

Auburn City Council Meeting, January 11, 2024

**Auburn City Council
Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 11, 2024 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 James N. Giannettino, Jr..

ROLL CALL – The City Clerk called the roll. Mayor Giannettino and Councilor Ginny Kent, Councilor Rhoda Overstreet-Wilson, Councilor Terry Cuddy and Councilor Christina Calarco were present.

The following City Staff was present for the meeting:

- City Manager, Jeff Dygert
- City Clerk, Chuck Mason
- Corporation Counsel, Nate Garland
- Police Chief, Jim Slayton
- Director of Planning and Economic Development, Jennifer Haines

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

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

Public Announcements –

The City of Auburn Historic Resources Review Board will not have a meeting in January due to no applications to go before the board.

Ceremonial Presentations –

WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. devoted his life to advancing equality, social justice, and opportunity for all, and challenged all Americans to participate in the never-ending work of building a more perfect union; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King's teachings can continue to guide and inspire us in addressing challenges in our communities; and

WHEREAS, the King Holiday and Service Act, enacted in 1994, designated the King Holiday as a National Day of Volunteer service, and charged the Corporation for National and Community Service with leading this effort; and

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WHEREAS, since 1994, millions of Americans have been inspired by the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to serve their neighbors and communities on the King Holiday; and

WHEREAS, serving on the King Holiday is an appropriate way to honor Dr. King. Through service we can build more equitable and just communities to underpin racial equity, expand civic opportunities, and foster respect for individual differences; and

WHEREAS, the King Day of Service theme this year is *“Shifting the Cultural Climate through the Study and Practice of Kingian Nonviolence”*. This theme defines the 2024 King Holiday Observance events and programming while serving as a compass for all the work we will do this upcoming calendar year and beyond. The pioneering work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. demonstrated that Kingian Nonviolence (Nonviolence365™) is the sustainable solution to injustice and violence in our world, ultimately leading to the creation of the Beloved Community, where injustice ceases and love prevails.; and

WHEREAS, each of us can and must contribute, support, and implement projects that increase economic opportunities, improve education, support veterans and military families, help combat the opioid crisis, and help communities prepare for and recover from disasters.

WHEREAS, citizens of the City of Auburn have the opportunity to participate in events throughout our city on the MLK Day of Service, January 15, 2024, as well as create and implement community service projects where they identify the need; City Council and the citizens of Auburn, do hereby proclaim January 15, 2024, as a Day of Service in honor of

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

in the City of Auburn, and call upon the people of this community to pay tribute to the life and works of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. through civic, community & service projects on Martin Luther King Day and throughout the year.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Auburn to be affixed this Eleventh Day of January 2024.

James N. Giannettino, Jr, Mayor

City of Auburn, New York

Pastor Robert E. Wilson, Chairperson of the City of Auburn Human Rights Commission accepted the proclamation from Mayor Giannettino. Pastor Wilson spoke on the importance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

Public to be heard: The City Clerk read the rules for Public To Be Heard. Steve Gamba of 130 North Street spoke to address an abandoned vehicle on a neighboring property from where he resides. Andrew Bishop spoke on matters pertaining to Owasco Lake. Christine DeChick of Pimm Avenue spoke on matters she is experiencing with a neighboring property involving code enforcement. Former Mayor Tim Lattimore of South Street spoke and stated he has a portrait that he will be delivering to the City Clerk for installation in Council Chambers at City Hall.

Approval of Meeting Minutes –

January 4, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the December 14, 2023 minutes by Councilor Kent, seconded by Councilor Overstreet-Wilson. Motion to approve carried 5-0.

Reports of City Officials

City Manager’s Report –

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- Snow Storm update: Thanks to our Public Works crews for another excellent job clearing city streets this past weekend. It looks like it may have been a good practice run for this coming weekend.
- Wind storm update: Currently, there are an estimated 50 City of Auburn NYSEG customers without power.
- On Tuesday night Jan. 9th, our police and fire crews began responding to numerous trees and wires down calls. The on-duty public works staff was soon overwhelmed and off-duty crews were recalled. The fire department was also overwhelmed and recalled crews to better respond to high volumes of calls. Some of these calls are simple investigations, while others required intervention or crews to standby and protect an incident. Due to significant structural damage, our Code Enforcement Officers also responded that night to speed up the process of building evaluation. During this time all of the usual calls for service for police, fire, and EMS remained consistent and were addressed. Tree work is dangerous on the best days and removals in the dark, in high winds and in the presence of unknown electric hazards is extremely dangerous. I'd like to thank all of our city crews that provided service Tuesday night and also recognize the extraordinary efforts of our Cayuga County 911 Dispatchers.
- The storm blew out a wall at the Casey Park Ice Rink as well as uprooting a significant number of trees in and around the park. The City Police Station also suffered some minor roof damage.
- 16 tons of debris was removed Tuesday night.
- Early Wednesday morning, we gathered several department heads and Mayor Giannettino to plan the days response to the storm. As daylight broke, call volume for emergency services and trees down increased. The city was divided into quadrants and departments teamed up to evaluate and inventory structural damage, trees down, wires down, etc. Our DPW and Municipal Utility crews joined forces to continue tree removals and clean ups. At times tree removals were stalled due to our inability to work on trees tangled up in live wires. Our crews removed 95.86 tons of tree debris on Wednesday. Our Public Works crews went from a significant snow storm event almost directly into a multiday wind storm event. The Codes Department and Engineering Department teamed up to evaluate structures damaged by falling trees and determine what trees were in the city right of way. The Fire Department continued to respond to a variety of calls for hazards, including electric issues and alarms. Our Police Department assisted in enforcing parking which enabled tree crews to access their work areas. The Planning Department reached out to elderly care and living facilities that were without power to address their needs.
- Due to prolonged power loss in some areas the city worked with the Auburn School District, Cayuga County Emergency Management, and the Red Cross to set up a warming shelter at Genesee Elementary School. This shelter has now been closed as power has been restored.
- We understand there can be frustration when our daily routines are disrupted. I assure all our residents and business owners that the city and our community partners, including NYSEG have and will continue to put extraordinary effort into restoring power and routine. At the peak NYSEG reports there were 14211 customers without power in the Auburn area, this afternoon that number is down to 2200. NYSEG brought 250-line crews into Auburn before the storm. Currently there are 425-line crews, 45 tree crews, and nearly 100 other support crews in the Auburn area working to restore power and assess damage. The majority of these resources will stay in the area until the next storm system passed this weekend.
- In response to the anticipated need for tree and brush debris removal from private property the City of Auburn is offering a special yard waste clean-up schedule. See attached flyer.

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- The weather forecast is calling for more precipitation and sustained high winds over the weekend. Please keep the following safety points in mind:
- Auburn City Ambulance has been extremely busy since January first and we continue to work with our mutual aid partners to provide service in and around the city. In the first nine days of the year, we experienced a more than 30% increase in call volume. As an example of prior call volumes, Christmas Eve the service responded to 23 calls, eleven of those calls were interfacility transports out of Auburn Community Hospital, of those, 2 were to Albany Medical Center and 2 were to Pennsylvania. On New Years Eve there were simultaneously 2 interfacility transfers to Albany and one to Rochester. The emergency medical care system is under tremendous stress all over. I'd like to acknowledge the collaboration of our neighboring ambulance services like Fleming, Throop, and Owasco who we regularly provide reciprocal service with in order to respond to the needs of the larger combined community.

Reports from members of Council –

Councilor Overstreet-Wilson announced the public is invitd to join the 49th Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration on January 14, 2024, at 4 p.m. at the Auburn First Church of God in Christ Church on Garrow Street in the City of Auburn, NY.

Matters to Come Before Council

A. State Environmental Quality Review Act Resolutions (SEQR) –

B. Ordinances – none

C. Local Laws – none

D. Resolutions –

E. Staff or Vendor Presentations –

Presentation from Joe Nehme – Senior Manager, External Affairs, Micron. At the invitation of Mayor Giannettino several members of the community were in attendance to hear this presentation on the Micron project to be built in Clay, NY and the impact it will have on the entire region. There is a community engagement survey available for people to provide input. The Central New York Community Engagement Committee (CEC) was formed to identify community priorities and create a framework for directing investments in areas such as education, housing, workforce development with an emphasis on underrepresented communities (women, people of color, rural communities, and veterans), child care, transportation, infrastructure and more.

The CEC will establish the Community Priorities Document which will serve as a guiding strategy to ensure the greater Central New York benefits from the Community Investment Fund. Learn how you can get involved and share your thoughts as we embark on this journey together. This presentation was

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recorded and is on the city website. Those in attendance included Jenny Haines of the City Planning and Economic Development Office, Dan Kolinsky from the Central New York Regional Economic Development Council, Auburn School Superintendent Jeff Pirrozolla and assistant Superintendents Amy Mahunick, Canille Johnson and Renee Burgess from the school district. Cayuga County Legislators Elane Daly and Brian Muldrow, AIDA Chairperson Gwen Webber McLeod, Maureen Riester of Cayuga Economic Development Council, Melody Smith Johnson of Melody's co-working space, Matt Ferg of A and M Graphics, Pastor Ted Freeman, and David Steigerwald,

TABLED ITEMS – none

Second Public to be Heard: none

OTHER BUSINESS – none

Executive Session: Councilor Cuddy made a motion to enter Executive Session, seconded by Councilor Calarco. Council voted to enter an executive session regarding the following matters:

- One matter pertaining to collective bargaining.
- Three matters pertaining to the sale, lease or acquisition of real property.

The motion to enter executive session carried 5-0. The Council entered Executive Session at 6:39 p.m. Executive session adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: By unanimous vote the Council adjourned the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m..

Minutes submitted by: Chuck Mason, City Clerk