



THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE NEW YORK

COMMON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 5, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

Common Council Chambers

Welcome to the regularly scheduled Meeting of the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council the date is December 5, 2022, and the time is 6:42 pm.

I. ROLL CALL: 8 present, 0 absent

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

Public Hearing – November 21, 2022

Common Council Meeting – November 21, 2022

Motion to accept the minutes: Councilmember Long

2nd: Councilmember Thompson

III. READING OF ITEMS by the City Chamberlain of any items not listed on the printed agenda.

ADD:

ACTION AGENDA

XI: MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:

- 1. R-22-91, Resolution Setting a Public Hearing Introducing a Local Law Amending Section 14.35 of The Administrative Code of the City of Poughkeepsie Entitles, “Taxes – Partial Exemption Granted; Conditions**

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Nick Kalogris – 14 Maryland Ave.
- Darrett Roberts – 140 Franklin St
- Laurie Sandow – S. Grand Ave. – submitted written comments*
- Cooper Miller – 134 Franklin St
- William Smith – 42 Columbia St.
- Nanette Koch – 127 S. Hamilton St
- Sylvia Buccelli – 19 BarclshaSt
- Kane Bowers - 147 Barclay St
- June Nemon – 147 Union St
- Freddie Thompson – 3 Hook Rd
- Larry Trepel – 15 S. Bridge St
- Daniell Atonna 116 College Ave
- Melissa Hoffman – 21 Lexington Ave
- Warren Jones – N. Clinton St

***SUBMITTED WRITTEN COMMENTS:**

Laurie Sandow comments, City of Poughkeepsie Common Council meeting, December 5, 2022, Page 1 of 2

The sausage-making in this City never ceases to amaze me. I should be used to it by now, but I am not. As it's succeeding in doing with other concerned City residents, it should have driven me away by now, but it has not.

On tonight's agenda:

—A Resolution “Setting a Public Hearing on the Recent Increase in Crime”

Umm, has this Council just woken up to crime? Or just woken up to their need for another round of grandstanding? A year-and-a-half ago, on August 25, 2021, Sarah Salem finally scheduled a long-delayed Council meeting on gun violence, homelessness and crime. A bunch of Council talking heads sat on the Changepoint stage; more talking heads spoke as presenters; there were impassioned pleas from community members; while Lorraine Johnson and current councilmembers like

Nedra Thompson, Megan Deichler, and Nathan Shook were absent or unseen. And the outcome of that special meeting? Or the June 2022 invite-only, closed-door summit of local elected officials, community members and church leaders? Nada, zip, zero—providing tonight’s opportunity to schedule another round of smoke, mirrors and public handwringing.

Also tonight: The following item, magically added to tonight’s agenda at 7:30pm Sunday night—that is, a presentation from the organization Charlia Frank, Inc.: a last-minute agenda alteration which, once again, the Chamberlain did not bother to redline. I hope tonight’s presentation will enlighten us as to how Councilmember Nedra Thompson is the Service of Process name for a \$10,000 County grant to this organization, which had no legal existence until one month before the County’s Round Two deadline. Also, about the satellite organizations that share members with Charlia Frank. Later tonight, will Councilmember Thompson tell us more about presenter Desiree King from St. Marks A.M.E. Zion, recipient of 7th Ward ARPA funds? Will other Councilmembers ever fully, publicly, disclose their own distribution of ARPA funds? Will this Council ever do a deep dive into Frankie Flowers’ Facebook claim that he “runs as a 501(c)3”, when New York’s Department of State shows no record for such a corporation?

Laurie Sandow comments, City of Poughkeepsie Common Council meeting, December 5, 2022, Page 2 of 2

Diving deeper into tonight’s agenda, we have the Council’s resolution rejecting the Redistricting Commission’s recommendations WITHOUT setting a date for the public hearing. In the same way that this Council—led by Sarah Salem, Sarah

Brannen and Evan Menist—stalled the Waterfront Advisory Committee (WAC) and the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) for the last 6 years, so has this Council been led by Sarah Salem and Evan Menist to obstruct City Charter and Census-mandated redistricting. Why hasn't the Commission's recommended map and demographic comparison chart also been posted to the City's website, enabling people to see what the Council's rejecting, and to compare and contrast? Why have all councilmembers willfully violated their oaths of office, their legal obligations and the City Charter, withholding necessary information and then using the very information they withheld for grandstanding and blindsiding—the very opposite of the Redistricting Commission's transparent approach to and exchange of information with the Council and its members.

Both the City and the Council are guilty of non-responsiveness to FOILs that will shed light on their delayed responses and collusion in undermining redistricting. Corporation Counsel Rebecca Valk received correspondence from Josh Simons of the Benjamin Center—an organization that did not respond to the RFP for consultants—which she never forwarded to the Redistricting Commission. And Evan Menist is in possession of the same Simons' correspondence that he also never forwarded. Charter-required councilmember comments, if any were made, were also never forwarded. In caucus meetings behind the scenes, Menist has been scheming with his own maps, presented to Councilmembers who serve their constituents as little as possible, while prioritizing self-interest to keep their own seats and paychecks, and preserve close-to-existing boundaries, as opposed to properly moving this City forward informed by census data supporting a Hispanic community of interest.

The Common Council has shed a bright shining light on the reason why the Redistricting Commission was created with bipartisan membership, rather than an exclusive one-party membership intent on producing a map and an end result in its own self-serving interest.

V. CHAIRWOMAN'S COMMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. A PRESENTATION Charlia Frank, Inc. regarding a youth film project

Chairwoman Cherry: My comments will be brief because we do have a presentation on the agenda and I want to address some public comment around the presentation.

So there were members of Charlia Frank that spoke at citizen comments on November 7th and I, in my capacity as acting chair, invited them to come to the council meeting to present.

When I reached out to them for the November 21st meeting, we decided it'd be better to come December 5th. So when I was doing Agenda Review last week, they mistakenly got off because initially we were shooting for the 21st. So I'll take responsibility for that. There's no conspiracy. It was every intention for them to present today and it was left off the agenda by mistake. People do make mistakes. We're human, so we're looking forward to their presentation tonight.

But, I wanted to just say, I want to congratulate Poughkeepsie Rising for the Ella's Jukebox performance this weekend. Although I was not able to be there, many of my colleagues were there. I just have to say, you know, just from the pictures and the little clips that I've seen and I know some of my colleagues were speaking [of it] in Old and New Business, like, bravo, you know, my hat's off to you.

I would also like to thank the City of Poughkeepsie and Andres and Chris Silva and Councilmember Long, who was the ice queen, I guess that was your costume, for participating in the Festival of Lights this past Friday.

I wanted to also speak to the vacant chairperson, Ward Six seat. We have received four applicants for that position, all of my colleagues have. I have forwarded their applications to my colleagues and we will be scheduling interviews next week. It is this Council's intention – and I want to underline, intention – to appoint someone at the next council meeting to begin the term in January. Like I say, *intention*. It takes a majority vote to select the candidate and

that's what we're going to strive to do. But, again, you know, we're not perfect and we'll do the best we can, but I want to put that on the record now before I invite... the mayor is not here tonight. I do want, after I speak, to allow our City Administrator two minutes – and I mean two minutes – to give comments as he will be our new mayor in the next month. I want to start that practice of being inclusive. So, let's...Charlia Frank if you want to come up and get ready, members of the Charlia Frank organization. And I just want to say that this whole council was blown away when you all spoke at citizen's comments about a month ago.

While they're setting up, Administrator Nelson if you want to take your two minutes...

City Administrator Nelson: I'll be brief and thanks so much again Chairwoman Brown. So, first of all, let me let me tell all of you members of the public, how humble and honored I am and will be throughout the year, serving as mayor of the great City of Poughkeepsie. And, you know, I couldn't believe that this would be happening, you know, not that long ago I started as the Finance Commissioner here in 2016 and I, I think it was September Mayor Rolison had only been in office for, you know, about eight or nine months. And we hit it off from the very beginning because the mayor had the political courage to do what needed to be done that year, which, you know, his first budget, unfortunately, had to raise taxes. And we did the best we could to in those early years to right the ship.

And we've come a long way since then. I think if you had asked me just a year or two ago if I'd ever have the opportunity to serve as mayor, I would have laughed. But I'm honored to work with all of you. I want to extend the hand of collaboration and I appreciate the kind words of support that I've received from all of you. And I want to recognize that publicly.

I probably will do Mayor's Comments a little bit differently than Mayor Rolison did. Rather than talk about some of the events and so forth that I think council members adequately cover, I'd like to just let the public know where your mayor stands on the issues, particularly the issues that are on the agenda for the night that you're asking me to comment.

And so I'm going to start that right now tonight by saying that I agree and support every item on this evening's agenda, and I'm really pleased to see that. I'd also like to extend an invitation to *For the Many* to reach out to my office when I'm sworn in. We anticipate that will be January 3rd. I would love to spend an hour or even two understanding..I will tell you and be honest and transparent that I, I start from the place of skepticism.

So, you know, be aware of that. But, please reach out to my office in advance of the holidays and we'll scheduled time. We could do it virtually, if you want, or we could do it in person.

Thank you, Chairwoman.

Chairwoman Brown: You're welcome. While they're doing that [Charlia Frank presenters trying to connect to internet for presentation], we can go into New and Unfinished Business

and give them the opportunity. So I'll start today with Councilmember Flowers, if you don't mind.

~~VI. MAYOR'S COMMENTS~~

VII. NEW & UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

~~VIII. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND BOARDS:~~

CONSENT AGENDA:

IX. MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:

A motion to accept the Consent Agenda was made by Chairwoman Cherry and seconded by Councilmember Menist

- 1. R-22-88, Resolution Setting a Public Hearing for the purpose of receiving comments on the Rise in Criminal Activity in the City of Poughkeepsie**

**RESOLUTION
(R-22-88)**

INTRODUCED BY CHAIRWOMAN BROWN, COUNCILMEMBERS DEICHLER, FLOWERS, JOHNSON, LONG, MENIST, PATTERSON-THOMPSON, SHOOK

WHEREAS, the City of Poughkeepsie is experiencing a recent increase in criminal activity and this is a matter of great concern to the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council wishes to hear from members of the public on the topic so that the City, in assistance with the community, can consider how to address these issues.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie shall hold a public hearing to receive comments from the public concerning the recent increase in criminal activity on **Monday, December 19, 2022 at 5:30 pm** in the Common Council Chambers, Third Floor, City Hall, 62 Civic Center Plaza, Poughkeepsie, New York and the Chamberlain is hereby directed to publish proper notice of the above hearing.

SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER: _____.

R-22-88 – VOICE VOTE						
☒ Accepted ☐ Defeated ☐ Tabled			Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Absent
	Councilmember Long	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Thompson	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Shook	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Deichler	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Flowers	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Menist	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Johnson	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Chairwoman Cherry	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐

2. R-22-89, Resolution Rejecting the Redistricting Commissions November 15, 2022 Map

**RESOLUTION
(R-22-89)**

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER MENIST: _____

WHEREAS, the Redistricting Commission submitted its proposed plan of redistricting to the Common Council on October 5, 2022; and The Redistricting Commission presented its proposed plan to the Common Council on October 17, 2022.

WHEREAS, the Redistricting Commission presented its proposed plan to the Common Council during the Common Council’s meeting of October 17, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council raised concerns with the proposed plans for Redistricting, particularly the need to incorporate Prisoner Adjusted Population data and compliance with Municipal Home Rule Law Section (13)(a)(i); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to City Charter Section 2.10(b), the Common Council voted on November 7, 2022 to return the plan to the Redistricting Commission; and

WHEREAS, on November 15, 2022, the Redistricting Commission submitted a second map dated November 15, 2022 for the Council’s consideration and the second map was discussed at the Council’s meeting of November 21, 2022; and

WHEREAS, after further study and review, the Council will be rejecting the Redistricting Commission's November 15, 2022 map with the intent of adopting "Map 1B – Last Revised November 28, 2022" by local law.

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, that Common Council hereby rejects the Redistricting Commission's November 15, 2022 map.

SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER: _____

R-22-89 – VOICE VOTE						
☒ Accepted ☐ Defeated ☐ Tabled			Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Absent
	Councilmember Long	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Thompson	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Shook	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Deichler	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Flowers	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Menist	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Johnson	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Chairwoman Cherry	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐

3. R-22-90, Resolution Introducing Local Law Adopting the City of Poughkeepsie Redistricting Plan Pursuant to Section 2.10 of the City Charter

**RESOLUTION
(R-22-90)**

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER MENIST:

BE IT RESOLVED that an introductory Local Law entitled, "**LOCAL LAW ADOPTING THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE REDISTRICTING PLAN PURSUANT TO SECTION 2.10 OF THE CITY CHARTER**", be and hereby is introduced before the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie in the County of Dutchess and State of New York; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of the aforesaid proposed local law are laid upon the desk of each member of the Council; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council shall hold a public hearing on said proposed local law to receive comment from the public on Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at 6:00pm

in the Common Council Chambers, Third Floor, City Hall, 62 Civic Center Plaza, Poughkeepsie, New York;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk publish or cause to be published a public notice in the official newspaper of the City of Poughkeepsie of said public hearing at least five (5) days prior thereto.

SECONDED BY _____

R-22-90– VOICE VOTE						
☒ Accepted ☐ Defeated ☐ Tabled			Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Absent
	Councilmember Long	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Thompson	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Shook	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Deichler	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Flowers	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Menist	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Johnson	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Chairwoman Cherry	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐

X. ORDINANCES AND LOCAL LAWS:

ACTION AGENDA:

XI. MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS: [Added by ADDENDUM]

RESOLUTION

(R-22-91)

RESOLUTION INTRODUCING LOCAL LAW AMENDING SECTION 14.35 OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE CODE OF THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE ENTITLED “TAXES – PARTIAL EXEMPTION GRANTED; CONDITIONS”

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER _____

BE IT RESOLVED that an introductory Local Law entitled, “LOCAL LAW AMENDING SECTION 14.35 OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE CODE OF THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE ENTITLED ‘TAXES – PARTIAL EXEMPTION GRANTED; CONDITIONS’” be and hereby is introduced before the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie in the County of Dutchess and State of New York; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of the aforesaid proposed local law are laid upon the desk of each member of the Council; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council shall hold a public hearing on said proposed local law to receive comment from the public on Monday, _____ at _____ pm in the Common Council Chambers, Third Floor, City Hall, 62 Civic Center Plaza, Poughkeepsie, New York;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk publish or cause to be published a public notice in the official newspaper of the City of Poughkeepsie of said public hearing at least five (5) days prior thereto.

SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER _____ .

No vote was taken on this Resolution. Further discussion warranted, moved to next Council Meeting

XII. ORDINANCES AND LOCAL LAWS:

- 1. O-22-XX (FIRST READ)**– Ordinance Amending §13-175 of the City of Poughkeepsie Code of Ordinances Entitled “Stop Signs; Locations Designated”
- 2. LL-22-XX**, Local Law Amending Chapter 14.35 of the Administrative Code of the City of Poughkeepsie Entitled Taxes – Partial Exemption Granted; Conditions – Senior Tax Exemption - *Public Hearing Must*

XIII. PRESENTATIONS OF PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

- 1. A COMMUNICATION FROM DESIREE KING, CASA & COMPEER PROGRAM MANAGER AT MENTAL HEALTH OF AMERICA**, regarding Pershing Park.
- 2. A COMMUNICATION FROM THE HISTORIC DISTRICT & LANDMARK PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**, regarding a proposed newly designated historic landmark in the City of Poughkeepsie located at 299 Main St. – *postponed to next council meeting*

A motion was made to defer the below communication/petition to Corporation Counsel by Chairwoman Brown and was seconded by Councilmember Menist.

- 3. FROM RICHARD AND KAREN BURKE**, a notice of personal injury sustained on August 24, 2022.

XIV. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

XV. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Councilmember Menist and seconded by Councilmember Deichler to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 PM.

Dated: December 9, 2022

I hereby certify that this true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Common Council Meeting held on Monday, December 5, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna M. DeLuca
Deputy City Chamberlain

