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**CITY OF ANSONIA
BOARD OF ALDERMEN**
Minutes of the Regular Meeting – March 11, 2014

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.

Moment of Silence

A Moment of Silence was observed in honor of the passing of Ansonia Attorney Edward Androski.

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 – present
Joseph Jeanette, D3 – present
Anthony DeLucia, D4 – present

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

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

Consideration of Previous Minutes

Alderman Jeanette MOVED to accept the following meeting minutes:

**February 4, 2014 Special Meeting
February 11, 2014 Regular Full Board Meeting**

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

Public Session

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

Donna Lindgren, 81 Prindle Avenue

Will the City of Ansonia do a road cleanup before Earth Day this April? Please consider it.

Mike Carpinello, 20 Fairview Street

I hope you will renew my license for the Super Softy truck.

I still think there are a lot of ice cream trucks running around the City. There's myself, there's Jim Kewalis, and Jim Caprio that have been doing this for almost 20 years each. It's the safety of the kids. One truck stops at one stop and here comes another truck. It's not that we don't watch out for safety but you get a lot of renegades and now that the season is starting again I was thinking maybe you could limit it to maybe only four trucks.

President Tripp stated, I would have to defer to Corporation Counsel Marini to check into the legality of it and see which committee we would funnel that through.

John Izzo, 12 Shortell Drive

I'd like to congratulate the new members of the Board of Aldermen. I'd like to comment on two items, both related to blight. My family owns nine residential properties in town, and our single-family home on Shortell Drive. The Ordinance Committee is discussing beefing up the residential Blight Ordinance, which is a great idea. I would like to volunteer to support that effort. I think there are some landlords in town that need some education and probably need to be fined where necessary.

We probably have as many single-family property owners in town with as much if not more blight than owners of multi-family properties in town. I want to offer and congratulate, I think it's a great idea but I would suggest that the discussion with imposing a license to multi-family owners didn't work in New Britain, probably won't work here. Essentially it's another tax. You can call it a license but owners of multi-family properties are already registered with the City. It's called the Town Clerk's Office, the Tax Collector's Office, WPCA. We are already registered. The City knows who we are. There are some that ruin it for the good guys in town. I suggest you have the power - invoke those fines. The message will be loud and clear that the City has zero tolerance for blight. I commend the effort and I suggest discussion before we start talking about additional fees in the form of a tax or license.

When you get a bill for \$185 per unit for your single-family home like I do, guys like me get bills for between \$4,000 and \$8,000 for our properties plus the usage. The profit is just not there.

I would like to suggest this administration take on the industrial blight that has prevented economic development as we know it in this town. We have blight on every block on Main Street in Ansonia. This Board has the authority to enact an ordinance. Consider sending a message. The industrial folks that remain – they're not going to be here that long. Show that you have zero tolerance. Give them a year to clean up their property or at least give it some eye candy. With the industrial buildings under the law you can only adopt an ordinance if it's a health and safety measure. I would suggest you look at the missing windows on the industrial buildings. Anything built before 1978 is likely to contain lead. I'm willing to bet there is a lot of lead that's airborne on most of these buildings. I'm willing to bet that we have asbestos issues, PCBs – airborne. I think you have the authority to go after the industrial guys. They bring very little to the table. All the hard work Vin Scarlata is doing and Sheila is going to be doing and Dave is working on, we have to support them and start now and send a message. The guy that bought the Farrell buildings last year, start with him and keep him on a short leash. He's made a lot of promises. I don't know where that is; I'm not privy to discussions. Send a message. Thank you for your time.

George Raslavsky, 99 Benz Street

I was talking to somebody that said they went to the Assessor's Office with a list of residents driving with out-of-state plates. She told him that it is not her job; it's the Police's job. I remember reading in The New Haven Register a while back where the Assessor in North Haven took it upon herself with her assistant, faced with an out-of-state plate, they looked into it. Whose job is it in Ansonia?

Corporation Counsel Marini explained, we have discussed this in the past several years. Technically the obligation falls to the police but really it is the responsibility of all City officials to keep their eye out and to report this information. If you see it going on, and this goes for the Aldermen and all of the City officials, we have an obligation to report it. No one department is going to be able to take care of this; we need to work together to do it. If you see something that doesn't look right, if you see out-of-state plates, it's just a phone call either to the Mayor's Office, to my office, to the Police, to let them know. We have a blight/zoning officer who is in the same boat – he is overwhelmed with calls every day. It is up to us to give support to the departments and help get the job done.

President Tripp stated, the Assessor's Office will be informed of the procedure. Thank you.

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

Public Official Session

Mayor David Cassetti

Good evening.

[Mayor Cassetti read aloud a Proclamation proclaiming the month of March as Irish American Heritage Month]

Tomorrow marks my 100th day in office. I want to start off by saying how grateful I am that the Board of Aldermen supported my budget last month. The budget will serve as the City's blueprint showing the residents what our priorities are while lowering the tax burden they have to carry. We need to rebuild our own business economy. The days of the large factories driving our city's economics are over. We need a brand-new foundation built on growth of small business. That being said, we will be aggressively recruiting businesses to Ansonia. I want my message to be crystal clear. Ansonia is open for business. This is more than a statement or a slogan; it is a fact. We have already had some notable accomplishments. Better Packages is coming to Ansonia. They are a manufacturing company that has been in Shelton for over 90 years. They are the first company taking advantage of the Tax Incentive Program. In April, Mustang Sally's will be adding a much-needed nightlife to our downtown. I am happy to announce that we have a new small business opening up on Kingston Drive. It is going to be a state of the art photo studio incorporating all of the latest digital technologies. The name of the new studio is L.A. Copper Photography. We have several big announcements on the horizon. The ACA building will have two new tenants by the start of the summer. Both tenants will help our residents who have been knocked down by this recession pick themselves up, dust themselves off and get back on their feet. I am very happy that The Workplace will be opening its doors to help our residents find employment. Nothing is a bigger morale booster than earning a paycheck. The other tenant will be TEAM, and they will be opening an early childhood center. In the last two months many potential investors have looked into purchasing the ATP and Palmer buildings. This is a positive signal that we are getting closer to new development on Main Street. I get excited listening to some of the ideas of the new businesses that would enhance our downtown. We are focused on the development of Olson Drive with the Housing Authority and will be making a joint announcement regarding the redevelopment in the next couple of weeks. Finally to close out development, the big elephant in the City is the former Copper and Brass plant. I can report that we have had several high-level intense meetings regarding the 44-acres at the end of Main Street. Although the development and teardown of these buildings is not moving as fast as I would like it to, it is moving forward. We are forming a partnership with the stakeholders of the property and the City to ensure that the future development fits Ansonia's needs.

My first budget lowered taxes. I said I would do it, and it has been done with your help. Now I ask the Board of Apportionment and Taxation to make the small adjustments that they feel are necessary to maintain operational services. We've continued to look for savings in our budget through the Cost-cutting Commission that met for the first time last week. They are being tasked with finding efficiencies in our departments that will hopefully result huge savings.

Funding education is a top priority of mine and it will continue to be. Our children are our future and they deserve the best the City can do for them. We look to continue to support our Board of Education and teachers as they strive to raise all of our children's test scores.

We will celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the City in style. We have put together a team of individuals who are organizing events to highlight the best Ansonia has to offer. The year-long celebration will feature a marquis summertime family picnic with entertainment and hopefully fireworks.

Unfortunately, the old City pension plan has been neglected for over 20 years. Not any more. I can confidently say to the custodians and the secretaries at the Board of Education that the City is looking into writing a new plan and begin making new proper investments.

I want to point out that a new effort in collecting back taxes has also worked. To date, we have collected over \$300,000 in back taxes from long-term outstanding tax delinquents.

Last week at my first Mayor's Night Out the residents raved about the good job the Public Works Department did clearing the snow this year compared to last year. I want to thank the entire Department of Public Works for the good job they did.

Our Recreation Department is also becoming more active. This year we will have an Adult Softball League again. There will be a Youth Basketball League. Finally, we will fully fund summer camp for kids ages 7-14 for five weeks.

Our government structure is now populated with new members who have new ideas on how to move the City forward. Committees are having more interest and higher attendance. Things in the government side are settling down and Ansonia is moving forward. Our administration has started off fast. We only just started. I am happy with what we have accomplished so far, but it's not enough. We are going to make Ansonia a premier City in the State of Connecticut. Thank you very much.

Alderman Adamowski stated, in regard to the Economic Development Director, what bothers me is that I'm an Alderman for the City of Ansonia, and I have to give respect to The Valley Independent Sentinel because if it wasn't for Ethan Fry, I wouldn't know what was going on here. Is that the proper way for an Alderman to

find out? It would have been nice if we all knew what was going on – there are 14 of us here.

Alderman Stowe stated, you are on the list of liaisons to EDC and you probably could have seen what was coming. I did not talk about what I knew because there are legal issues.

Alderman Adamowski stated, as I understand it with legal there are things you can and cannot say, but Mr. Marini sat over there when he was an Alderman and he hung the administration out to dry when there was an issue with the Police Department. He wanted transparency and everything was supposed to be out on the table. Now all of a sudden this happens – and I understand there are legalities – but now we don't hear a thing. But before we were supposed to say everything that happened. The administration was "hiding stuff" and we were "covering things up" were the words that were used. At least let's be consistent.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, obviously you have to handle matters properly and in a legal fashion. You had an issue where it falls under contract negotiation, yes, it falls under personnel, yes. The previous Mayor made the hire decision. This Mayor made the decision to dismiss Mr. Kelly. It was not a pleasant scenario but the Mayor felt he had just cause to do so. The entire process over the last week, unfortunately, legally, the Mayor could not share the information as it was ongoing. It would not be proper for the City to share the information at that time, and it would not be fair to Mr. Kelly to share the information at that time. Mr. Kelly's file is complete public record. Within that file you will find all the specific reasons underlining the Mayor's decision. You will find absolutely everything that you possibly would need to know, or could know, in writing. However in terms of commenting publicly, in fairness to Mr. Kelly, no, the administration will not pile on, it will not say things more than they need to be said, it will not destroy someone's reputation. The file of Mr. Kelly is public and already the media has requested it and certainly any Alderman here is more than welcome to take a look at that file. It's a matter of patience and doing things right. As Corporation Counsel I will not expose the City to undue and unnecessary legal risks. The primary thing is trust; we ask the Aldermen to trust the decisions that are being made. Hopefully as we go along it will be clear that we're acting in the best interest of the City.

Alderman Fainer stated, in the 100 days you got rid of the Grant Writer, you got rid of the Zoning Enforcement Officer, we got two Superintendents of Public Works. Where are we getting the money for all these salaries?

Mayor Cassetti replied, Mr. Fainer, I am cutting the salaries.

Alderman Fainer continued, we paid our Grant Writer five 5 weeks while we paid somebody else; we paid the Zoning Enforcement Officer 5 weeks. People that did their jobs. Now we've fired the Economic Development Director who had a contract for two years. That's going to cost us money. Why do we just keep firing

people? You guys were all involved in the Economic Development Commission that hired Mr. Kelly. You say the last administration. You were on that Committee and we all keep talking about transparency, but where is the transparency? You just keep getting rid of people. I don't understand it.

Mayor Cassetti stated, Mike Schryver is going to oversee the bond work. Tonight you're going to vote on that. The Salary Committee is working on that.

Alderman Fainer asked, is any money left in Contingency?

Mayor Cassetti stated, there's \$150,000 in Contingency.

Alderman Stowe stated, you pointed at me, I was on the hiring committee, and I had the highest hopes for Peter Kelly. I did everything I could do to help him. I took days off work all winter and met in the Mayor's Office to have EDC meetings. This administration is very ambitious to get businesses into this City. My previous term I talked about that all the time. I know if we don't have businesses in the City that can pay taxes and provide jobs for people here, that we cannot continue to fund all the departments of this town. We are very ambitious to move forward. I'm glad I'm not a City employee because they're pushing everybody to do their job and if they don't there are consequences. I worked with Peter Kelly from the previous administration into this administration and I did everything I could do to help him to be our long-term Economic Development Director. It had absolutely nothing to do with whether he was a democrat or a republican.

Alderman Fainer asked, don't you think that five months is quick to pull the rug out from under someone?

Mayor Cassetti replied, you don't know what we went through. I can't elaborate on it.

Corporation Counsel John Marini

Transparency continues to be an issue. We're going to be as transparent as we can with this issue or any other issue. We do have a Freedom of Information seminar at 7 p.m. April 1st in the Aldermanic Chambers. It's open to City officials and members of the public. Invitations are going out to the Boards and Department heads. The major topic is how to deal with the Freedom of Information Act as it applies to residents and media. It's on April Fool's Day and the theme will be "Not Making a Fool of Yourself when it comes to Freedom of Information."

We have three claims to discuss in Executive Session. The City had a substantial claim put in for the Red Wing Pond House and the flooding that went on about two months ago. Great American Insurance will be picking up the whole tab for the actual building, however it will be the Friends of the Nature Center – their insurance

which is The Hartford – that will be covering the personal property inside the actual building.

Blight was an issue that came up. The Mayor and my office have been working with the Blight office examining existing blight laws and also really beefing up enforcement for blight – both residential and commercial. We have an issue on Hotchkiss Terrace that's been pending for a year where we have a resident in Seymour that owns a driveway in Ansonia. It has fallen into horrible disrepair. It's a Zoning violation and a Blight issue. There is a Wetlands issue with the runoff. Amazingly nothing has been done about this. We don't want this to be another O'Neill's Court so we are this week taking very aggressive measures against that Seymour resident who has an obligation to the City of Ansonia.

We are taking a look at industrial blight – we're taking a look at windows and are fining them \$100 per window. Our Blight Enforcement Officer had asked, how can we count all those windows? It is hard but we will count them all, and we will fine them all \$100 which is the maximum penalty as of right now under our Blight rules. We are taking aggressive steps there.

We met to discuss Worker's Comp cases, we're undergoing a continuing evaluation of how to make legal services more efficient in the City of Ansonia. We're working with PMA – a workers comp carrier – trying to get a good handle on those cases. We're also looking at legal services in general. A lot of this falls under the umbrella of Claims against the City so it's more appropriate for Executive Session.

Alderman Fainer regarding workers compensation, we have a lot of repeat offenders on that. Is there anything we can do about that?

Corporation Counsel Marini replied, it's an ongoing problem. In Ansonia it tends to be more of a problem than in other towns our size. When we took these cases back to Berchem Moses & Devlin, the firm I'm with and that is handling the comp cases, they were very surprised, and they continue to be surprised at the number of workers comp cases we have. We have competent attorneys working on them; we're going to work very closely with PMA to monitor problem claims and try to stay on top of everything. The atmosphere really needs to be addressed. We are going to revise the list of providers. We are doing memoranda to the department heads outlining and clarifying the process for first reports of injury, how to deal with claims. We do have the ability to have people come in on light duty. Just because you're out doesn't mean you can't work – there's going to be something that you can do, even if it's counting paper clips.

Alderman Vaccaro stated, the Mayor mentioned unfunded pensions for Board of Education people. How many years was that?

Corporation Counsel Marini replied, about a decade. We have an unfunded pension to the tune of about \$4 million. It was an issue that was not faced over the

last decade. We are trying to figure out options going forward. We don't want to ignore it or turn a blind eye to it. It all comes back to finances; we need to do it responsibly. We are hoping that in the next month the Mayor will have a plan prepared for this Board to consider.

Alderman Blackwell asked, who does the onus fall on, the City or the Board of Education for those pensions?

Corporation Counsel Marini replied, it's the City of Ansonia pension plan; it was established by Charter.

Alderman Blackwell continued, regarding the workers compensation claims – obviously there are habitual ones. At what point does the City, taking into account the injury and the position that this person serves in the City, sit the individual down and decide to cut ties? Do we keep employing these people who obviously have serious injuries and keep re-injuring themselves?

Corporation Counsel Marini replied, it is a case-by-case basis – the mechanism is what they call “full and final stipulation.” That is when you enter into a settlement agreement buying out the rest of their claim. Remember that if someone hurts themselves while working for the City of Ansonia, if that injury lingers, like an injury in the foot can all of a sudden spread to the leg because of the way the person is walking. A foot injury can turn into a leg injury, a leg injury can turn into a back injury, a back injury can turn into a shoulder injury. It sounds completely absurd but this is the way it works, and as long as they're able to prove through the workers compensation system that this all stems back to the original injury, the City of Ansonia is on the hook for the whole thing.

Alderman Blackwell stated, my main concern is continuing to employ these people, whether it is Public Works, Police Department, where other people are relying on them to do a job. If I'm at Public Works and I'm holding something that may fall on me with another individual who has a back problem, and his back gives out, and now I am injured because of him. Or the Police Department, if you go to arrest a suspect and this person has a history of back issues or shoulder issues that we're aware of and it happened on the job and all of a sudden, he is injured and the other officer involved has to worry about him and the suspect.

Corporation Counsel Marini replied, part of the difficulty is, even if we have a feeling about an individual's ability to perform, the workers compensation system relies on the opinions of doctors. A claimant may get a doctor's opinion that releases him back to full duty. We may get an independent medical exam that says he's not. The system is not unilateral; it's the workers comp system that makes the decision. That full and final stipulation is an agreement between the two sides so it's not something you can just impose on someone. The other side has to have an incentive to settle the claim. It really is a case-by-case basis and as attorneys we have to play it by the facts of the case.

Grant Writer Sheila O'Malley

I am requesting you add to new business – there is a fiber optic resolution. We are going to do a cost-benefit analysis on this, but this resolution will allow the Mayor to sign paperwork for this grant, which OPM is sponsoring. It will establish a fiber optic connection between City Hall and the Library. It doesn't obligate us to anything, it just keeps us in the running for the grant should we decide to keep it. The resolution has to be submitted by March 31st. Everything else has been submitted to CCM who will submit everything to OPM on behalf of several communities that are participating. Fiber optic connectivity will speed up the connection and allow us to transmit greater amounts of data in shorter periods of time.

We are seeking \$36,000 to set up fiber optic cable. There is a maintenance fee afterward and we're trying to figure out whether...

Richard Bshara interjected, the installation will be done by Fiber Tech. OPM has some grant money left over from the VCOG. They're going to be applying this across the State. They're trying to get all the municipalities into the communications age. The grant would pay for the \$36,000 installation. Going forward there would be approximately \$3,600 per year in maintenance for that line for about 20 years. The Legislature is talking about picking up that portion of the cost.

There will also be an increase in the cost of using the line compared to what we are currently using. It's not a significant number, but an increase. But we are paying approximately \$5,000 a month currently for telephone lines. Wire line telephones are going to be going away. We would like to put in VoIP here. We may generate savings from phone line costs down the road where we can divert those toward implementing the fiber line. The fiber line will go back to CEN – the Connecticut Education Network – where we already have the library and all the schools. The Police Department through their 911 is going back to DEEP. There is connectivity between CEN and there, and through the VCOG initiative, ARMS is connected. We could put a number of our buildings on fiber and have them, through switches, connect all back here to try and put the whole City on this fiber network, use the phone system as one phone system across the City. There are a lot of opportunities and at some point it would be nice to videocast these meetings right across the fiber as they're going on. A lot of opportunities – the technology where it's going to be. This is the first step and the State is willing to pay for at least part of it.

Alderman Radin stated, Mr. Fainer noted that we are spending a lot of money on salaries and things like that. I personally don't think we can afford to put the extra money out for it right now. We are talking about cutting our mill rate. We're talking about cuts at the Police Department and ARMS. It sounds like a small amount but it's a small amount everywhere that we're cutting. I personally feel that no matter how small it is at this time it's not really something we need to look into.

Chris Tymniak, Chief Administrative Officer

I'd like to touch on the PMA and workers compensation. I've been working with them and next week we are going to re-institute our safety committee meetings. We have a new training regimen which we'll put all of our departments through so that in the future when we have claims coming up we have documented training that they were instructed to do "x, y, z" and it wasn't fit into the plan so your accident could have been avoidable... I've seen the workers comp number compared to other towns and cities, and it's alarmingly high, almost double to what other towns would be. It is something this administration is focused on. We are also kicking around several ideas to enhance light duty work for workers comp people.

You all have a copy of my monthly personnel report. If there are any questions I'm happy to answer that.

I am asking the Salary Committee to convene next week to lower the salaries for the EDC director and the Grant Writer position we currently have.

Chief Kevin Hale, Ansonia Police Department

We bring people back on Light Duty as quickly as possible – one, it gets people back to work and two, we have a lot of things to get done. We've been discussing this with John Marini, Chris Tymniak and PMA and we will continue to go down that road to improve this.

Winter parking program ends on March 31st.

We assisted Public Works with street cleaning mostly on the west side for the past couple of weeks. We were there to close off streets, move some cars and tow some cars.

We have two officer recruits graduating this Friday from the Academy, hosted by Milford Police Department.

Last week we had an ungodly traffic jam on Wakelee Avenue for hours and hours. An accident that just made it over the Ansonia line. Traffic was a nightmare. We had all hands on and brought people in early, kept people over. It all funnels to Wakelee Avenue. We did the best we could. All in all people were pretty good about it.

Alderman Radin stated, they did do a good job, everything moved along pretty fast. There were a lot of tractor trailer trucks.

Alderman Stowe stated, the block watch was fantastic. Thank you.

Eileen Eheman – Board of Education

Dr. Merlone asked me to attend in her place tonight.

The Mayor called the Superintendent about a Post Prom event. Our high school has a PTSO that is planning the 9th Post Prom – it's a safe place for the kids to go after prom is over. I've been trying to get donations and raising money. She contacted our bus company today – All Star Transportation – and they will donate two buses to transport the students from the High School to the Sports Center in Shelton, and then back to the High School.

There is new legislation from the State requiring regions in the State that will have to have a uniform or common calendar – when you open school, when you hold your vacation breaks, and there will be two common professional development days during the year. One has always been Election Day and we'll always probably continue that. There will be a second one. The thinking is to let people share professional development presenters fees and get together. Next year it's optional as to whether or not we will follow. Our area is ACES out of Hamden, there are about 20 towns. You might see a lot of towns in our area all opening on the same day and having some of the same weeks of vacation. We will probably revise our calendar which unfortunately we adopted already. We just found out that there is this common calendar that's out. We will probably make some changes in April.

We have a lot of testing going on. March is the testing month for the CAPT and the Mastery Tests. Those tests are no longer going on any more; they are done. We are moving into a whole new era of testing. We actually began our testing with our students, and most of it is online testing. We have fiberoptics connecting all of our schools and within our schools we have a very nice wireless network; almost all of it was paid for by grants. Because of that we are able to do online testing which is the way everyone is moving to. In February we started with the NWEA benchmark test, and it covers math, language arts, science and writing for grades 1 to 11. That's about 2,000 students taking that test. We only have so many computers. We did get a \$311,000 technology grant earlier this year and ordered 900 Google Chromebooks; they showed up yesterday. It took eight weeks to get in. We have three IT people working around the clock to get these 900 Chromebooks ready for the next round of testing that begins next week. It's called the Smarter Balance or the SBAD test. Students in grades 3-8 and grade 11 are tested in English, Language Arts, Math, Writing, and there's a performance standard. They will all be taking the test online as well. The last test is the CAPT science test and is for grades 6, 8, and 10. We will be done by April 8th. The nice thing about the online testing is that you can get some immediate results. Our Administrators are all being trained on Monday. If you have any technical questions I will not be able to answer them but I can get some answers for you.

Committee ReportsFinance Committee – Alderman Lorie Vaccaro

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

Cost Cutting Committee – Alderman Joan Radin

We met this week. We established that Nancy Valentine is our Chair and John Izzo is our Vice-Chair. It's a very aggressive group. We will be meeting once or twice a week. The public will be able to attend. They are anxious to move. The 18th is a special meeting, the 27th is the next meeting. We meet at 6:30 p.m.

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

Salary Committee – Alderman David Blackwell

I'll be sending e-mails out to the Committee to set up a meeting for next week. We met and approved a temporary Bond Project Manager position. Also we approved the new job description for the Superintendent of Public Works and we also approved a new part-time IT position for City Hall. See communications 4, 5 and 8.

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

Fire Committee – Alderman Joseph Jeanette

We had 7 motor vehicle accident assists; 2 CO investigations; [inaudible] 13; 1 vehicle fire, 5 natural/propane gas leaks; 3 system false alarms; 1 mutual aid; 1 electrical hazard; 3 public service/good intent calls. Total calls were 36. I would like to thank the Police Department and the Fire Department for the job they did on Route 8 at the accident – they all worked together and did an awesome job.

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

ARMS Committee – Alderman David Blackwell

ARMS responded to 229 calls for service. Of those 166 were transported. Of the 166, 68 were transported with an advanced life support medic on board. Ansonia provided mutual aid to Derby 10 times and to Shelton 3 times. We had zero mutual aid requests on the first call; 1 on the second and 1 on the third call. 166 patients went to Griffin; 6 to Yale; 9 to Yale Pediatrics; 6 to Yale-St. Raphael's campus; 5 to Bridgeport; 2 to St. Vincent's; 1 to Waterbury; 1 to VA West Haven.

ARMS collected \$39,753.86. The number is down because Medicaid reimbursements were not included due to the renewal of the application there. They will be included in March or April.

The new ambulance, Bravo 10, there was an issue with the floor and suspension of the ambulance. The vehicle will be returning to North Carolina to get redone. They have to pull all the cabinets out and fix the floor. There is an issue with the exhaust – with the on spot chains that go around the tires. They have to reconfigure the exhaust and put in a new floor. The vehicle will be going out to the person we purchased it from on the 14th, and it will be out approximately one month.

Alderman Jeanette asked if there is any way the company can give us a loaner?

Alderman Blackwell replied no. We will make sure our other three ambulances are fully up to par by Friday before this goes out.

Alderman Henri stated, I'd like to thank ARMS for hosting the Block Watch last Mayor's Night Out. Next time we'll need a bigger facility – we were standing room only.

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

WPCA; Public Works; Economic Development – Alderman Charles Stowe

Alderman Stowe stated, the WPCA is on the communications; Public Works has a communication in here. Economic Development – we will be forging ahead in the direction the Mayor wants to go and I'm looking forward to it. Economic Development meetings are on the third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m.

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

Alderman Patrick Henri – Ansonia's 125th Anniversary

Last night we had a meeting headed up by Melissa Torres who is the chief event coordinator at Ansonia High School. We were there for about two hours. The principal players so far are the schools, the YMCA, the Boys & Girls Club, the Fire Department, it was a pretty productive planning meeting. We are looking for any kind of participation and help for the events. We are going to have a year-long celebration and get what events in that we can. There is no quota; whatever we can do we're going to do on zero budget practically. Thank you.

Alderman Matthew Edo – Ordinance Committee

Just to touch on what Mr. Izzo said, we are actively and aggressively pursuing blight. We are just making sure the legalities are in place to enact the ordinance that we need to take care of the situations and help beautify the town.

Alderman Jeanette stated, I would also like to thank ARMS for assisting at the accident on Route 8 as well. They did a good job.

Municipal Reports / Annual Reports

Alderman Radin MOVED to accept all municipal and annual reports, dispense with the reading and place them on file; SECONDED by Alderman Cassetti. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Tax Collector's Report and Request for Refunds

Alderman Radin stated, the Tax Collector is doing a beautiful job giving us the amount of tax and money that we're collecting; however nowhere does it say what is still owed and what years and what categories they're in. I think it's unfair to the people that are paying their taxes that other people aren't paying and they're probably not being pushed enough. I would like to know what is still owed, for what years, and what categories they're in.

Mrs. Blackwell stated, I can do that; but it is also public record in my office. People can come in at any time and it's there.

Alderman Radin stated, okay, when I'm in City Hall I'll stop in the office. Thank you.

Alderman Edo MOVED to accept the report of the Tax Collector and pay the refunds in the amount of \$5,437.54 if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Vaccaro. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Claims

To be discussed in Executive Session.

02-14-819 George F. Neubauer
03-14-820 James Matejek
03-14-821 Dominique Mills

Communications

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

Communication #1

From: Superintendent Brian Capozzi, Waste Water Treatment Plant
Re: Request for bid waiver for purchase of Vacuum Truck

Mr. Capozzi explained, the vac truck is actually two pieces. There's the cab and chassis, which is the truck, and then there's the back body, which does the sucking and routing of the lines. That part is not on the State bid list. That is why I'm looking for a waiver on that. There are a few other companies that make a similar product that just are not on par with the vac truck that we're acquiring. The dump body is better than a push body. The vac we are looking at uses a fan system which is much more forgiving than a PD (positive displacement) motor if something gets by and gets into the motor. This truck is already built and they can sell it. The new trucks require different emissions which cost about \$30,000 more.

Alderman Stowe MOVED to waive the bid and award the purchase of a Vacuum Truck for the combined use of the Public Works Department and the WPCA as outlined in Communication #1; and further,

MOVED to authorize Mayor David Cassetti to execute any necessary documents to effectuate said purchase; SECONDED by Alderman Henri.

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

Communication #2

From: Police Chief Kevin J. Hale
Re: Request for bid waiver for Computer Server Equipment – Police Department

Chief Hale stated, we have three servers, the newest one is six years old and the other two are 7 and 8 years old. Our whole system, CAD which is Dispatch and Records Management which is everything that we do going back a decade and a half, we rely on every minute of the day our cruisers are tied into this system. It's long past time we replace these servers. We would like to go with NexGen, our current software vendor. They do all of our work. We prefer to stay with one vendor.

Alderman Stowe MOVED to waive the bid and authorize the purchase and installation of Computer Server Equipment for the Ansonia Police Department from NexGen Solutions in the amount of \$39,872; SECONDED by Alderman Vaccaro. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Communication #3

From: James Gaskins, Ansonia Public Schools
Re: Bid Award – Boiler Repairs at Ansonia High School

President Tripp explained, this has already been approved by the Board of Apportionment and Taxation, and this is a procedural approval by the Board of Aldermen.

Mr. Evans stated, we're just asking that you approve it and the Mayor to sign the contract for the low bid amount of \$37,950. Mr. Nimons looked over the City's insurance policy and we filed a claim with the insurance company. I'm happy to report tonight that the insurance company is picking up the full price of the replacement of the boiler, less the deductible. In actuality it's really only going to cost the City of Ansonia \$10,000 which is our deductible.

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED, per the recommendation of the Board of Education, to award the contract for Boiler Repairs at Ansonia High School to the low bidder, West State Mechanical, in the amount of \$37,950; and further,

MOVED to authorize Mayor David Cassetti to execute any and all documents to effectuate same; SECONDED by Alderman Radin. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Communication #4

From: Mayor David S. Cassetti
Re: Job Description – Superintendent of Public Works

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED, per the Board of Public Works and the Aldermanic Salaries Committee, to approve the job description of the Superintendent of Public Works; SECONDED by Alderman Stowe.

Alderman Stowe asked Corporation Counsel Marini to explain the matter.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, the issue was raised due to Mike Schryver announcing his intention to retire in January. His retirement date was set to be February 1st. He filed his retirement papers with the State and completed all the necessary paperwork. At his request we looked for a temporary emergency hire to be able to fill the position and begin the shadowing process. That was Doug Novack. Unfortunately there was a complication. Mike realized that he was not able to get onto the City's insurance plan, which was his intention. It was a worry about a lack of insurance upon his retirement, he could not opt onto the plan. He did not know about the legality of an agreement with the City to allow him to have City insurance. In coming to an approach to solving this, we talked with Salary

Committee and with Public Works and it was decided Mike would be able to stay on, not as Superintendent but as the manager of the myriad bond projects. There was a real need for someone, separate from the Superintendent, with real knowledge about the City, knowledge about how those projects were to be handled, to do the foundation of work to prepare those projects, and get them moving. He would be in that position until the summer at which time the position of Temporary Bond Project Manager would sunset and Doug would continue to act in the capacity of Superintendent. The open enrollment period for the insurance is the summer. That explains the timing of it so Mike will be able to opt back on to the City insurance plan.

Alderman Adamowski asked if anybody else was interviewed for this job.

Alderman Stowe replied, it is going to be posted, then we'll go through the candidates and choose the proper person.

Alderman Fainer asked, when Mike leaves who will take it over then?

Alderman Stowe stated, I've talked to Mike about this and Corporation Counsel Marini and we all believe the bid process will go along. Mike will take whoever he's got to take to look at what's going on and there's going to be a scope of work. Before Mike leaves we're going to make sure we have a list of the scope of work. That will be detailed enough so that the next Superintendent is going to be able to oversee the projects, along with the Mayor. Our Mayor actually ran a construction company so he is fully qualified to administer and inspect with all the licenses and stuff that he has. I offer any volunteer help that they need from me. Mike was looking forward to it. I think it was fair, the right thing to do under the circumstances.

Alderman Fainer stated, it's fair to Mike. Down the road is it going to be fair to the City that these projects are all started and you'll have ... you have somebody running or overseeing a project and all of a sudden he's gone. We're going to be doing a lot of construction.

Alderman Stowe stated, I believe with the Board of Aldermen that you have, the Mayor with the education in these matters that he has, and our Grant Writer and our new Public Works Director and our Public Works Commission, we will have enough people overseeing all of this that we're not going to let anything be neglected during the projects.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, the alternative is for Doug Novack to handle all the bond projects himself plus all the duties of Superintendent. On clarification, the Charter does say Public Works approves the hire, but it doesn't say anything about going to bid. So the Mayor's decision to work with Public Works and send it to bid was really above and beyond the scope of the Charter. It is our intention have Mike and Doug work in coordination at the beginning of the projects where there is a lot of work to be done.

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

Communication #5

From: Mayor David S. Cassetti

Re: Job Description – Part-time Information Technology Manager

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED, per the recommendation of Salary Committee, to approve the job description of the part-time Information Technology Manager; SECONDED by Alderman Blackwell. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Communication #6

From: Corporation Counsel John Marini

Re: Approval of License Agreement – Super Softy

Alderman Radin MOVED, per the recommendation of Corporation Counsel, to approve the license agreement between Super Softy and the City of Ansonia for a period of two years commencing March 12, 2014; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Communication #7

From: Corporation Counsel John Marini

Re: Approval of License Agreement – Joseph Kewalis

Alderman Radin MOVED, per the recommendation of Corporation Counsel, to approve the license agreement between Joseph Kewalis and the City of Ansonia for a period of two years commencing March 12, 2014; SECONDED by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Communication #8

From: Chairman John Finnucan, Board of Public Works

Re: New Position – Temporary Bond Project Manager

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to refer Communication #8 to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation; SECONDED by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Communication #9

From: Superintendent of Public Works Douglas Novack

Re: City Policy – Mailboxes

President Tripp explained, this is a very thorough description of how mailboxes should be put on the side of the road, and what constitutes damage and the City's liability. The information will be posted on the City website.

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

Resignations

Alderman Jeanette MOVED to accept the resignation of Ronald J. Vaccaro from the Zoning Board of Appeals, and to send him a letter of thanks for his service to the City; SECONDED by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Appointments

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Alderman Henri MOVED to reappoint William Urban (R) of 264 North Street; term to expire 6-12-2015; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Alderman Edo MOVED to reappoint Randolph Carroll (R) of 40 Fourth Street; term to expire 6-12-2017; SECONDED by Alderman Henri. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to reappoint Frank Pergola (U) of 13 Moulthrop Street; term to expire 6-12-2016; SECONDED by Alderman Radin. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to appoint Carol Starkey (D) of 76 Cottage Avenue (Mary Connors replacement); term to expire 12-31-2016; SECONDED by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Alderman Henri MOVED to appoint Luanna Plocha (U) of 40 Fourth Street (Florence Camilleri replacement); term to expire 12-31-2017; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to reappoint Helen Ptak of 12 East Street; term to expire 12-31-2018; SECONDED by Alderman Cassetti. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Alderman Henri MOVED to appoint Tamara Chisefsky (R) of 6 Fairview Street (Kay Jeanette replacement); term to expire 12-31-2016; SECONDED by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Alderman Blackwell MOVED to reappoint Claudia Degnan (R) of 13 Glen Drive; term to expire 12-31-2017; SECONDED by Alderman Stowe. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Alderman Cassetti MOVED to appoint Dave DiVencenzo (U) of 15 Woodbridge Avenue (Nicholas Gentile replacement); term to expire 12-31-2018; SECONDED by Alderman Stowe. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to appoint Diana L. Maurice (D) of 202 Prospect Street (George Curtis replacement); term to expire 12-31-2018; SECONDED by Alderman Stowe. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Alderman Stowe MOVED to appoint Elizabeth Gaudet (R) of 202 Prospect Street (Joseph A. Jaumann replacement); term to expire 12-31-2018; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Alderman Stowe MOVED to appoint Robert Brown of 11 Elliot Road (Ronald Vaccaro replacement); term to expire 12-31-2017; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Resolutions

None presented [SEE RESOLUTION PAGE 22 – NEW BUSINESS]

Unfinished Business

Alderman Fainer stated, I'm in the Fire Department. I get a tax abatement every year. I was on unemployment this year. I received a letter from the State of Connecticut accusing me of fraud because I didn't report the tax abatement. Well I didn't get the tax abatement until January 20-something. It took me about 10-15 calls back and forth with the State for somebody to finally say to me, we think you're good. It's \$390-something and they're accusing me of fraud because the City of Ansonia sent a W-2 to the Department of Labor. So after many phone calls, and the other day I got a letter addressed to the Finance Department to tell them that does not constitute income. I hope our Finance Department handles that. The letter was addressed to them but cc'd me and another one of the firemen. We weren't wrong, we didn't know we were getting it and we never got a W-2 on this. To go along with that, we're giving the volunteers, the ambulance people and the Fire Department an abatement for their service but now we're getting W-2's on it, so now we have to pay tax on it. So it's not really getting the abatement amount

that they're giving you. If the Fire Committee or somebody could address that – how we can handle that somewhat different. It was kind of tough when I got a letter from the State saying that I defrauded them. Then getting voice mailed and sent all over the place. I hope the Finance Department handles the letter that the State sent them. Don't send a thing to the Department of Labor.

Mr. Tymniak stated, I got the letter; I got the paperwork. I believe there were nine individuals. The W-2's went out as part of the American Healthcare Act. That was a catch-22 that was unintended. Every city which has a volunteer Fire Department across the country is required to submit it. IRS sent us a letter asking us to do that. Across the State they're dealing with this. I received the letter from the Department of Labor. I immediately called Victor Fuda who heads up the district that Ansonia falls into. I faxed him the letter, and the nine individuals' paperwork. I went back and forth with our Finance Department. I was told by the Department of Labor that the situation was being looked into and would be resolved. How we're going to handle this ongoing, we're going to have to figure out. Because you're right about the abatement and W-2 now; they're not going to match.

Mr. Bshara stated, the IRS made the determination that the abatements that are supplied by the towns to the volunteers is actually a pay for work. That is how they are classifying it. The Town of Westbrook got fined actually for supplying 1099s instead of W-2s. We said okay, we need to issue W-2s. When a W-2 goes out, it automatically we have to file as part of the 941s, which is the federal government side, we also have to do the UC2s which our payroll people do for the State side. Those names came across because we processed this through our payroll system to generate the W-2. It's kind of crazy. I saw the letter you're talking about. They may tell you it's not includable. But if the IRS says it's includable, they want to make it excludable for the State side, but we can't control what gets reported to the Department of Labor through our quarterly tax filing. There needs to be some more discussion on this.

New Business

Regional Performance Incentive Program (Fiber Optic) Resolution

Resolution of Endorsement

The Board of Aldermen of the City of Ansonia met on March 11, 2014 and adopted a resolution by the vote of 12 to 1 which endorsed the Regional Performance Incentive Program proposal referenced in Connecticut General Statutes Section 4-124s as amended by Section 251 and 253 of Public Act 13-247. Such proposal is attached to and made a part of this record.

[The attachment is available for view in the Office of the City Town Clerk, 253 Main Street, Ansonia, CT)

Grant Writer Sheila O'Malley stated, to Alderman Radin's point, it may very well be that we can't afford or don't want to put the money toward this project. OPM right now is trying to determine whether or not they're going to pay for maintenance going forward once the fiber optics are installed. That depends on the number of applicants. The number of applicants will dictate how that money is spent. This resolution doesn't bind the City; it just allows us to complete the application process going forward. You can choose not to if this Board decides it's not something you want to pursue. We can turn the grant funds down.

Alderman Stowe stated, fiber optic cable versus regular phone lines would be like laying pipe with a string instead of using a laser in this day and age.

Alderman Stowe MOVED to adopt the Resolution and proceed with this grant; SECONDED by Alderman Henri. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12 Yes, 1 No (Radin).

Veterans Committee; Pool of Plowing Vendors

Alderman Henri stated, I have some issued to come before the Ansonia Veterans Committee and I plan to call a meeting this month.

I spoke with Chief Hale discussion regarding having a similar pool as the City towing pool except that it be a pool of vendors to be called upon to plow sidewalks. We can discuss this with Public Works and figure out how we can do that, and perhaps post these selected vendors on the website so people know who to call to get their sidewalks shoveled.

Official Aldermanic Photograph

Mayor Cassetti asked that next month all of the Aldermen dress appropriately with a shirt and tie for an official group photograph.

Armory Improvements

Alderman Edo stated, I spent Saturday at the Armory going over Little League evaluations. Beautiful, bright sunny day, no rain, nothing out there. Snow is 90% off the Armory roof. We had water coming in in every facet you could possibly imagine in that Armory. That roof needs to be addressed before any money is allocated to do that floor. I know it's been approved already, but the roof is a bigger issue. I spoke to the Mayor about it on Saturday afternoon and I think that has to be addressed to Mr. Coppola and also to whoever is in charge of the Armory itself. There is water leaking from 10-12 feet up the roof, not just down at the edges. It is leaking all over the place in there.

President Tripp stated, that was one of the bond issues and was voted on. The new roof for the Armory, Eagle Hose, and this City Hall. Is that project upcoming?

Mayor Cassetti replied, yes, they are upcoming.

President Tripp asked, can we give priority to that Armory roof? Can we move that work forward?

Mayor Cassetti stated yes, I'll talk to them tomorrow.

Alderman Edo stated, the roof, as well as the safety issues as far as the locks. To be able to lock a door to go to the bathroom is important especially in the girls' bathroom. It has been brought to people's attention and there have been numerous complaints about it, especially after this weekend.

Executive Session

At approximately 8:50 p.m., Alderman Radin MOVED to enter Executive Session to discuss the following claims:

02-14-819 **George F. Neubauer**
03-14-820 **James Matejek**
03-14-821 **Dominique Mills**

and invited Mayor Cassetti and Corporation Counsel Marini to remain in the Aldermanic Chambers; SECONDED by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

[Alderman Adamowski left the meeting at this point. 8:51 p.m. – 12 present 2 absent]

Return to Regular Session

At approximately 9:05 p.m., Alderman Jeanette MOVED to return to Regular Session; SECONDED by Alderman Radin. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

President Tripp noted that there were no votes taken in Executive Session.

Alderman Fainer MOVED to authorize Corporation Counsel Marini to proceed with the actions discussed on the three claims; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Bruder, Secretary
Ansonia Board of Aldermen