



# CITY OF ANSONIA BOARD OF ALDERMEN

## Regular Meeting – May 14, 2013

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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 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 observed in honor and memory of Marty Lawlor who recently passed away. He was a longtime active resident of the City of Ansonia; his son is President of the Board of Education and his wife also works here in City Hall.

### *Roll Call*

The secretary called the roll:

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

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

President Sharkey declared a quorum of 13 present, 1 absent.

### *Deviate From the Agenda*

Alderman Madigosky MOVED to DEVIATE from the agenda; SECONDED by Alderman Tripp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

The Oath of Office was administered to the local Civil Preparedness Force Members by Town and City Clerk Madeline Bottone. These are civilians the City of Ansonia will be able to employ in times of emergency such as some of the recent storms we have had. They are undergoing some training at this time.

President Sharkey stated, we thank you for your commitment and I'm glad to see these people volunteering at such a young age. Thank you very much.

***Consideration of Previous Minutes***

1. Regular Meeting of April 9, 2013

**Alderman DeLucia MOVED to accept the minutes; SECONDED by Alderman Marcinko. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

**Public Session**

Edward Musante, 21 Castle Lane

Mr. Musante voiced his concern regarding adherence to the City's policy of picking up after your dog.

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***

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President Sharkey for Mayor James Della Volpe

Mayor Della Volpe is attending a conference in Washington until Saturday.

Mustang Sally's will be moving into the former Lanza's. The Chief of Police is aware of this and they have no record of any problems in any other locations they have. It should be a good addition to an empty building.

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Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake

I would ask that you table Communication #2.

This week the case of Castle Lane Developers was found in favor of the City. The developer's appeal was dismissed.

Lt. Andrew Cota, Ansonia Police Department

The Annual Awards Ceremony will be held at 7 p.m. next Tuesday night at Ansonia High School.

The Memorial Day Parade will be held Sunday the 26<sup>th</sup>.

We have an Officer in the Academy graduating the third week in June and beginning his Field Training Program.

We are in the midst of the hiring process. The applications deadline is this Friday. We'll be testing on June 1<sup>st</sup> for police officer openings we have to fill retirements.

Our Anti-Crime Unit has made numerous arrests throughout the City. They're out there each and every night addressing various concerns. The unit has been very successful in addressing issues phoned in by residents and will continue to address them.

Alderman Radin mentioned the red light at corner of Wakelee and Jackson has been out for a while.

Lieutenant Cota stated that he would be in touch with Mr. Hart to replace the light.

Alderman Radin continued, expressing her concern about the owner of the antique shop on Main Street putting red cones in front of his store to block off the parking. She noted that he is holding auctions there on Tuesday mornings and he actually is rude to people that try to park in front of his store.

Lieutenant Cota stated that they would look into it.

President Sharkey advised Alderman Radin to call the Police Department at any time and it would be handled even sooner.

Alderman Radin stated that she would rather report it here so it is on record.

Alderman Tripp asked Lieutenant Cota to thank the members of the Anti-Crime Unit and Ansonia Police Department for the hard work they are doing, especially with the drug dealing and things like that.

He expressed his concern with the intersection of Hill Street, Root Avenue, and Orchard Street. There are cars continually parked right in front of the market, right in front of the stop sign. People park right in front of the fire hydrant in that location as well.

Alderman Nihill noted that there is a sight line issue in that location as well.

Lieutenant Cota explained that there already is a No Parking sign in front of the store, and the Police Department had another one put onto the Stop sign. He stated that they would work on enforcement in that location.

Alderman Knapp noted that he received a call from a taxpayer that wanted to compliment the Police Department on the fine job they're doing with the recent arrests.

President Sharkey stated, United Illuminating is finally connecting the last pole that we have outside on Main Street, so we should be able to light up our new signs very quickly. It's been a lot of hard work from Mr. Schryver and Eileen Krugel.

### ***Committee Reports***

#### ***ARMS Committee - Alderman Scott Nihill***

In April ARMS was dispatched to 252 responses and resulted in 185 patients being transported, 66 with advanced life support. We provided 29 mutual aid calls to Derby, 3 to Seymour and one to Shelton. We passed no first calls.

They're working hard down there and I'd like to compliment Chief Heon and his staff. You saw tonight the CERT Team and I'd like to publicly thank them for getting involved. Everybody knows that it's tough getting volunteers for anything. It's a good program.

**Alderman Marcinko MOVED to accept the report; SECONDED by Alderman Tripp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

#### ***Ordinance Committee - Alderman Jerome Fainer***

We held a public hearing tonight on the two proposed ordinances we'll be voting on tonight. It is the recommendation of the Ordinance Committee to table #2 because we received last-minute information. We will have to reschedule for next month.

**Alderman Adamowski MOVED to accept the report; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

#### ***Finance Committee - Alderman Edward Adamowski***

**Alderman Adamowski MOVED to pay all bills if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Knapp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

#### ***Salary Committee - Alderman Edward Adamowski***

You have before you again tonight the one we tabled last month. We are ready to move forward with that and will take that up under Old Business.

### ***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 Knapp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

### ***Tax Collector's Report and Request for Refunds***

President Sharkey noted that the Tax Collector is here tonight. He stated that looking at the percentage of total collections he is glad to see such an increase. He noted this report give the Aldermen the information they really need.

Alderman Radin explained that one of her constituents that works in New York went in to pay taxes in advance, and the Tax Office would not take the advance payment. She asked why, if someone has the money to pay it ahead of time, they can't do so.

Mrs. Blackwell explained to Alderman Radin that the Tax Office cannot accept tax payments in advance by State law. She explained that the mill rate is not set yet, the tax bills have not been issued yet and they cannot accept the advance payment.

Alderman Stowe thanked Mrs. Blackwell for her report.

**Alderman Nihill MOVED to accept the report; SECONDED by Alderman Fainer. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

**Alderman Nihill MOVED to accept the refund report and pay the refunds in the amount of \$2,402.90 if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Knapp. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

### *Claims*

None presented.

### *Communications*

**Alderman Knapp MOVED to accept all of the communications, place them on file, and take them up in their order on the agenda; SECONDED by Alderman Nihill. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

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Communication #1  
From: Joyce Bondos  
Re: Complaint

President Sharkey explained that the Chief of Police is well aware of this ongoing situation and that he has had many phone conversations with the writer of this letter. Chief Hale will handle it. This person has made complaints about zoning violations to the Zoning Enforcement Officer, to myself as the Alderman in this Ward. I have had a conversation again today with Chief Hale and he is going to contact her, by mail so it is documented. There is nothing the Board of Aldermen can get involved in at this point.

**Alderman Adamowski MOVED to accept the communication and place it on file; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

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**Communication #2**

From: Chairman John Finnucan, Board of Public Works  
Re: Bid Award - Solid Waste and Recycling

**Alderman Adamowski MOVED TO TABLE Communication #2; SECONDED by Alderman Marcinko. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

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**Communication #3**

From: Mayor James T. Della Volpe  
Re: Reappointment of Thomas P. Clifford, III to the SCC Regional Water District and Recycling

**Alderman Fainer MOVED to affirm the reappointment Thomas P. Clifford III of 10 South Westwood Road to the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District's Representative Policy Board (RPB), term to expire June 30, 2016; SECONDED by Alderman Madigosky. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

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**Communication #4**

From: Police Chief Kevin Hale  
Re: Bid Waiver to move Police and Fire Receiver Site

President Sharkey explained that Northeastern Communications is the single source vendor for our emergency services radio systems. The \$7,271.21 cost will be shared by the Police and Fire Departments, and is currently budgeted.

**Alderman Nihill MOVED to waive the bid and authorize Northeastern Communications to move the police and fire receiver site from its current location to the top of the Ansonia Middle School building at 115 Howard Avenue at a cost of \$7,271.21; SECONDED by Alderman Madigosky. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

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**Communication #5**

From: Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake  
Re: Chronic Nuisance Properties and Use of City Parks Ordinances

1. Chronic Nuisance Properties

Alderman Fainer explained that the ordinance is based on the City of Derby's ordinance. When they had a problem at a bar in Derby where Police were constantly going there, they used this and Chief Narowski cleared it right up.

**Alderman Nihill MOVED to ADOPT Ordinance #1 Chronic Nuisance Properties Ordinance; SECONDED by Alderman Stowe. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

## 2. Regulating Use of City Parks

Alderman Fainer explained that the Committee would like to TABLE this Ordinance for another month as they received further information at the last minute.

**Alderman Knapp MOVED to TABLE; SECONDED by Alderman Radin. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

### *Resignations*

**Alderman Knapp MOVED to accept, with regret, the resignation of Larry Commune from the Board of Apportionment and Taxation and the Retirement Board and send him a letter of thanks for his service to the City; SECONDED by Alderman Adamowski. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

### *Ordinances*

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Ordinance #1

Re: Chronic Nuisance Properties

Item approved - See Communication #5.

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Ordinance #2

Re: Regulating Use of City Parks

Item tabled - See Communication #5.

### *Unfinished Business*

1. Tara Kolakowski, Acting Personnel Director - Job description:  
Assistant Senior Center Director

**Alcerman Adamowski MOVED to bring this item back from the TABLE; SECONDED by Alderman Nihill. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

**Alderman Adamowski MOVED to approve the job description for Assistant Senior Center Director; SECONDED by Alderman Stowe. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

### *New Business*

President Sharkey stated that he had reported that we have a new play scape at Prendergast School that was obtained under the auspices of the New Jersey

Firefighters Union, the Port Authority Police of the City of New York, and with help from the Ansonia Fire Department the play scape is constructed. They are in the process of putting down the rubberized surface -like a mulch- that was delivered today. The mother of the child that it's being built in remembrance of asked that a swing set be included - that is an addition. The group that is supplying everything agreed to purchase a beautiful swing set and Public Works will install it. It is on back order and should arrive here next week. The official ribbon cutting ceremony will be 9 a.m. Friday, May 31.

I also have been made aware that Lowe's in Derby may be willing to donate picnic tables to the site if we put in an official request. The Principal of Prendergast School wrote a nice letter requesting three picnic tables. They approved it; we have the picnic sets and Public Works is assembling them.

**Alderman Knapp MOVED to send a letter to the manager of Lowe's thanking him for the donation of the three picnic tables; and further,**

**MOVED to send a letter of thanks to Public Works and all of the volunteers that participated in any way; SECONDED by Alderman Nihill. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

Alderman Stowe stated, last month we requested to have an FYI from different committees telling us if they had a quorum or not. I saw there were three, but none from the Zoning Board of Appeals. Last night there was a Zoning Board of Appeals meeting, there were a couple of attorneys here and we did not have a quorum. I know this Board and the Mayor are just as concerned as I am. That Board is not functioning and we need to figure out how to get it functioning.

President Sharkey noted that the Mayor has several names of people that are willing to fill out that Board, it's a matter of the Mayor bringing them to us.

Alderman Stowe continued, last night some of us attended the Board of Apportionment and Taxation public hearing. There were a lot of people from the Board of Education and concerned citizens. I can't compliment that Board enough on the way they handled themselves through that whole process.

We are having a Charter Revision and one of the things mentioned was having a referendum for a certain percent tax increase. I think that somehow wrapped with giving the Board of Education the opportunity to have good clear meetings with the Finance Committee needs to happen in the coming year. I understand their frustration because they are losing a lot of state grants. It really bothered me to watch the Board of Apportionment and Taxation and the Mayor get blamed. We were there, a lot of us, and got the heat. If the Board of Education has more time to work with than what we give them, the Finance Committee, and if they're able to show us their needs in an honest working manner, that somehow it is possible to have some of the money they want for their budget on that referendum and give the citizens the actual opportunity to vote for that, yes or no. The pressure that's going to come next year, because I think

they're going to be in worse shape than this year. None of us want that. I think we need to make a concerted effort to try and work together in a transparent manner that shows the public that we are really making an effort to solve these problems. It was a little rowdy in here last night, and I never saw it so intense. Put it out there - it's a Democracy, let the people have the final vote. I won't like it if my taxes go up but if the majority of the people vote to give the Board of Education the money then so be it, they should have it.

President Sharkey stated, I think we're looking at several things. Yes, the Board of Education needs to have more say rather than wait until the night of the public hearing to voice their opinion. The Board of Aldermen turned over this recommended budget in February. Every citizen knew in February what the recommended amount was going to the Board of Education. There was no Board of Education member at any Finance Committee meeting of the Board of Apportionment and Taxation from February until May. Not one person walked in the door. They waited to walk in last night and put on a good show. I am a lifelong educator, my wife was a lifelong educator. I understood everything that went on last night. My daughter works in the Ansonia school system, one who at times has had pink slips. I understand where people are coming from. I know how much my taxes are going up next year. This was a group that was heartfelt for saving their programs and saving what they have.

Maybe it needs to somehow go before the public and let the public vote on the Board of Education budget. Many places have done that and it's been recommended here. I worked in Bethel, and sometimes it went to eight votes because the citizens kept voting down the education budget. One year we had to go back to work under the last year's salary and benefits. The Police Department of the City of Ansonia has had to do that here once before. When all the people vote on the budget you find out it's a different feeling than having 60 people walk in one room and voice their opinion. The members of the Finance Committee did an excellent job of voting their heartfelt what they thought their constituents wanted. That is the budget that we turned over and I think that is the budget that the Board of Apportionment and Taxation is voting on. Last night made it look like the Administration, the Board of Aldermen was mentioned several times, and the Board of Apportionment and Taxation are all turning a deaf ear to education, and that truly is not the case. My children went through the Ansonia school system and played sports, Mr. Sturges' children played sports, we all know what sports do for the children. We are lifelong residents and are still here volunteering our time and doing what we do. At one point last night I looked around at that table and looked at the fellow Aldermen who were there and said, "why do we volunteer our time?" because at times we are scapegoats. Last night people were looking at you and looking at me and everybody was making us scapegoats for what they feel were taking something away from them. We certainly weren't doing it intentionally. I went home frustrated and said to my wife, there is not one person in my neighborhood that has a child in school, and I can tell you how they would vote for the Board of Education budget. I can tell you what they tell me about what they want to see in the budget. I have widows, I have single people after

divorces living in the houses and they are paying higher taxes. We know their taxes are going up. I am frustrated. I attended every Finance Committee meeting, every Board of Apportionment and Taxation meeting, and it was a tough meeting last night. People looked at us like we were uncaring. There were comments that came out last night that I couldn't believe. One guy asked why the City bought a new fire truck. We didn't buy a new fire truck, we bought an ambulance because it was needed. We certainly haven't bought a fire truck. There is a lot of misinformation out there.

Alderman Tripp stated, obviously all of the meetings of the Board of Aldermen are open to the public, all the meetings of the Board of A&T are open to the public, and that budget process has been ongoing since January. In regard to the Board of Ed budget, besides input from the Board of Aldermen on one night, nobody from the public, over four months. The process is more than just one night. At the beginning of every single one of our meetings is the public. The public speaks first and then we go on about our business. I agree completely with President Sharkey's previous comments. As I walk my ward I go out and talk to people. I represent a very blue collar hard-working ward. These people are not affluent. A lot of them are barely getting by. I represent a lot of senior citizens that are barely getting by. They are at the tipping point. If taxes go up much more a lot of these people are going to lose their house.

Alderman Stowe stated, I can relate to what you said about your frustration when you went home. One of the reasons I ran for Alderman was because I was concerned about taxes, but I was not trying to deprive anybody of anything. I'm working very hard trying to help Economic Development, I believe that could be the engine to take away some of our problems. I also know that as a community we need to figure out how to work together with all of our departments or it will be very difficult to change the complexion of the City. The Mayor has made some big sales here with a couple of our buildings, I think we're heading in the right direction. The condemnation is directed at us, the City officials. I believe that is not the case and I think if there was a vote we would find out the majority of people would vote against the tax increase. It is not fair in my eyes to the Board of Education to not have the opportunity to sell their product to the public, because they're not totally wrong. When you have school systems that are good, like Orange - people move there when they have kids and then leave when their kids graduate high school, just to go to that school system. I really know that we all feel the same way and I would like to see us take extra effort, whether I am here or not, I would like to see this Board try to bring them in as a friend, work together, look at our issues and ways to solve them, and if we could pass this resolution idea we could give the public the opportunity and it's in their hands. It's up to the Board of Education to sell their product. If they can't sell it to the people because the people don't believe they can afford it, we've done our duty here. There is nothing more we can do. The Board of A&T - I was embarrassed a little bit because they come and volunteer for this - they're not elected. We hand them this budget that we hope can make work, the hours they work is mind-boggling, and then to be berated like that - we don't need to function like that as a city.

President Sharkey stated, along that line, people that are on our Charter Revision, keep this right in the forefront when you're thinking about changing the budget process. One of the things that was on our table to send on was to have either a) the Board of Finance be elected, or b) the Board of Aldermen take over setting the budget. That was another thing that was an issue there. You have to understand, you are elected officials and you have more to do as the governing body of the City of Ansonia than just setting the budget. We set a tentative budget, but you have many other things. You operate every month on a myriad of things - everything that deals with everything about public health and safety, the well being, how this City runs is in this Board. The Board of Finance or Board of Taxation solely is in charge of the budget. That is their job - solely. I have seen other towns where the Board of Finance is elected and trust me, they have a harder time than ours. Our people last night that sat here, and we all felt for them here while the people were giving them the eye and talking about them and everything else, if they were elected, I can tell you, many of those people would go out to get rid of them on that Board. I worked in a town where the Finance board was elected and people ran solely saying that there would be no tax increase. They didn't care if there were storms, fire and brimstone, whatever was happening, there was not going to be a tax increase. I can tell you, someone just got elected, I think it was in Bethany. The woman who ran for First Selectman got beat by someone else, however she was elated because enough of her people got on the Finance Board, which is elected. They didn't care about having the First Selectman seat, they wanted the Finance Board. So people actually run, when you have an elected Finance Board, you would have had half the people sitting here last night saying, "You're going to get beat in November." There was a woman who made a comment from the audience, "You people will see what happens in November." I think they were directing it to us five members that were sitting here. I really think so. My answer is, we do a lot more things. We put our heart and souls into what portion of the budget we send on. I don't wish to preach to the choir here. As Chairman of the Fire Committee I can tell you I'm operating with 15% less money than I had five years ago because they asked everybody to take a reduction. I took a 10% reduction one year and a 5% reduction the next year. I got 15% less money and people say, "Close a firehouse." I don't see any other department taking a reduction. People focus on one department that has a \$245,000 budget to run everything we do 365 days a year. I just don't understand it. The Library has twice the budget that the Fire Department does. How is that going to help you at 2 a.m. when your house is on fire? We deal with our hearts and do it. At least the Board of Apportionment and Taxation - they can't get them in November. These people volunteer - they're on there for 10 years and 15 years and keep coming back to the same heartache every single year. If they were elected they'd be out of a job. Keep that in mind when it comes before the Charter Revision Commission. I don't want to see the Board of Aldermen take over the budget. I truly don't; we've got enough to do.

Alderman Knapp concurred and expressed his appreciation of the time and effort that the Board of Apportionment and Taxation puts in. He stated, the

one element that nobody has mention tonight is the State of Connecticut. We operate in the dark.

President Sharkey added, the Board of A&T is setting a budget right now, and they may get more money from the State, but they haven't set their budget. They are operating without knowing how much the State is actually giving them for grants. There is no way you can get an answer from them. Enough said.

**Alderman Tripp MOVED to send a letter to Chief Kevin Hale and the Board of Police Commissioners for a complete review of the dangerous intersection of Hill Street, Root Avenue and Orchard Street that needs to be looked at regarding the sightline issues, parking problems, school bus stop problems, and faded out signage; and further,**

**MOVED to request the continued vigilance of the Ansonia Police Department to that intersection; and further,**

**MOVED to request that Corporation Counsel and the City Engineer research the possible use of the empty lot that is across the street from that large block for use as off-street parking and prohibit all parking from directly in front of the store; and further,**

**MOVED to have Public Works look into the intersection of Root Avenue where it is totally rutted and eroding into the property line of the adjacent yards;**

**SECONDED by Alderman Radin. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

### *Adjournment*

**Alderman Adamowski MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED by Alderman Fainer. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Bruder, Secretary  
Ansonia Board of Aldermen