



THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE NEW YORK

COMMON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, April 4, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

Common Council Chambers

Welcome to the regularly scheduled Meeting of the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council the date is April 4, 2022, and the time is 6:44 pm.

I'd like to acknowledge that we are gathered, wherever we are, on the traditional territory of the Lenape people and this territory was a critical resting place along a popular trade route for people of the Lenape Nation and other cultures as is evidenced in the earliest derivation of the name 'Poughkeepsie' with an indigenous string of words, U-puku-ipi-sing, that, when translated, means 'reed-covered lodge by the little water place' or resting place.

Let's all recite the pledge of allegiance.

I. ROLL CALL: (8 present, 1 absent: Councilmember Deichler absent)

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

Common Council Meeting – March 21, 2022

**Motion to accept the minutes: Councilmember Long
2nd: Councilmember Menist**

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

YES

ADD: CONSENT AGENDA

IX: MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:

R-22-28, Appointments to the City of Poughkeepsie Redistricting Commission

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 1. Larry Trepel – S. Bridge St.**
- 2. Peter Van Aken – Wilbur Blvd.**
- 3. Ken Stier – Verrazano Blvd.**
- 4. Warren Jones – N. Clover St.**
- 5. Laurie Sadow – S. Grand Ave. (submitted in writing)**

On April 4, 1967—exactly 55 years ago today—the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his speech “Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break the Silence”. That speech was also known as the Three Evils speech, in which he said: “When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.” Could there be a better anniversary to address the need to break the silence, collusion, lawbreaking and backroom deals that are par for this City’s course, no matter how much transparency is trumpeted in the Mayor’s State of the City address?

Lawbreaking, secret deals, and opaqueness rule the roost for both Common Council as well as City Administration. In September 2021, the City launched a website redesign. The new site was, and continues to be, riddled with broken links. The vast majority of history available on the previous site has been destroyed or rendered inaccessible. Though criticism of the new site is widespread, city officials continue to insist that virtually all feedback is complimentary with very few complaints and criticisms. But attend a public meeting in the community, or field private questions or phone calls from people who can’t navigate the new site, and it’s obvious that’s entirely untrue.

Meeting agendas are hard to find, deleted without notice, posted to the site without timestamps, and then disappear, deleted and replaced with entirely new documents containing neither redlining nor a hint of what might have appeared on a previous version. The City’s current post about vacancies on various City Boards takes readers to broken links. Tonight’s Council agenda is another example—the first agenda version listed Redistricting under the Action portion, but that item entirely disappeared from a revised agenda post. (And then, sometime late on Monday, April 4, an item called “Other” was posted, without a clue that it was a further, last-minute addendum to the agenda.)

Last week, in complete secret, this City closed title on the Wheaton Park parcel with Pelton Partners LLC. The 2016 contract was filled with fiduciary breaches, including a contract sale price based on a 2008 appraisal. That contract was signed without witnesses and notarization, with an effective date AFTER former Mayor Tkazyik was out of office. There was a stark difference between the contract and the much higher sale price that Sue Serino cited on the NYS Senate floor when she misled fellow State Senators to favor her home rule legislation.

As with Wheaton, rather than draw a line in the sand, it seems this City has decided to hang up a banner reading “lawbreaking and secret deals welcomed here”. Another example is taking place right now at the Ice House:

On July 8, 2021, City Administrator Marc Nelson sent a formal letter to Kevin Lund terminating the 2010 Ice House license agreement effective October 31, 2021. But instead, construction was undertaken at the Ice House AFTER receipt of that letter—some of it without proper permits. If you try to inspect the history of the lease agreement, the parcel, and violations incurred over the years—you’ll find the Building Department folder contains only 18 pages for more than a decade of use, occupancy, permits and violations. On August 11, 2021, the Building Department issued a stop work order. Former Building Inspector Gary Beck somehow cured that order and construction resumed, as if the Building Department and current Building Inspectors, had no clue about the license termination. Flores Taqueria was somehow installed and began business in the Ice House, and now the Administration seems to be taking the attitude “poor guy, let him work” rather than making it clear to Lund that they’ll see him in court.

V. CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

I do want to let everyone know that unfortunately tonight Adam Bosch from Pattern for Progress couldn't make it. He had something come up last minute. So we're moving the pattern for progress presentation on the current or the recent housing assessment to our May 2nd meeting. And that was a, you know, a last minute thing that just came up. So unfortunately, they won't be here with us tonight. But I do encourage folks, if you haven't had a chance to look at that assessment, to head over to the city website and take a look, it does present very compelling data about challenges associated with housing here in the city of Poughkeepsie. And it does provide us with a blueprint of sorts, a framework so that we can start to address those issues.

You know, either by revising policies or implementing new strategies to meet current and future housing needs for everyone. Here in the city of Poughkeepsie on April 18, which is our next common council meeting, we're going to hear an update from the police department on what methods they've been deploying to increase public safety and reduce violence across the community. So again, that presentation will be on April 18th.

We'll be joined by Chief Pape and I'm sure others from the department, and they'll give us an update now on the request of Councilmember Flowers. And, you know, we talked about it in caucus and we thought it would be important to have them come in and give the community a little bit of an update as to what's going on.

COVID, you know, we're doing well, but I did notice today there was an article in the Poughkeepsie Journal that were they were reporting cases week to week. And you know, we've seen a leap in cases in Dutchess County, up by 48 percent since last week's report. So just FYI use caution. I'm considering wearing masks more in indoor spaces. I was reading something today that does recommend that you still use that Six Feet guide. It worked. Masks, they worked.

If you're not vaccinated yet, get vaccinated. Now's the time. We're in a lull. You're not going to have any trouble finding an appointment. If you're not boosted, go get boosted. There's talks about, you know, more boosters becoming available for folks who are over the age of 50 and also experiencing other kinds of disease that make them compromised. So if that's you, go get it done because the sooner we get everybody up to speed as far as vaccinations and protections, the better off we will be if there happens to be a spike in cases. So we might as well use the precautions that we know work and we've used in the past.

The redistricting commission. We're making appointments tonight. It's happening. Great job, everyone. We've got it up to this point. So we're going to be doing that. It's on the agenda tonight.

I did want to mention a couple of celebrations recently. Last week, on March 31st, it was Trans Day of visibility, and that's a day to celebrate and recognize the beauty

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of transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming folks in our community.

And while we've come a long way, trans rights are being attacked across the country. Florida, Texas, even right here in our own community with book bans and other kinds of things that people are doing that, you know, really present life threatening attacks and risks or risks onto people of this community. And while Trans Day Visibility represents a much needed opportunity to celebrate trans joy and uplift trans lives, it's important to pause to acknowledge the ongoing epidemic of violence against transgender and non-binary people and especially against black and brown transgender woman. I think, you know, it's also a good opportunity for me to remind folks that I use they/them pronouns. I'm non-binary and I really appreciate.

I have to say, I appreciate, you know, my common council colleagues really using my pronouns as best they can and, you know, the administration correcting themselves when they get it wrong. I'm here for that and I'm here for you know, everybody else that wants to be seen.

And it's not just about visibility, it's about acknowledgement, it's about acceptance. It's about welcoming. It's about ensuring that folks understand that they belong here, no matter who they are. And it really is a life or death scenario for a lot of young trans people out there.

You know, the rate of suicide amongst trans folks and especially again amongst trans, black and brown women, just continues to skyrocket as these attacks continue to get, you know, more brutal against the community, so I just ask everyone to understand that, you know, trans folks or trans folks, pronouns are not a choice. And everybody is beautiful for who they are.

Ramadan, I want to acknowledge that Councilmember Thompson is celebrating Ramadan this month, and I want to wish everyone who does celebrate Ramadan Mubarak. You know, this is the holiest month in the Islamic calendar, and it began at sundown this past Saturday, April 2nd. You know, while Ramadan most understand that Ramadan is a month of fasting, it's so, so much more than just fasting. It's a month of reflection, of self-development, discipline, of connecting to others. And it's a real great reminder, you know, for folks of people who don't have who have less of food of water resources. And it's a good time to reflect on what we each do have. So family, spirituality and yes, God for us to celebrate.

I was brought up practicing Islam, and while I don't practice anymore, I do respect the tenets of Islam, and I do take a lot of what I learned as a child and what my father taught me through that practice with me. And, you know, during the month of Ramadan, I take it upon myself to reflect spiritually, although I'm not, you know, praying more than five times a day or fasting.

Even I really do honor and respect what it means in that, you know, do you good on to others and take the time to work on your own self-discipline and development and community? It's really about, you know, bringing each other together for a community, and I really appreciate these little gifts that you gave us tonight.

Councilmember Thompson, it's a really nice reminder and a little card to go along with it. And I do have to mention too we'll see Councilmember Thompson exit into a room when it's time to break the fast, and I respect and hope that you have enough space in there to do so.

So again, I want to wish everybody Ramadan Mubarak for, you know, whoever celebrates. And that concludes my comments, and so I'll we'll move to the mayor's comments.

VI. MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Thank you, chair, and thank you for those remarks. State of the city was last Thursday. I want to thank everyone who helped with that presentation and change point theater especially want to thank Dr. Rosser, who joined during the speech to talk about really which the theme of the speech was helping the youth of the city of Poughkeepsie as far as helping the youth or two very important reports that were released by the children's cabinet, which I spoke about.

But just again want to mention it tonight two working groups were established by the cabinet one on early learning, which obviously is extremely important. And the other is the out of school activities report. Because, as was mentioned at the state of the city, 80 percent of a child's time spends outside of school.

So that's the 80 20 formula, which is what we have really looked at very intently here as we try to do all the things that we're doing and making decisions with that 80 20 focus in mind, making sure that the things that we can do and we can control that will have the best outcomes for our children and families when they're outside of those school buildings.

We've just a couple of related topics on policing tonight. Today, we swore in a brand new police officer. That's Ishmael Chisholm. He was sworn in today Shield ninety seven. He just graduated from the 25th Academy held by the Dutchess County Law Enforcement Group and the Sheriff's Office. And Ishmael, prior to going into the academy as he was brought in, recruited by the Sheriff's Office to become a part time deputy, which actually qualified him after he qualified to get into the academy. He wanted to be a city Poughkeepsie police officer. He was one of our local city residents who took the test, who took advantage of the tutorial services that we provided. And he scored where we could take him. And we were really excited that he is now part of the team.

And I didn't I didn't mention this, that the state of the city, we will be hiring other city residents off that list. We're using the city residency list. I think we have 14 individuals now on the list from the city of Poughkeepsie who passed the physical agility test, which was given this weekend before last. And we're really, really excited about the opportunity to take from that list, and hopefully we may even get other academy graduates who are on the list.

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I know this Saturday that members, some members of the Procedural Justice Committee, took in the implicit bias training, which was an all day training which take took place of five or five. And I would think everyone that was able to do that.

We had a graduation again weekend before of the a new initiative called the Youth and Police Initiative, which is a joint initiative between the school district and the City of Accuracy Police Department, the Dutchess County Sheriff's Office, the New York State Police and the Office of Probation, where 15 students. We training with members of those agencies work in a program that is designed to build trust from the two different sides of this discussion. And police officers are encouraged, and their training is to put themselves in the shoes of students and young adults, and the young adults are putting themselves in the shoes of police officers.

I tell you, I attended the training. I heard both from members of the student side and members of the public safety community that they were extremely gratified and happy that they actually did the training. And two of the individuals from the high school both said that they learned so much and one of them said he wished it was more than a week. And so that program, my understanding is ongoing, and I believe 60 students from Poughkeepsie High School will go through this training and then also want to thank the county who is funding this.

And I hope that this is something that we will continue for the long term, because I do know that the City of White Plains Police Department has had this program where we gained some information from, there are communities throughout the whole country that have it.

White Plains is one of the local communities that have it, and I believe they've had it for 30 years. So obviously it must be working. Otherwise they wouldn't have it for 30 years.

We have a new intern here at City Hall. I know we had some discussions. I know Councilperson Long and I did. Back in was August, when then Governor Cuomo announced that there would be a funding of for a gun violence prevention, internship and job opportunities throughout the state. Poughkeepsie was awarded it. Did that come directly to us? It came to the Workforce Investment Board. I think it was around \$300,000 or something like that at the time.

We've been working with the WIB since then and it's taken a while. This is not just particular to here. The money was, they talked about it and by the time it filters down.

So we do have an individual who was working here in City Hall, the background in engineering, and he's going to be with us for the next four weeks. We had hoped and that we would be able to also be able to access some employee or employees for the Department of Public Works. That's been an ongoing conversation.

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There's been some stops and starts with this throughout the whole state, but we're really happy that we've got someone finally from that that that gun prevention, violence, money that came through the governor's office.

Next week, I'll have an intern working with me for a week. This is an individual senior from the city of Poughkeepsie high school, did it a couple of years ago where they actually will be working here in City Hall while they're on spring break. And it helps them with their, I guess, resume building. And I also believe they may be funded through the corrections center and at the chamber at Poughkeepsie High School. So we're looking forward to that and Chair that's my comments.

VII. NEW & UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VIII. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND BOARDS:

NONE

CONSENT AGENDA:

IX. MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:

A motion was made by Councilmember Cherry and seconded by Councilmember Menist to receive and print.

1. R-22-27, Appointments to the Ethics Committee

**R E S O L U T I O N
(R-22-27)**

INTRODUCED BY CHAIRPERSON SALEM :

WHEREAS, in accordance with City Charter §6.08 and Administrative Code §15.05, the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie is authorized to make appointments of City residents to serve on the City of Poughkeepsie Board of Ethics; and

WHEREAS, all appointments to the Board of Ethics are currently vacant; and

WHEREAS, three members of the Board of Ethics have expressed their desire for reappointment to serve another two year term.

NOW, THEREFORE,

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BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie hereby appoints the following individuals to the Board of Ethics for a two (2) year term:

Lance Hardy

Marina Tarkos (City of Poughkeepsie Employee member)

SECONDED BY _____.

R-22-27			Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Absent
☒ Accepted ☐ Defeated ☐ Tabled	Councilmember Long	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Thompson	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Shook	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Deichler	Voter	☐	☐	☐	☒
	Councilmember Flowers	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Menist	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Johnson	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Cherry	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Chair Salem	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐

X. ORDINANCES AND LOCAL LAWS:

ACTION AGENDA:

XI. MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:

A motion was made by Chair Salem and seconded by Councilmember Menist to move R-22-28 from the Action Agenda to the Consent Agenda.

1. R-22-28, Appointments to the City of Poughkeepsie Redistricting Commission

**RESOLUTION
(R-22-28)**

~~INTRODUCED BY CHAIR SALEM:~~

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~~WHEREAS, in accordance with City Charter §2.09, the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie is authorized appoint four (4) individuals to serve as the City of Poughkeepsie Redistricting Commission.~~

NOW, THEREFORE,

~~BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie hereby appoints the following individuals to the City of Poughkeepsie Redistricting Commission:~~

~~Deanne Flynn
Stan Merritt
Elizabeth O'Raffity
Laurie Sandow~~

SECONDED BY _____.

A motion was made by Councilmember L. Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Long to amend Resolution R-22-28 to vote on each individual appointment and separate the original Resolution into:

- R-22-28
- R-22-29
- R-22-30
- R-22-31

A motion was made by Councilmember Cherry and seconded by Councilmember Menist to receive and print.

**RESOLUTION
(R-22-28)**

INTRODUCED BY _____:

WHEREAS, in accordance with City Charter §2.09, the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie is authorized appoint four (4) individuals to serve as the City of Poughkeepsie Redistricting Commission.

NOW, THEREFORE,

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BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie hereby appoints the following individuals to the City of Poughkeepsie Redistricting Commission:

Deanne Flynn

SECONDED BY _____.

R-22-28						
			Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Absent
☒ Accepted ☐ Defeated ☐ Tabled	Councilmember Long	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Thompson	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Shook	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Deichler	Voter	☐	☐	☐	☒
	Councilmember Flowers	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Menist	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Johnson	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Cherry	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Chair Salem	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐

A motion was made by Councilmember Cherry and seconded by Councilmember Long to receive and print.

RESOLUTION
(R-22-29)

INTRODUCED BY CHAIR SALEM:

WHEREAS, in accordance with City Charter §2.09, the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie is authorized appoint four (4) individuals to serve as the City of Poughkeepsie Redistricting Commission.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie hereby appoints the following individual to the City of Poughkeepsie Redistricting Commission:

Stan Merritt

SECONDED BY _____.

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R-22-29						
☒ 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	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Cherry	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Chair Salem	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐

A motion was made by Councilmember Cherry and seconded by Councilmember Long to receive and print.

RESOLUTION
(R-22-30)

INTRODUCED BY CHAIR SALEM:

WHEREAS, in accordance with City Charter §2.09, the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie is authorized appoint four (4) individuals to serve as the City of Poughkeepsie Redistricting Commission.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie hereby appoints the following individual to the City of Poughkeepsie Redistricting Commission:

Elizabeth O'Raffity

SECONDED BY _____.

R-22-30						
☒ 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	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Cherry	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Chair Salem	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐

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A motion was made by Councilmember Cherry and seconded by Councilmember Long to receive and print.

**RESOLUTION
(R-22-31)**

INTRODUCED BY CHAIR SALEM:

WHEREAS, in accordance with City Charter §2.09, the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie is authorized appoint four (4) individuals to serve as the City of Poughkeepsie Redistricting Commission.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie hereby appoints the following individual to the City of Poughkeepsie Redistricting Commission:

Laurie Sandow

SECONDED BY _____.

R-22-31						
			Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Absent
☒ Accepted ☐ Defeated ☐ Tabled	Councilmember Long	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Thompson	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Shook	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Deichler	Voter	☐	☐	☐	☒
	Councilmember Flowers	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Menist	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Councilmember Johnson	Voter	☐	☒	☐	☐
	Councilmember Cherry	Voter	☒	☐	☐	☐
	Chair Salem	Voter	☐	☒	☐	☐

XII. ORDINANCES AND LOCAL LAWS:

XIII. PRESENTATIONS OF PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

- 1. FROM PATTERN FOR PROGRESS**, a presentation of the 2022 Housing Needs Assessment.

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A motion was made by Councilmember Menist and seconded by Councilmember Long to defer the remaining petition to Corporation Counsel.

- 2. FROM CONNIE WRIGHT**, a notice of personal injury sustained on December 30, 2021.
- 3. FROM ALEXIS BENITEZ**, a notice of personal injury sustained on January 18, 2022.
- 4. FROM KAMAL STEWART**, a notice of property damage sustained on January 28, 2022.
- 5. FROM EHR ENTERPRISES, INC.**, a notice of property damage sustained on February 4, 2022.
- 6. FROM JUSTIN ANGOT**, a notice of personal injury sustained on February 10, 2022.
- 7. FROM TAKIYAH INGRAM**, a notice of personal injury sustained on February 10, 2022.
- 8. FROM GALE TRONCILLITO**, a notice of property damage sustained on March 8, 2022.

XIV. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

XV. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Councilmember Cherry and seconded by Councilmember Thompson to adjourn the meeting at 8:30pm.

Dated: April 11, 2022.

I hereby certify that this true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Common Council Meeting held on Monday, April 4, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Jasmin Nicole Davis
City Chamberlain