



THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE NEW YORK

PUBLIC HEARING

Monday, December 20, 2021 5:45 p.m.

Virtual / Zoom

Welcome to the scheduled meeting of the Public Hearing in the City of Poughkeepsie. The date is December 20, 2021 and the time is 5:45 pm.

THIS HEARING IS FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECEIVING COMMENTS ON THE Public Hearing Regarding the Proposed Local Law to amend certain residency requirements for the position of Fire Chief

Councilmember-At-Large Salem called the meeting to order at 5:48 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Five (5) minutes per person public comment.

1. Laurie Sandow, S. Grand Ave. (submitted written comments)
2. Nick Bucher, 39 Cramer Rd.

My primary purpose in speaking at this public hearing is to express my disgust at Councilmembers Sarah Brannen and Randall Johnson Jr., who voted against even holding this public hearing. Of course, it's nothing new for councilmembers to try to shut down the public, whether it's by failing to respond to Freedom of Information requests, blocking access or comments to their social media posts, tampering with evidence, and even silencing and arresting speakers on the basis of made-up rules.

This council, as a whole, has repeatedly demonstrated their contempt for the public, with members skipping out of both public hearings as well as Council meetings, racing through and/or curtailing public comments, posting last minute agendas, failing to hold Ward meetings or otherwise communicate with city residents, and overall doing their darnedest to discourage public knowledge and participation. To my knowledge, only one councilmember, Natasha Cherry, has a current medical reason for missing any meetings.

In the meantime, Brannen's and Johnson's vote against holding tonight's public hearing sank Council proceedings to an entirely new low. At least four current councilmembers don't work in this City. Sarah Brannen doesn't work in this city. Randall Johnson not only doesn't work in this city; he hasn't lived here in months if not years. And despite this, Councilmembers got on their high horses about how youngsters need to see their neighbors live and work in the city.

Instead of establishing the number of firefighters actually qualified for the Fire Chief job, at the last meeting Randall Johnson went down the irrelevant and pointless rabbit hole of how many firefighters were employed overall.

Brannen claims that she chose not run for office again because she wanted to spend more time with her family. Yet, apparently Brannen thinks nothing of the cost and disruption that moving might cause a family—especially in this inflated real estate market, and given this City's failing school district.

And to top it all off, this hearing takes place on a night where the Council agenda was not only already packed, but has now been stacked with several additional last-minute items, all without time stamps, and entirely unlikely for the public to become aware of until after the meeting has started. All the better to disenfranchise the public, and highlight the Council and the Council Chair's consistent inability and unwillingness to attend to city business in a transparent, forthcoming, orderly and timely fashion.

When meetings start and people can't log on, they don't call the city—they call or message me. When people can't find agendas, resolutions, and other information, they've given up writing or calling the city—instead they call and message me. Can't access, download or maneuver through the City's user-unfriendly GoToMeeting platform? The City's attitude is too bad, tough luck. People stop me in the supermarket and in parking lots to complain about their lack of access, and why they can't see the names and faces of other attendees. Yet the city continues unabashed and unfazed, pretending that information is accessible, and that the problem lies with anyone who dares to question or say otherwise.

I'll leave it at that for this hearing.

Official Minutes of the Public Hearing of December 20, 2021 on a Resolution introducing a Local Law to amend certain residency requirements for the position of Fire Chief

At 5:55 pm the Public Hearing was adjourned.

Dated: December 28, 2021

I hereby certify that this true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Common Council Public Hearing held on December 20, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Jasmin N. Davis
City Chamberlain