



THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE NEW YORK

COMMON COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 29, 2021 6:00 p.m.

City Hall

The Council Meeting was conducted using videoconferencing, as permitted by the NYS Open Meetings Law.

Welcome to the regularly scheduled meeting of the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council the date is March 29, 2021, and the time is 6:03 pm.

Effective immediately and based upon notices and health advisories issued by Federal, State, and Local officials related to the Coronavirus, the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council will not hold in-person meetings. Until further notice, all future City Council meetings (including public hearings) will be held via videoconferencing, as permitted by the NYS Open Meetings Law.

Due to public health and safety concerns, the public will not be permitted to attend at the remote locations where the City Council members will be situated. The public, however, will be able to fully observe the video conference meeting by using the registration link that was posted with our meeting notice and the meeting will be available for viewing at a later date and available on our website.

I'd like to acknowledge that we are gathered, wherever we are, on the traditional territory of the Lenape people and this territory was a critical resting place along a popular trade route for people of the Lenape Nation and other cultures as is evidenced in the earliest derivation of the name 'Poughkeepsie' with an indigenous string of words, U-puku-ipi-sing, that, when translated, means 'reed-covered lodge by the little water place' or resting place.

Let's all recite the pledge of allegiance.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

II. ROLL CALL- ALL PRESENT (Councilmember L. Johnson logged on after roll call)

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

NONE

III. READING OF ITEMS by the City Chamberlain of any resolutions not listed on the printed agenda.

NONE

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Three (3) minutes per person up to 45 minutes of public comment on any agenda and non-agenda items.

1. Brian Robinson – 143 Montgomery St
2. Ann Lancelotti -
3. Kevin Carswell -
4. Kris Tal
5. Ken Stier (will submit statement to clerk)
6. Jeffrey Schneider – N. Water St.

V. CHAIRPERSON’S COMMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Today began the Trial for the former police officer implicated in the murder of George Floyd, 10 months following George Floyd’s death on May 25, 2020, which occurred after the former officer knelt on George Floyd’s neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds, leaving him lifeless on the pavement. A death that resulted in protests worldwide, and here in Poughkeepsie, calling for justice, police reform and accountability, and systemic changes to repair the centuries of harm wrought by racism and inequitable treatment of black Americans. Watching opening arguments from the prosecution this morning was gut-wrenching, to say the least, and a reminder of how important passage of this plan is for our community. On June 12, 2020, Governor Cuomo issued Executive Order No. 203 which required local governments which have a police agency operating with police officers to perform “a comprehensive review of current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices and develop a plan to improve such deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, for the purposes of addressing the particular needs of the communities served by such police agency and promote community engagement to foster trust, fairness, and legitimacy, and to address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color.” The order goes on to say that “After offering drafted plan for public comment and review to all citizens in the municipality, and after consideration of such comments, the plan shall be presented to the local legislative body in such political

subdivision, which shall ratify or adopt such plan by local law or resolution, as appropriate, no later than April 1, 2021.”

The Executive Order directed the chief executive of the local government entity to convene the head of the local police agency and stakeholders in the community to develop such a plan, Mayor Rolison tasked the City of Poughkeepsie Procedural Justice Committee with reviewing the Executive Order and gathering community input, suggestions, and ideas which would be discussed by the committee and incorporated into their recommendations to Mayor Rolison and Chief Pape. As part of their review, the Procedural Justice Committee held several meetings and solicited input from representatives from the police department, community members, and other stakeholders and presented those recommendations to Mayor Rolison and Chief Pape.

On February 2, 2021, the City of Poughkeepsie released its preliminary plan, and subsequently held a public meeting on February 10, 2021, for the solicitation of further comments and suggestions. On February 22, 2021, Mayor Rolison and Chief Pape released the Police Reform and Modernization Collaborative Report and presented the plan to the Common Council on March 1, 2021.

In Receipt of the report, we reviewed the comments and feedback provided by community members, the procedural justice committee, community advocacy groups like ENJAN and the Poughkeepsie Community Action Collaborative, and solicited further input regarding how the plan should be further improved toward its adoption. Which is why we gather tonight.

First, thank you to everyone who put in the work to get this done. Members of the Council, Police Force, the Chief, Captain, Mayor Rolison, the Procedural Justice Committee, our short-term commission to advise the council, ENJAN, and the Poughkeepsie Community Action Collaborative. This was a true community effort. The need for on-going and continuing police reforms and improvements have been demonstrated and will occur beyond what the Report contains by the legislative authority of the Common Council with feedback from community stakeholders, committees, and departments.

Moving forward, the Common Council will work toward implementing a civilian review board, will continue to advocate for strategies to increase diversity and encourage fair promotions, as well as toward implementation of reporting standards to promote greater transparency and accountability.

VI. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND BOARDS:

NONE

VII. MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:

- 1. A motion was made by Councilmember Brannen and seconded by Councilmember L. Johnson to receive and print.**

**RESOLUTION
(R-21-34)**

INTRODUCED BY CHAIR SALEM, VICE-CHAIR BRANNEN, MAJORITY LEADER LORRAINE JOHNSON, COUNCILMEMBERS PETSAS, MENIST, FLOWERS, CHERRY, JOHNSON, MCNAMARA:

WHEREAS, beginning on May 25, 2020, following the police-involved death of George Floyd in Minnesota, protests have taken place throughout the nation, in communities across New York State, and in the City of Poughkeepsie in response to police-involved deaths and racially-biased law enforcement to demand change, action, and accountability; and

WHEREAS, there is a long and painful history in the nation, New York State, and the City of Poughkeepsie of discrimination and mistreatment of black and African-American citizens dating back to the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in America and continuing to this day; and

WHEREAS, this national history includes a number of incidents involving the police that have resulted in the deaths of unarmed civilians, predominantly black and African-American men, that have undermined the public's confidence and trust in our system of law enforcement and criminal justice, and such condition is ongoing and urgently needs to be rectified; and

WHEREAS, these deaths in New York State include those of Anthony Baez, Amadou Diallo, Ousmane Zango, Sean Bell, Ramarley Graham, Patrick Dorismond, Akai Gurley, and Eric Garner, amongst others, and, in other states, include Oscar Grant, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Laquan McDonald, Walter Scott, Freddie Gray, Philando Castile, Antwon Rose Jr., Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd, amongst others; and

WHEREAS, these names repeated by thousands in the streets of the City of Poughkeepsie and millions across the nation are only the most recent to be added to an endless list, one that begins with names forgotten centuries ago and one that continues to grow; and

WHEREAS, the City of Poughkeepsie has a diverse and beautiful population; and

WHEREAS, government has a responsibility to ensure that all of its citizens are treated equally, fairly, and justly before the law; and

WHEREAS, on June 12, 2020 Governor Cuomo issued Executive Order No. 203 which required local governments which have a police agency operating with police officers to perform a comprehensive review of current police deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices for the purposes of addressing the particular needs of the communities served by such

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police agency and promote community engagement to foster trust, fairness, and legitimacy and to address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Executive Order the City of Poughkeepsie was required to undertake such a review and submit a written plan on or before April 1, 2021 to the New York State Department of Budget. The Executive Order further states that the failure of a municipality to do so would result in certain funding being withheld by the NYS Department of Budget; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Order directed the chief executive of the local government entity to convene the head of the local police agency and stakeholders in the community to develop such plan; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Rolison tasked the City of Poughkeepsie Procedural Justice Committee with reviewing the Executive Order and gathering community input, suggestions and ideas which would be discussed by the committee and incorporated into their recommendations to Mayor Rolison and Chief Pape; and

WHEREAS, as part of their review the Procedural Justice Committee held several meetings and solicited input from representatives from the police department, community members and other stakeholders and presented those recommendations to Mayor Rolison and Chief Pape; and

WHEREAS, on February 2, 2021 the City of Poughkeepsie released their preliminary plan, and subsequently held a public meeting on February 10, 2021 for the solicitation of further comments and suggestions; and

WHEREAS, on February 22, 2021 Mayor Rolison and Chief Pape released the Police Reform and Modernization Collaborative Report and presented the plan to the Common Council on March 1, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council of the City of Poughkeepsie has received and reviewed the comments and feedback provided by community advocacy groups and has solicited further input regarding such plan; and

WHEREAS, the need for on-going and continuing police reforms and improvements has been demonstrated and will occur beyond what the Report contains by the legislative authority of the Common Council with feedback from community stakeholders, committees and departments; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council will work toward implementing a civilian review board, will continue to advocate for strategies to increase diversity and encourage fair promotions, as well as toward implementation of reporting standards to promote greater transparency and accountability; and

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Police Reform and Modernization Collaboration Report annexed hereto is hereby approved and adopted by the Common Council; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Common Council, upon adoption of this resolution, will transmit the City of Poughkeepsie Police Reform and Modernization Collaborative Report to the New York State Department of Budget before the April 1, 2021 deadline.

SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER: BRANNEN

R21-34			Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Absent
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Defeated <input type="checkbox"/> Tabled	Councilmember Flowers	Voter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Councilmember McNamara	Voter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Councilmember Cherry	Voter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Councilmember R. Johnson	Voter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Councilmember Menist	Voter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Councilmember Petsas	Voter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Councilmember L. Johnson	Voter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Councilmember Brannen	Voter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Chair Salem	Voter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

VIII. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

X. NEW BUSINESS:

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by multiple councilmembers to adjourn the meeting at

Dated: April 14, 2021

I hereby certify that this true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Common Council Meeting held on Monday, March 29, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

**Donna M. DeLuca
Deputy City Chamberlain**

