

Regular Meeting

These minutes are for the regular meeting of the Beacon City Council, held in the Municipal Center at One Municipal Plaza on January 4, 2016. Please note that the video recording of this meeting is available at <http://vimeo.com/channels/40154>.

Council Members Present:

Randy Casale, Mayor
George Mansfield, At Large
Lee Kyriacou, At Large
Peggy Ross, Ward One
Omar Harper, Ward Two
Pamela Wetherbee, Ward Three
Ali Muhammad, Ward Four

Council Members Absent:**Also Present:**

Anthony Ruggiero, City Administrator
Nick Ward Willis, City Attorney

A moment of silence for past and present service members.

First Opportunity for Public Comments: Each speaker may have one opportunity to speak up to three minutes on any subject matter other than those which are the topic of a public hearing tonight.

Speakers:

1. **Vane Lashua:** Shared bittersweet news that he met someone and is moving back to Connersville, Indiana after living here in Beacon for 10 years. Mentioned how wonderful it has been to see Beacon develop. Read the poem that he wrote about Beacon (poem found at the end of these minutes)
2. **Theresa Kraft:** Asked where on the website she can find the council meeting agendas. The City Administrator advised that agendas are on the website and that she could sign up for the agenda distribution list.

Public Hearings:

none

Community Segment:

3. **Beacon Speaks Out:** Mark Ungar spoke on behalf of the committee. He mentioned that this group was formed in May 2015 in order to discuss ways of improving the community. As a result of gathering information and holding community workshops, they have come up with the following eight initiatives:
 - a. Revamped Complaint/Compliment Form
 - b. Developed programs to engage the City's youth
 - c. Information – add information to the PD Website
 - d. Mediation – coordinated efforts to mediate issues of nonviolent criminals (Create a Center)

- e. Crisis Intervention Training for Officers
- f. Sector Policing
- g. Officer dedicated to Main Street
- h. Body Cameras
- i. Increase diversity in the PD

The next meeting of Beacon Speaks Out will be on February 6 from 1pm to 3pm in the Memorial Building. The handout supplied by Mr. Ungar is at the end of these minutes.

Council Member Reports:**4. Ali Muhammad – Ward Four:**

Thank you to Beacon Speaks Out. Mentioned a quote that read more politicians should be poets and more poets politicians. Thanked everyone who came out for the meeting. Wished everyone a Happy New Year. Added that it has been a pleasure serving as a council member and looks forward to starting the New Year.

5. Omar Harper – Ward Two:

Wished everyone a Happy New Year. Great to see how much Beacon Speaks Out has accomplished. Having grown up here, I see that the same challenges exist today as did when I was a kid. My wrestling team took third place in the tournament we attended.

6. Lee Kyriacou – At Large:

Sent all the councilmembers an op-ed piece from NYS needing more effective and oversight over the prison system. Would like a resolution to share our viewpoint. Would like to have this conversation. Would like to see those who wish to serve on a committee appointed.

7. George Mansfield – At Large:

Wished everyone a Happy New Year.

8. Pam Wetherbee – Ward Three

Reminded everyone to clear their sidewalks when it snows. Got her check in the mail related to her property taxes.

9. Peggy Ross – Ward One:

Thank everyone for coming. Happy New Year and Welcome Councilman Harper. Thank you Councilman Kyriacou for sending that information around. When we discuss the prison issue, would like to include the dehumanization that occurs with prison workers as well as the treatment of the prisoners.

10. County Legislator Report:

- a. **John Forman:** Just a quick briefing on the county caucusing. Will meet on Tuesday night at the organizational meeting. Marc Molinaro will give his State of the County speech later this month.
- b. **John Landisi:** Thank those who put the ceremony together. Mayor did a great job over the past 4 years and Council did a great job over the past 2 years. Looking forward to working with everyone. His intent for these meeting is to give a report on the things that are meaningful to Beacon and Fishkill.

11. City Administrator, Anthony Ruggiero: Remind everyone that Christmas tree pick up starts today. In spite of the recent rain, we continue to be in a stage 2 drought. Gave an explanation about why we are still in a stage two situation. The reservoirs have come up but our reservoirs are at a higher elevation and do not sit on an aquifer so there is no recharging.

12. Mayor Casale's Report:

Happy and Healthy New Year. We need to continue our joyous time throughout the year. We cannot let small issue divide us. We need to work together and not let things splinter our community. We can't let Federal and State issues come between us. Thank Peggy Ross and Justin Riccobono for organizing the swearing in ceremony. Welcome, Omar aboard and I look forward to working with all of you. We will be forming a Charter Revision Commission together soon to review. And a committee to look at our comprehensive plan and linkage zone. We will be working with a planning consultant, funded through a NYS Grant. The Fire Department is pleased to announce the 2016 Volunteer Fire Officers:

Beacon Engine Company: Captain Anthony Fraioli; Mase Hook and Ladder: Capt Daniel Giralli and 1st Lt. Matthew Smith; Lewis Tompkins Hose Co.: Asst. Chief Dennis Lehey, 2nd Lt. Charles Delbene, 2nd Lt. Cory Dubetsky. The president are Frank Merritt, Beacon Engine; Robert Fontaine, Mase Hook and Ladder and Robert Meeker, Lewis Tompkins Hose Co.

Tax Collection Command Letter:

13. The City Administrator read the 2016 Tax Collection Command Letter into the record (letter at the end of these minutes)

Appointments:

14. Reappointment of Board and Committee Members

Motion by Councilman Muhammad, second by Councilwoman Ross

All in favor

7-0

15. Appointment of Ricardo Pacheco to the Human Relations Commission

Motion by Councilman Muhammad, second by Councilman Mansfield

All in favor

7-0

Mayor Casale explained that Rev. Pacheco lives in Wappingers but his church is in Beacon.

Resolutions, Ordinances and Local Laws:

16. Adopting the Rules and Procedures for Council Meetings

Motion by Councilwoman Wetherbee, second by Councilwoman Ross

All in favor

7-0

17. Designation of the Poughkeepsie Journal as the City's Newspaper of Record

Motion by Councilman Harper, second by Councilwoman Wetherbee

All in favor

7-0

18. Authorizing a Six-Month Extension of the Special Permit Related to 248 Tironda Avenue

Motion by Councilwoman Ross, second by Councilman Ali

All in favor

7-0

19. Authorizing the Renewal of the Contract with Keene and Bean For Legal Services for 2016

Motion by Councilman Muhammad, second by Councilman Harper

All in favor

7-0

20. Authorizing the Renewal of the Contract with Lanc and Tully for Engineering Services for 2016

Motion by Councilman Mansfield, second by Councilman Muhammad

All in favor

7-0

21. Authorizing the Renewal of the Contract with Video Ventures for Videotaping Services for 2016

Motion by Councilwoman Wetherbee, second by Councilman Muhammad

All in favor

7-0

22. Resolution to Authorize an Agreement with Vitascape for Grant Writing Services for 2016

Motion by Councilman Mansfield, second by Councilwoman Wetherbee

All in favor

7-0

Approval of Minutes of the December 21, 2015 Meeting

Minutes will be approved at the Jan. 19 meeting.

Budget Amendments:

None

Second Opportunity for Public Comments: Each speaker may have one opportunity to speak for up to three minutes on any subject matter on which the Council can take action.

None

Announcements/Introductions:

None

Next Workshop: January 11, 2016

Next Council Meeting: January 19, 2016

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Evans, Assistant to the Mayor

BEACON SPEAKS OUT

finding solutions together

Beacon Speaks Out (BSO) announces the publication of a new and improved *Complaint and Compliment Brochure*, which will be widely available to the citizenry in several public locations. It is the first of eight initiatives that also include programs for youth, community mediation, and improved communications. All of these efforts were sparked by a community-wide event in May 2015 to improve police-community relations in three main areas:

1. Strengthening Police Connections to the every part of Beacon's Diverse Community
2. Adopting Best Practices in the Beacon Police Department (BPD) to Improve Community Safety
3. Improving and Expanding Communication between the BPD and the Community

BSO members - together with government and police officials - met each week between June and December to turn the community's needs and ideas, expressed at the May event, into specific plans. Summarizing the spirit behind this effort, Mark Ungar (BSO member and professor at the CUNY Criminal Justice Doctoral Program) stated, "There is a tremendous interest in Beacon to proactively create a model of community-police collaboration."

Several BPD projects, such as Sectoral Policing and a dedicated Main Street Officer, were also reinforced from collaboration among the community and city government. Speaking on behalf of the BPD and City of Beacon officials, Chief Douglas Solomon asserted, "It has been my pleasure to have worked with Beacon Speaks Out over the past several months. I greatly appreciate not only the time and energy, but the concern that the group has shown and contributed to this cutting edge endeavor."

Commenting on the leadership shown by Mayor Randy Casale, who invited government and civic leaders in January of last year to help Beacon establish ways to improve relations between the BPD and the community, BSO co-founder Brooke Simmons (*I Am Beacon*) stated, "We are very pleased that the city has been so proactive in trying to improve relations between the police and the community."

To expand and continue this effort, BEACON SPEAKS OUT will be holding a second community-wide event from 1-3 PM on February 6, 2016 (Memorial Building / Bingo Hall at 413 Main Street, Beacon) to update citizens on the other initiatives resulting from the hundreds of responses collated from last May's meeting. Building on every participant's involvement in this process, goals for 2016 will be highlighted for discussion at the meeting.

Attend. Become involved. Speak your mind. Help make a difference!

For a description of the initiatives, please visit www.beaconspeaksout.org.

For more information on the February meeting, please contact **Beacon Speaks Out:**

- **Mark Ungar** (beaconspeaksout@gmail.com) / 845-831-5215
- **Brooke Simmons** (brooke@iambeacon.org) / 845-505-6820

I Took a Walk Today

I took a walk today down by the falls, in sunshine along the railroad
I tightroped the tracks and timed the ties to step along the day.
I took a walk today, by my magnificent river, under full moon and stars,
I reason an excuse for tides, for bridges, ferries, docks and parks.
I took a walk today to open up my spirit, to give me time.

Time to fly, time to recognize my ignorance,
Time to open up myself to all my possibilities,
Time to stop thinking of them and every detail in between.

I love where I am because it is where I am.
I love to watch, to look, to have this Earth around me.
I love to walk in sunshine, rain, fog and storm.
I love to be with those I love.
I love to challenge myself.
I love to be happy when I'm finished even though I fail.

I took a walk today and the sun shone down, the Earth shone up and
I shone in between, all one.