

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 22, 2019. Please note that the video recording of this meeting is available at <https://vimeo.com/channels/40154>.

Council Members Present:

Lee Kyriacou, At Large
George Mansfield, At Large
Terry Nelson, Ward One
Jodi McCredo, Ward Three
Amber Grant, Ward Four
Randy Casale, Mayor

Council Members Absent:

John Rembert, Ward Two

Also Present:

Anthony Ruggiero, City Administrator
Drew Victoria, City Attorney

A moment of silence was observed for those who serve and have served in the US military.

A second moment of silence was observed for Shannon M. Kent, a 35-year-old Navy Sailor from Pine Plains recently killed in Syria.

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:**Michal Mart:**

Believes that the affordable housing units being offered by the City of Beacon are not actually affordable, specifically 7 Creek Drive and 343 Main Street. She would like Hudson River Housing to report on the statistics of the applications for affordable housing in Beacon.

Dennis Pavelock:

Would like to know if anyone in Beacon is affected by the government shutdown (which, as of the Council meeting on January 22, had reached 32 days). He asked if there is anything City residents can do to help, such as bringing groceries or helping with daily activities and expenses.

Mr. Pavelock doesn't believe there is enough talk about closing down Beacon Engine. It is the wrong way to go. When this came up a few years ago it was standing room only in the courthouse. He believes that closing a firehouse is not the right answer and instead the City should fix up the firehouses.

Nicole Wooten, Conservation Action Committee (CAC) Member:

Gave three updates from the CAC (1) She congratulated Philipstown on receiving \$16,000 on December 18th for resiliency planning from a Climate Smart Communities grant. Seven million dollars in total were awarded to Climate Smart Communities. The CAC is looking forward to working with the City to appoint a Climate Smart Community Coordinator in order to receive access to additional grants. (2) The CAC has reviewed the Drinking Water Source Protection grant and has offered to work with the city to submit the grant. (3) She gave an update on the Natural Resources Inventory. The inventory maps are nearly complete. The writing will be done by the end of the month. The NY DEC 2018 Annual Hudson River Estuary Coordinator's Report has already recognized Beacon's CAC for their success in this area. She looks forward to sharing the report with the community when it is complete.

Theresa Kraft:

Ms. Kraft made two points (1) City council members reports are below par or non-existent. How is it possible that Council members have so little to report? (2) COB transfer station needs money, the conditions are unkept. It needs new windows. She posited that money saved from the use of solar panels could be used for this.

Public Hearings:

No. 1: Mental Health Event Announcement

Speakers:

Ruben Simmons, I Am Beacon member:

Mr. Simmons announced that there will be an event dedicated to mental health awareness and services on June 1, 2019 at Riverfront Park. There will be music and vendors. The goal is to showcase all of the services that are available for people seeking mental health solutions. If anyone would like to be a part of the planning or knows someone who provides a service, please contact Brandon Lillad at blil9407@my.msmc.edu. You can also reach I Am Beacon through their Facebook page. The general messaging for the event is destigmatizing intervention, prevention and wellness.

I Am Beacon is currently partnered with the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral and Community Health, NAMI Mid-Hudson, City of Beacon, HRH, and A little Beacon Blog.

No. 2: Motion for the continuation of a public hearing to receive public comment on a proposed Local Law to delete Chapter 183 entitled Signs and to amend Chapter 223 Sections 15 and 63 of the Code of the City of Beacon, concerning sign regulations in the City of Beacon.

Motion: Councilperson McCredo

Second: Councilperson Nelson

John Clarke:

The City of Beacon law regarding signs is being updated because of a decision by the Supreme Court which said all signs have to have equal status. The law being discussed during the public hearing attempts to come up with common ground where you can regulate all signs fairly. He recommended grandfathering in existing signs that may become non-compliant for two reasons. First, he predicts lots of push back from business groups and the chamber of commerce. Second, there is a high burden on the building department to take down the non-compliant signs all at the same time, especially considering there may be dozens of such signs.

Drew Gamils, City Attorney:

Stated that the holiday lights may have to be exempt within the law.

Theresa Kraft:

There is a sign on Verplank Avenue and Main Street which has been knocked over and has been laying on the ground for weeks. It should be upright. The same business is putting their sandwich board sign in a no parking zone. The City needs to enforce the laws already on the books, including the two-hour parking limit. She also believes that parking spaces on Main Street are too narrow.

Motion to close the public hearing:

- Motion made by Council person Nelson
- Seconded by Council person Grant

Council Member Reports:

Amber Grant:

Has an issue with material being presented at meetings that are not included in the agenda packet, thereby preventing the council and the public from having access to the presentations. Thanked the highway department for working very hard to keep streets clear during the recent snow storm.

Lee Kyriacou:

Commented on the public hearing regarding signs saying that he adamantly opposes the sign law. He believes the law is structured so that it maximizes the penalty the City can impose in terms of requirements. Instead, he proposed that the City take a minimalist approach. The

Council should not have many restrictions and for the most part, the Council should be permitting signs, particularly on residential properties. He asked if the Council could go through an annual list of things they would like to accomplish in workshop. His list last year included the following items: (1) tightening central main street zoning - he thinks this has been done successfully (2) planning for job creation - the Council has more work to do, and should look at areas of the city appropriate for zoning for job creation (3) managing Fishkill Creek development - he thinks this has been successfully accomplished (4) expand greenway trails - he would like to begin expansion on both sides of the creek of the greenway trail south of Route 9D (5) extending historic protections - the process has been started but not finished (6) strengthen planning and zoning boards – he believes the council has done that and he'd like to see that continue. He would like the unfinished items to be considered to the extent they have not been finished.

George Mansfield:

Reminded residents that the Dr. Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. Parade has been rescheduled for February 16th at 10 a.m. A lot of people have been asking him when their street would be paved. He asked if the City could put that information on the website.

Jodi McCredo:

Thanked the City for their work on the roads during the recent snow storm. She suggested that the City work closely with Hudson River Housing to solve affordable housing issues. The people who qualify for the housing couldn't possibly afford it as it is currently priced. Hudson Valley Community Power and Community Choice is an organization that allows pooling of energy amongst communities. They will be holding Q & A sessions at the following times and dates: January 30th at the Fishkill Recreation Center from 5:30 until 7:00; Jan 31st at the Mill House Brewing Company from 5:00 until 8:00; the Howland Public Library on February 2nd from 1:00 until 2:30. There will also be weekly community-hosted office hours to offer more information on Tuesdays in Poughkeepsie, Thursdays in Coldspring, and Wednesdays at the Beacon Recreation Center from 11:00 until 12:30.

Additionally, Ms. McCredo would like to bring community broadband to Beacon which would ensure that low income neighborhoods have access to broadband.

Terry Nelson:

Mr. Nelson got a lot of phone calls from people asking when they have to clear their sidewalk after a snow storm. The Mayor told him that people have 24 hours to shovel their sidewalk.

Anthony Ruggiero, City Administrator:

Mr. Ruggiero thanked the Highway Department for their work during the recent snow storm. He gave an update regarding prices for available affordable housing. One-bedroom apartments cost \$192,760, and two-bedroom apartments cost \$275,462. The current market rates are between \$800,000 and \$1,000,000 for those units. If you are interested, call Hudson River Housing to ensure that you qualify. Hudson River Housing can come in and give a presentation on affordable housing in Beacon.

Mayor Randy Casale:

Mayor Casale thanked the Public Works employees for cleaning the streets efficiently during the latest winter storm. He went on to make the following comments regarding the City's new public alert system:

"The Swift911 alert system is a messaging application that allows us to connect with thousands of city residents within seconds. We used the service twice last week to alert Beacon residents of impending inclement weather. Each time over 5,000 residents received our calls, texts and emails.

The response we received was overwhelmingly positive with residents calling to thank city hall for the new service. Within 24 hours of our first alert, the number of people who have volunteered their cell phones and emails increased over 100%. We are going to continue to use Swift 911 to alert Beacon residents about impending weather events and we hope to expand its use across several City departments. Anyone can sign up on our website to receive alerts directly to the phone via text, call or email."

Mayor Casale then showed a tutorial on how to sign up for the service via cityofbeacon.org. If you would like to watch the tutorial please refer to the video of this council meeting at the 50-minute mark.

The Mayor mentioned that owners renting out or selling affordable housing do have the right to ask for a credit check from potential renters/buyers who can be denied.

Resolutions, Ordinances and Local Laws:

- 1. A resolution adopting a Local Law to repeal Chapter 223, Article III, Section 24.8 and to amend Chapter 223, Attachment 2 of the Code of the City of Beacon concerning amusement centers containing only vintage amusement devices**

- Motion by Council person McCredo
- Second by Council person Nelson

John Clarke: This resolution takes away the existing conditions for vintage amusement centers. Further, vintage amusement centers will still be allowed. Now the City won't have a long list of special permit conditions that were on the books before.

- Resolution passes 6-0

2. A resolution appointing Collin Milone to position of Administrative Assistant to the Mayor

- Motion by Council person Nelson
- Second by Council person McCredo

Council person Grant:

Ms. Grant asked if a resolution needs to be passed for Collin Milone to work on Climate Smart Communities. Anthony Ruggiero, City Administrator, said it does not and the duties would be wrapped into his staff duty. Ms. Grant would like to let people know when an affirmative declaration is made on this decision to allow Collin Milone to work on Climate Smart Communities.

- Resolution passes 6-0

3. A resolution appointing Dave Buckley as the City of Beacon's Acting Building Inspector

- Motion by Council person Mansfield
- Second by Council person McCredo
- Resolution passes 6-0

4. A resolution authorizing reappointment of Kathleen Martin as Sole Assessor of the City of Beacon

- Motion by Council person McCredo
- Second by Council person Mansfield
- Resolution Passes 6-0

5. A resolution confirming the appointment of Conservation Advisory Committee Members Micah Slavkin and Danielle Levoit

- Motion by Council person Grant
- Second by Council person Nelson
- Resolution passes 6-0

6. A resolution confirming the appointment of Garrett P. Duquesne to the Zoning Board of Appeals

- Motion by Council person Mansfield
- Second by Council person Kyriacou
- Resolution passes 6-0

7. A resolution confirming the reappointment of various Board and Committee Members

- Motion by Council person Mansfield
- Second by Council person Grant

Council person Jodi McCredo:

Ms. McCredo believes it is a good idea to get some fresh blood onto the planning board. She appreciates the work that has been done by the Planning Board. However, she believes that it might be a good idea to look at some turnover. She would like more transparency in the appointments of board and committee members. The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) and Planning Boards have 3-year appointments and terms are staggered so as to avoid interruptions to continuity.

Mayor Casale:

Essentially said that continuity leads to success. He also said that the Planning Board can't stop projects just because people don't like projects. He said that he does not make appointments based upon political affiliation, although that is what happened in the past.

Council person Amber Grant:

Ms. Grant wants more transparency from the Mayor's office regarding committee applications and appointments.

Council person Lee Kyraicou:

Mr. Kyriakou pointed out that the appointments are made by the Mayor and approved by the Council. He went on to say that there are members of the ZBA he could vote off when they do come up for reappointment based upon his observation of a ZBA meeting.

Drew Gamil, City Attorney:

Confirmed that it is legal to invite potential reappointed members to the next council workshop and have a discussion to learn about their thinking processes and to learn what they have learned along the way.

Council person Lee Kyraicou:

Made a motion to separate the proposed reappointed members of the Zoning and Planning board from the rest of the proposed reappointed board and committee members and to invite those members of ZBA and Planning Board to the next workshop meeting.

- Motion: Council person Kyraicou
- Second: Council person McCredo
- Motion Passes 6-0

Anthony Ruggiero, City Administrator:

Advised the Council against making appointments to boards and committees a political matter and also mentioned that if the proposed reappointed members are not reappointed, then they will become holdovers.

- Resolution passes 4-2 (Mayor Casale and George Mansfield voted no)

Council person George Mansfield:

Mr. Mansfield made the following observation: If we are going to invite the ZBA and Planning Board members to the Council in order to essentially interview them, then according to that principle, shouldn't we be inviting proposed reappointed members of all boards and committees?

Mayor Casale:

Believes that this motion is part of a witch hunt.

Council person Jodi McCredo:

Said she is not trying to single anyone out and she appreciates all of the work the volunteers do. She also said that the Human Relations Commission could and should have more people on the board. She wants more transparency in the application and appointment process for boards and committees. She believes that it is in her right as a Council person to have clarification on some decisions that were made by the ZBA and Planning Board. She would not be opposed to having the conversation with the proposed members in an executive session.

Council person George Mansfield and Council person Amber Grant rescinded their original motions to vote on all of the reappointed members in favor of the following resolution.

7. A resolution to reappoint members to the CAC, Tree Committee, and Human Relations Commission

- Motion by Councilperson Grant
- Second by Councilperson Nelson
- Resolution passes 5-1 (Mayor Casale voted no)

8. A Resolution to refer the concept plan for Chai Builders Corp. to the Dutchess County Planning Board and the City Planning Board for report and recommendation

John Clarke described the details of the resolution. The wetlands are getting smaller in that area. The Council decided to ask the City Attorney to write a resolution to refer Concept Plan B to the Planning Board.

- Motion by Council person Nelson
- Seconded by Council person McCredo
- Resolution passes 6-0

9. A resolution adopting the City of Beacon Procurement Policy

- Motion by Council person Amber Grant
- Seconded by Council person Terry Nelson

Council person Amber Grant:

Asked for a summary of the Procurement Policy. Anthony Ruggiero informed the Council that not much has changed from the 2018 Procurement Policy however there is one notable addition. The Local Business Consideration Quote applies to written quotations between an annual rate of \$5,000 – \$19,999 if the local bidder is within 10% of the lowest responsive responsible bidder, they have a chance to match the lowest bid. The goal is to give local firms a chance to win the bid.

- Resolution passes 6-0

10. A resolution to award the Contract for Green Street Park Improvements to Beacon Residential, LLC

- Motion by Amber Grant
- Seconded by Terry Nelson

Mayor Casale read a letter from a resident who lives near the park. The resident was not in favor of the proposed changes primarily because they would eliminate a flat area where neighborhood children can ride their bikes.

Councilperson George Mansfield:

Asked how we got to the point of this vote? How much public input has there been?

Anthony Ruggiero, City Administrator:

Explained that this is \$60,000 from a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) originally allocated for South Avenue Park. He suggested that the money may be able to be folded into the master plan so as not to spend the CDBG grant money of \$60,000 just to turn around and have that project contradict the master plan in a few years. However, he needs Dutchess County approval to fold the \$60,000 into the master plan because there is a time limit on the funding and it has already been moved from one project to another.

Council person Jodi McCredo:

Would like a gate to add accessibility to Green Street Park.

Council person Amber Grant and Council person Terry Nelson rescinded their motions.

Motion to table until next workshop

- Motion by Council person Amber Grant
- Second by Council person Jodi McCredo
- Motion passes 6 - 0

11. A resolution to retain Henningson, Durham & Richardson Architecture and Engineering, P.C. to review plans for the proposed 110 Howland Avenue wireless telecommunication special use permit application

- Motion Councilperson Nelson
- Second Councilperson McCredo
- Resolution passes 6-0

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.

Speakers:

No speakers

Adjournment:

- Motion by Council person Grant
- Second by Council person Nelson
- Motion passes 6-0

Next Workshop: January 28, 2019

Next Meeting: February 4, 2019