

**Auburn City Council
Regular Meeting
Thursday, July 8, 2021 5:00 P.M.
City Council Chambers
Memorial City Hall
24 South St.
Auburn, NY 13021**

Minutes

The meeting of the Auburn City Council was called to order at 5:00 p.m. from the City Council Chambers, 24 South St. Auburn, NY by Mayor Quill.

ROLL CALL – The City Clerk called the roll. Councilor Deb McCormick, Councilor Jimmy Giannettino, Councilor Terry Cuddy, Councilor Tim Locastro and Mayor Quill were all present.

The following City Staff was present for the meeting:

- City Manager, Jeff Dygert
- Corporation Counsel, Stacy DeForest
- City Clerk, Chuck Mason
- Police Chief, Shawn Butler
- Fire Chief, Mark Fritz
- City Engineer, Bill Lupien
- Police Lieutenant James Slayton

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag – Mayor Quill led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moment of Silent Prayer or Reflection – Mayor Quill asked for a moment of silent prayer.

Public Announcements – none

CEREMONIAL PRESENTATIONS –

Mayor Quill asked the members of Council to dispense of the rules of the meeting so that the meeting could be dedicated to a ceremony to recognize retiring Chief of Police Shawn Butler. No members opposed.

1. Mayor Quill introduced City Manager Jeff Dygert
2. City Manager provides opening remarks about Chief Butler. City Manager then introduced Chris Major and John Breeze representing the APD police officers union for remarks. The officers spoke.

3. Mayor Quill introduced NYS Senator Pamela Helming. Senator Helming spoke and made a presentation to Chief Butler.
4. Mayor Quill introduced Senator John Mannion. NYS Senator Mannion spoke and made a presentation to Chief Butler.
5. Mayor Quill introduced Former Assemblyman Gary Finch. Mr. Finch spoke.
6. Mayor Quill introduced Patrick Cameron representing Assemblyman John Lemondes. Assemblyman speaks. Mr. Cameron spoke.
7. Mayor Quill introduced Sheriff Brian Schenk. Sheriff Schenk spoke.
8. Mayor Quill introduces Dave Stebbins, representative from NYS Troopers. Mr. Stebbins spoke.
9. Mayor Quill introduces former Police Chief Gary Giannotta. Chief Giannotta spoke.
10. Mayor Quill introduces Chief Steve Rotunno, Town of Cicero Police Department representing the CNY Chapter of the NYS Association of Chiefs of Police. Chief Rotunno spoke.
11. Mayor Quill introduces Tom Haag representing Congressman John Katko. Mr. Haag spoke and made a presentation to Chief Butler.
12. Mayor Quill invites Chief Shawn Butler to speak.

Police Chief Shawn Butler made the following remarks:

I am truly humbled and quite honestly, undeserving of all this fanfare. There are so many people responsible for any of my successes that I've enjoyed over 25 years of service to this community. There have been so many hands lifted me up. And my team are truly the ones who deserve praise, accolades and recognition. I was just simply one piece of the puzzle that makes up APD. With that said, Where has 25 years gone? I still remember sitting in the police academy, and one of our instructors telling us don't blink, before you know it, it's all gonna be over. And now here we are. I'm filled with mixed emotions. Excited, happy, anticipatory for what adventures lie ahead for my family and I but also sad, anxious and uncertain about what life will look like when I hang up the uniform for the last time. So, several years ago, the deputy chief and I had the opportunity to travel to San Diego for a police Leadership Conference. The keynote speaker was someone that I've never heard of or before and quickly became a fan of, his name was Simon Sinek. And he introduced me to the term and title of his famous book, Start With Why. Hearing him speak and reading his book put my career and life into perspective, in a powerful way, by begging the question for all of us relative to our career in our life, can we all answer the basic why? Why do we do what we do? What is our cause, our mantra, our purpose in life, our why? Circling back to my career with the City of Auburn, this job has fulfilled everything that I ever hoped that it would. It has been my life's work and has defined me as a person and challenged and pushed me far beyond what I thought I was personally capable of. My interest in law enforcement started when I was very young. I was always enamored by the imagery of a police officer, what they stood for, the car, the whole aura. And that made up the police officer image. From that point on, and after watching probably every episode of CHIPS and Cops growing up, my dream was realized in law enforcement was what I wanted to do. I often reflect with anxiety of what I would have would have been doing if my dream was not fulfilled in 1996. But here we are 25 years later and a lifetime of memories ago, and I would not have changed a thing. Fast forward to 2012. Having been on the job for 16 years at the time, I was fortunate to have been given an opportunity to interview for the chief of police job after

former chief Gary Giannotta announced his retirement. At that time, I was a lieutenant assigned to lead our Detective Bureau and I thought I was ready for this next step. Luckily, I was not selected because looking back at myself nine years ago, I was not prepared both personally or professionally to lead this department. Though our department struggled during the next four years under a different leadership style and gave me the opportunity to hone develop and mature my leadership skills in the chance that I would be given the opportunity to lead APD again in the future. I returned to college to finish my undergrad undergraduate degree. I became heavily involved in volunteering with numerous organizations in our community and I learned from the experience of what not to do for the sake of our staff and our community. My time serving the City of Auburn has been filled with so many joyous events. But as is the nature of policing I've seen and felt tragedy as well. Through other people's grief, I've learned new depths of compassionate empathy and service. And it made lifelong friends to include the Socci and Bell families who are both here tonight. Investigating the tragic and untimely deaths of their children changed me as an officer and as a person, and helped me realize what my true purpose was in serving others as a police officer, something that transformed me into the leader I leave here today and what has also defined my why, in the profession of policing. Experiences like these and dozens more like them, coupled with the amazing support from my family have filled me with memories that will stay with me forever. I would be remiss if I did not specifically thank some very important people in my life that supported me along the way in attaining this position as chief of police while allowing me to serve the City of Auburn for the past 25 years. My wife Laurie, the woman that convinced me that I could love and be loved again. She's been my biggest supporter in life. Laurie has pushed me to pursue all of my dreams and without her, me standing here would not have been a reality. For that and so much more. I say thank you and I love you. Our children, Marissa, Tony, who's serving in the US Army, currently stationed at Fort Drum could not be here, my daughter, Emma, my son, Ethan. Does everyone know how hard it is to be the child of a cop? Let alone the chief? Ask them about growing up in Fort Knox. Seriously, though, thank you for all your love and support for all and for all growing up to be amazing, independent, independent and successful kids. Laurie, and I could not have asked for anything more from each of you. My family, many of whom are here tonight and some that could not attend. I know what you thought 25 years ago when I became a police officer. You all said to yourselves, Shawn a cop? No way. Even though you're still shaking your heads. I thank you all for supporting me through this adventure and being here today. This also includes my extended family the Wilsons, Marcus and Katrina. Your friendship and support to Lori and I has been invaluable. Deputy Chief Roger Anthony who unfortunately, is not here tonight. If you knew Roger, it's the member guest at Highland. There are priorities in life. Certain things you cannot miss even if it's a downpour outside. But seriously, Roger and I are only separated by six months in service here at APD and we came up through the ranks side by side. Roger was everything I needed, as a friend, a co worker and a counselor. He always had a knack on how to recenter and get me to see a different perspective relative to any challenge we faced. Nothing rattles him. The world could be collapsing around Roger and you would never know it. Always calm, cool collected. That's Roger. So Roger, thank you for you've been instrumental in my success as well as our departments. Former Chief Gary Giannotta, thank you for your leadership and seeing something in me when you hired me in 1996 and subsequently promoted me to Patrol Sergeant 2005. And then again,

you didn't learn the first time, to Lieutenant in 2009. You were always willing to listen to my ideas and let me run with many of them. You encouraged my desire to further my leadership trainings as well as explore different aspects of the policing profession. I still question you how you stayed police chief for 16 years. But as you always say, it was it was easy because you had good people surrounding you. But 16 years, I thank you. Our APD family, the officers, command staff, professional employees. I know and you heard some tonight, I know I subjected you to a lot of demands and changes over the past five years. But I'm hopeful you all see the results of your efforts, and that the changes were necessary. Our organization I'm very proud to say as a revered police department, not only in our community, but our surrounding partner agencies. And that is because of all your hard work, determination and deliverance of excellence each and every day. Please remember to always be accountable to yourself, those you serve and continually challenge yourselves to be the very best officers you can be. And always, always remember, never become complacent. Your number one priority is to return to your family at the end of every shift. To my assistant Chris Wilkinson, a very special thank you for everything you have done for Roger and I as well as our employees. She is the glue that keeps our organization together and she is a huge asset and I thank her for that. To my successor, who I can't name it this time. But as I prepare prepare to pass you the torch that lights and leads the APD organization I wish you nothing but success and longevity. I'm confident in your abilities, your desire to make APD better and to grow this organization with new ideas. One piece of advice I would have for you is to continue building upon our relationships because as you know, we the police cannot be the solution for all of society's problems. We need to work collaboratively with not only community members but the many resources we have available here in Cayuga County and beyond. You heard that stated many times. This is not always an easy task but is a necessity. It really is the secret to our department's current successes. And lastly, take care of your people. Without their help, health and happiness. We cannot care for our community. If you care for them, they will care for you. And remember, I'm always a phone call or email away. Only if I have coverage. To our partner agencies. The Cayuga County Sheriff's Office, Sheriff Schenk, the New York State Police, Major Barry Chase, Captain Dave Stebbins, Cayuga Counseling Services Heather Petrus, Auburn Fire Department Chief Fritz, the school district, Nick's Ride, CAP, our courts, EMS, ACH, Harriet Tubman Center for Justice and Peace, Human Rights Commission. These are just a few of our partner agencies in this community. The list is long, but without each of your agencies and your staff we could never do the great work that we have accomplished by our collective employees and for that I thank you all. My fellow city of Auburn employees, especially our department head team, I was blessed to work with this group of professionals, all stars, as I like to refer to them. We collaborate every week. We have grown with each other. We have had many successes and I thank you all for the partnerships and your guidance in leading me as well. Mayor Quill, City Council including former Councillor Carbajal, I thank you for entrusting me with the opportunity to lead APD into the future. And I thank you for your consistent support, encouragement along the way, and without that this job would have been 100 times harder. But your faith in me made a world of difference especially during the last two years when it was popular in some parts of our nation to condemn and dismantle police agencies. Each of you stood steadfast alongside your police department and for that we are stronger, better and more resilient. A special thank you to Councilor Jimmy Giannettino who for over the past five years has

become a dear friend and confidant. Thank you also for teaching me everything I never wanted to know about politics. And I definitely know what I'm not going to be doing in retirement. No offense. City Manager Jeff Dygert. Who would have ever thought that a fire chief turned city manager, who likes heavy metal music, is a part time motorhead, would turn out to be one of the very best city managers Auburn has ever had. Your leadership, guidance, mentorship and friendship have been instrumental to my success. I also thank you for believing in me and giving me this opportunity to grow as a person and as a leader for always being willing to guide me towards the best solution to any problem or question that I laid on your desk. And we know there were lots. The city of Auburn is fortunate to have you steering the ship and I look forward to watching you grow our city into the future. A firefighter, who knew? Last and absolutely not least the citizens of Auburn in the place I've raised my family and called home for the past 25 years. There's no other place I would rather to have completed my career as a police officer than here serving this great community. Auburn is unique, it is historic, it is vibrant, it's alive, and though Laurie and I will be leaving to live our next chapter in a warmer climate, we will be back. While we are traveling the country we'll be watching from afar seeing how our city continues to prosper. We will always be residents of Auburn, and you will always forever be in a place in our heart. In closing, I need to acknowledge a dear friend who was taken from us way too early, Detective Doug Parker. As many of you know, Doug passed away in July 16 2019, which also marks the final day of service for me with APD. I miss Doug every day and wish he were here to celebrate with us but I know he's watching overhead saying good job, kid. So, back to Simon Sinek's book, Start With Why. For Laurie and I finding our purpose and our why has now transformed into living our why. My career thus far has been about service to others, for my purpose and my why in life. Laura and I have also found our why in each other. And we are now ready to explore and live our why with travels, adventures, new experiences, new people and new ways to serve others. Gone but not forgotten we thank you and love you all. Thank you.

13. Mayor Quill and members of City Council spoke, followed by a presentation of a Key To The City to Chief Butler for his 25 Years of service.

Mayor Quill then asked Council to dispense with any other business for the evening and all agreed.

ADJOURNMENT: By unanimous vote the Council adjourned the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m..

Minutes submitted by:

Chuck Mason, City Clerk