



CITY OF ANSONIA BOARD OF ALDERMEN

Special Meeting – January 8, 2013

Call to Order

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

Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was held in observance of the tragedy in Newtown, and the tragedy in Webster, NY.

Roll Call

The secretary called the roll:

Edward Adamowski, D1- present
Peter Marcinko, D1 - present
Charles Stowe, R2 - present
Philip Tripp, R2 - absent
Kevin Mott, D3- present
Joseph Jeanette, D3 - present
Jerome Fainer, D4 - absent

Anthony DeLucia, D4 - present
Howard Madigosky, D5 - present
Joan Radin, R5 - present
Scott Nihill, D6- present
John Marini, R7 - present
David Knapp, D7 - present
Gene Sharkey, D6 - present

President Sharkey declared a quorum of 12 present, 2 absent.

Consideration of Previous Minutes

1. Regular Meeting of December 11, 2012
2. Special Meeting of December 11, 2012
3. Special Meeting of January 3, 2013
4. Aldermanic Salaries Committee of January 3, 2013

Alderman Marini MOVED to accept the minutes; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Public Session

Mary Gibson

I am representing the Ansonia Cultural Commission. I would like to report the results of the "Deck Your House and Yard" contest. I would like to explain how

we judge, so everyone is clear on the process. I create a tally sheet with every resident and all Firehouses that enter the contest. I give the tally sheet to each of the judges. This year there were seven judges - five from the Cultural Committee and two from the Valley Arts Council. We drive around at night and each vote privately on a scale of 1 to 10 - 10 being the highest - and I take all the tally sheets at the end of the voting session, and add up all the scores. The house per ward that comes in with the highest numerical score is the winner. Then from all the entries, the house that has the most votes is the citywide bragging rights winner. Very simply, that's how it's done.

Mrs. Gibson presented awards to the winners as follows:

Firehouses - tied:

Charters Hose Co. 4 - Ed Norman

Hilltop Hose - Bob Meyernick

Ward 1 - Fred Baker and Paula Abbati

Ward 3 - Mrs. Gentile

Ward 5 - John and Annmarie Checkley

Ward 7 - Bob Meyernick

Ward 6 Bill Webster

Ward 5 Rob Librandi

Citywide - Ward 2 - Ron and Carolyn Steeves

Edward Musante, 21 Castle Lane

I'd like to thank the President, [inaudible] did take care of that snow that was up on Wakelee Avenue because I was having Action News coming in, but that was taken care of. There is a pole down on Division Street there going into the Complex that's leaning. Anybody that tries to drive a truck is not going to come out of there. Get ice on there and it's all going to go down. I have a question. Is there a policy when they clean the roads, they're not supposed to blow the snow back into the roads? Elaine Drive, the rest of Prospect Street, after his guys plow it you look...

President Sharkey asked, who's putting it back in there?

Mr. Musante replied, people, residents, are pushing the snow into the street on Elaine Drive and North Prospect Street, after the plow guys come by doing a good job.

Chief Hale stated, they're not supposed to do that.

President Sharkey stated, I've witnessed it myself on Hill Street the other day, someone with a snow blower throwing everything out in the road. People do it.

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

Public Official Session

Mayor James Della Volpe

I would like to congratulate all of the winners of the contest, especially my neighbors Ron and Carolyn, they did a great job. They made it hard to go home every night because my wife asked why can't I do that. Everybody did a great job - congratulations.

I recently signed a pledge for Clean Energy Communities challenging our local communities, Derby, Shelton and Seymour to reduce our energy. Hopefully we can do that. I'd like to congratulate Rep. Gentile because I know she was named Chair of the Environment Commission just yesterday. We are looking forward to working with you and getting some help.

I'd like to thank all the Aldermen that participated in the school security meeting we had last week with the Board of Education. I thought each and every one of you came up with great ideas/suggestions. We all had the safety of our children in mind and all worked together. Hopefully we can continue - a lot of good suggestions came out of that meeting. Hopefully they'll be implemented within the next several months.

Alderman Marini stated, as you spoke to, there are a lot of developments going down in Ansonia from clean energy and the progress you're making there, the talks we've had about school security, to Economic Development and our efforts to put together with a steering committee a plan, as well as other things. It seems to me we haven't had our series of Ward meetings that we typically have and it may be a good time to get out there to the public and start to engage them and get dialogue going about all these initiatives. I know that our meetings here every month certainly are open, but I do think it's important to take that proactive step to actually get out there into the wards and make the effort to engage the public to see where they are.

Mayor Della Volpe stated, I agree with you. I instituted them when I first came to office, I held them three to four times a year. Over the past year I haven't had one but we are planning on starting up in February or March. That's a good point well taken.

Alderman Marini stated, I know that in the past in terms of marketing the Ward meetings we typically just say, "a Ward meeting, we'll talk about basic issues"... But it seems with the several really big issues that we have, maybe we can specifically indicate, "come to talk about the Clean Energy," "Come to talk about school security," "come to talk about the future of Ansonia's Economic Development"... So rather than just put it out there sort of in a vague way where Board members and residents might not know what to expect, they can

see exactly what the issues are and that may trigger some interest for people to actually get out there and weigh in on the subjects. There will definitely be some interest on weighing in on school security. There are a lot of people that would want to weigh in on Economic Development, and clean energy and the environment. Obviously we'll discuss a lot more at those meetings, but even if it's just three things, it will serve as a motivator to bring the people out.

Mayor Della Volpe stated, yes, having to deal with those issues and having all the department heads there too, I think is advantageous.

Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake

I really have nothing to report. I'll entertain any questions you have. Thank you.

Tara Kolakowski, Acting Personnel Director

You have my report in front of you for the month. If there are any questions, I'll entertain them.

There is still a meeting to try and iron the Public Works Department contract, it's ongoing. Hopefully this month the Board of Aldermen will have a draft copy of the new personnel policy for you guys to work on for 30 to 60 days, and we'll get that implemented before the spring.

President Sharkey asked, where do we stand on the Public Works contract?

Mayor Della Volpe stated, it's at arbitration. We're waiting for a hearing date; it's been canceled several times. Hopefully we'll have it in February or March.

Chief Kevin Hale, Ansonia Police Department

Just a reminder - the winter parking rules are on the even side this year - we started in 2012 and that's an even year, so it's the even side.

We're continuing hiring - we had a retirement announcement of an officer last week so we're interviewing candidates to hopefully fill that position as soon as we can.

We'll talk a little bit later about a promotion that we'd like to see approved.

Mike Schryver, Department of Public Works

Alderman Radin stated, Mike, I'd just like to say that you did a great job Saturday on Jackson and Wakelee. But I had to go down Jackson Street Sunday night to a wake and the street was a mess on Sunday night. I don't know whether they didn't make the second sweep down there later on in the evening, but that whole road was like it had been plowed and not plowed again.

The other thing is, on Wakelee Avenue the plows are going really fast and the snow is coming across the sidewalk and hitting my window. I don't know whether the plows have to be adjusted down so that snow isn't coming across my sidewalk.

Mr. Schryver explained, it was a wet, slushy snow, that is why that happened.

Alderman Radin stated no, they were going pretty fast. I don't know how fast you're allowed to go but as far as I'm concerned it was thrown up so if it was wet and slushy it wouldn't have gone up as far as the windows. The windows are like 2 ½ feet up. I don't want to come down to a broken window.

Alderman Nihill stated, I just want to let Mike know that my area, my Ward, I'm very happy with the job they're doing up there. They're making the extra effort to get really close to the curb line and I think they did a fine job.

Alderman Marini stated, snow plowing is a hard job and I think up in the 7th Ward you can tell that the effort has been made. It's hard to get everyone satisfied and I'm proud to look at the work that's been done.

First, Pulaski Highway and what the City's obligations are and what we can do to improve the garbage pickup. The garbage that lies on a lot of areas of Pulaski Highway, particularly when there's not a yard. If there's not a yard and it slopes off into a wooded area, people driving by are using it as a garbage. I got so frustrated with the condition of it, especially at the intersection off of Benz and Pulaski, that I went out and bought one of those claw handles, and I convinced my high school sister who is into being green, into coming along. She held a trash bag and I scooped in about 40 beer cans, 20 nips, cigarette butts, candy wrappers, gum wrappers, two pairs of men's underwear, two shoes that didn't match. Certain individuals are just driving down there and throwing it out there.

I know it is a state road, but in terms of what the City's obligation is and what we can do to stop it, to let people know that we really don't have a tolerance for this. It's a nice area and let's stop the garbage.

Mr. Schryver stated, the state does pick up, occasionally they go roadside and pick up the garbage. If there is a large accumulation or an eyesore, the Mayor has called. If we see it we will pick it up. Just give us a call if there's something that we need to clean up, we will do it.

Alderman Marini stated, it's all covered now with the snow, but in a couple of months the area near the school in particular is a bad area. The wooded areas on both sides, and that area over the guardrail that are just a mess. You can't see it from the road, but it's a mess. There are areas that are plainly visible from the road around the school, or bags that are hung in trees. The other one I know of that is probably the toughest area is really around Olson Drive and the

Riverside projects. The slope that goes down to the river is a holy mess. Everything from entire barbecue grills to all sorts of other things. There is an immense amount of trash. It's near the entranceway to the City.

The other question I had was, we should figure out a plan to resolve the pavilion at the Ansonia Nature Center. I know there was a good intention to get things going, my understanding is that we got a kit that came in but it really wasn't the kit that the Ansonia Nature Center wanted, it wasn't the shape they wanted. They wanted an octagon and received a rectangle. It is important enough to take the time to get it right, because this is something that's going to be utilized from here on. It's important to get it right, to give the Ansonia Nature Center what they want to address the need they have there. I don't know where we are.

Mr. Schryver stated, it wasn't the wrong kit, it was a replica of what was there before, just downsizing it because of our money situation. We had a deductible. It was a seldom-used pavilion. My feeling was that was the most we could get with the money we had. Charlie Stowe has sat in with the Mayor, myself, and Donna Lindgren and we've gone through things. In fact I have a meeting at 9:00 tomorrow with Donna, again, looking at other options. I can't tell you exactly which way we're going to go with it but we may be using it - the rectangular one.

Alderman Marini stated, if we were to go with the existing one, what would be the timeframe for putting it up?

Mr. Schryver replied, May 1st.

Alderman Stowe stated, to add to what Mr. Marini said about the garbage, on one of the areas he was talking about and went and picked up, somebody complained to me and kind of laughingly, that every other week they were going out and cleaning that very spot where Mr. Marini was talking about. And it dawned on me - they have these cameras that you can move all around and they'll take pictures of people when they're doing things. Really they're game cameras, but you could catch people too. I'm wondering if possibly, because they're not that much money, maybe we could get one of those wildlife cameras and hand it in places we're having problems with. They take wonderful pictures and they're cheap.

Alderman Marini stated, we've had talks of a movable camera at one point in time.

President Sharkey stated, the Chief and I did look into that; it was security issues. We had talked about putting them in the parks, and we just didn't have the money to purchase them.

Alderman Stowe stated, if you look up Cabela's on the Internet - you don't have to have much money - a couple hundred dollars.

Alderman Marini stated, just looking at the brands I'm assuming it seems that this individual has a preference, and it seems to be one guy probably, doing a lot of that part of it.

Alderman Stowe stated, well Beaver Street had been an ongoing problem where I believe you'd catch that person - give them a fine and make them clean it up.

Alderman Marini asked Chief Hale, are there any recommendations as to what cameras would be useful for the most amount of purposes? The budget is coming up, cameras were talked about briefly before, and I think the idea of applying for a grant possibly was brought up as well. I think the parks is where the idea of the cameras had come up before.

Chief Hale stated, for the purposes we were talking about, video would be fore conducive to what we were trying to do and certainly when you go to that, the price certainly goes up. I'm not opposed to them; I think video is a tremendous thing. When you get into those systems you're talking a sizeable amount of money depending on what you want. I'm certainly not opposed to it; we can get some recommendations as to what's out there and then you can buy them where you can move them - they're portable. You put them in hot spots - downtown or spots where we get graffiti, or garbage, or vandalism, or narcotics - whatever you have.

President Sharkey stated, why don't we look into it and see what we can do. It's definitely a Police issue, but once the trash is on the ground it's Public Works to pick it up. Public Works can't be the people preventing them putting it down; it would be the Police to put the cameras out. We have ordinances against it. I know there were some available that we had looked at.

Alderman Marini stated, it is everybody's issue and it shouldn't be tolerated. If we're able to put a camera into our security capital - just the idea of posting signs that say "Area Under Surveillance" in different areas, and the fact that there's this floating camera out there. People will have to second guess before they just assume that this dimly lit area is going to be safe, whether it be for throwing a bottle of alcohol and graffiti tagging something. There are some teeth to it. You never know, that may be the night the camera is there. Right now there is nothing that indicates that we're taking any step to prevent anything.

Alderman Stowe stated, hopefully if the videos are too much you can look into the snapshot. I had a neighbor in Westville, and a guy was breaking into garages. The guy was breaking into the garage and the guy had the presence of mind to go in his cabinet and grab his camera and get to the window, and he went "Hey!" And the guy turned around, he got a perfect snapshot of his face and the guy went back to Whalley. A snapshot can work.

Committee Reports***Finance Committee - Alderman Edward Adamowski***

1. Authorization to Pay Bills

Alderman Adamowski MOVED to pay all bills if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Mott. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

The Finance Committee has been very busy. We met the other night on the Police Department upgrades and the Finance Committee voted in favor of pursuing that issue. We will have the full details hopefully by next month.

Also, we met with Kurt Miller from Seymour regarding the Tax Incentive Program - that is something we're still actively working on with the Mayor and hopefully we'll get something back from Kurt Miller on that issue.

As stated before, the budget process starts tomorrow. The new schedule should be in your mailboxes. We have quite a vigorous schedule.

Alderman Nihill stated, I was wondering, our new Tax Collector, I was wondering how things were going with the new rules of operation there, and we have it more staffed. I was wondering if anybody knew. Are collections up? Most of the other department heads are here, maybe she could come once in a while.

Mayor Della Volpe stated, we'll make sure she is here next month. I know that we went out to a collection agency and received a check today for \$7,300 so the delinquent Motor Vehicle Tax Collections have been reduced. Last month they were close to \$2,200 and we're down to I think \$1,900 or maybe \$1,850 now. People are coming in and paying their taxes.

Alderman Nihill stated, we do have a written report, it didn't make it - I didn't have one in my box but there were some here. Thank you.

ARMS - Alderman Scott Nihill

I passed out our Annual Activity Report; you can read it at your leisure. Of note from that annual report we're up 239 calls this year - we had 2,949 calls up from 2,710 calls. It's also putting more strain on ARMS because unfortunately, Griffin Hospital, a lot of times, is on diversion - it adds a lot of time into each call that ARMS has to service because they're running to Waterbury, or Yale.

Our December monthly report, we were dispatched to 243 responses resulting in 170 patients being transported, 66 with a medic. We provided 22 mutual aid calls to Derby, 12 to Seymour and one call to Newtown. We passed zero first

calls, one second call on the overnight, and two third calls were passed because we don't have the vehicles to service them.

I'm very happy to report that the new company ARMS has contracted with, EMMS, is doing a bang-up job on our collections. For example, the month of June, 2012, they collected a 91.25 percent collection rate, which I think is phenomenal. We billed \$102,884 for December and we've collected 42 percent of that. As you can see, there's a chart and I'd be happy to share the figures if anybody's interested.

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

Alderman John Marini - Economic Development Committee

A big project being worked on as you all know is the formulation of the master plan, marketing and Economic Development plan for Ansonia that's being put together in coordination with Bartram & Cochran and right now our steering committee that is with Mr. Stoltz of Bartram & Cochran. We hope to have a report finalized sometime in the upcoming months, there's a priority on making the plan the best it can be so it's still in the works. When it does roll out we'll be excited to share it not only with the Economic Development Commission but with this Board and the rest of the City, and it will really tie into the rest of the work that the Economic Development Commission has to do from that point on. It's a way to bring Economic Development in, to organize our City to attract business and to grow our Grand List and the marketing strategy to allow ourselves to really put Ansonia in the best position possible to attract business and opportunities.

The other two items are with our Finance Committee as Alderman Adamowski already covered - there is the Tax Incentive Program which is right now with Kurt Miller of Seymour and we're waiting to get that feedback from him so we can finalize it.

There's also the Façade Loan Program which the Finance Committee has agreed will be a zero interest loan program at this point. So it will be increments of \$2,000 two-year loans that business owners could apply for. We've already talked about how that money will only be able to produce visual improvements to the outside of the stores. The newest twist is there will not be interest. However, the applicant will be responsible for the payment of all building fees or any other fees that arise, to the City, for their renovations, so that there is money collected, stimulated for the City, but there is a maximum incentive for them to apply. Sometime between now and the next Aldermen's meeting the Finance Committee can finalize both of those projects and with any luck we'll have them up for a vote for complete finalization, and we can roll out that loan program starting in March.

I know we have our Finance Committee meetings but for any member of the Board of Aldermen that can make it, or any resident of the City, the next Economic Development Commission meeting will be held at 7 p.m. next Thursday. They will be discussing some priorities for the upcoming year. A lot of that will tie into the report when it comes out. They are always happy to have people be part of the dialogue and they'd love to have feedback. What worked last year was the Farmer's Market and the Bicycle Festival, so those are things we'll do again. I would invite any other member of the Commission or any resident of Ansonia to come to that meeting and share.

President Sharkey stated, I think the Tax Incentive Program is going to be very important to Ansonia because as Kurt Miller explained to us when he met with us, they consider that they are competing with Ansonia. They already have a Tax Incentive Plan. If they are competing to draw business into Seymour and they're competing with us, they don't consider that they're competing with Derby or with Shelton; they are competing with us. We really need something in hand to attract business to Ansonia.

Charter Revision Commission - Alderman Marini

At our next meeting the Commission wanted to dive in, first and foremost, to the Tax Office recommendations that the Board of Aldermen had proposed. I believe there are six points that we put together. Corporation Counsel Blake is already making sure that the Charter Revision Commission has those. I guess this is an opportunity for us, this meeting or right after, take a look at those six points and if there's anybody that feels the need to explain those points to the board or to add on anything else, the Charter Revision Commission will meet the fourth Thursday of the month at 7:15. I do realize that bumps up against one of our Finance Committee meetings, however there should be plenty of time - the last scheduled appointment that day is 7 o'clock and Charter Revision Commission does not start until 7:15. Likely there will be time left. This Board should be clear, and I think it has been in its six points, how we want to see the Charter revised with respect to the Tax Office.

Another thing, we sent out letters to all of the Heads of Commissions and Departments inviting them to give feedback to the Charter Revision Commission. It was my feeling that the Department Heads, Commission Heads, were the ones that deal with the Charter on a daily basis. They are the ones best positioned to know what changes, if any, are necessary, to the portions of the Charter that pertain to them. I've heard back from Ray Tingley, but I haven't heard back from, I don't believe, any other Commissions at this point. I would encourage any Department Heads or Commission Heads to take a look at the section of the Charter, to review that section that governs them, and to get in touch with the Charter Revision Commission in person or simply by e-mail or telephone. The Commission wants to be informed as it goes ahead. Likewise with the Board of Aldermen, the Commission is open to any dialogue.

Alderman Stowe stated, there was mention at the last meeting something about scrubbing the Charter, and Corporation Counsel Blake was supposed to have come up with some ideas of what that would cost. Mr. Norman had mentioned it as well.

Corporation Counsel Blake stated, I don't have any figures on that yet.

Alderman Marini stated, our next meeting will be at the end of this month, so that's when we expect to hear that update. Some of our members are attorneys and have asked around, so by the next meeting we should be getting some kind of a range.

Alderman Stowe stated, when that's known, the public should know about it.

Municipal Reports / Annual Reports

Alderman Nihill MOVED to accept all municipal and annual reports, dispense with the reading and place them on file; SECONDED by Alderman Adamowski. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Tax Refunds

Alderman Nihill MOVED to accept the refund report and pay the refunds in the amount of \$4,054.72 if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Knapp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Communications

Alderman Nihill MOVED to accept the communication, place it on file, and take it up; SECONDED by Alderman Knapp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Communication #1

From: Chairman Edward Adamowski, Aldermanic Finance Committee

Re: Final Report and Status of Tax Collector's Office

President Sharkey read, "The subcommittee passed a motion to have the full Board of Aldermen at their January 8, 2013 meeting consider and review the recommendations found in Mr. Stanley J. Gorzelany's final report and status dated December 4, 2012. A copy of the report is included with this letter."

Alderman Nihill MOVED to accept Mr. Gorzelany's final report and institute the recommendations made in his report; SECONDED by Alderman Stowe. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Alderman Stowe asked if the City ever sent Mr. Gorzelany a thank you letter.

President Sharkey stated, he implemented a lot of things; I did see a report

someplace today that already after the first of this year they had 414 take offs from delinquent just this year.

Appointments

Ansonia Police Department

Chief Hale stated, Kristen is not one for fanfare or to boast about herself, she just goes about her business. I get to talk about her tonight; there's nothing she can do about that. The simple fact of the matter is that you had voted to add another detective to our ranks. We had gone through a testing process and Officer Hunt has come out number one. She is an exceptional Police Officer. She has been with us just over nine years. She goes about her business professionally and capably every day. She is one of the best Officers we have in a very good Police Department. The task, no matter how difficult or complicated, she dives in and tackles it. She has become one of our primary "go to" people in any event that we have. Kristen has a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from UNH. This is a most deserved promotion; this is only going to make us that much stronger at the Police Department. I would look for your favorable support.

Alderman Adamowski MOVED to accept the appointment of Officer Kristen Hunt to Detective; SECONDED by Alderman Radin. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Applause rang throughout the forum.

Resolutions

Resolution #1

Re: State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security

All Aldermen of All Wards introduced the following Resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Ansonia Board of Aldermen may enter into with and deliver to the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate; and

FURTHER RESOLVED that James T. Della Volpe, as Mayor of the City of Ansonia, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Ansonia Board of Aldermen and to do and perform all acts and things which he deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

Alderman Nihill MOVED to ADOPT Resolution #1; SECONDED by Alderman Mott. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Bruder, Secretary
Ansonia Board of Aldermen