

**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING
OF THE SCHENECTADY CITY COUNCIL
March 9, 2026**

The City Council meeting was called to order by the City Council President Carl Williams at 7:00 P.M. in room 209, City Council chambers at City Hall.

Mr. Williams called on Reverend James Konicki of Holy Name of Jesus National Catholic Church to offer the invocation prayer.

Mr. Williams then called on Councilwoman Kim Wiggins to lead the pledge of allegiance.

The City Clerk called the roll, and the following members of the City Council answered to be present:

Present: Councilmembers – Justin Chaires, Hayden Engert, John Mootoveren, Kim Wiggins, and Carl Williams

Also Present: Mayor Gary R. McCarthy, City Clerk Samanta R. Mykoo, and Corporation Counsel Maxine L. Barasch, Esq.

Absent: Councilmembers – Doreen Ditoro and Carmel Patrick

At this time, Mr. Williams yielded the floor to Mayor Gary R. McCarthy to present a proclamation to Hector Vega in recognition of 36 years of service to the City of Schenectady.

Afterwards, Mr. Williams yielded the floor to Councilman Justin Chaires to present the following ceremonial resolution:

Resolution 2025-030 Recognizing March 2026 as Irish American Heritage Month
The resolution was moved by Mr. Chaires and seconded by Mr. Mootoveren. The resolution was accepted by the Vice President of the Schenectady Ancient Order of Hibernians Keith Maguire. Him, along with other members of the organization thanked the mayor and city council for the recognition.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Regarding the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA)

Mr. Williams invited all who wished to address the Council regarding the Public Hearing to come forward:

Ellie Pepper – *See comments on file in the Department of Development.*

Seeing no further speakers come forward, Ms. Porterfield declared the Public Hearing closed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Williams asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2026, Council meeting, as submitted by the City Clerk. Mr. Mootoveren made a motion to approve the minutes, and Mr. Chaires seconded the motion.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

None.

COMMUNICATIONS PRESENTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL:

Official:

None.

General:

From Broderick, Fuller, Nekola – American Legion Post 1005, a thank you letter for the donation to their post.

From American Legion Post 1485, a letter expressing appreciation for the donation to their post.

Petitions:

None.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS):

Mr. Williams invited all who wished to address the Legislative Agenda to come forward or otherwise submit their comments to the City Clerk:

Marion Porterfield – Addressed prior statements made by council members regarding the city’s trash task force, stating that those comments placed blame on her. It was noted that her recommendations had been submitted but not considered, and that multiple members had left the committee. Emphasis was placed on the need for operational staff input, clearer cost analysis, and appropriate administrative responsibility in developing waste management policies. **See attached comments*

Seeing no further speakers come forward, Mr. Williams declared the Privilege of the Floor regarding Legislative Items, to be closed.

INTRODUCTION OF AND ACTION UPON LOCAL LAWS, ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

Mr. Williams made a motion that the Council approve the Consent Agenda, the motion was moved by Mr. Chaires and seconded by Mr. Mootoveren.

Consent Agenda

- Ordinance No. 2026-01.....Adopted Unanimously
- Ordinance No. 2026-02.....Adopted Unanimously

Ordinance No. 2026-03.....	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2026-030.....	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2026-031.....	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2026-032.....	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2026-033.....	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2026-034.....	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2026-035.....	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2026-036.....	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2026-037.....	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2026-038.....	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2026-039.....	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2026-040.....	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2026-041.....	Adopted Unanimously

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Mr. Williams directed all who wished to discuss any items for City Business to come forward or otherwise submit their comments to the City Clerk.

Ellie Pepper – Criticized the mayor’s decision to file a lawsuit challenging the council’s appointment of Justin Chaires, stating that the council followed the city charter and that the legal action caused unnecessary delay and expense before the court ultimately ordered him to be seated. Concerns were raised about the use of taxpayer funds for the lawsuit and the influence of party endorsements in determining who serves in city government. Remarks also pointed to low voter turnout and referenced recent endorsement patterns, including impacts on Black elected officials, suggesting that key decisions may be shaped more by internal political processes than by voters.

Marion Porterfield – Thanked Councilmember Wiggins chairing the housing stability task force and noted strong community interest in the effort. Appreciation was also shared for council actions helping residents remain in their homes through tax foreclosure redemptions. Concluded by recognizing Women’s History Month and sharing a quote from Maya Angelou.

Seeing no further speakers come forward, Mr. Williams declared the Privilege of the Floor regarding City Business to be closed.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

Mayor Gary R. McCarthy – Stated he has no ill will to Justin Chaires but criticized the council’s appointment process as inconsistent and lacking transparency, citing closed-door interviews and procedural concerns. Also addressed the city’s garbage program, stating that the current system is difficult to manage without limits on the amount of waste, and expressed interest in working with the council to establish clearer and more effective guidelines.

Carl Williams – Responded to the mayor’s comments about the appointment of Justin Chaires, defending the council’s process and disputing the suggestion that the appointment was handled improperly. Stated that the council acted within its authority and that criticism of the process had been overstated. Also commented on the city’s garbage program, explaining that the legislation was intended to create a more equitable and sustainable system. Acknowledged that implementation has been difficult, including issues with enforcement, bag limits, and loopholes in the sticker system. Support was expressed for revisiting the program, incorporating operational input, and making changes so the system is clearer, more manageable, and fairer for residents. Concluded by highlighting recent accomplishments in the city, including the YWCA's Harbor House groundbreaking, Holi celebrations, and Proctors' 100th anniversary, while also voicing solidarity with local educators regarding Tier 6 pension concerns.

Adjourned:

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Mr. Williams asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was moved by Mr. Mootoveren and seconded by Mr. Chaires. The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

A true record

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Samanta R. Mykoo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

By: Samanta R. Mykoo
Schenectady City Clerk



BRODERICK - FULLER - NEKOLA
AMERICAN LEGION POST 1005
951 NORWOOD AVENUE
SCHENECTADY, N.Y. 12303

KOREA



VIETNAM



Jabonon/Grenada; August 24, 1982 to
July 31, 1984;

PHONE (518) 356-1878

Panama; December 20, 1989 to January
31, 1990;

Persian Gulf; August 2, 1990 to cessation
of hostilities as determined by U.S. Govt.

CITY CLERK
CITY HALL
109 ST
SCHENECTADY NY
12303

February 19, 2026

ON BEHALF OF ALL THE MEN & OFFICERS OF OUR
AMERICAN LEGION POST #1005, WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK
YOU FOR YOUR DONATION TO OUR POST. I'M SURE THAT
IT WILL PUT TO GOOD USE.

Sincerely,
James M. Shure
Commander



AMERICAN LEGION POST 1485

3/2/2026

To Samanta Mykoo, City Clerk.

The members of American Legion Post 1485 thank
the City of Schenectady for the check of \$1,000.00.

Sincerely yours
Pils Hedlund
Post adj.

March 9, 2026

Greetings Council President, Councilmembers, and Mayor.

I am here to address item number 2 on the Consent Agenda regarding trash. I will start by addressing Ms. Ditoro's remarks from the last committee meeting on February 2, 2026, regarding garbage pickup. As the discussion was taking place, Ms. Ditoro said, and I quote, "Miss Porterfield was on the task force. Miss Porterfield didn't want to pass anything through, and she eventually left the committee so there was really nothing we could do to move anything forward." Her comments begin at 1:32:45 in the video.

That is a very distorted version of the truth. She forgot to mention that Matt Douglas, former city employee Mike Hamilton, who produced Schenectady By The Numbers, and Billy Macejka also left the committee.

That is just one version of the story. Another version was given on October 14, 2025, by Mr. Engert, while he was running for office. He came to the rail and said that the whole waste program was a failure pushed out under my leadership. He read a statement that was worded very carefully, not to tell a blatant lie, but to imply that I was the architect of the sticker program. His comments are at 38:30 in the video.

Ms. Ditoro, who attended the Waste Committee meetings, states that the bulk item suggestion was made after my departure from the committee. That is two extremely different versions of the story. The only thing they have in common is let's try to blame Marion Porterfield for this trash debacle.

The fact is, I sat on that committee beginning January 30, 2024, and after attending a number of meetings with no outcomes, in March 2024, I sent a document outlining some recommendations on how we can move forward. Only Matt Douglas from SPD responded positively to the idea. I also brought printed copies to the next meeting. My recommendations were never considered or discussed. Finally, in July 2024, I emailed the Mayor to say that nothing was moving forward or coming out of this committee, and that I would no longer be attending meetings. I ask that, once there are any recommendations, they be brought to the City Council for consideration.

I also sent an email to the council members in March 2024, including Mr. Mootoveren, Mr. Williams, Mr. Ditoro, and Miss Patrick, stating that I would no longer be attending the meetings but offered that one of them could attend if they so chose. I included a copy of my recommendations with the email. (see attachments)

Let us keep in mind that it was the mayor who convened that task force, his Director of Operations, who sent out the meeting notices and created the agendas.

Trying to determine how much garbage constitutes a jackpot, or whatever term is being used, is not the council's responsibility. Council members are a legislative body and are not out there daily. The recommendation should be the OGS, as it was Mr. La Paul LaFond who finally brought forth the sticker program, and it should also include the people who work on garbage every single day. In my recommendations, I suggested a task force of the people who do the day-to-day work, who have boots on the ground and know it better than any of us. That was not taken up; however, I saw it recently in the Gazette editorial, and they also made that suggestion, so perhaps it will now be considered by the administration. Ms. Ditoro stated that the garbage people did it for years. So why are we not asking for their expertise? She also stated that the city is losing money. How does she know? I asked for the tonnage of garbage collected to help determine the costs, and all I received were estimates. During the last budget cycle, I recommended separating Waste from the rest of the budget so we could see actual costs versus revenue, as is done with Water, Sewer, and the Golf Fund. The Waste Analysis given to the Council included staff costs that were also in another part of the budget, which had to be corrected.

The code clearly says that we cannot charge more garbage fees than it costs us to collect it.

Determining how garbage is collected is an administrative responsibility with the findings presented to the City Council for their legislative action. Don't forget to ask the employees who do it daily for their opinion.

Submitted by Marion Porterfield to be entered into the comments section of the Schenectady City Council meeting on March 9, 2026.

From: Marion Porterfield <MPorterfield@schenectadyny.gov>

Sent: Monday, July 15, 2024 1:45:46 PM

To: John Mootoveren <JMootoveren@schenectadyny.gov>; Carl Williams <CWilliams@schenectadyny.gov>; Carmel Patrick <CPatrick@schenectadyny.gov>; Damonni Farley <DFarley@schenectadyny.gov>; Doreen M. Ditoro <DDitoro@schenectadyny.gov>; Joseph Mancini <JMancini@schenectadyny.gov>

Cc: Ekram Phanisnaraine <EPhanisnaraine@schenectadyny.gov>; Samanta R. Mykoo <SMykoo@schenectadyny.gov>

Subject: Stepping off Waste Committee

Councilmembers,

I wanted you to be aware that I am stepping off the Waste Committee. This committee was convened in January to address the so called "jackpots". Even though meetings have been going on since January no significant recommendations have been made for the Council to act upon. I am again sending you the Waste Committee Considerations that I presented to the committee in March and updated in April, none of which have been considered. I will continue to send suggestions to the Waste Committee of possible solutions and hope that all of you will do the same. I will also forward resident complaints that I receive about garage, trash and litter in the city.

This is a serious and ongoing problem in the city, additionally we need to address this issue of revenue which is how this discussion began. If any of you are interested in sitting on the Waste Committee, I suggest you contact the Mayor.

Marion Porterfield
Schenectady City Council President

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Waste Committee Considerations_updated.pdf

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Waste Committee Considerations

Goals:

- Raise \$100,000 in revenue
- Create plan on how to charge properties that put out substantial amounts of garbage
- Reduce trash and litter in the city – guidelines for putting our trash
- Create awareness and buy in throughout the city

Possible Sources of Revenue:

- Charge properties owners for substantial amounts of garbage (measurements to be determined)
- Charge to cover cost of pest control
- Apply for grants (DEC) and other sources

Actions Items:

Immediate:

- Give initiative a name or create catchy slogan
- Develop timeline
- Get buy in from city workers – ask for their input, help and support
- Make city residents aware of renewed enforcement of current rules
- Create a PSA; enlist help from neighborhood associations; churches, CDTA, businesses, school and colleges and community members to help by posting on their social media and posting signs.
- Signs on garbage trucks, wrap city vehicles

Intermediate:

- Put more trash cans throughout the city with anti-littering/clean community messaging
- Clean hillside along I-890, seek help from state and possibly Army Corp of Engineers

Long Term:

- Maintain progress
- Monitoring trash generated and cost for disposal

Challenges:

Resistance to Change: Changing learned behavior of residents. Employees often resist organizational changes due to fear of the unknown or disruptions to their routines. Overcoming this challenge requires effective communication and a change in management strategies.

Communication Barriers: Miscommunication, lack of clarity, and cultural differences can hinder effective communication. Addressing these barriers is essential for collaboration and productivity.

Lack of Trust and Transparency: Trust is vital for a healthy work environment. When employees lack trust in leadership or colleagues, it affects morale and teamwork.

Conflicting Values and Goals: Diverse teams may have varying values and priorities. Balancing these differences and aligning everyone toward common goals can be challenging.

Putting the burden on the everyone for the actions of a few: Creating a fair way to put costs on those who largely contribute to the problem

Opportunities:

A Cleaner City!

Increased Resident Satisfaction with City Services: improving customer service and enhanced quality of service.

Enhancing Employee Satisfaction and Motivation: boosting employee satisfaction and motivation, leading to better retention rates, productivity, and profitability. Increased morale.

Improving Communication and Collaboration: Effective strategies foster open communication and collaboration among team members can enhance overall performance. Include employees who work in the Waste Department daily into the conversation to create solutions and support from their colleagues.

Supporting Decision Making and Problem Solving: provides insights into decision-making processes, helping stakeholders make informed choices and solve complex problems.

Increasing Productivity and Efficiency: By considering and understanding individual and group behavior, organizations can optimize processes and improve efficiency.

How you see it depends on where you sit!

Submitted by Marion Porterfield
City Council President
March 28, 2024
Updated April 15, 2024