



**CITY OF ANSONIA  
BOARD OF ALDERMEN**

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting – September 9, 2014**

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*Elyahua Lynch*  
TOWN AND CITY CLERK

**Call to Order**

The Regular Meeting of the Ansonia Board of Aldermen was called to order at 7 p.m. by Aldermanic President Philip Tripp. 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  
Charles Stowe, R1 – present  
Philip Tripp, R2 – present  
Lorie Vaccaro, R2 – present  
Denice Hunt, D3 – absent  
Joseph Jeanette, D3 – absent  
Anthony DeLucia, D4 – absent

Jerome Fainer, D4 – absent  
Anthony Casseti, R5 – present  
Joan Radin, R5 – present  
Matthew Edo, R6 – present  
Patrick Henri, R6 – absent  
David Blackwell, Jr., R7 – present  
Daniel Evans, R7 – present

President Tripp declared a quorum of 9 present, 5 absent.

**Add-Ons**

**Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to add the following items to the agenda:**

**New Business**

**SECONDED by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.**

**Consideration of Previous Minutes**

**Alderman Radin MOVED to accept the minutes of the August 11, 2014 Special Full Board Meeting; SECONDED by Alderman Vaccaro. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.**

**Public Session**

President Tripp asked if any member of the public wished to speak.

William J. Stokes, 34 West Brookside Avenue

The reason why I'm here is, there was an article in the paper which had to do with the Aldermen reduction and the Ward changes and so forth. It was a public hearing. I was kind of surprised to see the article in the paper the same day that this meeting was to be held. Not only that they had the concert out there that night so the parking I guess wasn't easy for those people that did get here or didn't make because of the hike. But the way the thing was read was that it was just a comment that you would have to make. I didn't make it, I wish I could have, I had other things I had to do that night because I found out about it later during the day. I said, what about all these people that were working day shift and came home and read the paper – there was no way they could make this meeting if they would like to. It was a little bit of poor planning in my estimation, which goes a long way in a sense. The way the follow up article read was, it said that they had 20 people, or 20 people spoke about their options, what they felt about it and all, which to me is not a very big count for the City of Ansonia. Again it makes you stop to think, was this planned? My personal opinion that they didn't want to see a big crowd for some reason? Or the poor planning because they put the notice out the same day the meeting was held. I don't think there's any other business in the City of Ansonia that does articles like that or runs a City – you've got responsibility. I think somebody kind of, like you said, blew it, you know? They had their reasons maybe, but I personally didn't feel it was the right thing to do. Then when the article came out the second time after the meeting was held, they talked about Seymour's got the reduction in theirs and a couple of other cities. So I say to myself, are they better than we are? They've got less people, does the City look better? I don't know, I don't live in Seymour but, and there are other towns that did the same thing. Does that mean that because they're doing it we have to go along with what they're doing? When you see things like that, it really does make you think a little bit. If they're going to consolidate maybe the voting places. This is in November, you get darkness early. Where are these places going to be? Is it going to be easy to get to them, to park? Right now from the North End, which is St. Anthony's, after this year, there's only one more year left because St. Anthony's is going to close up, who is going to own the property I don't know, I don't know if that voting place will even be available whether there's a change or not. Put yourself in my position. Say they go up to the Armory instead. It's a one-way street and people are going to ride around, they can't find a parking place. They'll go straight home. I know I would, and I live in the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward. I'm beginning to wonder how well it was planned.

And you've got the thing it's going to be put on the ballot. You know, this is my personal opinion. I think whoever was going to do this didn't look forward enough. If they asked me, I would have come down and talked to them. Though I hope the presentation was meaningful, but a lot of this is my personal interpretation. I've lived in Ansonia all my life; I don't want to make any enemies. Thank you.

President Tripp thanked Mr. Stokes for coming to the meeting.

Randolph Carroll, 40 Fourth Street

I've come before this Board before about the anti-blight issue. There is graffiti all over the back of the buildings behind Gatison Park and they are almost covered. The front of the Ansonia Copper and Brass, that is covered with graffiti. I talked to the Mayor and the Mayor said our Blight Inspector – I saw him go to the properties. But it's been four months. I know we took down the graffiti on the railroad tracks, you know, could something be done about the graffiti on the back of these buildings?

Mayor Cassetti stated, it is private property.

Mr. Carroll stated, well, the Blight Ordinance says, there were two parties in the park this month. My fence around my condominium is spray-painted all over with graffiti. The property owner is responsible for removing graffiti and if they don't do it the City could step in. I've spent over \$40 in white spray paint to cover the graffiti on my white fence. Since I'm a responsible owner, I think that all those buildings that have been graffitied for years can be taken care of at Gatison Park.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, you're talking about the Copper and Brass buildings as well. We're not only going to get rid of the graffiti but the [inaudible] as well for that. In terms of Gatison Park, you're absolutely right, the Blight Program is working for private properties with the fees and penalties on that. Of course public property is going to be Public Works.

Mr. Carroll stated, this is not public property; it's private property. For instance, they went after my dumpsters at my condominium so I bought blue paint and sprayed. I had leftover so I went up to Daily Mart's dumpsters which are the same company and I painted over their graffiti as well. There are 29 units. We pay almost \$60,000 in taxes for that property and that's our front door. For company to visit and see this graffiti the first thing that you see when you come to our property – it's kind of embarrassing.

Besides that, I'd like to thank Sheila about the grant for the trees – they were planted. It makes my entrance to the property a lot nicer. Thank you.

Donna Lindgren, 81 Prindle Avenue

I have an idea that I think will make our City a better place. I am a retired Nature Center Director and I've been an avid gardener for a very long time. In the letter that you have in your packet from me, I suggest that the Administration consider putting in Community Gardens at the Olson Drive complex when it is redone. Several months ago, maybe in May or June, I saw a drawing of the proposed buildings that will be going in there, and I didn't see anything in there about an outdoor recreational facility. I was hoping that I could convince the Administration to put in some community gardens in that location.

In my letter to you I mentioned an organization by the name of the Trust for Public Land – it is a national organization. I knew about them because back in 2000 they helped the City of Ansonia acquire about 600 acres of open space land next to the Ansonia Nature and Recreation Center. They do wonderful work and are interested in getting people outdoors in healthy activities like parks or river walks or community gardens. They were kind enough to send me some maps on the work they have done in Connecticut. Although it's a national organization they're very involved in Connecticut as well in those kinds of pursuits and getting people into the outdoors in some healthy activities. I have maps for each of you. If you look at that map, Ansonia is listed in that map as one of the cities that they've helped. I'm sure they would help again if they were asked to.

Also in my letter, I've referenced a publication which is called Land and People – I know you people do not need anything more to read than you already have. I've spoken with Mayor Cassetti about this, and our Grant Writer. I've spoken with Troy White back in June and I even spoke with James Finnucan when he was head of the Housing Department during the last Administration. I'm hoping that with the information I'm providing to you, and perhaps your own good feelings, maybe we could pursue something like community gardens at that location. Most people today are very interested in healthy food and food that doesn't have to travel 3,000 miles from California. They're interested in exercise, fresh air, and green spaces, which community gardens would provide to our residents in that part of the City.

I'm going to give you something else to read. If you wouldn't mind, It's on Page 53, a very nice article about community gardens that have been done in another state, although this organization does it a lot in many states. Please bear with me, and when you get a minute, if you could just look at that article, that would be great.

Another aside, I don't know whether the Ansonia 125 group is here tonight, but on September 27th the Ansonia Nature Center is going to provide a Naugatuck River Bash on the Riverwalk. If anyone can spend some time and help at the Friends of the Nature Center table, that would be great as well.

Camille Copertino, 7 Church Street

I had asked two months ago that the house next door to me at 5 Church Street be cleaned, the yard, because the house had been deserted. The Mayor at that time said that he would look into it. I was quite pleasantly surprised when the next day I got home from work and my daughter said that Mayor and another gentleman had come to look at the house and assess what was going on next door. That action, that was so quick, was absolutely wonderful. I want to thank you for that.

Also within two days after that, there was a gentleman that was hired apparently and it took two days to actually clean out that property with that man working

more than eight hours a day. I was very, very pleased with the response, it was so quickly that it was quite amazing. I guess my question is, that house has been deserted. I don't know where it stands. What will we do going forward with places like that, that come Spring it will definitely grow again.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, the Blight Program is helping us tremendously with cleaning up properties. However, there is the long-term question that is a deserted property, what is the long-term game plan? There is an option for us to do a blight assessment where blighted properties that are chronic problems are assessed at a higher rate. The reason we haven't really put that before the Board is, will that really solve anything, does it maybe just dig that property into a deeper hole. So the long-term is really to get these into productive ownership is the answer. The big effort here is to get a good owner for the property. That's really the only answer. The Blight Officer, Dave Blackwell, who you probably saw out inspecting the property, and I, have had some in-depth conversations about this, because there is no easy answer. We know the goal is getting a good owner but it's easier said than done.

Mrs. Copertino asked, is the house now for sale or auction?

Corporation Counsel Marini replied, I'm not sure what the status is. It could be bank-owned and maybe the bank is trying to get it into somebody's hands. The housing market is just starting to respond and come back a little. In other areas it's still very weak. So all we can do from a Blight enforcement perspective is keep a close eye, listen to the complaints. Whether it's grass or graffiti, at least with the laws we have now we can act on these complaints and eliminate the problem for a while.

Dave Knapp, 3 Glen Drive

I'm a little concerned. Last week I look into the Valley Independent Sentinel and I see that the Housing Authority rolls out a new plan for the development of the project at Olson Drive. This project here is probably one of the most important projects that this town currently is looking at and is probably one of the most important projects for the future of this town. Not long ago this Administration rolled out a plan. Are the two groups talking to each other? And you're putting together a committee to help with the planning of... Are any of the Aldermen serving on that committee?

Corporation Counsel Marini replied, there will be a large committee, Dave, to bridge the gap between the Housing Authority and the City. Remember, there are two distinct parts of this whole proposal. One is the public safety complex, one is the housing. The City obviously is going to lead the way with public safety; the Housing Authority is going to lead the way with the housing. But there needs to be communication. So the Mayor is going to appoint a group that consists of Aldermen, representatives of the Police Department, representatives of the Housing Authority, to basically start the overall dialogue.

What you saw with the Housing Authority was a preliminary step that had more to do with setbacks than any actual design. I know it's hard to say that when you see the colorful pictures, but that design was essentially a placeholder to get a zoning change that they needed to be able to accommodate the more dispersed units. It has nothing to do with decisions being made about what's going to be there. I think Troy and the Housing Authority Commissioners would say the same thing. We are very, very, very far off from anything approaching a final design. There is so much time to involve thoughts from the community whether it be Donna's thoughts about community gardens, or thoughts that other groups and commissions have had. The group that's going to be appointed this fall is really going to act and determine in the coming year, two years, and be the sounding board to get these ideas up and running, so don't worry that anything has been decided. Remember, this is the first time you've seen any plans for that project at all. You've seen two plans for that project; in the past we've seen no plans for that project there.

Mr. Knapp stated, your original plan had a police station, fire department...

Corporation Counsel Marini interjected, they're only looking at one side of the project.

Mr. Knapp continued, and the Housing Authority's plan is talking about making a satellite educational type of facility. What's the next plan going to have? A casino?

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, if you have a way, Dave, of putting a casino over there you need to share.

Mr. Knapp stated, I think it was a couple of months ago I offered to serve on that Committee and never heard anything but that doesn't surprise me.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, the Committee hasn't been created yet.

Mr. Knapp continued, and what I also would like to see is, maybe have some tenants serve on that Committee. Maybe somebody ought to ask them what they'd like to see there.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, certainly. There is a tenant representative on the Housing Authority right now, and there definitely will be tenants as a member of this. What you're thinking is 100 percent right and is actually the reality of what is going to happen.

Mr. Knapp stated, my offer to serve still stands. Thank you.

Tara Kolakowski, 14 Farrell Drive

I'm here tonight because I came in late for the special meeting of the Board of Aldermen about Charter Revision to send those changes out for referendum. I'm really just here to voice my concerns. My main concern is going from 14 Aldermen to nine. I served on the Board of Aldermen. I sat where every one of you sit tonight. My main concern is being mindful of changing from 14 to 9, is putting too much responsibility on 9 people. I know there are people here that own their own business, like Mrs. Radin and Mr. Edo. I know that Mr. Vaccaro has an office in City Hall because he is dedicated and spends so much time here. I know that other Aldermen serve in other capacities, in volunteer capacities in the City. Alderman Adamowski, Alderman Fainer, Alderman Delucia. I know that Alderman Blackwell has a family and serves as a baseball coach. There is a tremendous amount of volunteer time that every individual chooses to dedicate to the City. To go from 14 to 9 limits their ability to volunteer. It puts too much stress and pressure on 9 people. I am saying this because, Charlie Stowe you are the liaison to the WPCA, to the Public Works Department, and to Economic Development. Could you imagine, Charlie, if all of a sudden you have to now be the liaison and pick up the Rec Commission and ARMS Committee? Logistically it's too, there are not enough hours in a day. There are 24 hours in the day. You can't possibly... 30 days, 31 days, 28 days in a month. You couldn't do it. I think we would make a tremendous mistake putting this much stress and pressure on 9 individuals. I only say it because I've sat where you sit. I've dedicated the time and the hours. If any one of you or all of you can say, or Mayor Cassetti, he sat as a police commissioner, do you all have another 10 to 12 hours a month, a week, to volunteer? To make a choice between going and getting the overtime in your job to put food on your table, or if a fire comes in and you have to respond to that, you can't make the Committee meeting? It's a huge responsibility. Again, I think we should be very mindful of taking 14 and going to 9. Thank you very much.

Harry Danley, Jr. 52 North Cliff Street

I'm here tonight in regard to the tennis courts. After the last meeting the Board of Aldermen made a decision on the tennis courts. After the meeting I talked to Mayor Cassetti about getting an estimate so you may reconsider tennis courts. I am here tonight with an estimate for the Aldermen to take a look at.

This past meeting the Board decided to dismantle the tennis courts based on information that was wrong. One statement was made that there is a drainage problem at the tennis courts - totally false. There were drainage problems back in 2005 that the City took care of when they put the new soccer field in. They drained the pond and put the water back in. There is no drainage problem at the tennis courts.

If you look at the estimate, the gentleman was there. He has been doing this work for 35 years. He took a look at the courts and he said that they're in pretty good

shape and if there were any drainage problem with the tennis courts there would be buckling. That is not the case here.

The estimate given to the Board of \$20,000 to \$80,000 – you've got to narrow that down a little bit. I'm surprised that the Board went ahead. There was nothing in writing. There was just a verbal and the Board made a decision. I would disagree with that and I wish that the Board would reconsider.

Also, I looked into it a little, and speaking of grants – Sheila – I found out the other day that there is a United States Tennis Association – they offer grants for City tennis courts. Maybe it's something you could take the time in the future to look into.

Ms. O'Malley stated, there are a lot of recreational grants out there but they are very limited and they are very small in the amount that they give out. Everybody wants to improve their recreational [inaudible]. I can certainly consider taking a look at that.

Mr. Danley stated, I would ask that you hold off on doing any further work until we really investigate this. Now we have an estimate. Also, I've gotten two businesses that are willing to make a donation toward this price of \$17,000. I was looking into including nets and new concrete footings and was going to talk to Mr. Novak if maybe the Public Works Department could help out with that. We would save approximately \$1,500 to \$2,000 right there if Public Works helped us with that. I also went around and asked a couple of businesses to donate and I have two businesses that are willing to donate \$500 each. That would take another \$1,000 off this price. I could go out and ask for more businesses to help us out.

I also was able to get 19 more signatures to add onto the petition. I think it was a rush to make this decision. I hope the Board would take the time to reconsider this. Thank you.

Doug Novak, Superintendent of Public Works

I also would like to distribute to the Aldermen an estimate that we had talked about at the last meeting from Putnam Tennis Courts in Harwinton. Thank you very much.

Ken Plavnicky, 15 Mountain View Road

I had money put back into my escrow this year. That was because of Mayor Cassetti and the Administration for lowering our taxes. I've owned property 25 years and I've never seen money put back into my escrow up until this last month. I was quite happy for seeing it and I just want to say thank you for the way it was done. Hopefully next year we'll see it again.

Jeff Coppola, 43 Glen Drive, Recreation Director

Just a couple of phone calls I got this week, any concerns hopefully you can have an answer for me or Chief Hale, help me out with this. I know we're in the process of doing the Charter Revision and so forth. The issue is Abe Stone Park - it seems to be popular with the dogs, and the fines that we're not able right now, the Police, to give. We don't have an ordinance yet. They've called, they says the Police are doing their jobs, about three or four times they have seen and they have helped scoot them off the field, but where to we go from here as far as, what do we need to do with getting a fine, getting a sign up there saying that if you get caught with your dog, it's "this" amount of money. How close are we to coming up with something like that? There are some at Nolan.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, unless the ordinance is specifically Nolan Field, you're already set. If it ends up being, worst case scenario, which I don't imagine, that this is only Nolan Field, we could have an ordinance ready by the October meeting, and put that into effect about a week after.

Alderman Blackwell asked, speaking about dogs, what is the capacity of Colony Park Little League field as of right now? Are we currently using it for any kind of athletics?

Mr. Coppola stated, right now we have our fall league, and I believe they're practicing at Nolan Field. I don't believe there is any use there right now.

Alderman Blackwell asked, is there any way we can work on something as a dog park? I had talked to several residents in that area that Mr. Danley is collecting signatures from, and they said that the only thing they use that tennis court for is skateboarding. I know you had mentioned a skate park and possibly a dog park. Is there any way we could give the residents a place to bring their dogs instead of Nolan Field?

Mayor Cassetti replied, originally that's what I wanted to do with the tennis courts – to take them down and make either a skate park or a dog park for the residents. I think a dog park would probably be better there; it's too set back for a skate park.

Mr. Coppola stated, and the skate park, if you want to do that also, we've talked about putting one on Howard Avenue across the street from the Boys and Girls Club. There is plenty of space there for a skate park. One more comment on the tennis courts – I know we're throwing out quotes and estimates and so forth – but it might not just be a money issue. We are talking about a necessity and wants and what we want to do with it also. It might not come down just to money – it comes down to 17 or 30, can we spend it somewhere else and give the neighborhood something else that they want. That's a decision you might think about also.

Thank you very much.

President Tripp asked 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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*Mayor David Cassetti*

Good evening. I won't say welcome back, because we all have been working very hard throughout the summer season. First I would like to thank all the members of the Charter Revision Commission for their recommendations and for their diligent efforts to create a more streamlined and efficient government. I would also like to thank the Board of Aldermen for approving the Commission's recommendations at last month's special meeting. I encourage all residents to come out and vote on the Charter Revision questions in November.

You may have seen our milling contractor and Public Works employees working diligently on municipal roads and infrastructure projects. Our Superintendent of Public Works Doug Novak is working with his three supervisors to forge ahead with a number of municipal projects. Thank you Doug and the Public Works for doing a great job addressing the City's needs.

Thank you to Judy Nicolari and the Ansonia Cultural Commission for another successful summer concert season. We are looking forward to a wonderful Harvest Festival October 4th.

I would also like to advise the public that the Ansonia-Derby football game on September 19<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. there will be a fireworks display at the end of the game. Please come and support Ansonia's great football team and enjoy the fireworks display. I also want to give credit to Stop & Shop again as they were the original sponsors of our fireworks display.

Finally, on October 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 I will be giving my State of the City address at the Ansonia High School. I am proud of the work we continue to do on behalf of the Ansonia taxpayers. I am eager to share with you what we have accomplished and what we hope to accomplish moving forward. I strongly encourage you to attend this forum and share your thoughts and concerns. My staff and I look forward to seeing you all there. Thank you very much.

Alderman Adamowski stated, first thing, I wanted to say thank you to Public Works and yourself, whoever orchestrated all of that for getting West Main Street done. I see Nolan Field is getting done. Those are all good projects and I'm glad to see it being done.

The one issue we do have – was that cell tower deal signed?

Corporation Counsel Marini stated the contracts are being executed. We had an updated closing packet sent to us. All in all we have to collect about 40 signatures, have them notarized. The package is about done and should go out soon.

Alderman Adamowski asked, is there any way we can not finalize it at this point? I did some research after this board, I believe, hastily voted to go with this one company. Was there anybody else we looked at?

Corporation Counsel Marini replied, there were other companies, and every company will tell you they have a better deal.

Alderman Adamowski stated, I just wondered why they weren't shared with everybody because when I voted on it, I voted no, I was the only one. I only heard one company and one deal.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, the original RFPs were done over a year and a half ago. In fact we would not be able to go with one company. A Request for Proposals has to go out. It was done under the previous administration. We informally looked around at other proposals, but again, every single company tells you they have a better deal. Once you run the numbers it tends to be a different story.

Alderman Adamowski stated, I fully understand that, but my point is, when this Board was asked to vote on it, we were only given one company. What are we basing our decision on? The other company that I had a conversation with after this vote said they could have given us the same amount of money for half the years – 20 years instead of 40 years, which in essence, if that's the case, if they could have come close to that, we don't know, but if they could have actually come close to that, then whoever voted lost \$2.1 million revenue for the City of Ansonia. The guy's name is Eric Webb.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, ah, he is very persistent, Mr. Webb. We have had many conversations with him. When they run the appropriate numbers you'll find that is not the case. Really they come like flies. Essentially when this agreement went public, we're were hit with five calls a day. Mr. Webb is the most persistent. I can show you my cell phone. The truth of the matter is, we started to entertain some of these people before Mr. Webb. They had the same promises and it just is not the case. We had an RFP process. It went through the democratic process; it was properly vetted. It was given to the highest bidder and at some point you have to go with someone.

Alderman Adamowski stated, in closing I don't care what administration it was, this one or last one, I still think we voted on this and I don't think we had all the information. I think we could have done a lot better. My last comment which is very

disturbing, which is an email from Corporation Counsel Marini to this gentleman where it says in the e-mail, "I have spoken to our City administrators about your offer to review and these documents for the purpose of generating a new bid. While I thank you for that offer, we have decided we cannot continue discussions with Wireless Capital given a letter of intent we have already approved with Unison." I have had no knowledge of this before this vote. I voted no, thank God. I knew nothing about it so I don't know who you were talking to.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, the intent was under the previous administration. What we're referring to is a process that was followed. If you're going to entertain 100 offers, again, you're never going to be able to stop the process.

Mr. Tymniak added, after the meeting and it was published in the newspaper, I was getting telephone calls from all across the country. All these cellphone providers, they put in the Google search terms, and when it pops up, I mean, I came into the office the Thursday after the meeting and I had about 17 messages. I couldn't even call them all back. I started calling back and got through 12 of them, and every one of them had the same pitch.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, you have to understand, Mr. Webb makes a hefty commission on this.

Alderman Stowe stated, the Land Use Commission, I believe it was. I was on that commission and we had three people we vetted. I don't know if we could have been more diligent.

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*Corporation Counsel John Marini*

The Blight program is going very well. As the season gets busier for board and commissions, make sure you reinforce some important reminders. The agendas being handed in on time is important, especially for special meetings – 24 hours after the meeting the minutes are supposed to be done. The agendas are supposed to be done 24 hours before a special meeting takes place. Also remind your boards and commission members about the appropriate use of executive session and the limited reasons that you can enter into an executive session. There sometimes is some confusion – there are really only several – 5 – limited purposes. Those are just basic reminders.

I also wish to say thank you to our blight enforcement officers that are really making a noticeable difference in the City.

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*Chief of Staff Christopher Tymniak*

We have begun the process of employee evaluations. This year we will be stressing setting goals for your departments. Setting goals for each individual employee. We're also going to start putting a pitch on customer service and opening up and smiling and being more friendly and accommodating to the public. That is a goal of ours - to be more friendly to the public.

Also, last meeting I talked about solar panels on the landfill. Greenskies Energy is the company which will run the ZREC program for us and they are here tonight to answer any questions on the solar panel project. Maybe during old business they can come up; they want to pass out a package and introduce themselves and go over what they do and what their vision is for that.

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*Director of Economic Development Sheila O'Malley*

Just working with Ansonia Copper and Brass on the upcoming demolition project, taking contractors through and trying to work with the owner on demolishing those buildings. Also, working on a MOU with Farrell Corporation trying to bridge the gap with the private owners, trying to work in cooperation and in tandem with them to help move some of the properties.

We're also going to be looking at administering a feasibility study which we receive \$60,000 for from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation and the UI Company. That grant will essentially look at some of the buildings in downtown, specifically the Armory, Farrell, ATP and Palmer. We'll look at how these buildings fit in, what makes best sense for these buildings.

People's Bank next month will set up a workshop to try to educate small business owners and give them some financial planning and help with their small businesses. A lot of times we see small business owners not planning for the first year of business and how does that play out and what is going to be the financial impact to them so that they can survive. That's an important workshop and I'll have more information on that as it becomes available. Thank you.

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*Chief of Police Kevin Hale*

As you may have read, we had a rash of burglaries recently on the West Side of town. Those are active investigations and we've adjusted our presence accordingly and will continue to do so.

School opened last week. We have our normal presence at the schools and the usual first two weeks of traffic issues at Mead, Prendergast, and Emmett O'Brien. It's really a bit of a mess because of the construction; it does spill out onto Ford Street. We had to make some corrections there with buses, where students and parents

are parking. A lot of this is re-educating parents that are coming to drop their children off at school and trying to get them to play by the rules and make it as safe as we can, as well as the buses stacking out at Prendergast, and more so in front of Mead. These are busy places for 20 minutes in the morning; less so in the afternoons.

Cross walks and stop bars should be completed by the end of the week; we had a late start on those.

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*Superintendent of Schools Carol Merlone*

Good evening, I'm happy to report that we had a great opening, thanks to the Chief and his Officers with their presence in the buildings. We began August 11<sup>th</sup> with our Freshman Academy and I'm happy to say that they all turned up in uniform this year; we didn't have any struggle with that. Our teachers began on the 25<sup>th</sup> with professional development the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. On the 27<sup>th</sup> we opened the doors to the remaining students. From Kindergarten to Grade 12, they are all in uniform.

Our schools – we upgraded security. We have an additional 40 signs around the buildings and there are new cameras, new vestibules, locks, all staff have taken the safety and security test from the State that has to be in by the 30<sup>th</sup>. This week we're doing Central Office.

I'd like to thank the Valley United Way for providing the businesses to provide 197 families with free clothing for their children in the City. 197 families were served with coats, shoes, uniforms, back packs for their children. We do appreciate the businesses around the Valley – the Valley United Way is a great organization to give to if they ever approach you.

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*Superintendent of Public Works Doug Novak*

Our paving program has started at Nolan Field. Last week we reclaimed the parking lot and started paving. We'll move from Nolan to Colony, to Hilltop, and then working on our City streets. I don't know which Ward they're going to be paving, it all depends on when the vendor is available.

October 4<sup>th</sup> is the Tri-Town (Ansonia, Derby and Seymour) Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day at the Public Works Complex. It will be held from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Putting some advertisements in the local papers on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of September. Call Public Works with questions.

Alderman Radin stated, people are asking me, when they are going to pave Franklin Street and Wakelee Avenue.

Mr. Novak stated, the situation over there was, when the State puts out a bid they bid by town. When they bid by town, contractors bid by town. What happened there was because they paved in Seymour and Ansonia, O&G and Ticon have to

split the paving. They started splitting hairs and there is a big argument over who is going to do what. Then there was an issue over the purchase order that was issued by the State. Supposedly it has been resolved and they are supposed to start paving again on September 18<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Novak stated, we're at the mercy of vendor but all of the paving should be done by November 1<sup>st</sup>.

Finance Committee – Alderman Lorie Vaccaro

**Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to pay all bills if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Blackwell. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.**

Alderman Vaccaro reported that the City audit is proceeding and should be done by September 30<sup>th</sup>. If it goes beyond that date they're looking at October 15<sup>th</sup> to complete the audit.

Alderman Cassetti MOVED to accept the report; SECONDED by Alderman Radin. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

Public Works Committee – Alderman Charlie Stowe

Alderman Stowe stated, I think Public Works has already spoken enough for itself tonight. If anyone has questions I'll gladly hear them.

ARMS Committee – Alderman Joan Radin

I was at the meeting last night. They swore in the volunteers that just finished some programs. I apologize, I don't have the number of calls, I believe it was 289 last month. I do have an important report though and I think the people of Ansonia should be aware of this. ARMS is one of the only places in town that actually brings money into the town to help defray their costs. In July – ARMS volunteers covered 64 shifts, equaling 384 hours of coverage. This coverage equates to \$6,186.24 of salary that is being saved over the traditional part-time staffing, which means the City doesn't pay that – that's the time they put in volunteering. In August 2014 the volunteers covered 55 shifts, equaling 330 hours of coverage. This coverage equates to \$5,316.30 in salary savings of a traditional part-time employee. Fiscal year to date, the volunteers have contributed 714 hours for \$11,502.54 savings to the citizens of Ansonia. They are doing a wonderful job. Hopefully we'll be able to continue what we're doing.

WPCA Committee – Alderman Charles Stowe

The nitrogen has been cut back at the plant, so we have a check of over \$70,000 the most we ever got. Our collections from usage fees have gone considerably up since the new Commission has been put into place by the Mayor.

We are looking forward to working together there. We're having a little bit of growing pains occasionally. We're looking forward to performing well and collecting and hopefully being able to cut costs for the plant. Brian Capozzi is doing an excellent job down there.

Economic Development Committee – Sheila O'Malley

We discussed a number of projects at the Economic Development Commission meeting. I'll bring two items to your attention – I think you will be getting a proposal from the Economic Development Commission to try to waive the permit fees for those businesses that are receiving a façade loan program. It's \$2,000 and some of the fees are high and it doesn't make a whole lot of sense to loan the money and then make them pay the fees, which could be 10 or 20 percent of what they're getting a loan for. We also talked about expanding the parameters of the façade loan program. As you know, we did get a \$500,000 grant and we may use some of that to try to expand the program to make a more sizable loan and to give some flexibility to business owners.

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Ansonia Housing – Alderman Joan Radin

I went to the last meeting and I have to say there's been quite an improvement since Troy White came in. They've elected a tenant to the commission. I met him and we had a very interesting meeting. The other thing that really impressed me was the fact that they are trying to help the people in Woodlawn and they never get out. It's a very lonely life. They got a group together and took a bus to go somewhere. They actually had two buses and went for the day to Captain's Cove. The people at Captain's Cove were lovely to them. They liked it so much that when they came back they decided that next month they'll go to Yankee Candle in Massachusetts. I think we're really improving and I think they'll have less problems in the housing because the senior citizens – the older people will be able to talk to each other, which I guess they didn't do before. I really hope to see a big change.

Technology Committee – Alderman Anthony Cassetti

Ms. O'Malley stated, Smart Home Theaters recently received a deposit which they needed before they would go out and order the equipment. It should be 5-10 days for the equipment and then they'll be working on the installation. By next meeting we should have cameras, it's entirely possible.

Alderman Blackwell asked, could it stream live?

Ms. O'Malley replied, yes.

**Alderman Cassetti MOVED to accept all of the Committee Reports as presented; SECONDED by Alderman Radin. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.**

***Municipal Reports / Annual Reports***

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

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

**Alderman Edo MOVED to accept the report of the Tax Collector and pay the refunds in the amount of \$898.72 if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Vaccaro. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.**

***Claims***

08-14-835 Michael Palumbo v. City of Ansonia re: rear tire  
08-14-834 Tammy Blackwell

**Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to refer the claims to Corporation Counsel Marini; SECONDED by Alderman Radin. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.**

***Communications***

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Communication #1

From: President Joyce Freed, Preferred Investments Associates  
Re: 23 Ford Street

Alderman Vaccaro explained that they are asking us to open the road in order to install a gas line at that address, but the communication is incomplete – there is no detailed plan. We have a similar request tonight from YankeeGas with a map and their plan details. We need to get more information on this one.

**Alderman Vaccaro MOVED TO TABLE; SECONDED by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.**

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Communication #2

From: Sean Montie, Sargis Associates, Inc. (on behalf of YankeeGas)  
Re: 19 Woodbridge Avenue

Mr. Novak stated, the roads are on the five-year moratorium. They have to do more extensive milling. That's where the issue is.

Alderman Cassetti MOVED to approve the request and allow them to proceed SECONDED by Alderman Stowe. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

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Communication #3  
From: Donna Lindgren  
Re: Site for Community Garden

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to place the information on file; SECONDED by Alderman Blackwell. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

**Resignations**

Alderman Edo MOVED to accept the resignation of Corporation Counsel John Marini from the Public Safety Committee; SECONDED by Alderman Radin. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.

**Appointments**

**Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to approve the following appointments:**

**Horace Behrle of 94 Brook Street, to the Board of Assessment Appeals, Macero replacement, term to expire 12/31/2014;**

**Joseph Jeanette (D) of 2 Gracie Lane to the Public Safety Committee, term to expire 12/31/2016;**

**SECONDED by Alderman Cassetti. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.**

**Resolutions**

None presented.

**Ordinances**

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Ordinance #1  
Re: Revised Retirement Plan Membership Provision  
Re: Sec. 21 A-9 (a)

Corporation Counsel Marini explained, this board has talked before about reforming the pension system for the City and there has been a call to move toward a more private-style plan. Of course, this has to be done piece-meal; it's not something that can be done unilaterally. Most of the retirement obligations come from union contract. Right now a lot of employees are actually in MERF right now and are not in the City pension plan. If we take a look at the City pension plan, the

City employees that are in there – a good deal of them are Union employees. They are in there because their union contracts require that they are provided a City pension plan or its equivalent. The City pension plan is actually created by our ordinances. We can't unilaterally change something in the ordinances if it's guaranteed by union contract. That has to be negotiated. So this is a way to start with the non-union employees. What you see here is going forward, the idea of changing the City pension plan – restricting guaranteed access to only union members, until a replacement is created and negotiated with them to switch them onto a different plan. In the meantime, we're essentially stopping non-union employees from entering into this plan as we create a substitute.

This Ordinance redefines who is eligible. Under the change, the eligible members will be those that are guaranteed entrance to the plan by union contract. It's a first step. We want to have a private-style pension plan. Concurrent with this change, we want to offer an alternative for those non-union employees. Right now Bill Nimons and the Finance Department have worked on the numbers – we are going to prepare an alternative for those employees.

Alderman Stowe **Moved** to **ADOPT THE ORDINANCE**; **SECONDED** by Alderman Vaccaro. A voice vote was taken and the **MOTION PASSED 9-0**.

### **Old Business**

Mr. Tymniak stated, Greenskies Energy is here tonight. Like I said, they weren't here last month and there were questions. If you'd like to allow them to have the floor to introduce themselves it is entirely up to the body. They do have a packet to pass out to the Aldermen.

The other group here is Turtle & Hughes and UI. Last month we passed their contract. In your packet tonight there are some FYI letters from UI. Those are for City Hall, there is the ARMS Building and the Ansonia Library. That is just to round out the overall thing – I think the Board of Aldermen has voted on it now three times. The final thing is the UI contract, which you could authorize the Mayor to enter into agreement.

**Alderman Vaccaro Moved** to **authorize Mayor Cassetti to execute the agreement with UI**; **SECONDED** by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the **MOTION PASSED 9-0**.

### Draft Report on Charter Changes

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, there is one tweak that we need. One part of the Charter was affected by another section. The decision to go from 14 to 9 Aldermen would affect a section at the very end of the Charter that speaks to how many Aldermen are needed to pass an ordinance without the need for a public hearing.

Right now it says you need 12 Aldermen to attend and to vote unanimously in favor of an ordinance. When that occurs there is no need for a public hearing. If we want to go along with that in an updated Charter, 12 is not the number if indeed the voters decide to go to 9 Aldermen. So the question is, should it be 9 unanimous votes to pass an ordinance without the need for a public hearing? Should it be 8, 7, some other number? What should that be?

**Alderman Stowe MOVED that the number should be 7 in the Draft Report on Charter Changes that refers to the number of Aldermen needed to pass an Ordinance without having to hold a public hearing; SECONDED by Alderman Vaccaro. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 8 Yes, 1 No (Adamowski).**

#### Update on Roofs

Ms. O'Malley stated, we're getting the contractor out there who will give us some specs, and we're going to draw up the RFP and send it out to bid. The contractor is coming out this week to take a look at both roofs and give us specs.

Alderman Adamowski asked, how far are they paving East Main?

Mr. Novak replied, they're paving from Tremont to Eagle Street.

#### Board of Police Commissioners Ability to Hire and Fire

Corporation Counsel Marini stated there is no needed action to be taken. There is a State Statute that gives the Board of Police Commissioners the ability to hire and fire officers. In the past it looks like hires have always come before this Board. State Statute actually gives that power to the Police Commissioners, not this Board and not the Mayor.

#### ***New Business***

None presented.

#### ***Executive Session***

At approximately 8:30 p.m., Alderman Stowe MOVED to enter Executive Session to discuss the following:

1. **Blight lien - 95 Benz Street**
2. **Angela Diaz v. City of Ansonia**
3. **Blight lien - 25 Grove Street**
4. **Tammy Blackwell - Reimbursement for vehicular damage incurred during employment**
5. **Bottone v. City of Ansonia**

and invited Corporation Counsel Marini and Mayor Cassetti to remain in the Aldermanic Chambers; **SECONDED** by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the **MOTION PASSED 9-0.**

***Return to Regular Session***

At approximately 9:03 p.m., Alderman Vaccaro **MOVED** to return to Regular Session; **SECONDED** by Alderman Blackwell. A voice vote was taken and the **MOTION PASSED 9-0.**

**Alderman Blackwell MOVED to authorize Corporation Counsel Marini to enter into agreements on Executive Session Items 1 through 5 as discussed; SECONDED by Alderman Vaccaro. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.**

***Adjournment***

**Alderman Cassetti MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED by Alderman Vaccaro. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 9-0.**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Bruder, Secretary  
Ansonia Board of Aldermen