

**CITY OF ANSONIA
BOARD OF ALDERMEN*****Regular Meeting – November 10, 2009***

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.

Roll Call

The secretary called the roll:

Peter Danielczuk, D1-present
Robert Duffus, D1 - absent
Jason Bender, D2 - present
James Fainer, D2 - absent
Gale Banks, D3- present
Joseph Jeanette, D3- present
Robert Beall, D4 - present

Jerome Fainer, D4 - present
Spero Jordanides, D5 - absent
Pasquale Pietrangelo, D5 - present
Scott Nihill, D6 - present
Gene Sharkey, D6 - present
Tara Kolakowski, D7- present
Stephen Blume, D7 - present

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

Consideration of Previous Minutes

Alderman Nihill MOVED to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 13, 2009 and the Special Meeting of October 13, 2009 if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Fainer. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

Public Session**Rich Wade, President, Friends of the Ansonia Nature Center**

We had a strategic planning meeting and came up with a mission statement for the Nature Center. I would like to encourage the Board to accept this mission statement tonight, which is Communication #3. Thank you.

Joan Radin

First I'd like to congratulate everybody for being re-elected. Secondly, I picked up the papers yesterday morning. I'm not quite sure I understand this resolution, which is the Mayor's salary. I'm not sure what the Mayor makes now, so it really doesn't make any difference. The amounts at this time are pretty steep for the way the community is, the situation with the jobs and

people out of work and not having anything. Is this an automatic thing that happens, or... I mean, I thought with salaries it was something that had to do with... I don't understand it at all. I'm not sure if anybody else understands it. Is this something that's going to go into the Charter? I don't understand how they do this. Are they going to explain it?

President Blume stated, it's a salary schedule. There's a freeze now and it won't go into effect unless the freeze is lifted.

Mrs. Radin stated, so the freeze also affects the Mayor's salary? Okay. I looked at this and said, "My God, with the economy the way it is today we really can't afford it."

President Blume stated, it's just a schedule; we didn't have one. The freeze is on.

Alderman Kolakowski stated, it's not retroactive.

Mrs. Radin stated, okay. Like I said it scared me when I picked it up because I know what the economy is like and there are people that are really struggling to make ends meet. Thank you.

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

Public Official Session

Mayor James Della Volpe

I'd like to congratulate everybody on their election to the positions. I'd just like to say how sad I am about Gale Banks. Gale has put a lot of work and time and effort into representing the Third Ward. She's done a tremendous job for us and we're really going to miss her. She is very dedicated. Like I said, she put in a lot of time and effort, she showed up for all of the meetings, she participated, and we're certainly going to miss her. Hopefully she'll stay involved in some capacity. Thank you, Gale Banks. [applause]

I'd like to report on the Riverwalk. It's still at DOT for their approval. It looks like we're not going to go out to bid until the spring. I've been assured that it will go out to bid in spring. The money is in place, from the federal government, it's all set - we just need the consultants and engineers at the Department of Transportation to approve the plans. Once they do, we'll go out to bid.

I talked to Bob Scinto yesterday about the Fountain Lake project. He's going to go out and find a developer because Farrell has decided to stay in Ansonia for at least the next five years - they're going to reinvest millions of dollars into the buildings on upper Main. Of course, that's good news. He was a little upset

that they weren't going to Shelton, but that's fine, it doesn't bother me because they're staying here and it's about time that everybody doesn't leave the Valley and go to Shelton. Bob said he'd work extremely hard and get something up there as soon as possible.

Thirdly, the demolition is just about complete on the two buildings. For next year there are going to be four scheduled to come down. Right now two are down, it's just open space and that's the way it's going to remain for the time being.

On Tuesday, December 1st we're going to have our swearing in ceremony here in Aldermanic Chambers starting 5 p.m. to accommodate several people because we have other meetings going on during that night.

Tomorrow is Veterans' Day and there are two ceremonies - one at Mead School at 8:30 in the morning and the other at 11 o'clock at Malus Park.

I have a plaque here for our outgoing Board of Aldermen President who served over 32 years on the Board of Aldermen and 12 of them as President. I know he's always wanted his gavel. Well, we have his gavel for him. Peter, I'm going to read the inscription:

"President Peter J. Danielczuk, 1995-2007, in recognition of your 12 years of service as President of the Board of Aldermen and for countless years of devoted public service to the citizens of Ansonia. Presented, with thanks, by Mayor James Della Volpe."

[Applause].

Alderman Danielczuk stated, thank you, Mayor Della Volpe. It doesn't seem possible, 1973 graduating from the University of Connecticut and being elected in November of that year to my first term on the Board of Aldermen. Served as Vice-President of the Board of Education, was on the Public Works Board, Economic Development, many other boards, and for many, many years on the Board of Aldermen. I've worked with a lot of Mayors throughout. Every Mayor was great in their own way. I have say it's been a pleasure in the last 10 years to work with a guy who I think has done a tremendous job, who will go down in history as one of our greatest Mayors of our time. Mayor Della Volpe, I want to thank you very much. I'd like to thank all of you who I served with for so many years. To the current President, Mr. Blume, keep doing a great job. To Trish, thank you for many years of being my secretary here on the Board. And of course, what can I say about Madeline? She's just a sweetheart. One of the best Town and City Clerk's we ever had in the City of Ansonia, too. She does a great job. Thanks everybody, God bless, and I'm here whenever the Mayor needs me. I'll be here for him. Thank you very much. [Applause].

President Blume thanked Mayor Della Volpe.

Corporation Counsel Blake

It's been a pleasure, Peter, working with you as President. Thank you for all your time for the City of Ansonia.

There are three Executive Session matters. There's a late communication on 119 Division, I want to give you an update where we are.

One I want to update you on is 13 Bartholomew Avenue, Mr. Jeremy Zuran has a house that has six cars, six motorcycles, a trailer. We were at a hearing in front of Judge Bellis yesterday. There was a temporary injunction. The attorney came in and said they need a little more time. Instead of having two trials, a temporary injunction and a permanent injunction, we're going to have a trial December 15 at Derby Superior Court in front of Judge Bellis. Within the next week there is a dumpster and his attorney said he'll have to move that dumpster out of the house and there's a canvas shed - he will put it to the side. Within two weeks he has to see the Zoning Enforcement Officer to get a permit to have that. Hopefully by December 15th that will resolve or we will have a very successful trial on the 15th.

Alderman Kolakowski stated, I've have had a lot of calls on this, I know the Mayor's gotten a lot of calls on this. People are tired of waiting for some 'real' action to be taken. The Police response has been great, the noise has gone down. Part of it also is their concern about how antagonistic he is about raising the volume of the music, or the motorcycles, then as soon as the Police come up, it stops, then he starts it again. Is there any way the court can - you know. The neighbors think he's running some kind of chop shop out of that temporary garage they have there, because there are so many people coming in and out.

Corporation Counsel Blake stated, it's friends and his friends are motorcycle enthusiasts. That stuff is all going to be going. If not, if he doesn't change his ways within a couple years he'll be bankrupt. We have court December 15th. Hopefully before that date his attorney will put some sense into him. He's on everyone's radar. The blight officer on it.

Alderman Kolakowski stated, it's been nine months now.

Corporation Counsel Blake stated, it's coming to an end. The trial is that day. There's not going to be a continuance; it's going to be that day if he doesn't resolve it.

Mayor Della Volpe stated, according to Peter Crabtree, he's starting to comply with the cleanup regarding the yard. But, he has no respect for the law, he has been given several tickets by the officers. He just doesn't care about the neighborhood. We've been out there, we've talked to every neighbor and sent out notices and kept them updated as to what's going on. We have to follow process.

President Blume thanked Corporation Counsel Blake.

Chief Hale, Ansonia Police Department

To give you an update on what's going on at the Department technology wise - all of the parts are in for the new phone system and we're expecting a cutover on December 8th with some training beforehand.

The in-car reporting system as well as the cogent fingerprint system should be in within the next four to five days.

We're also taking a look at the intersection of Division and Clifton. We're having more traffic problems there. It's backed up and at times it's grid locked. That is a City light and we believe it is not in sync with the light at the bottom of the hill, which is a State light. The State won't synchronize our light for us. They will help us but that's going to require some engineering on our part. In the meantime, we're looking at getting rid of the right turn on red. As we did on Jackson and Wakelee, we have to get permission from the DOT to put up the no turn on red signs.

Alderman Pietrangelo asked for the details of the winter parking ban.

Chief Hale explained that the ban is in effect December 1 through March 31, and it will be on the odd side the entire winter this year.

Alderman Banks stated, when we were campaigning last Tuesday, someone asked if Columbia Street could become two-way. I was thinking maybe one-side parking. Sometimes people don't stop at the stop light and they just go down Columbia Street like a son-of-a-gun. They don't even stop.

Chief Hale stated, that was two-way years ago. There were probably reasons why...

Alderman Banks stated, yes, it's a narrow street.

Chief Hale stated, it's a narrow street with a lot of multi-family homes with a lot of cars that don't have off-street parking.

Alderman Banks asked, how about speed bumps?

Chief Hale stated, the Commission discussed that issue. It's a great idea to have temporary speed bumps and then pull them out in winter, but there's a cost involved. Once you put them on the first street, there will be a line down the stairs of people looking to put in speed bumps on their street. I think we have to be careful in looking at that. The Fire Department is right there, too. We had a request from a Columbia Street resident asking for a crosswalk across Main Street at the intersection. It has to go to DOT because it's a state highway.

Chief Hale continued, I would start with the Fire Department, because that is one of their main routes.

Alderman Sharkey stated, that was a Fire Department request because of the size of the new vehicles. With people parking on the street and two-way traffic, it was impossible to get the truck down the street.

President Blume thanked Chief Hale.

Comptroller Joseph Miller

You have my report in front of you. As stated in the report, we have total delinquent car taxes of \$1.8 million - that's almost 2 mills. Total delinquents as of the end of September were \$3.8 million. I believe the City will be taking much a harsher stance on delinquent taxes. The bio-alert system, or the "boot system" - we're looking at that in more detail. I've recommended it to the Mayor. What happens is, they come out at night, they pick up the delinquent automobile plates, they drive around at night and they will only drive around nights that City Hall is open the following day. They come in pay their delinquent taxes plus the boot fee. If it's not paid for by 5 p.m. then they're towed and then they have more costs. We have to do something. There is no cost to the City. The company puts the boot on.

Alderman Kolakowski stated, we are in really tough economic times. I think if we start booting cars, people are going to come in outraged about how they're going to get to work and pay for the thing. Maybe as a first, we could research it. Maybe the Police can give them a seven-day warning. Either come in and pay, or after that seven days we'll put a boot on it. To automatically go out and start booting peoples' cars, there will be a line out the door, in the Mayor's office, and I'm afraid somebody will go postal.

Alderman Nihill stated, I totally disagree, Mr. President. I believe the good people are making the sacrifices they need to make to pay their taxes. I, for one, am tired of people constantly not doing their fair share. I think we should take aggressive steps to recoup some of these back taxes.

Alderman Kolakowski stated, I agree with you, Alderman Nihill, but I think you have to warn them first.

Mr. Miller stated, there will be a news release.

President Blume stated, we're just in the infant stages of this, and we're going to discuss this first. It's not something we're going to act on tonight.

Mayor Della Volpe stated, this is something we've discussed with the Cities of Derby and Seymour to possibly combine and do it together. Just like New Haven did, once they made the announcement, X-amount of people came in and

made their payments. The ones that really don't care are the ones that got booted. We will have further discussion when we're close to making the decision on whether or not we're going to do this.

Alderman Sharkey stated, New Haven had the policy. They suspended it for a while. Before they reinstated it, they notified everybody in the newspaper, and I forget how many billions of dollars poured in, just by notifying everybody that they were going back to the boot project. People by the hundreds came in to pay their taxes.

Alderman Kolakowski asked, what is the percentage of auto taxes compared to property taxes and WPCA taxes we're not getting paid on? How do you say, we're going to boot a car, but they're not paying their property taxes either.

Mr. Miller stated, you have to remember, on the property tax, we're going to get the money sooner or later because of when the house sells. The automobile tax, as I stated, is \$1.8 million out of \$3.8 million. So there's \$2 million. To Mr. Nihill, we have a 98 percent collection rate, so there's only two percent out there. We're talking 2-3 mills.

Alderman Jeanette asked, if you don't pay your car taxes, you can't register your car, right?

Mr. Miller stated, yes you can. Although we send the list into the State, we have to pay the State to do this, because it's one of their cost-saving measures. Also, using myself as an example - Joseph M. Miller, Jr. I can re-register my car I'm told by J. Michael Miller. You're not supposed to register it, but they do.

Alderman Fainer stated, if you look at the list, Father Salemi Drive - there are no houses on Father Salemi Drive but there were I don't know how many cars registered on Father Salemi Drive.

Alderman Nihill stated, I know times are tough, but to me it's a slap in the face to the people that are struggling yet they do the right thing and make sacrifices to pay their responsibilities. Then you have other people that just get by the system - they know all the loopholes to get around it. I think we have to get aggressive and go to the next step to try to collect.

Alderman Jeanette stated, it's not just the people that aren't paying their taxes; there are a lot of cars registered out of state that live here.

President Blume stated, we have a lot to talk about. I'm sure we'll have another meeting or workshop and will discuss all of it.

President Blume thanked Mr. Miller.

Committee Reports***Finance Committee - Alderman Gene Sharkey***

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

ARMS Committee - Alderman Jerome Fainer

For the month of October we had 229 calls for service. We transported 155 patients to area hospitals. We collected \$47,705.21.

At 6:30 p.m. November 18th at Griffin Hospital we're holding a public information session on the H1N1 flu.

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

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

Tax Refunds

Alderman Nihill MOVED to accept the report of the Tax Collector and pay the Tax Refunds for October, 2009 in the amount of \$229.10 if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Sharkey. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

Claims

None presented.

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

Communication #1

From: Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake
Re: Forbearance Agreement - 17-19 Sixth Street

To be discussed in Executive Session.

Communication #2

From: Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake
Re: 64-78 Pulaski Highway Appraisal

To be discussed in Executive Session.

Communication #3

From: Director Donna Lindgren, Ansonia Nature Center
Re: Mission Statement

Alderman Danielczuk MOVED to approve the Mission Statement for the Ansonia Nature Center; SECONDED by Alderman Sharkey. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

Communication #4

From: James and Eileen Ehman
Re: Reimbursement of Road Patch Bond

Alderman Sharkey stated, the bond was actually paid so they would have a permanent patch, but the road widening eliminated their need to do it.

Alderman Sharkey MOVED that the Board of Aldermen write a letter to the City Engineer authorizing the release of the bond; SECONDED by Alderman Fainer. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

PUBLIC SESSION on Late Communications

President Blume asked three times if any member of the public wished to address the Board on Late Communications #1 or #2. Being none, he declared the Public Session closed.

Late Communication #1

From: Ansonia Fire Commission
Re: Disposition of Old Engine 3

Alderman Sharkey stated, Engine 3, a 1988 FMC Pumper had been taken out of service. We received its replacement. We were contacted by the town of Lee, Maine that currently is using a 1972 pumper that was donated to them by

Nichols Fire Department. They have several other pieces, but they currently have no pumper that's working. They are a town of 1,000 people with a total Fire Department budget of \$20,000. They cannot fix their pumper.

We have a past precedent of donating our old fire apparatus. Some time in the past we sent our old Engine 6 and the previous Engine 3 out to Kansas after a flood disabled a lot of the equipment that was there. We also donated the old Engine 1 to a town in New Hampshire. That is presently a first-line piece in New Hampshire. We were contacted, the first people, it was offered for \$1 to Webster Hose Company and they turned it down. The Fire Commission unanimously voted to donate this piece to Lee, Maine.

They will come here to pick it up. I contacted the Chief of the New Haven Fire Department - he's going to supply hose for the truck. While we still have the insurance, we'll drive it to New Haven, New Haven will put equipment on it, and we're going to contact them and they're going to come pick it up.

Alderman Sharkey MOVED to dispose of the equipment in a very worthy manner, in "as is condition," to the Town of Lee, Maine to replace their outdated apparatus; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

Late Communication #2

From: Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake
Re: City of Ansonia v. Raymond Jones

To be discussed in Executive Session.

Appointments

Town and City Clerk Madeline Botton read aloud the following appointments:

CULTURAL COMMISSION

Alderman Kolakowski MOVED to appoint Michael Soberany of 110 Woodbridge Avenue, Apt. K15, Della Volpe replacement; term to expire 12/31/2012; SECONDED by Alderman Danielczuk. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

Resolutions

Resolution #1: Mayoral Salary Resolution

Alderman Kolakowski MOVED to adopt Resolution #1; SECONDED by Alderman Beall.

Alderman Kolakowski stated, it's reflective of, when someone starts new as Mayor, their salary is in line with an average salary in 2009, actually below. But after 16 years it gets them to a point where they're able to support a family. They've done a great job after 16 years for the City of Ansonia. I recommend that this is something that's positive and should be passed by the Board of Aldermen from the Salary Committee.

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

R E S O L U T I O N

The Aldermen of the Salary Committee introduced the following Resolution:

Resolved,

That this salary schedule be adopted effective December 1, 2009 but shall apply retroactively for purposes of calculating years of service:

The Mayor shall be paid the following salary per annum, which shall be increased after each year of continuous service as described below:

- 1) After one (1) year of continuous service, per annum: \$54,000
- 2) After two (2) years of continuous service, per annum: \$57,000
- 3) After three (3) years of continuous service, per annum: \$60,000
- 4) After four (4) years of continuous service, per annum: \$63,000
- 5) After five (5) years of continuous service, per annum: \$66,000
- 6) After six (6) years of continuous service, per annum: \$69,000
- 7) After seven (7) years of continuous service, per annum: \$72,000
- 8) After eight (8) years of continuous service, per annum: \$75,000
- 9) After nine (9) years of continuous service, per annum: \$78,000
- 10) After ten (10) years of continuous service, per annum: \$81,000
- 11) After eleven (11) years of continuous service, per annum: \$84,000
- 12) After twelve (12) years of continuous service, per annum: \$87,000
- 13) After thirteen (13) years of continuous service, per annum: \$90,000
- 14) After fourteen (14) years of continuous service, per annum: \$93,000
- 15) After fifteen (15) years of continuous service, per annum: \$96,000
- 16) After sixteen (16) years of continuous service, per annum: \$99,000

Unfinished Business

None presented.

New Business

None presented.

Executive Session

At approximately 7:36p.m., Alderman Sharkey MOVED to enter Executive Session to discuss the following items:

1. Forbearance Agreement - 17-19 Sixth Street
2. 64 - 78 Pulaski Highway
3. City of Ansonia v. Raymond Jones

And further, invited Mayor Della Volpe and Corporation Counsel Kevin Blake to remain in the Aldermanic Chambers; SECONDED by Alderman Kolakowski. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

Return to Regular Session

At approximately 7:48 p.m., Alderman Sharkey MOVED to return to regular session; SECONDED by Alderman Kolakowski. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

Items from Executive Session

Forbearance Agreement - 17-19 Sixth Street

Alderman Sharkey MOVED to TABLE and have Corporation Counsel Blake research what the true amount of the blight lien is and report back to the Aldermen; SECONDED by Alderman Nihill. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

City of Ansonia v. Raymond Jones

Alderman Nihill MOVED to proceed with the forbearance agreement with respect to 119 Division Street; SECONDED by Alderman Kolakowski. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

64 - 78 Pulaski Highway

Alderman Sharkey MOVED to have Corporation Counsel Blake report back to the Board on what the figure looks like; SECONDED by Alderman Banks. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

Adjournment

Alderman Banks MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED by Alderman Danielczuk. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11-0.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Bruder, Secretary
Ansonia Board of Aldermen