



The City of Poughkeepsie New York

Common Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 4, 2025

6:30 PM

Common Council Chambers

**Welcome to the regularly scheduled Meeting of the City of Poughkeepsie
Common Council the date is March 4, 2025, and the time is 6:44pm**

I. ROLL CALL

8 Present, 1 Absent (Council Member At-Large Da'Ron Wilson)

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

A motion to Approve was made by 3rd Ward Council Member Brown and seconded by 1st Ward Council Member Henry.

CCM Public Hearing Minutes of February 18, 2025 & CCM Minutes of February 18, 2025 - VOICE VOTE	
Yes/Aye:	1st Ward Council Member Henry, 2nd Ward Councilmember Menist, 3rd Ward Council Member Brown, 5th Ward Council Member James, 6th Ward Council Member Grant, 7th Ward Council Member Patterson Thompson, 4th Ward Council Member Shook, 8th Ward Councilmember McClinton
No/Nay:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Council Member At-Large Wilson
Result:	Passed

1. Common Council Public Hearing of February 18, 2025 - Vassar Warner Nomination
2. Common Council Meeting of February 18, 2025

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

IV. PRESENTATIONS OF PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

A motion to Defer to Corporation Counsel was made by 2nd Ward Councilmember Menist and seconded by 8th Ward Councilmember McClinton.

Motion to Defer Petition to Corporation Counsel - Voice Vote	
Yes/Aye:	1st Ward Council Member Henry, 2nd Ward Councilmember Menist, 3rd Ward Council Member Brown, 5th Ward Council Member James, 6th Ward Council Member Grant, 7th Ward Council Member Patterson Thompson, 4th Ward Council Member Shook, 8th Ward Councilmember McClinton
No/Nay:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Council Member At-Large Wilson
Result:	Passed

1. **FROM CHARLES CARTALEMI**, a notice of claim for property damage sustained on February 9, 2025

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Three (3) minutes per person up to 45 minutes of public comment on any agenda and non-agenda item.

Warren Jones
Laurie Sandow *
Daniel Atonna

***Submitted written comments**

Laurie Sandow public comments, Common Council Meeting, March 4, 2025

Tonight's Informational Meeting takes place less than two weeks away from Sunshine Week—an annual initiative established in 2005 to promote open government and access to public information. Open government and access to public information being concepts that seem foreign to most members of the Common Council, and sadly anathema to this City's Mayor Flowers, Corporation Counsel Valk, City Administrator Donat and Common Council Chair Wilson. As Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis observed—at a time when we still had a Supreme Court free of the influence of malignant tyrants—
“Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants.”

As I stated at the last Informational Meeting on September 3, 2024, and repeat again tonight, the word “special” appears nowhere in the Charter's paragraph about Informational Meetings. Yet the Council has willfully chosen to interpret the text of the distinct City Charter “Section §2.05 Informational Meetings” as if that section falls under the umbrella of §Section 2.04, “special” Common Council meetings.

<https://ecode360.com/attachment/PO1408/PO1408-CHA.pdf>

—City of Poughkeepsie Charter Section 2.04 Regular and Special Meetings; Minutes; Quorum; Voting; Open Meeting Rule; Vacancy in Office of Chairperson

“(a) The common council shall conduct its regular meetings at least twice each calendar month at a time and place to be determined by its rules. The council chair or another person serving as chairperson, the mayor, or any other three councilmembers, may call a special meeting of the common council by written notice served personally upon all its members, or left at their places of residence within the city, at least twenty-four hours prior to the proposed date and time of each such meeting, but service of said notice may be waived by the unanimous consent of all councilmembers. No action shall be taken at any special meeting upon any matter not specified in such written notice. The council chair, or in the event of his or her absence the vice-chairperson, shall set the agenda for, and serve as chairperson at, all meetings of the common council including the organizational meeting pursuant to Section 2.03 of this charter. The city chamberlain, or his or her deputy, shall serve as recording secretary at all meetings of the common council and shall record, transcribe and maintain all minutes of its proceedings, which minutes shall be and remain available for public inspection during all regular business hours of the city chamberlain.

“(b) A majority of the entire membership of the common council shall constitute a quorum at all its meetings.

“(c) Each councilmember shall be entitled to cast one vote on any matter to come before it at any regular or special meeting. The affirmative vote of a majority of the entire membership shall be required to enact any proposed legislation.

“(d) All meetings of the common council and its committees shall be open to the public except those that are closed pursuant to the provisions of the public officers law of the state of New York. Prior to submitting any proposed legislation to a vote of the common council at any regular or special meeting, the person serving as chairperson shall suspend the rules of the meeting upon such conditions as he or she may determine to permit comment upon such proposed legislation by any member of the public in attendance who wishes to be heard. In addition, each regular or special meeting of the common council shall include a period during which any member of the public in attendance may comment upon any aspect of city governance.

“(e) In the event of a vacancy in the offices of vice chairperson, the common council shall fill the vacancy within thirty days of its occurrence in the manner provided by its rules.”

—City of Poughkeepsie Charter Section 2.05 Informational Meetings:

“In addition to its organizational, regular and special meetings as hereinabove prescribed, the common council shall convene meetings in March and September of each year which shall be solely informational. All members of the common council, the mayor, the city administrator and the heads of all city departments and offices shall be in attendance unless excused by the council chair for good cause shown. The general public in attendance at such meeting may inquire of any such persons with regard to any aspect of city governance.

Written public notice of each such meeting shall be published in the city’s official newspaper and on the city’s official website and by whatever other electronic means as may be commonly used by the city for such purposes, and may otherwise be given as provided by the rules of the common council, not later than the fourteenth day next preceding such meeting.”

The language and conditions being applied tonight, asserted by the Council’s concocted Rule XXIII, appear nowhere in the Charter. Furthermore, when requested to produce a legal opinion and citations to support the Council’s illegitimate and malignant rule aimed at undermining and depriving the public’s right to know, the only way that Corporation Counsel Valk could cover her rear end was through denial, by replying: “Legal opinions are exempt from FOIL under the attorney-client privilege. This office does not issue opinions to members of the general public. All communications on this topic also fall within the scope of the attorney-client privilege. Therefore, your FOIL [Freedom of Information Law request] is denied.”

Where these Informational Meetings were once open-ended give-and-takes, the Council's new rule reads:

<https://www.cityofpoughkeepsie.com/DocumentCenter/View/3013/2024-Common-Council-Rules-of-Conduct-and-Procedure-PDF>

“RULE XXIII: The following rules shall apply to the informational meetings required by the City Charter:

“(a) Speakers shall register in writing prior to the beginning of the meeting by providing their name, address, and organization if any. Individuals arriving after the commencement of the meeting shall be permitted to register upon arrival if the Chairperson has not closed the hearing.

“(b) The Chairperson shall recognize each speaker, in the order registered, when the hearing commences. Speakers shall identify themselves, their address and organization, if any, prior to their questions.

“(c) Speakers shall be permitted five (5) minutes to read their questions. Speakers may not yield any remaining time they may have to another speaker

“(d) Department heads who wish to respond to questions immediately after the speaker finishes their five (5) minutes shall be permitted to do, but in no instance will a Department Head be required to answer a question on the spot if they indicate they need to review files, documents or records in order to accurately answer the question. In such case, the Department Head shall submit a written response to the Chairperson within the time specified by the Chairperson.

“(e) Speakers may submit their questions in writing either in advance of or at the informational meeting.”

As members of the public, not one Councilmember, not the Mayor, nor the Corporation Counsel, ever attended a single session of the 2016 Charter Review Commission yet use their closed-door caucus meetings and unchecked power to interpret the Charter's content to serve their own interests, including ignoring certain segments and requirements of the Charter. In an elected capacity, only Yvonne Flowers, while still a Councilmember, attended a single Executive Session Q&A about her position, and only because each individual councilmember received a specific invite to meet with the Charter Review Commission in Executive Session. The current Common Council has standards and rules for the public that they do not apply to themselves. Nearly the entire current Council has never spoken during public comments under pressure of a three-minute time limit. I am the only member of the public who attended and observed all the 2016 Charter review meetings. I applied to be a

member of the Flowers-intended current Charter Review commission and was told that—no surprise, even after several deadline extensions—not enough people applied.

Why on earth is Rule XXIII directing written responses from this Information meeting to be sent to the Council Chairperson and not to the member of the public who asked them?

Where does Rule XXIII specify the timeline for the Chair to receive and distribute those replies? Where is the rule requiring that these answers be made and recorded on webcast, and on the public record?

I began my questions at the Informational Meeting with a partial list of questions for Council Chair Da’Ron Wilson, who was absent from the meeting. I began, but was cut off by the time limit, when I began to read questions for Corporation Counsel Rebecca Valk. The complete list of those questions will be submitted separately, with the expectation that I will receive answers in full to each of the questions I had prepared, whether I was able to read them into the record or not.

During my closing comments, I specifically asked whether I would receive answers to questions I submitted in writing after the Informational Meeting, since after the last Informational Meeting City Administrator Joe Donat refused that request, replying:
On Wed, Sep 18, 2024 at 3:47 PM Joseph Donat <jdonat@cityofpoughkeepsie.com> wrote:
Ms. Sadow,

Thank you for your email. The City provided those who were unable to receive their five minute allotment of time the opportunity to submit questions in writing after the meeting was adjourned. Due to you being provided the appropriate amount of time to speak, we will not be responding to additional questions or comments at this time.

In the event you have any other concerns or issues, please do not hesitate to contact me directly and I will respond appropriately.

Regards, Joe

VI. NEW & UNFINISHED BUSINESS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

VII. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND BOARDS:

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA: MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:

A motion to Approve the Consent Agenda was made by 6th Ward Council Member Grant and seconded by 3rd Ward Council Member Brown.

Motion to Approve R-25-26 & R-25-27	
Yes/Aye:	1st Ward Council Member Henry, 2nd Ward Councilmember Menist, 3rd Ward Council Member Brown, 5th Ward Council Member James, 6th Ward Council Member Grant, 7th Ward Council Member Patterson Thompson, 4th Ward Council Member Shook, 8th Ward Councilmember McClinton
No/Nay:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Council Member At-Large Wilson
Result:	Passed

1. **R-25-26**, Resolution Amending the 2025 Budget to Reallocate Funding for Certain Positions in the Department of Public Works

R E S O L U T I O N
(R-25-26)

INTRODUCED BY CHAIRMAN WILSON AND COUNCILMEMBER SHOOK:

WHEREAS, the Common Council by resolution R-24-89 adopted a budget for the fiscal year 2025 (the “2025 Budget”); and

WHEREAS, the Common Council wishes to amend the 2025 Budget to reallocate funding for certain positions in the Department of Public Works.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the 2025 Budget adopted by the Common Council as Resolution R-24-89 is amended as shown on Schedule A, annexed hereto and made a part hereof.

Schedule A

EXPENSES

G/L	G/L Name	Description	Increase	Decrease
01-08-5110 7103	Salaries - CSEA	New Laborer Position Added	\$ 43,795	
01-08-5110 7803	Social Security Tax	New Laborer Position Added	\$ 2,716	
01-08-5110 7803M	Medicare Tax	New Laborer Position Added	\$ 635	
01-08-5110 7103	Salaries- CSEA	Working Supervisor Position Removed		\$ (76,256)
01-08-5110 7803	Social Security Tax	Working Supervisor Position Removed		\$ (4,728)
01-08-5110 7803.M	Medicare Tax	Working Supervisor Position Removed		\$ (1,106)
01-08-1490 7103	Salaries- CSEA	Promotion Admin Asst. Gr 10 to Office Manager Gr 12	\$ 12,693	\$ -
01-08-1490 7803	Social Security Tax	Promotion Admin Asst. Gr 10 to Office Manager Gr 13	\$ 787	\$ -
01-08-1490 7803.M	Medicare Tax	Promotion Admin Asst. Gr 10 to Office Manager Gr 14	\$ 184	\$ -
01-08-7110 7103	Salaries- CSEA	Laborer from Parks and Rec		\$ (54,927)
01-08-7110 7803	Social Security Tax	Laborer from Parks and Rec	\$ -	\$ (3,406)
01-08-7110 7803M	Medicare Tax	Laborer from Parks and Rec	\$ -	\$ (797)
01-08-1620 7103	Salaries- CSEA	Laborer to Building and Grounds	\$ 54,927	\$ -
01-08-1620 7803	Social Security Tax	Laborer to Building and Grounds	\$ 3,406	\$ -
01-08-1620 7803M	Medicare Tax	Laborer to Building and Grounds	\$ 797	\$ -
01-08-7110 7103	Salaries- CSEA	Unbudget Laborer Vacancy to be filled	\$ 43,796	\$ -
01-08-7110 7803	Social Security Tax	Unbudget Laborer Vacancy to be filled	\$ 2,715	\$ -
01-08-7110 7803M	Medicare Tax	Unbudget Laborer Vacancy to be filled	\$ 635	\$ -
		Removal of 25 % of HMEO's Salary that was charged to Sanitation, Charging 100% of Salary to General Fund		
18-08-8160 7103	Salaries- CSEA	Fund	\$ -	\$ (16,703)
		Removal of 25 % of HMEO's Salary that was charged to Sanitation, Charging 100% of Salary to General Fund		
18-08-8160 7803	Social Security Tax	Fund	\$ -	\$ (1,036)
		Removal of 25 % of HMEO's Salary that was charged to Sanitation, Charging 100% of Salary to General Fund		
18-08-8160 7803M	Medicare Tax	Fund	\$ -	\$ (243)
		Additton of 25% of Salary previously Charged to Sanitation		
01-08-5110 7103	Salaries- CSEA	Sanitation	\$ 16,703	\$ -
		Additton of 25% of Salary previously Charged to Sanitation		
01-08-5110 7803	Social Security Tax	Sanitation	\$ 1,036	\$ -
		Additton of 25% of Salary previously Charged to Sanitation		
01-08-5110 7803M	Medicare Tax	Sanitation	\$ 243	\$ -
		Send Sanitation Savings to GF for 25% Previously Charged to Sanitation		
18-22-990 7901	IFT to General Fund	Charged to Sanitation	\$ 17,982	\$ -
01-20-1900 7498	General Fund Contingency	Remove from Contingency to Balance Fund	\$ -	\$ (25,866)
		Expense Totals	\$ 203,050	\$ (185,068)
		Difference in Expenses	\$ 17,982	

REVENUES

G/L	G/L Name	Description	Increase	Decrease
		GF Recieve Savings for 25% Previously Charged to Sanitation		
01-00 5018	IFT from Sanitation	Sanitation	\$ 17,982	
		Difference in Revenues	\$ 17,982	
		NET DIFFERENCE	\$ 0	

2. **R-28-27**, Resolution of the City of Poughkeepsie Designating 52 South Hamilton Street, Currently Known as "Vassar Warner Home" as a Local Historic Landmark

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE DESIGNATING 52
SOUTH HAMILTON STREET, CURRENTLY KNOWN AS "VASSAR
WARNER HOME" AS A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK**

(R-25-27)

**INTRODUCED BY CHAIRMAN WILSON, COUNCILMEMBER SHOOK,
PATTERSON THOMPSON, HENRY, MENIST, BROWN, JAMES, GRANT AND
MCCLINTON:**

WHEREAS, 52 South Hamilton Street, known as "Vassar Warner Home," City of Poughkeepsie is owned by Vassar-Warner Home; and

WHEREAS, Richard J. Schuster, in his capacity as Chairman for Save Vassar-Warner, has applied for and is desirous of securing a designation of 52 South Hamilton Street as a local historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, the HDLPC held a public hearing on December 12, 2024 and January 9, 2025 regarding the application as a local historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, the HDLPC voted in favor of the proposed nomination and approved the application on January 9, 2025; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 19-4.5(4)(f) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Poughkeepsie, the HDLPC's approved application was forwarded to the Common Council for consideration; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council held a public hearing on February 18, 2025 regarding the nomination as a local historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, after duly considering the factors specified in Section 19-4.5(4) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Poughkeepsie, the Common Council hereby finds that 52 South Hamilton Street, known as "Vassar Warner Home," possesses special character, historic and aesthetic value as part of the cultural, economic and social history of the City of Poughkeepsie and embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style. .

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council hereby designates 52 South Hamilton Street, known as "Vassar Warner Home," City of Poughkeepsie, owned by Vassar-Warner Home, as a local historic landmark. The City

Chamberlain is authorized and directed to forward notice of the designation of 52 South Hamilton Street, known as “Vassar Warner Home,” City of Poughkeepsie as a local historic landmark to the Dutchess County Clerk for recordation.

IX. CONSENT AGENDA: ORDINANCES AND LOCAL LAWS:

A motion to Approve was made by 3rd Ward Council Member Brown and seconded by 6th Ward Council Member Grant.

MOTION TO APPROVE LL-25-02- VOICE VOTE	
Yes/Aye:	1st Ward Council Member Henry, 2nd Ward Councilmember Menist, 3rd Ward Council Member Brown, 5th Ward Council Member James, 6th Ward Council Member Grant, 7th Ward Council Member Patterson Thompson, 4th Ward Council Member Shook, 8th Ward Councilmember McClinton
No/Nay:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Council Member At-Large Wilson
Result:	Passed

1. **LL-25-02**, A Local Law to Amend the City's Zoning Code to Remove the Footnote at Section 19-3.3(2)(C) Of the Zoning Code and to Correct Various Definitions

(LL-25-02)

A LOCAL LAW TO AMEND THE CITY’S ZONING CODE TO REMOVE THE FOOTNOTE AT SECTION 19-3.3(2)(C) OF THE ZONING CODE AND TO CORRECT VARIOUS DEFINITIONS

SPONSOR: CHAIRMAN WILSON, COUNCILMEMBER SHOOK, PATTERSON THOMPSON, HENRY, MENIST, BROWN, JAMES AND GRANT

BE IT ENACTED, by the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie as follows:

~~STRIKETHROUGH INDICATES DELETION~~
BOLD and UNDERLINE INDICATES ADDED
LANGUAGE

Section 1: Section 19-3.3(2)(c) “Lot Coverage” is amended to delete the footnote that

states “Includes all buildings/structures.”

Section 2: Section 19-10.2 is amended to delete the definition of “Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)” and add a definition for “Accessory Apartment” as follows:

~~**ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU)**~~

~~An accessory residential dwelling unit physically connected or attached to a principal single unit or two-unit dwelling or connected or attached to an existing accessory structure such as a garage or carriage house. The ADU must be connected by at least one common wall or be structurally interdependent in some other way with the existing structure.~~

ACCESSORY APARTMENT:

A small, independent living space on the same lot as a single family dwelling which is clearly subordinate to that principal use.

Section 3: Section 19-10.2 is amended to delete the definitions for “Apartment” and “Backbuilding” as follows:

~~**APARTMENT**~~

~~A dwelling unit located on an upper floor of a shopfront building or a factory building and having a minimum floor area of 300 square feet.~~

~~**BACKBUILDING**~~

~~A single-story structure connecting a principal building to an outbuilding.~~

Section 4: Section 19-10.2 is amended to correct the definitions for “Commission,” “Day Care Home/Family Day Care Home,” “Restaurant, Standard” and “Sidewalk Café.”

COMMISSION (HDLPC)

The Historic **District and Landmark** Preservation Commission created pursuant to this Chapter.

DAY CARE HOME/FAMILY DAY CARE HOME

~~A day care home is a dwelling in which a permanent resident provides licensed care in a protective setting for up to six children or elderly or disabled adults for less than 24 hours per day. The number counted includes the family’s natural, adopted, or foster children who are under six years of age. A home-based program that provides regular care for children in compliance with the requirements of New York State Office of Children and Family Service.~~

RESTAURANT, STANDARD (erroneously given retail establishment’s definition)

~~An establishment engaged in the sale to the general public of commodities or goods in small quantities to ultimate consumers. Any establishment separately defined in this~~

~~chapter shall not be considered a retail establishment.~~ **An establishment whose principal business is the sale of food in a ready to consume state, normally ordered from a menu and delivered to a table for consumption on premises.**

SIDEWALK CAFÉ

An **accessory seating area for a** restaurant or café open to the sky, with readily removable tables, chairs or railings, and no overhead coverage other than umbrellas or retractable awnings, compliant with Section 19-15-14 of the Code of Ordinances.

Section 5: Section 19-10.2 is amended to move “Development” below “Demolition” to be alphabetically correct.

Section 6: This Local Law shall take effect upon filing with the New York Secretary of State.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of the aforesaid proposed Local Law be laid upon the desk of each council member; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Common Council shall hold a public hearing on said proposed Local Law and that the City Clerk shall 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.

X. ACTION AGENDA: MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:

XI. ACTION AGENDA: ORDINANCES AND LOCAL LAWS:

XII. MAYOR’S COMMENTS:

Thank you Vice Chair Shook.

I know what was brought up earlier in regards to what’s happening in our schools. I did have the opportunity to attend the Mayor’s Neighborhood Academy that was hosted by the William Julius Wilson Institute and Harlem Children’s Zone. We’ve been working with them closely in the past couple of years through the Children’s Cabinet. I had the opportunity to work along with other mayors that are throughout the country and also individuals that are working with youth services. So, we did discuss about better ways of communicating and also coordinating services with the city school district because the thing is our kids are educated in the schools, but when they come out of the schools, they also need those supports. So, I’ll be reaching out to the councilmembers to get a little bit more involved in that as well as we’re moving forward, as we’re building the pipeline of services for our children and also being able to provide opportunities for them outside of school that would help them on that pathway to social mobility and economic mobility. It was a great - kind of two and a half, about a day and a half, but

it's like two days -workshop. And, Geoffrey Canada is going to be coming here to visit and that'll be some time in, I think April. I think they changed it because he was going to come in March, I mean in February, but the weather prohibited him from coming. So, he'll be here in April. So we hope everyone can attend to see what the possibilities are that the opportunities that we can provide here in the City of Poughkeepsie and working along with our school district. I'm really excited about the partnership because the thing is, is that this is a collaborative effort in order to provide our children and their families with the opportunities that they need and the resources that they need in order to see a change in our educational system. So, it's not just a school that's going to be able to educate our kids, we need a whole community involved. So, this is a great partnership and they have done it in Harlem and I know we can do it here. So, I'm looking forward to moving forward with that.

Also, too it was mentioned that our [former] City Chamberlain Jasmin Davis, she did lose her husband which was very devastating. So please keep her in your prayers and we do extend condolences to her.

Also, Dr. Martinez – it was brought up by Councilmember Grant of Dr. Martinez's retirement, which his last day was last Friday. I believe it was last Friday and Joe Vita has been appointed as the interim Commissioner of Finance at the moment. [I'm] looking forward to working with him and we were aware of Dr. Martinez retiring much earlier – like last year – and so he has been working with Joe Vita throughout the year regarding the finances so I really do appreciate the work that he's been putting into his staff and ensuring that as he leaves, the the city would still be in good hands when it comes down to our finances. When I came in here last year, I was aware that the – that many of the department heads are retirement age. So, we've been sitting down with the department heads to discuss their time and when they're leaving. And I really do appreciate the time line that they're giving us and also the succession plans have been put in place to kind of help make sure that it's a transition as they're moving on and we're bringing in new people. So, [I'm] looking forward to, you know, for the following year, we have a couple more that are retiring. But they've also been – they have a nice plan in place that we've been working on, so I wish them well.

Also, too, the Social Security building, we've been talking about that. At first we were told they were going to do renovations with the Social Security building, and then later on we find out it's on the list to be cut. So, we are having discussions with our federal elected officials about what that's going to look like. Right now, the services are going to be diverted to Middletown and so our County Legislator Randy Johnson had reached out, having discussions with the county about, maybe, being able to transport individuals over to Middletown if needed, but that is still in discussions with the county and, also, we've been having discussions with the county executive and maybe working on providing services for our seniors to be able to get online services to help them do that process because this can be very intimidating that you have to do everything now online and if you have a problem trying to get someone to answer that question for you, [it] is very difficult. So, we're trying to see about working on a way that we can set up some time so that we can go through that process for those who need that help So there are people on the ground who are working on being able to provide other services

and helping people to navigate through those social security services that they need while we're still trying to figure out what's happening on the federal level with a lot of our services. So, we'll keep everybody informed of that as we move forward.

The other thing, too, it came up about individuals concerned about ICE being in our city and so far, they have been here twice. They were looking for - what we were told - they were looking for someone who had a warrant. We do have our police department and our chief is aware of what they need to do if ICE is in the area. We will be putting out a statement. We wanted to ensure that we had our protocols in place but we want to make sure to the individuals know that we want to make sure that they know to come to our police department if they're feeling unsafe, if there was - they're a victim of a crime, we don't want them to feel that they cannot come to our police department and fear that they're going to be turned over to ICE agents or they're going to be detained. That is not the case whatsoever. It has been noted and it was done and, I think in 2017 that we are considered a safe city. So there are permits that are put in place on what our police department can do and what they are not to do, so we will be releasing that. We have been talking with individuals though especially those from their Latino community.

I know councilmember Thompson has been talking with individuals in the muslim community. There are cards that were given out to individuals to let them know to carry with them to let them know what to do if they're approached and that is something that they're planning on giving out in some of the events to ensure that we have them ready for..in case they need to. There is a fear out there. People are scared and we just want to make sure that we let them know that we're here for them to assist in any way we can, but they have to understand what our restrictions are as well. If the agents do come here it's not that we can intervene for any work that they do, but we're not going to be involved when it comes down to, if they come and this is a fear. And I'll put it out there that if our individuals come to our police department, that our police department's gonna take their information and then contact our ICE agents. That is not the case whatsoever. And our police department has informed us to ensure us that when a person does come to the police department, especially when they're there to..if they're involved in any type of..a victim of a crime, the information of whether they're undocumented is not taken in consideration and is not collected, also. So, we need to make sure that people understand that part. So we will have more conversations in regards to it. It's a very touchy situation because no matter what we say, people are still afraid. And the last event that I went to that was held at the church, it was very heartbreaking to see individuals signing off documents and having on them ready to turn their kids over to individuals in case they're detained. So that was another thing that we talked about, as far as the kids are concerned, that has to be emotionally devastating to know that your parent at any point can be taken from you and now you're going with a stranger or someone that at least your parents feel comfortable to leave you with, but to know you're not with your parents can be devastating. So, we are working and talking with our county in regards to services that will be available for those kids. So there are some things that we are working on and it will be involving the councilmember more because I think he should be talking about this a little more at our ward meetings.

XIII. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

XIV. ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:20 pm a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by 3rd Ward Council Member Brown and seconded by 7th Ward Council Member Patterson Thompson.

Dated: March 6, 2025

I hereby certify that this true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Common Council Meeting held on Tuesday, March 4, 2025.

**Respectfully submitted,
Donna M. DeLuca
Deputy City Chamberlain**