sharkey stated, you didn't address it to me.

Mr. Plavnicky stated, who do I address it to - I addressed it Alderman Marini, he's the one that tells me the truth. Are we John? Do you know?

Alderman Marini replied, I don't know.

President Blume stated, you need to address me, okay?

Mr. Plavnicky stated, okay, well he said I didn't address him.

President Blume stated, I can address who I want.

Mr. Plavnicky stated, okay. Are we paying volunteers to do that?

President Blume replied, yes.

Mr. Plavnicky asked, we are?

President Blume replied, yes.

Mr. Plavnicky asked, any reason why we have to do that?

President Blume replied, it's snow duty. They're on...

Mr. Plavnicky interjected, I have a fire hydrant in front of my house. I'll do it myself. I don't need to pay volunteer firemen to go out there, you know?

President Blume explained, it's snow duty. They're on at the station...

Mr. Plavnicky interjected, volunteers have snow duty. No other towns have that.

President Blume stated, pardon?

Mr. Plavnicky restated, no other towns have that.

President Blume stated, every town has it.

Mr. Plavnicky stated, no. Stratford doesn't. Bridgeport doesn't.

President Blume stated, Bridgeport is paid. This is volunteer, okay? All the volunteer communities have snow duty. Firemen to the station, because they can't get to the station if there's a fire. They stay there...

Mr. Plavnicky interjected, I believe the homeowners should be responsible for that. If my neighbor can't do it, I'll do it for him.

President Blume stated, it doesn't matter [inaudible], this is how they do it. They get up in the morning and they shovel out the hydrants so that if a fire does occur we can find the hydrant. All volunteer towns do this.

Mr. Plavnicky, addressing Alderman Marini, asked, what do you think, John, [inaudible]?

President Blume instructed Mr. Plavnicky to address the Chair.

Mr. Plavnicky stated, you're not telling me what, you know, I mean, I'm looking at how to save the town money is what I'm doing. I'm looking how to save the town money. Know what I mean?

Alderman Marini stated, you directed a comment to me. I think there is a good point that we do have a firefighter service, they are a valuable asset to our community, and I think in this situation, you know, take a look at Main Street. I mean, I know businesses wouldn't be able to function if that snow was there.

Mr. Plavnicky stated, I can see Main Street, but homeowners? You know, houses?

Alderman Marini stated, well, in certain spots it's a liability, remember, that not only bears...

President Blume stated, the homeowners don't shovel the hydrants. You don't direct me. I will direct you. Homeowners...

Mr. Plavnicky stated, I'm talking to Alderman Marini.

President Blume stated, no, you talk to me. I'll talk to him. That's how it goes.

Mr. Plavnicky asked, is that right? Okay.

Alderman Marini stated, Mr. President, we also have to realize that we are working for the residents of the City. There is probably a proper decorum for addressing residents, even if we disagree with them.

Mr. Plavnicky stated, thank you.

President Blume stated, the meeting gets carried away in a crate. I've been doing this for a long time. The public needs to address me. I will say, Mr. Marini, would you like to answer the question? And that's fine.

Alderman Marini stated, you're correct about that point. We just need to set a respectful tone when we do.

Mr. Plavnicky stated, sure, I'll be respectful. Is there any way you could check into that for me?

Alderman Marini stated, I think in this situation, I think that what President Blume is saying is correct. Fire hydrants are the responsibility of the City. It makes complete sense to me that the volunteer firefighters would be clearing it out, and I think it's important that they do that. At this point I...

Mr. Plavnicky interjected, even with the homeowners?

Alderman Marini replied, yes, because those fire hydrants are the responsibility of the City and there would be a tremendous problem if we didn't have firefighters willing to do that. Paying them for that service, that's reasonable to me.

Mr. Plavnicky stated, thank you.

President Blume asked three times if any other member of the public wished to address the Board. Being none, he declared the public session closed.

Public Official Session

Mayor James Della Volpe

Good evening. I'd like to start off on behalf of the City of Ansonia I's like to congratulate Danielle Todd who is a senior and president at Ansonia High School. She is the President of the Human Relations Club and she won the prestigious Princeton Prize of Race Relations throughout the State of Connecticut. This award is given to a high school student who has had a significant and positive effect on race relations in the schools and in the communities. She will be honored at an awards ceremony at the Graduate Club in New Haven on April 5th. I would like to congratulate Danielle on behalf of the City.

I'd like to let you know that the bulk pickup has started. It will be March, April and May. Please monitor your wards. If you have any bulk that has to be picked up and hasn't after a day or two please notify Public Works and/or the Mayor's Office.

Along those lines, Public Works reported that we had 65.5 inches of snow this year. Overtime costs were \$110,605.13. Material used was 2,856 yards. Public Works is now in the process of getting sand off the streets and hopefully we'll have a committee like we did last year a cleanup day throughout the City. I noticed there is a lot of sand on the sidewalks - maybe we could get the residents to sweep the sand into the gutters so that we could use our sweeper, and/or we could get the guys out there to clean it up.

We're also filling pot holes and replacing the curbing that was damaged during the snow removal. There was quite a bit of it, especially on the west side.

As you know, I'm the Chairman of Valley Council of Governments. Recently I sent a letter on behalf of all four cities to the DOT Commissioner in regard to the train service from New Canaan up through Bridgeport, up through Waterbury that was stopped. I'd like to let the Board know as of yesterday the service has resumed. We don't see any problems in the future. That has started again.

Last month, representatives from Duke Developers in New Jersey came up to look at the ATP Palmer Building. They received all the environmental reports; they're reviewing it. They're also going through their financing; they're trying to acquire the financing. While they're here, instead of meeting with representatives from Farrell's, they're very interested in the part that connects with the ATP building - that's the process lab and the warehouse on East Main Street. We're looking to incorporate the Farrell property maybe into a bigger project. Hopefully we'll be hearing from them in the next few weeks. Once I do, I'll notify the Board.

Also, three years ago the Ansonia School System was put on the Priority School District list. That meant we would get extra funding. The school system, the administrators and teachers worked very hard to implement all of the policies and procedures and programs, and because of their hard work they were able to improve the system and now we are no longer in the Priority School District. That is good news. The bad news is we're not going to receive the \$1.2 million that we received the last three years. They will be taking that money away over a three-year period. We're going to have to work in the budget process with the Board of Apportionment and Taxation in regard to the reduced funding that they're going to be receiving from the State.

I'll entertain any questions that the Board may have.

Alderman Knapp MOVED to send a letter to Danielle Todd from Ansonia High School congratulating her on her accomplishments; SECONDED by Alderman Sharkey.

Mayor Della Volpe stated, I will be attending the dinner along with the Superintendent of Schools and other representatives from the Human Relations Club.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

Alderman Marini asked, is there any progress with union negotiations at this point?

Mayor Della Volpe replied, we set up two dates, and so far the Union has postponed both dates. Right now we're looking at March 23rd as a sit down and

set the ground rules. As soon as I find out, I'll get in touch with everybody and keep everybody abreast.

President Blume thanked Mayor Della Volpe.

Attorney Kevin Blake, Corporation Counsel

We had the public hearing for agenda item number one, and I have to come back again regarding a workers compensation claim of Salvatore Digiorgi I'd like to talk to you about in Executive Session.

Alderman Marini stated, I want to follow up with you on the matter of O'Neil's Court, which I'm sure you're familiar with. We've brought it up here before; it's an issue that's been around since the 80s, - a drainage issue that I think we all feel needs to be resolved now. Any word on the situation - I know there's a new obstacle. I'd like to see this resolved without going to court. It's extra time, extra expense, I know the homeowners, the Spadaro's are very eager for an update.

Corporation Counsel Blake stated, a lot of people are. I have just reviewed the letter that will go out tomorrow to the owners of the house, because I'm trying to get e-mails to their daughter, who e-mailed me and called me. She sort of doesn't respond to anything. So I'm sending by regular mail, certified mail to meet with us. To meet with me, the engineer, the Superintendent of Public Works to show them - they're afraid that they can't build on that property that we're doing the correction on. They can't anyway. There is a gas easement right there. There's this easement there. You can't build on easements. We're going to clean up where the drainage is already. So if we don't get a response to them in the next - I gave them 10 days to respond - we have no choice but to proceed in court to get this thing done. We'll probably get it done in the spring.

Alderman Marini asked, what about proceeding on the agreement that we have? We know that the homeowners have signed the agreement; what about doing the work and if they have an issue, put the ball in their court...[inaudible].

Corporation Counsel Blake replied, these people, and this goes back to 1985, were not a problem in the beginning because they were agreeable to it. They got a little older, and their daughter came in and that is the person who doesn't want it to proceed. We only had Mr. Spadaro we had to do an agreement with, and he was satisfied after we went and showed him everything.

Alderman Marini stated, the daughter shouldn't be party to the contract, or does she own the property?

Corporation Counsel Blake replied, I don't know, but I feel that she may have power of attorney. They don't want us on the property. I just can't barge on

the property to do what we want to do. It's about a 20-yard length of property - we can do it in two days. Public Works should be doing it.

President Blume asked, the land that has the easements on it - nothing can be done there?

Corporation Counsel Blake stated, we need to get on there - we an easement to get our equipment on there - we can't fit on that little narrow thing with the equipment to get the job done. There is a YankeeGas easement right there. They think that if they allow us to do this drainage correction, it devalues their property because they can't build on it. Well they can't build on it anyway according to Mr. D'amico and Mr. Schryver because there's an easement there for these other things.

President Blume stated, okay, I understand. Thank you.

Police Chief Kevin Hale

I would like to thank the members of the Board for their kindness and support in the recent weeks; it's most appreciated by my family and I.

The streets are widened again and we can get out and run radar again. We've been doing that to the misfortune of some people, but it is necessary in many locations. We've stepped up enforcement of distracted driving. You could go out there right now and find a half dozen people talking on phones, texting. So we are dramatically stepping up enforcement on that. If you happen to know somebody who is inclined to do that please advise them that they probably shouldn't do that; it's not safe.

President Blume thanked Chief Hale.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee - Alderman Gene Sharkey

Alderman Sharkey MOVED to pay all bills if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Knapp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

Fire Committee - Alderman Gene Sharkey

I would like to publicly thank Eileen Krugel for all the work that she did putting together the FEMA money. Probably everybody knows President Obama has agreed to designate Connecticut a state of emergency for January 11th and 12th - the snowstorm. Under FEMA guidelines, they decided that they would pay for any snow removal fees in the 48-hour period. Each of the 169 towns and cities had to put together all of their money that they spent on Police, Fire, Public Works, Housing Authority and Board of Education. Any money that was spent, and it had to be documented - it was not a wish list or pie in the sky - you

actually had to show bills. Bill for sand, bills for overtime, bills for food, bills for everything. It was quite an enormous task and I worked in bill capacity with Eileen getting figures together for her. I know how much work she put in. I think the City of Ansonia is going to be reimbursed someplace in the \$60,000 range for money that we have already laid out. Thank you, Eileen, for your hard work.

President Blume stated, I have to add that there was a time constraint to this; she only had a couple of days to do this. She was here over the weekend, mornings, nights. It was a good job; she really went out of her way to do this.

Alderman Sharkey stated, I know that the Chief of Police was there; we attended the conference call with all of the 169 towns and cities in the state. Every Ansonia department was there and at that time they told us all the figures had to be put together and put in the computer in a 48-hour period. It was an enormous undertaking. It shows how hard people work.

[Applause rang throughout the forum]

Alderman Jeanette MOVED to accept the report; SECONDED by Alderman Marini. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

[Alderman Beall arrived at this point, 7:17 p.m. - 12 present 2 absent]

ARMS Committee - Alderman Jerome Fainer

Alderman Jerome Fainer stated, our new ambulance is running. It's top of the line. It's got a few bugs and will go back to the shop to get straightened out. We've been running two ambulances, sometimes three, and we're not missing any calls.

In February we were dispatched to 208 calls, transported 152 patients. We had paramedics involved with 75 of our transports. We did mutual aid for 13 calls in Derby, two to Seymour, one to Shelton. We collected \$53,207.87.

President Blume stated, for ARMS, the collections are up. They're running three ambulances now. This reconstruction we undertook is working. Last month they only had one assist that had to come to Ansonia. It used to be that there were more assists coming here than our ambulance got out. Only one time did we have to go to mutual aid for the entire last month, because all three of our ambulances were out on the road. They're doing a fine job.

Alderman Sharkey MOVED to accept the report; SECONDED by Alderman Nihill. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Economic Development Commission - Alderman John Marini

There are two matters relative to Economic Development that I'd like to discuss tonight. First, the Business Survey went out last month. I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate the entire Economic Development Commission. I'm putting the survey together; I'm getting it out, and I'm also getting out to the businesses, two weeks ago, to start the follow up with the owners. A copy of that survey is supplied to each of the Aldermen here and certainly the Commission welcomes any comments or suggestions whether it be tonight or in the future. We definitely invite you to attend a meeting. A sample of this survey is now available on the City website. It's just a sample, but we want to make as many people aware of our efforts. Two weeks ago, as I mentioned, Economic Development Commissioner Pat Henri and myself took a walk down Main Street to visit the businesses in support of the survey. We were met with a lot of enthusiasm and many business owners expressed their approval at seeing City officials stop in for a visit. Many thought they had honestly been overlooked for some time. We encouraged the merchants to feel comfortable in communicating with City Hall, whether they had something positive to say or something negative to say. Either way, it's our hope efforts like this will open up a strong and open line of communication between the City and the business owners. Our Commission also plans to continue its efforts to personally visit the businesses, sort of make it a habit, monthly, both on Main Street and elsewhere. Part of the reason is to encourage the return of the surveys right now, but really, the best reason is that it's the greatest kind of communication we can have. Many business owners simply don't have the time to get to City Hall for our meetings or the Economic Development Commission meetings and we want to make it easy for them and simply bring the meeting to them.

The second issue relative to Economic Development that I'd like to talk about tonight is the status of the demolition at Olson Drive. As this Board is fully aware, the housing projects have had a longstanding negative impact on our community and our residents, particularly those living within the complex. Unfortunately, it's also become the elephant in the room that this Board never talks about. It's been four years since the residents voted to demolish the buildings, and most of the apartments still stand today. From what I hear across the City and my Ward, I hear a lot of confusion over the City's plan. They want to know what our timeline is for the removal, why the project has been delayed, what our ultimate goals are for the site. The Mayor's Office has informed me that the problem is basically about obtaining a green light and funding from the Housing Authority - funding that we voted on. And further, I've been told by the Mayor's Office that policy changes instituted by the Obama administration are basically to blame, that administration is less willing to approve the demolition of the housing project that a previous administrations were. Honestly, I don't care and I don't feel this Board should care what any administration in Washington has to say about this. As the City's elected officials we are responsible for the safety of our residents. We are responsible for the direction that the City is headed in. We are responsible to

carry out the will of our voters. The Board of Aldermen, I believe, needs to step up to the plate and see that the job at Olson Drive is completed.

Tonight I'm suggesting the following. I would really like this Board to take a tour through the projects themselves. I think if we're going to get involved we need to know what we're talking about. We have no facts, and we have to know the people who are going to be the most affected by this decision.

Alderman Marini MOVED that this Board, tonight, draft a formal letter to our elected officials urging that we be given clearance and funding to move ahead with the demolition as voted. I would like to see a letter go to the local and national officials, including Joe Crisco, Linda Gentile, Rosa Delauro, Len Greene, Richard Blumenthal, our Governor, and President Obama; SECONDED by Alderman Duffus.

Corporation Counsel Blake stated, right now we have funding, when the Housing Authority is ready to go and proceed with the demolition, we have funding that's available, it's sitting there for them. Unfortunately, they are getting stopped because of other administrations - the administration down in Washington, and also to proceed forward. We do not own that property, that's government property that the Housing Authority maintains and runs for them. The City doesn't have the authority to go in there and demolish those buildings.

President Blume stated, plus, we don't have the money right now. They haven't released any more money.

Corporation Counsel Blake stated, the money is still there, but the bonding money is still there; we used it for the three buildings that came down. The money is sitting there, it was agreed to, we went to referendum, and it's bonded there. It's sitting there, it's not costing the City, I believe, any money for sitting there. We're not using it, we're not being charged any interest. It's there waiting for them to proceed.

President Blume stated, but it has to be released by them.

Corporation Counsel Blake stated, we release it to them when they request it. It's pretty much a very quick release that their attorneys call our bonding counsel and set up and we sign these forms and they need the money to do the demolition.

President Blume stated, I understood that the money was being held up and we could not proceed.

Alderman Jerome Fainer stated, no, we bonded for that.

Mayor Della Volpe stated, the bonding money is there. HUD is the one that is holding this up. The Housing Authority has a demolition plan in place that

they've submitted that HUD had not approved yet. That's where, I've been told by the Housing Authority, we cannot move forward, or the Housing Authority cannot move forward. They're in the process of going through another plan with the local agency, which is up in Hartford and Boston, and until we get approval from them, John, we can't move forward. I agree with you 100 percent; we want this done as soon as possible also. I don't foresee a problem with the Board sending a letter saying that we'd like to see some action. I think it should be addressed to the Housing Authority and/or whoever the Board deems necessary.

Alderman Marini stated, I agree with the assessment both by Kevin and the Mayor. I think, we understand that it's not our property and it seems to be out of our hands. I think we can't be silent, in other words, we have to exert pressure anywhere and everywhere we can, whether it be with HUD, our elected officials whether we bring them in to help us out. I understand we don't have the authority to be able to just go in there and do it. That's why I think we need to be making noise. We need to be proactive and not silent, because we've been silent for too long. If it's going to get done I think we need to take a proactive stance.

Mayor Della Volpe stated, as a Board, yes, you've been a little silent on the issue. But as far as the Mayor's Office, we haven't been silent. We've been sending letters to the legislators - state, federal, and we've been sending letters to HUD and we've been sending letters to the Housing Authority to try to move this along as quickly as possible. I don't foresee a problem looking forward and acting on it.

Alderman Marini stated, we're the representatives on the ground level of the Wards, and I think we owe it to our residents to be involved, and to not stop at all.

Alderman Jerome Fainer stated, I think one of the holdups over there was, too, that the next building scheduled to be demolished was the central utilities plant. They had to change that around and they had to spend a lot of money to put all individual utilities in there.

Alderman Marini stated, it sounds like a backward plan.

[Multiple people talking at once - inaudible]

[Alderman Duffus speaking]...I mean, when it was originally set up it was being done through attrition. You know, we had to wait until the residents moved out and then eventually, once that building was empty, then we'd go and demolish it. It has to be done in a procedure where [inaudible] live and also some of them to return as well. All of that has to be worked out, once it's all said and done.

Alderman Marini stated, a plan needs to be in place, I would like to see those buildings come down and us to utilize Section 8 vouchers rather than put anything up in its place. But either way, obviously, the plan needs to be complete when it goes forward. Obviously we can't leave anyone in the lurch. The thing is, I just don't see, they're just dragging their feet and I think we realize that. So let's get that plan in place, move it forward. Lets do something, let's say something. Let's not be silent.

President Blume stated, let's be clear on this, we're not silent on this. I know what the Mayor's Office has been doing. There has been movement.

Alderman Marini stated, I'm talking about this Board. Of course there has been movement, some of those buildings came down last fall. Let's not wait again. So my motion is to send that motion to our officials.

Alderman Marini MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION to add on the recommendation of the Mayor. SECONDED by Alderman Duffus. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED AS AMENDED 12-0.

President Blume asked, John, the surveys that you sent out - how many did you send out?

Alderman Marini replied, I believe between 400 and 600 surveys. Claude Perry has the accurate total.

President Blume asked, how many were sent back?

Alderman Marini replied, so far it's at about 60. The thing to stress is, going out to the businesses makes a huge difference. Our experience was we were going there and either a) the business owner had seen the survey, but thought, "Oh, just another thing - no one's going to read it, no one's going to follow it up." After we talked with them they said, "Oh, I want to get this to you right now." A couple of times they filled it out on the spot and gave it right back to us. Other times we found out they didn't get the survey. I believe the reason is, we don't have an accurate list of the active businesses in the City. The list has unfortunately not been updated for the past 15 years. That's obviously a problem. We need to make sure the list is updated. We need to make sure they're getting the survey. You know, any excuse to get out there and meet the businesses is great and I don't foresee - I mean we're not going to maximize return of the surveys unless we get out there. That's why we're going to continue keeping the deadline to have it back open because our goal is to get as many of them back as possible.

President Blume stated, John, this is a great undertaking you took on. Is there another way you can reach them? I don't think you can go out and see 600 people.

Alderman Marini stated, yes, you're right, you can't. There are some other ideas. One is a business forum, where we start getting the business owners together. It's important for them not to just hear us, but to hear each other. That's where you're going to see the opportunities to make connections where you can have two business owners that maybe want to team up on a project, or then can get involved as a whole in our community. Another idea being floated is an idea of focus groups that we've seen other towns do. You know all business owners are never available at the same time, so you do target groups - in the mornings, at nights, on weekends. The goal is to give them the opportunity to come together. We're exploring additional ways. So far the response has been good. The Commission surely isn't short of ideas. I feel confident that we're going to make a difference.

President Blume stated, good, good job.

Alderman Marini continued, we'll tabulate the results of the survey once we get enough, and obviously the goal is get at least half back before we put a tabulation together. The ultimate goal of the Economic Development Commission - it's a long-term development plan for the City. We want to work with business owners, the City, all of our commissions, basically know where we are, where we want to be, how to actually get there.

Alderman Jay Fainer MOVED to accept the report; SECONDED by Alderman Duffus. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Municipal Reports / Annual Reports

Alderman Sharkey 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 12-0.

Tax Refunds

Alderman Nihill MOVED to accept the report of the Tax Collector and grant the refunds for the month of February in the amount of \$7,592.08 if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Jay Fainer. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Accidents and Claims

2-11-775	Maxximus Corp.
2-11-776	Donna Fuoco
2-11-777	Daniel D. Skuret
2-11-778	Marra Doughery
3-11-779	Amanda Bartone
3-11-780	Jeffrey Billings

Alderman Bender MOVED to forward the claims to the Claims Committee and Corporation Counsel Blake; SECONDED by Alderman Knapp.

Alderman Sharkey stated, one of them doesn't look to be ours. One of them that was in here, it was something that happened on Ford Street, and I think that was during the time of the paving. This letter was written in February for a pothole that was hit in October, but the tire wasn't replaced until November. This looked very sketchy. I think this one has to be taken out and sent to whoever the paving company was up there.

Corporation Counsel Blake stated, what I did was send it to our insurance broker and made them a note that this is something we believe is the responsibility of the paving company. The other one is the day of the sewer back up, it was sent to Jack Androski.

Alderman Jay Fainer asked, do we own the sidewalk in the front of the Post Office?

President Blume replied, yes.

Alderman Fainer stated, I know if I have a sidewalk in front of my house and somebody trips, I'd be responsible for it.

Corporation Counsel Blake stated, we have sidewalk repairs that we will pay the homeowner a percentage of it. I already spoke to Attorney Bellis on this thing and told him that we believe he should [inaudible] the Post Office on this one too; that we don't believe we're responsible for it.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Communications

Alderman Sharkey 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 Duffus. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Communication #1

From: Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake
Re: Proposed Land Use Fees

Alderman Jeanette MOVED to adopt the fees; SECONDED by Alderman Bender. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Communication #2

From: Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake

Re: Salvatore DiGiorgi Workers Compensation

To be discussed in Executive Session.

Resignation

Alderman Sharkey MOVED to accept the resignation of Carmen Pitney from the Community Development Forum and to send him a letter of thanks for his service to the City; SECONDED by Alderman Nihill. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Appointments

Town and City Clerk Madeline Bottone read aloud Mayor James Della Volpe's appointments as outlined in his letter of March 2, 2011, as follows:

Economic Development Commission

Alderman Marini MOVED to reappoint Ralphine Siggars-Ford of 222 ½ North State Street, term to expire 2/28/2016; SECONDED by Alderman Bender. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11 Yes, 1 No (Sharkey).

Water Pollution Control Authority

Alderman Knapp MOVED to appoint Joseph F. Fabrizio of 31 High Acres Road, Madigosky replacement, term to expire 1/31/2014; SECONDED by Alderman Sharkey. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Unfinished Business

Alderman Marini stated, I just want to bring up the video taping committee. We want to make sure our government is as open and as transparent for the residents of the City as possible. I think we need to bring at least some discussion to the table. As yet the organized committee has not met. I believe we need to do something.

President Blume stated, Alderman Beall, can you get in touch with Alderman Marini and call a meeting and let's sit down and discuss this?

Alderman Beall replied yes, I will.

President Blume stated, I know that it's busy. Alderman Beall will get hold of you, you get hold of me, we'll contact the rest of the members and we'll sit down.

New Business

President Blume requested that someone move to change the date of next month's meeting, if at all possible, from the second Tuesday to the second Monday. I've never missed a meeting and I won't be able to attend, I'll be in Parris Island.

Alderman Knapp MOVED to change the date of the April Board of Aldermen meeting from the second Tuesday to the second Monday, April 11, 2011; SECONDED by Alderman Sharkey. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Alderman Marini stated, I just want to bring something to the Board's attention. Liz Nimons at Prendergast School has organized a community reading project. I know there are residents out there getting involved. I think it's important that we have as many City officials get involved. I signed up to do some reading. I was once a teacher for a year. I told the kids it was going to be a vacation when I left, and it was. Obviously some help for them is always appreciated. I would like to encourage any member of this Board that has a little free time - I think it's only a half hour a week - to volunteer, get involved. I can circulate the information around. If you want to pass it on to family members or anyone else you know in the City, it would be nice to have people on behalf of the City getting involved and showing Liz and Prendergast School that we're in support of what they're doing.

President Blume stated, that's very nice, thank you.

Alderman Nihill stated, John got me thinking, the bantering about the fire hydrants. I have one question. Since we are getting, I believe, gouged by Regional Water Authority with this maintenance on the hydrants, how about sending them a letter for reimbursement for what we have to pay out to maintain their hydrants that they're supposed to be maintaining by removing the snow.

President Blume stated, removing the snow's not in it. They maintain the hydrants.

Alderman Nihill stated, to me, maintain the hydrants maybe should be...

President Blume stated, the water flow to the hydrants. We could certainly do that and to go one step farther, we're meeting with the Attorney General - the Mayor and myself at the end of this month. We didn't give up on the fire hydrant thing. Blumenthal is gone and we had a few problems there. We have a new Attorney General in house now and we have an appointment, the last Thursday in the month I believe. We are going to see the new Attorney General, we're going to reopen this hydrant deal. It didn't go away. I'm sure at that

time we'll mention this also, if that's okay. Or you can still have your letter sent.

Alderman Marini stated, why not put it on the table? I mean, we're strapped for cash. We need as much relief as possible. It's not right, we're having to use our volunteers to do it. It would be nice if we could get some relief.

Alderman Nihill MOVED to send a letter to the Regional Water Authority; SECONDED by Alderman Marini. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Alderman Knapp stated, that yellow dumpster on Jewett Street. It looks like it's just about in the road, on the road, and it looks like it's starting to collect a lot of neighbors. It looks like the stuff is starting to spill over. I noticed some chairs and stuff on the side of it.

Alderman Sharkey stated, it's on that private right of way. It is on the people's property but the other people that travel up there, they have a right of way to get to their houses, we established that years ago. On Planning and Zoning before they built the houses above there. The Zoning Enforcement Officer is well aware of it and is working diligently to try to get that dumpster moved. I guess the person who has the dumpster doesn't pay any rental on it, so he doesn't care if it ever moves. There have been many complaints on that dumpster. The City is probably going to end up in court. It just sits there. It's owned by some company and the people refuse to pay the rental on it. They won't pick it up or haul it. It sat there all winter and Public Works had to plow around it.

Alderman Jeanette asked, can't we get the Blight Officer up there?

President Blume stated, he's involved with it.

Alderman Nihill stated, on Root Avenue, if we could send our Zoning Enforcement Officer. I see we had some issues with the property owner in the past. The wall he constructed that they now took down. I see some active construction going on, on that bank..

Alderman Sharkey stated, they're actively going to go to court on that also. There is a piece of construction equipment that doesn't belong there that was brought in there. Zoning Enforcement and Blight are well aware of it. They will end up in court. That wall was built without permits and they are endeavoring to...

President Blume interjected, it's good that we're noticing this. Things have changed quite a bit since Mr. Tanner's been downstairs. He is, I've never seen anybody so active. He's really in charge and he's out there and he's doing a great job.

Alderman Marini stated, I'll second that sentiment, he is. To follow up on that, I want to get the Blight Committee together in the next month or so. If you're a member, we talked about it at a past meeting, we were interested in giving Mr. Tanner the power of municipal citation. That means that rather than writing a threatening letter and following up a couple of months after, he'd have the ability to give a ticket at a violation, just like a Police Officer. I think that would benefit the City greatly. I'm a little interested to know what the process would be for us to pass it - that's something that has to be researched. If anyone knows it certainly would help us to move it along - if it has to be an ordinance, how we go about doing it. I think that maybe it should start with the Blight Committee and maybe by the next meeting we could make the recommendation as to what we have to do to get it done.

Executive Session

At approximately 7:45 p.m., Alderman Jerome Fainer MOVED to enter Executive Session and invite the Mayor and Corporation Counsel Blake to remain in the Aldermanic Chambers; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Return to Regular Session

At approximately 8 p.m., Alderman Sharkey MOVED to return to Regular Session; SECONDED by Alderman Duffus. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Adjournment

Alderman Knapp MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED by Alderman Adamowski. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Bruder, Secretary
Ansonia Board of Aldermen