



**Ansonia Board of Aldermen
Regular Meeting Minutes**

April 14, 2015

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– present
- Anthony DeLucia, D4 – present
- Richard Kaslaitis, III R4 – 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

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 JOAN RADIN
 CITY CLERK
 ANSONIA, CONNECTICUT

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

Consideration of Previous Minutes

Alderman Radin MOVED to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 10, 2015; SECONDED by Alderman Kaslaitis. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Public Session

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

Randolph Carroll, 40 Fourth Street

Mr. Carroll explained that he is the Chairman of a fiduciary that has raised \$5,000 to repair a badly damaged part of the mosaic floor in the Ansonia Public Library, at no cost to the City. This fiduciary also raised money and restored the clock tower at the Library and the fountain. He explained that the Library is listed with National Register, and that the mosaic floor is in really bad shape. His contractor, who has insurance and an existing bond in place, is ready to begin work on April 15th.

The contractor will take out the broken concrete and replace the matching mosaic pieces and re-grout the area. There is a major crack that will be repaired with colored grout to match the surrounding tiles. He noted that Public Works does not need to consult on this because it's a restoration project and not a maintenance project. Because it is a City building the fiduciary needs approval from this Board to go forward with the contract.

President Tripp thanked Mr. Carroll. The Board will take this up under New Business later in the meeting.

Veronica Kudej, 256 Wakelee Avenue

Mrs. Kudej congratulated the City on the Wakelee Avenue project and what's going to be done on the West Side. Thank you.

Michael Egan, 103 Benz Street

Mr. Egan acknowledged that the budget the Board will vote on tonight gives the taxpayer a modest decrease in taxes. He thanked everyone for this reduction and expressed his hope that at some time the Board can get the education piece under control. He suggested that the Ordinance Committee consider that a four percent increase should go to the public for a referendum. It has been reported that some of the budget increases are due to contractual obligations. He asked that the Board consider setting the budget prior to settling the contracts so that departments would have to live within the budget, instead of working the other way around.

Mr. Egan noted that he observed 3 groups of students walking along the streets to the Nature Center. Two of the three groups were walking correctly facing the traffic, and all of their escorts were wearing safety vests. Overall this is progress.

Mr. Egan asked about the City's regulation for in-law apartments in an area zoned for single-family homes. He asked that when a permit is issued, and that family moves along, when somebody else comes along, can that later be considered a large extended blended family home in an area that is zoned for single-family homes? He noted that the house he references has two furnaces, two hot water heaters, and it is being advertised for extended family. Mr. Egan feels it doesn't seem realistic in a single family zone.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Blackwell explained that he knows the house Mr. Egan is talking about, and that the permits were issued. He also explained that everybody has to be aware that an in-law apartment has to be reapplied for every three years. It has to be a person of the age of 65 and older and must be blood related. Mr. Blackwell continued, the apartment has had all of the interior locks removed and the person who bought the home is on the zoning certificate.

Mr. Egan then asked which bank the City deals with for the WPCA payments because evidently they lost some of the checks that were deposited there. Corporation Counsel Marini explained that the checks have been located and posted to the accounts.

Mr. Egan requested clarification on what residents are supposed to be doing with their trash – should it all be put together or does the recycling need to be separated. He has read conflicting ideas on this.

Christina Knott, 9 Alcott Street

Ms. Knott explained that she spoke at the March Board of Aldermen meeting, having had issues with her daughter's bus stop at Grove and Meadow. She thanked the Police Department for being out there not only during the bus stop times but throughout the whole day. She noted that she sees an improvement in the safety of the children getting off the bus.

Pat Boemmels, 4 Renahan Drive

Ms. Boemmels, along with Fran Brancato, are representing the National Day of Prayer. They thanked the City administration for their support in the past years. This year's observance will be held from 5-7 p.m. Thursday, May 7 at Veterans' Memorial Park next door to City Hall. All are invited to come. Ms. Boemmels expressed her wish to see more participation from the various City departments, veterans, business people and residents of Ansonia. She explained the group will be praying for government and education, family, church, businesses and the media. Ms. Boemmels left some brochures. There will be pastors from local churches leading the group, and there will be songs.

Jared Heon, 9 Kieley Lane

Mr. Heon shared his concern as Director of ARMS regarding the budget. He explained that ARMS operates on a lean budget. His concern is in the area Capital Improvement – while he is in favor of a referendum and putting together a large-scale Capital Improvement Plan, he has had one since he took over in 2010 and it's been loosely adhered to. He stated, when it's loosely adhered to it puts us in a predicament because we're relying on things to be replaced and it sets us back. This year ARMS planned for a replacement. They planned for a replacement last year. They have yet to be done. Mr. Heon is hoping they are included in the plan and has offered to serve on a committee to put the plan together.

He stated, I want everyone to keep in mind that the citizens need to understand the importance of supporting this plan when it comes time for the referendum. This is not a 'wish list' this is a 'needs list'. We are being pushed back further. We are providing a service and will continue to provide it to the best of our ability. Everyone in the public needs to know that this plan will have been looked at strategically, and people have put a lot of thought and planning into it. If it does not get approved it could put some of the departments in a predicament. It would not make financial sense to not follow that plan once it's put out. I know everyone is very happy with the tax decrease; I am too. I understand there are priorities. Please keep that in mind when you go over your budget.

Ann Lynch, 15 Birchwood Drive, Vice-Chair Recreation Commission

Ms. Lynch discussed the status and condition of the Armory, stating, the past administration secured grant money to replace the floor and that it would be replaced last summer. That summer has passed and nothing has been done to the floor at the Armory. In the past

couple of years a lot of money has been put into the Armory – replacing the roof, the sprinklers, a new boiler. What is the hold up of the floor? The Armory is used almost daily by a number of organizations. Our sports leagues practice there. It is open for people to walk during the winter. This town needs a community center; a place where community and non-profit organizations can gather. If we had a decent and safe community center the Recreation Department could offer more programs to the community. Along with the floor at the Armory we could designate a space to hold meetings. Our parent football meeting was held in a room with the ceiling tiles missing and paint chips hanging off the walls. If this facility is not repaired soon, do you have an alternate plan to offer the groups that would be affected? What is the status of the grant that was secured, and what does this administration plan to do with the grant money?

Ms. Sheila O'Malley replied to Ms. Lynch, stating, I've spoken a few times about the Armory to this Board and to the residents. The building was built in 1919 and has significant issues. What needs to be addressed is the exterior first. If you don't shore up the exterior of the building, the improvements inside will be for naught. We are looking at the gym floor. We have had environmental testing. Engineers have been in several times to discuss options. To replace that floor you will incur environmental costs. We're not sure what the dollar amount is, but we want a firm idea of what that will cost. The Mayor recognizes the gym floor is widely used by many groups. We are trying to contain the costs because we don't think the taxpayers can afford an exorbitant environmental cost to clean up and replace the floor. Right now we are trying to pinpoint a dollar amount. We're not doing anything with the money for the floor. I will talk later on about a couple of grants – one we've secured and another we're looking to secure for assessment and remediation before we replace the floor. We want to be very careful and judicious about how we approach this building. It's nice to say we want a community center but what is the cost of that, what are the environmental conditions, and none of that was explored. We are going to do that first.

Ms. Lynch asked, when do you think we'll have an answer about the environmental?

Ms. O'Malley replied, I'm hoping that within the next couple of months we'll have the options laid out and will give the Board choices on how they wish to proceed.

Ms. Lynch asked, does that grant money ever expire?

Ms. O'Malley replied, we're still in good shape with that.

Ms. Lynch asked, is there an expiration date? I am nervous that we're going to forget all of that – that money is going to expire. Something needs to be done. The floor is a liability.

Ms. O'Malley stated, we won't let the money go to waste. You can't replace the floor until you look at the environmental issues.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, environmental issues could be a much larger liability than anything. You don't want to get halfway into a project and realize you have [inaudible] not only a money debt but a hazard. This is an important concern. Everyone recognizes the need for a community center. There could be funds available to get us where we need to be, once we figure out what the scope is.

Tara Kolakowski, 14 Farrell Drive

We have a reserve fund that is overfunded. We have those excess dollars. Now we need an ambulance. We need a floor and we have some grants. There was a nice \$3.5 million chunk of money the State gave us for Wakelee Avenue; kudos to getting that. Now that \$350,000 is available that the City had to come up with is available because of the excess in the reserve fund. So we have this money that was put away for years. If we're going to spend the reserve fund, let's do the projects. Let's buy the ambulance. Let's fix the Armory. It seems like real simple solutions. Maybe we're overthinking some things. The money is there. Let's not move it around. Let's spend it.

Ms. O'Malley stated, we're not saying we can't fund the Armory, we're saying that we don't know what the environmental issues are as it pertains to the Armory.

Ms. Kolakowski stated, the funds are there; if you wanted to explore the environmental issues – if they come up at a half-million dollars, we've got it. The City's got it. If it comes up at \$1 million – we probably have that too.

Ms. O'Malley stated, but you don't know what that number is.

Ms. Kolakowski stated, we could find out, and maybe it's between a half-million and a million. It's still there. It's a good thing that the reserves are there; that the excess amount is available. Hey – it's a win-win.

Nunzio Parente, 29 Chester Street

I have a comment about the budget. At the end of the process, this is the last chance that you really want to hear anything about the budget. There is something that concerns me – the Board of Education budget. While I'm not saying they don't deserve or need the money, as of April 1st they're 8 percent behind on spending on their budget. So we're about to approve a 4 percent increase when they're 8 percent behind on the spending. That's roughly 12 percent. Why can't we take the 4 percent we're going to approve, and I'm not saying don't give it to them, but set it aside, let them finish this year, and then see what we need to give them. I don't know that we need to give them the whole amount. The 8 percent that they haven't spent is roughly \$2.4 million, and you're going to give them another million.

Corporation Counsel Marini explained, it is actually illegal to hold up funds from the Board of Education contingent on any occurrence. It was litigated – the Town of Trumbull went through this and other communities as well. It's an interesting and innovative idea, but that is exactly what the State frowns upon and does not allow.

Mr. Parente asked, if you didn't give them any increase, and the budget stayed flat, and you just gave \$1 million to the Board of A&T, would the state come down and say "we know what you're going to do here, you're holding that money in reserve and we know you're going to give it to the Board of Education..."

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, you would not be able to say that you're holding any money in reserve. Any department could come before the Board of A&T mid-year and request funds.

Mr. Parente asked, they haven't used \$2.4 million yet and we're giving them another \$1 million – that's \$3.4 million. When the fiscal year ends, if they have a \$2 million surplus, what happens to that surplus?

Mr. Nimons replied, it would revert back to the City. The Board of Education actually has a projected deficit of \$50,000 for June 30th. A lot of it is encumbered, and if you want to stop into my office, I will be happy to go over the whole thing with you.

James Gaskins, Business Administrator for Ansonia Public Schools stated, I would be happy to meet with Mr. Parente and Mr. Nimons to go over this. I do question the numbers and statistics he is stating. What he is seeing on this report for expenditures and encumbrances as of the date, is accurate. But it's not the whole picture for our budget. For example, many certified staff – a huge part of our budget - are on a balloon payment for salary. So they are only receiving a small portion of their salary throughout the year, and then they receive a large balloon payment at the end of the year for the people that don't work over the summer. That figure is \$1.7 to \$2 million. The March bills probably aren't even in. We're looking at four months left in the year of bills. We do a comprehensive projection for the Board of Education every single month. Right now we are looking at a projected \$50,000 deficit. We are doing all we can to not go over budget. There are other factors that should be considered.

Joseph Cassetti, 72 Root Avenue

I'm at a loss for words for what I feel for the ARMS crew coming here hat in hand. As far as I can see, they are the only safety service in the City that actually provides an income, and a large income at that. If they need anything, I remember when we had it at the City dump. I remember when we didn't have the bandages and we didn't have all of the accouterments that we needed. The last time I was involved with ARMS, we purchased a very good ambulance. If it's 10 years old and they need another one, I believe we should look at the budget and give them what they need.

President Tripp asked three times if any other person wished to speak. Being none, he declared the Public Session closed.

Public Official Session

Mayor David Cassetti

Tonight you have on your agenda the City's budget for the upcoming fiscal year. I am happy to report to the residents that with your support this new budget includes a one mill decrease in next year's tax bill. I would like to thank all of you who worked tirelessly to craft this budget, especially Bill Nimons and the Finance Department, the Board of Apportionment and Taxation, and the Finance Committee, and all of the City Departments. The residents appreciate your effort and so do I. In fact, if I were to ask each and every one of our Ansonia residents to list out their priorities, lowering taxes would be at the top of their

list. Since I was elected, I have made that a mandate. The budget before this Board tonight represents a historic moment - back-to-back tax decreases for our residents. I know you will find that this is a fiscally sound, financially prudent budget that responsibly addresses our pension obligations, creates efficiencies in departments, and effectively addresses one-time purchases and lowers taxes for the citizens of our great City. I ask for your support of this budget and your support for the needs of the residents of Ansonia.

My Office of Grants Administration has been very busy. This morning we announced a \$3.5 million grant from the Connecticut Department of Transportation for the full depth reconstruction of Wakelee Avenue from Franklin Street to Division Street. When I first came to office, I recognized that the infrastructure in this City was sorely neglected; in particular, the Wakelee Avenue corridor. I have always considered Wakelee Avenue to be one of the most beautiful streets and is the gateway into both Ansonia and Derby. This grant and this project will let people know that we care about our roads and we are proud of the way our great City looks. This is part of my overall plan to improve the look and feel of the City.

Very soon I will be making another announcement of a large grant that will help to improve the quality of life for our residents.

Spring has finally come to Ansonia. The grass is greener and the fields should all be open now. I've been out to some games already and I look forward to a brand-new winning season for Ansonia spring sports teams.

Last weekend the fishing season opened for the entire State and I am happy to report that I helped the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection place 150 trout in Colony Pond. We put one rainbow trout in the pond that must have weighed about 10 pounds. Good luck to that fisherman.

We have begun preparation for this year's Memorial Day Parade. We are seeking new participants to march in the parade. I encourage all residents to visit our Facebook page or the City website to find out how they can get involved in this year's parade.

At this time I would like to welcome Marcia Benno to the team. Marcia started on April 6th as the new Tax Assessor. Marcia is an Ansonia resident who has extensive knowledge in regard to tax assessments and has worked in the Tax Assessor's Office in both Milford and Stratford. We are thrilled to have her experience and expertise on the staff.

I would like to give a special thanks to my Chief of Staff Chris Tymniak. Chris has done a wonderful job in his role helping on all fronts, specifically the budget, contracts, community events, and worked many long hours helping to move the City forward. Chris will be stepping down as my Chief of Staff on May 1st, and will take on a part-time role in the Mayor's Office handling constituent services and events coordinating until the end of the summer. Thank you, Chris, for your dedicated service to Ansonia.

The City of Ansonia will be recognized at the end of this month by BH Care as Employer of the Year for our innovative way of helping improve our parks and beefing up our Public Works crew by hiring temporary employees. We have helped to employ individuals who were looking for a job, and we helped beautify our parks and open spaces with added

workers. We plan on doing the same this year hiring temporary workers. Thank you very much.

Corporation Counsel John Marini

We are beginning negotiations with the City Hall and Public Works unions. We had an initial meeting and it's planned to go forward through the spring and summer.

In terms of blight enforcement, there's been a lot of activity trying to protect the residents' and businesses' interests from dangerous and hazardous conditions. In particular, there are significant properties, which we believe pose detrimental impact to the City - SHW which we know as the former industrial location adjacent to Copper and Brass and Farrel across from Eagle Hose. That is currently under analysis. Peck School is currently under investigation by our Blight Officer and will be subject to blight fines. And finally, the building owned by Washington Management at 501 East Main Street, that's the former process lab formerly owned by Farrel. That of course had two liens entered against it pursuant not only to the Blight laws but also to a voluntary agreement with the owner and his own representations as to the repairs he could make to the blight.

As a member of the administration and the team that worked on the budget this year, I'd like to say that the theme of the budget really is trying to do as much as possible with the limited resources that we have. That is why this budget was worked on very hard by the Finance Office, the Aldermen, the Board of A&T, the Mayor. It includes not only a list of expenditures but it's a capital improvement plan as well. It's a forward looking plan to find different ways of doing different things, which is why you have a surplus that is being used for tax relief and major capital improvements. You have the majority of the surplus being used to invest in pensions, to buy vehicles such as the fire truck and street sweeper, to invest into improvements that are non-operational and that lower taxes in the long run. In addition, you have a capital improvement plan to take care of things exactly like the ambulances and vehicle improvements, other capital improvements. [inaudible] the budget doesn't have to support 100 percent of the infrastructure and the capital investments going on. Yes, tax relief is in this budget because of course it's been a priority of this administration to make sure taxpayers have a place in the budget and that they are considered every year going forward.

Chief of Staff Christopher Tymniak

Thank you very much. I want to thank the Mayor for his kind words and the Board of Aldermen for allowing me to serve you guys and the residents of the City of Ansonia for the last 17 months. I've truly enjoyed the jobs we've done, the projects we've all worked on together. I'm looking forward to moving on to the next chapter. I will be around all summer long finishing up projects we started such as the Farmer's Market, the Summerfest, the Parade, and handling constituent services throughout the summer on a part-time basis. I want to thank the Board of Aldermen; I've enjoyed working with each one of you. I know that we tried to get most of the project you wanted across the line. Some of the ideas were great. Again I truly enjoyed doing this and I want to thank the Mayor, Bill Nimons, John Marini and Sheila O'Malley for supporting us along the way.

You have a copy of my report in there.

Director of Economic Development Sheila O'Malley

Demolition at Ansonia Copper and Brass - they're working on the environment issues with the Rod Mill building, which is slated next to be demolished. Hopefully this summer you'll see some activity on the demolition. Our own buildings have been put out to bid and are due back on May 20. We are hoping to get a mix of residential and retail reuse for those buildings and get them back on the tax rolls.

We put in a grant specifically for the Armory and also for other buildings for assessment and remediation funding for Brownfields. The Mayor mentioned that there will be another grant announcement shortly. We will talk later about Wakelee Avenue because it's on your agenda.

I want to thank Lieutenant Cota for his efforts on the Justice Assistance Grant which we were successful in getting \$30,000 for body cameras. It's going to be a big help to the Police Department. Thank you again.

Lieutenant Andrew Cota

As the Mayor said, Spring is here. We have a couple of projects that will be going on throughout the city. As you're seeing in the newspapers, Division Street is going to be getting some major overhaul where the railroad tracks are for a little over a week; Wakelee Avenue project, Westfield Avenue project. We are aware that there are going to be major or potentially major traffic issues throughout town. In light of that we're going to continue with our motor vehicle enforcement through out the town. If there are areas anybody has concerns with feel free to call us.

One of the big ones that we're still pressing is cellphones – people driving and talking on cellphones. We're also getting ready, our radar trailer is getting it's tune up and getting checked out after the winter. We'll put it out on different streets as required. We also have the metro counts – those are the tubes that you see across the streets so we can assess areas. If we are getting reports of speeding we can put them down and get a better idea of what's going on.

With the evenings getting longer, we're patrolling the parks.

We are currently staffed on all shifts. We've got multiple training classes that we've been sending dispatchers and officers to. In the next couple of weeks our annual firearms qualifications will start at the Rod and Gun Club.

President Tripp asked about the coverage on Division Street for policing. Lieutenant Cota explained that they are reviewing the coverage with the State and they're looking at additional coverage at the tops of the hills at Division and Atwater, and at Division at Main.

The railroad tracks will be completely barricaded and there won't be any way to get a car across. They are ripping up that entire center section and replacing it with concrete. There will be signs directing people long before that area.

Comptroller Bill Nimons

I hope everyone supports the budget. It's a very fiscally responsible budget and we're heading in the right direction.

Public Works Director Doug Novak

In regard to Mr. Egan's question about recycling, I've been in contact with Winters Bros. There was a post on Click and Fix – someone complained that they were integrating the trash and recycling. Winters Bros. put out a retort to that and they found that people are putting trash in the recycling. In other words, you can't put a pizza box in the recycling; you can't put canned goods that still have food material into the recycling. If you look at some of the Click and Fix posts, the ones that says "Winters Bros. Employee" is the individual that is our contact at Winters Bros. He is answering that question.

Projects we are still working on – the ARMS project is moving along and we should be wrapping that in the next couple of weeks. We'll be starting the Library windows and boiler project soon. We'll be replacing the roof here on City Hall. Sometime in June/July we'll be milling and paving 11 roads in the City. The Route 8 ramp project has started; the contractor is in town. The Mayor and I have to meet with them tomorrow regarding some issues.

One quick mention about the Armory floor - If anyone here has ever been involved in remediation of contaminated soil, you open up a Pandora's box. Your costs could run from \$1 to \$10 million. At the Armory, we have soil is contaminated with lead. The issue is, the contractors cannot make the lead airborne. If you make the lead airborne, the whole building becomes contaminated and you have to shut down the whole building. There may be a way to encapsulate the lead. But once we cut a hole in the floor and disturb the sandy base under the basketball court, it could pose a problem. The Raymark project in Stratford went from \$40 million to \$130 million by the time it was done. I just don't think that if we go forward and find issues with contaminated soil, I don't want to be standing here in front of the taxpayers of Ansonia saying it's going to cost you a projected \$5 million but the contractor is still not going to give you a bottom line number. The only time you get a bottom line number on a contaminated soil project is when it's done. We are looking into how we can resolve these issues. We're trying some best management practices that we're coming up with to give to the consulting engineers to see if there is a practical way of saving the whole project. Hopefully it will be, but the encapsulation process is not a minor project, it's major. We have some spots on the floor now where the floor is weak. We think the floor joists that run across the floor that are in the sand may have rotted over the years. That's another issue. There are many intricacies we have to look at.

Fire Chief Scott Tremblay

In March the Fire Department answered 50 calls for help including four motor vehicle accidents, one with extrication on St. Joseph's Church property, and three times up on the

highway with two accidents being relatively serious. With that, we are almost 60 calls ahead of where we were last year. We are very busy.

Tonight you should have a recommendation from the Board of A&T for additional funds for the Fire Department. I went to their meeting last week and asked for funding for truck repairs and training. Both line items are empty and we have some things that we'd like to fund. I ask your support on that.

I'd like to thank Sheila O'Malley for working with the Fire Department. We are exploring some avenues for grant money to try to get some items that we desperately need. On the budget, I would like to thank all the committees that worked with us from the Mayor's Office, the Finance Office, the Board of A&T, the Finance Committee, thank you for having an open mind and listening to the reasons that we need the funds that you are about to allocate tonight.

Acting Library Director Mary Ann Capone

As a reminder to everyone, it's Amnesty Week at the Library so if you have any books or DVDs hiding, now is the time to bring them back. Thank you.

Dr. Carol Merlone – Superintendent of Schools

In response to Mr. Parente, I'd like to invite him to the Board of Education office and I'd be more than happy to go over the budget – James and I – with him. That is an open invitation to anyone in the community. We have an open door policy and we're willing to sit with anyone.

I'd like to extend my appreciation to Doug and Public Works for helping to clean our parking lots from sand and debris this week.

I would like to congratulate Sheila O'Malley and everyone involved in getting the Wakelee Avenue grant. It's very fortunate that we received that today. We were contacted by the State Department today because we applied for the Technology Assistance Grant from the State, and the State notified us that they made an error with the RFP so now we have to apply again.

I would like to inform everyone that Assistant Principal at Prendergast School, Sherrod McNeil, has been named the Connecticut Assistant Principal of the Year. This is our second administrator that has been named a Connecticut Administrator of the Year. We will host a testimonial from 5-7 p.m. April 29th at the Ansonia High School Atrium. Invitations went out however if anyone is interested in coming they can contact Pam Perotti at the Central Office. Tickets are \$30 per person.

I am very proud of our students at Ansonia High School. A class of students took the Advanced Placement Chemistry test. They competed in the American U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad competition at Quinnipiac. This was our first time competing in an AP course. We will be getting their scores shortly.

We have many students that received accolades this month. Four of our students competed against students from 15 area high schools. They were in the Titan Business Challenge sponsored by Junior Achievement. This is a business simulation held annually at Fairfield University. I attended with them in March. Our students ranked #3. We did surpass Seymour, Shelton and Derby. We are not only good in athletics but academics as well.

We had the 7th Annual Literacy Fair at Ansonia Middle School at the end of March during one of those snowy Saturday mornings, but 120 people from the community attended.

This month closed out with a spirited rally at Prendergast School in celebration of Autism Awareness. They raised \$860 by selling shirts and selling tape, with which they taped Mr. Sherrod McNeil to the wall.

Ansonia Middle School made the Channel 8 News with their new program hosted by Teacher Jessica Badowski. She received the Golden Apple Award from our Central Office from our Board of Education last Wednesday evening, because she sponsored a new program. She formed a 501c3, raised money from relatives and friends, and she is taking first generation students who never went to college and is giving them a college experience. She is taking the 8th Graders from Ansonia Middle School and she hired buses, and is taking them on college campuses to inspire them to want to go to college. Plus she put together a step-by-step approach of what the children need to do at each grade level and she's following them through the high school. She has two teacher volunteers from Ansonia Middle School helping her with this.

Great things are happening in the school system too. Thank you.

Tax Assessor Marcia Benno

I would just like to say that I'm very excited to be serving the City of Ansonia and my door is always open for any questions or concerns. Thank you.

Tax Collector Tammy Blackwell

You have my report; I have nothing to say.

Committee Reports

Finance 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 12-0.

Public Works Committee – Alderman Charles Stowe

I'd like to thank Doug for coming tonight.

ARMS Committee – Alderman Joan Radin

In March there were 249 responses; that's at least 8 a day. There were mutual aid calls. Griffin Hospital was on diversion so they had to go to different hospitals.

Total billing revenue for the month of March was \$61,702.14. They had, in February and March, a total of almost \$10,000 in volunteer hours. ARMS brings in the amount of their budget. I was very disappointed that they did not put the ambulance in the budget this year because they are sadly in need of a new ambulance. In the fiscal year to date, the total number of volunteer hours contributed were 2,850 for a total of \$45,914.5 that the City did not have to pay.

WPCA Committee – Alderman Charles Stowe

I would prefer the Chairman Nunzio Parente to give the report and tell anybody anything that's going on.

Mr. Parente stated, we recently approved a \$270 fee to pay back the loan for building the plant. That's steady every year. Will soon be setting the sewer usage fee. We anticipate a minor decrease in that bill again. We anticipate closing the fiscal year 2014-15 with a slight overage which will be transferred to our capital improvement account.

Ansonia Housing Authority - Alderman Joan Radin

They're having another luncheon next Friday. Emmett O'Brien is doing the food again. It was wonderful, I enjoyed it a lot, I was invited again. The seniors in that group don't get out very much. It's a wonderful thing for them.

Board of Apportionment & Taxation Recommendations and Comptroller Approvals

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to accept the Board of Apportionment and Taxation Recommendations and the Comptroller Approvals; SECONDED by Alderman Kaslaitis. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Tax Collector Report and Request for Refunds

Alderman Edo MOVED to accept the report of the Tax Collector and pay the refunds in the amount of \$4,183.71 if found to be correct; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Accidents and Claims

03-15-845 Kelly Miller v. City of Ansonia
03-15-846 Richard Politano v. City of Ansonia

03-15-847 Kostas Kachoulas v. City of Ansonia
03-15-848 Roger W. Bednar v. City of Ansonia
03-15-849 Rita St. Jacques v. City of Ansonia
03-15-850 Timothy P. Aspinwall v. City of Ansonia
03-15-851 Christopher Charles v. City of Ansonia
03-15-852 Daniel Rainville v. City of Ansonia

Alderman Edo MOVED to refer the claims to Corporation Counsel Marini; SECONDED by Alderman Henri. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Communications

Alderman Radin MOVED to accept all communications, dispense with the reading unless an Alderman wants one read, and take them up in their order on the agenda; SECONDED by Alderman Kaslaitis. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Communication #1

**From: Chairman Joseph Jeanette, Ansonia Fire Commission
Re: Appointment of Daniel Kershaw, Sr.**

Alderman Henri MOVED, per the recommendation of the Fire Commission, to approve the appointment of Daniel Kershaw, Sr. to the position of Fire Police; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Communication #2

**From: Chief of Staff Chris Tymniak
Re: United Illuminating**

Mr. Tymniak explained, we've done lighting upgrade projects at the High School, the Middle School, the Library, ARMS. All the bills are coming in lower. So UI is giving us the opportunity to do it again at Public Works, so the Public Works facility and outside lights, including one light in the salt shed, will be replaced. UI is estimating the annual savings to be \$9,000 a month. You can see in the chart that's a payback of about \$4,500 a year which gets rolled into the UI bill. The City will be saving about \$400 according to UI according to their projections a month to do it. This is the best we've seen come back from UI for an upgrade, which means that the energy-hog lights are just sucking up energy faster than we really realized. This is a no-brainer.

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to authorize the agreement between United Illuminating and Ansonia Public Works for a lighting upgrade to more energy-efficient fixtures at the Public Works Complex; SECONDED by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 11 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention (Jeanette).

Communication #3

From: Planning & Zoning Commission Chairman Joseph Jaumann
Re: 64 and 78 Pulaski Highway

No action.

Communication #4

From: Planning & Zoning Commission Chairman Joseph Jaumann
Re: 135 Hill Street Property

No action.

Communication #5

From: Chief of Staff Chris Tymniak
Re: Transition to Part-Time Status

No action.

Communication #6

From: Economic Development Director Sheila O'Malley
Re: Bid Waiver – Reconstruction of Wakelee Avenue

Ms. O'Malley stated, the application that was submitted, while I did a good portion of it, a lot of it was engineering that is required by the Department of Transportation. The engineering firm VHB did a good portion of the preliminary engineering design. I am requesting a bid waiver for continuity – they can continue on and do the rest of the design work and also for a cost savings. Our required match is 10 percent of that grant.

Alderman Edo MOVED to waive the bid and authorize VHB Inc. to complete the Wakelee Avenue engineering project; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Communication #7

From: Alderman Charles Stowe – 1st Ward
Re: ECS Funding Disparity

Alderman Stowe stated, this is about Education Cost Sharing and I'm requesting that the Aldermen join me in making an effort to get the community leaders, Mayors and First Selectmen of towns that are in similar shape that we are to get together and start talking about trying to figure a way to force the State to pay this money, which they are responsible to give us this formula, and they're not. We would have \$5.7 million towards our Board of Education right now in Ansonia if this was funded. Our community needs this. We need this to drop the mill rate, to help bring in business, and we need this to help our citizens with the taxes that they have to pay, and also the school system.

Alderman Stowe MOVED that the Board of Aldermen make an effort to meet with community leaders of under-funded ECS cities and towns to discuss the ECS funding formula and getting the State to fund it; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Communication #8

From: Aldermanic Finance Committee Chairman Lorie Vaccaro

Re: 2015-2016 City Budget

Alderman Vaccaro stated, the budget proposes a 1 mill tax decrease, provides for the best interest of the City's infrastructure and capital and strengthens Ansonia's commitment to essential services such as Fire, Rescue, Medical and Public Works. For the first time the budget also includes a Capital Improvement Plan and forecast of income and expenditures.

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED that the Board of Aldermen of the City of Ansonia approves the use of \$2,000,000 from the 2014-2015 fund balance as a supplement to revenue for the 2015-2016 City budget; SECONDED by Alderman Kaslaitis.

Alderman Adamowski stated, we had talked about this at length, myself, Mr. Nimons, Corporation Counsel Marini. I understand that the reserve fund was overfunded by, you said, 8-10 percent. My concern is, first of all, I would have to vote for a tax decrease and have to vote for this budget because further down the road, if I ever ran for higher office, I know it would be all over the paper that Alderman Adamowski didn't vote for a tax decrease. So with that being said, how long can we withstand year after year of taking from our reserve to supplement the budget that we are spending of \$1 million every year we're going up. The spending is going up, we're taking from a reserve, and no business to supplement the amount of money you're spending is being added. At some point everything is going to come crashing down. If you look at the amount of money over the past two years that the mills would have gone up, it would probably have been somewhere around 3.

Mr. Nimons stated, 2.5.

Alderman Adamowski stated, that is my point. Where is our long-term plan to where we're going to stop using money that's been saved, and funding our budget, and start working on what we need to in bringing business into the City of Ansonia to offset the spending that we're doing. We are spending like it's going out of style. We buy everything. Eventually it runs out my friends.

Alderman Vaccaro stated, the auditors on our latest City audit and going back approximately six years indicated the fund balance to be approximately 16 percent when they recommend a fund balance of 8 or 9 percent. The difference between 8 or 9 percent and 16 percent is excess revenue that was collected by the City. I don't want to call it over-taxation, but that's what the bottom line is. The auditors recommended 8 or 9 percent. We have the excess.

Alderman Adamowski stated, I understand Mr. Vaccaro's point but that was not my question. My question was, what is the long-term goal to actually solve the problem instead of borrowing from the savings account. That is my question.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, the long-term plan is not to continue to repeat a strategy to rely on the General Fund. No one has ever said that it is. The reality is, where the budget falls right now, and the history of where the budget falls for the last 10 years, we are

in the position where we can leverage the general fund to get tax relief. We know in this economy, right here, right now, April 2015, taxpayers need the relief. It is not a long term plan going into the future. That is why the Board and Mayor understand the big picture. Forty acres of Copper and Brass, the plans to level that. That answers a question of what we're doing to bring business in. Clear a canvas for development. Farrel. We talked about moving Farrel from downtown to Fountain Lake so they can consolidate their operations, bring in more tax revenue, and bring in additional tenants at Fountain Lake. That is the plan – getting more business – getting more tax revenue. We have a Blight program in place. From the beginning of the administration, set up and run to clean up the City to be more attractive for residents and for business owners, to bring them into the downtown, and that's what's being pushed into service to do on 501 East Main Street, the Peck School, SHW. All the things you see going on around you, that is the plan for the future. Right now, this is what we can do to give tax relief because we prioritized tax relief. We understand that the taxpayers need it desperately. But for the long term, yes, the economy has to be grown. To be honest, \$3.5 million going to Wakelee Avenue, all the other developments I've talked about, every effort to move forward, and the very literal Capital Plan that you have in front of you today. There is no doubt that planning is being made for the future.

Alderman Adamowski stated, thank you very much. I would have appreciated having that response from the Mayor.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, I can tell you that the Mayor is the driving force behind everything that's been going on from the Mayor's Office. But of course it is up to you, it is up to the Aldermen to support this and make it work. It is really a team effort and Alderman Adamowski, we want you on the team; we want your vote for this.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

NAME	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Adamowski	X		
Stowe	X		
Vaccaro	1		
<i>Hunt</i>			
Jeanette	X		
DeLucia	X		
Kaslaitis	2		
Cassetti	X		
Radin	X		
Edo	X		
Henri	X		
Blackwell	X		
<i>Evans</i>			
Tripp	X		
TOTALS:	12	0	0

The MOTION PASSED by a vote of 12 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions.

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED that the Board of Aldermen of the City of Ansonia approves the final budget of expenses for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016 in the amount of \$62,395,098; SECONDED by Alderman Edo.

Alderman Henri stated, I think it's a great budget; I'm all for it. A lot of hard work has gone into this. It's good for the City of Ansonia. I've got a problem with one thing on here, and I know we can't take it off. If I was the tie vote, I wouldn't vote no against this. But we are allocating funds to VCOG, Executive Director Rick Dunne, who openly in the media in response to an article I wrote told me to shut up and called me a whore. We've never met. We've never talked. He only read my column and this is his statement to me. So I don't know if because he doesn't know me if he [inaudible] as a veteran if he's making that statement about veterans, Republicans, the City of Ansonia, or myself. Either way, it's not acceptable on any level. This is a professional person who represents a lot of cities including Ansonia. He takes our tax dollars. I don't see condoning what he did or rewarding what he said by giving him our tax dollars. If we had a budget of one wooden nickel for him, I would not vote for him to get it. He comes across to me as nothing more than a cyber-bully. Thank you.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

NAME	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Adamowski	X		
Stowe	X		
Vaccaro	1		
<i>Hunt</i>			
Jeanette	X		
DeLucia	X		
Kaslaitis	X		
Cassetti	X		
Radin	X		
Edo	2		
Henri			X
Blackwell	X		
<i>Evans</i>			
Tripp	X		
TOTALS:	11		1

The MOTION PASSED by a vote of 11 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention (Henri).

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED that the Board of Aldermen of the City of Ansonia approves the final budget of revenue for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016 in the amount of \$62,395,098; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

NAME	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Adamowski	X		
Stowe	X		
Vaccaro	1		
<i>Hunt</i>			
Jeanette	2		
DeLucia	X		
Kaslaitis	X		
Cassetti	X		
Radin	X		
Edo	X		
Henri	X		
Blackwell	X		
<i>Evans</i>			
Tripp	X		
TOTALS:	12	0	0

The MOTION PASSED by a vote of 12 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions.

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED that the Board of Aldermen of the City of Ansonia hereby approves a tax rate of 37.52 mills on the dollar. To be and the same is hereby assessed on the ratable estate of the Town and City of Ansonia, last completed being the Grand List of 2014 One half (1/2) or 18.76 mills due July 1, 2015 and one half (1/2) or 18.76 mills due January 1, 2016. SECONDED by Alderman Kaslaitis.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

NAME	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Adamowski	X		
Stowe	X		
Vaccaro	1		
<i>Hunt</i>			
Jeanette	X		
DeLucia	X		
Kaslaitis	2		
Cassetti	X		
Radin	X		
Edo	X		
Henri	X		
Blackwell	X		
<i>Evans</i>			
Tripp	X		
TOTALS:	12		

The MOTION PASSED by a vote of 12 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions.

President Tripp stated, I would like to thank everybody for their work on the budget, from the Mayor's office to the Board of A&T, the Board of Aldermen and all of the Departments involved.

Resignations

Alderman Jeanette MOVED to accept the resignation of Christine Collicelli from the Cultural Commission and send her a letter of thanks for her service to the City; SECONDED by Alderman Vaccaro. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Appointments

EQUALITY COMMISSION

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to appoint Raul Alvarado (U) of 53 Elm Street; term to expire 12-31-2017; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

ASSESSOR

Alderman Henri MOVED to approve the appointment of Marsha Benno (R) of 180 Hill Street as Tax Assessor for the City of Ansonia; SECONDED by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Alderman Blackwell asked, since when do we appoint and vote on Union employees switching jobs? This is the first time we've done it since I've been here.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, you're just taking a vote to confirm the Mayor's recommendation.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to appoint Randolph Carroll of 40 Fourth Street, Unit 10; term to expire 6-12-2016; SECONDED by Alderman Cassetti. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Resolutions

Resolution #1

Re: Audit Clerk's Salary

RESOLVED that this salary be adopted effective February 1, 2015 or as specified:

Finance Department Audit Clerk
Current salary: \$26.97/hourly
New salary: \$39.45/hourly
Cost: \$12.48

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to AMEND the Resolution to rename the job title "Audit, Risk and Compliance Specialist" at the rate of \$39.45 effective 2/1/2015; and ADOPT it as AMENDED; SECONDED by Alderman Adamowski.

Mr. Nimons explained, we're working on the Capital Improvement Plan, Investment Plan. It will require a lot of hands-on effort for all the departments for the next five years. We also are being put in a risk policy that will have compliance with all departments within the City of Ansonia to make sure we are controlling the risk issues. He is going to take on that role out of the Finance Office. He will report directly to the Mayor and indirectly to me. At this point, the entire Finance Department is all structured the way I want it, that we need here in the City of Ansonia as we move forward into this new era.

President Tripp asked, is it safe to say this man's workload has almost doubled?

Mr. Nimons replied, I would say it has probably more than doubled. He has been instrumental with the budget, along with Rich Bshara, and I failed to thank them both, immensely. Without their help we would have never gotten this budget done.

Alderman Stowe stated, I want to support this; I'm not a person to support raises and everyone knows that. Mr. Jaskilka is going to enable to run the City with Mr. Nimons and save money, and I know that, so I support this 100 percent.

Alderman Blackwell stated, I understand that the individual's workload has more than doubled. That leads me to believe, how is he going to get it done within the same hours? You're increasing his salary but you're not increasing his hours, and his work doubled. How is he going to get it done? Why don't we increase his hours and keep his salary the same? How are you going to do all that more work in the same amount of hours?

Mr. Nimons replied, he is very efficient, David.

Alderman Blackwell stated, my vote is no, it doesn't make sense. That is not a good answer. You double someone's workload, you're not going to give him any more hours, just give him more money. I can't comprehend that.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 10 Yes, 2 No (Blackwell, Edo).

Resolution #2

Re: Connecticut State Library – Historic Document Preservation Grant

RESOLVED, that David S. Cassetti, Mayor of the City of Ansonia, is empowered to execute and deliver, in the name and on behalf of this municipality, a contract with the Connecticut State Library for an Historic Documents Preservation Grant, FY 2016.

Alderman Cassetti MOVED TO ADOPT Resolution #2; SECONDED by Alderman Henri. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

New Business

Randolph Carroll – Re: Library Floor

Alderman Stowe MOVED to authorize Mr. Carroll to proceed with the repair of the mosaic work on the Library floor; SECONDED by Alderman Henri.

In response to questions, Mr. Carroll explained that the contractor has liability insurance for \$1 million; we are using the old bond that hasn't been cashed yet from his last project; and Mr. Carroll has the paperwork indicating same.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Old Business

Mr. Vaccaro stated, we've had inquiries regarding City Hall employees who may be interested in retiring. I believe this budget season presents us with a good opportunity to have informal discussions regarding early retirement issues and potential options that may be explored. They also believe it is important for those considering early retirement to be fully aware of all options available.

Alderman Vaccaro **MOVED** to authorize Corporation Counsel Marini to begin discussions with City Hall Employees that may be interested in early retirement and explore appropriate options with those personnel; **SECONDED** by Alderman Kaslaitis. A voice vote was taken and the **MOTION PASSED 12-0.**

Executive Session

At approximately 8:40 p.m., Alderman Cassetti MOVED to enter Executive Session to discuss the following items:

- 1. Hooker v. Ansonia**
- 2. Cruciani v. Ansonia**
- 3. Ansonia v. Washington Management**

and invited Corporation Counsel Marini, Mayor Cassetti, Mr. Tymniak, and Ms. O'Malley to remain in the Aldermanic Chambers; SECONDED by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Return to Regular Session

At approximately 8:53 p.m., Alderman Edo MOVED to return to Regular Session; SECONDED by Alderman Jeanette. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12-0.

Items from Executive Session

No action.

Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Patricia M. Bruder, Secretary
Ansonia Board of Aldermen**