



Common Council Meeting
City of Middletown
February 15, 2022
City Hall
16 James Street
Middletown, New York 10940

P R E S E N T

Miguel Rodrigues, President of Common Council
Ald. Gerald Kleiner
Ald. Paul Johnson
Ald. Kate Ramkissoo
Ald. Sparrow Tobin
Ald. Jude Jean-Francois
Ald. Andrew Green
Ald. Kevin Witt
Ald. Joseph Masi

Digitally Recorded Proceeding, transcribed by:
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1. Pledge of Allegiance

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Roll.

2. Roll Call

Roll Call: Tobin, Jean-Francois, Johnson, Ramkissoo, Kleiner, Green, Witt, Masi, President Rodrigues.

3. Approval of Minutes.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Approval of minutes.

COUNCIL CLERK: We have the Common Council Meeting Minutes from January 18th, 2022.

ALD. MASI: So moved.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Motion by Alderman Masi, seconded by Alderman Green. All in favor?

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Aye.

4. Correspondence, Communications and Reports

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Correspondence.

COUNCIL CLERK: None this evening.

5. For the Good of the City

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: For the Good of the City. Anyone would like to address the Council, please step forward.

(None this evening.)

6. Remarks of the Mayor.

(Nothing this evening.)

7. Remarks of Department Heads

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Remarks of Department Head, Economic Development.

MARI BRUNI, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Good evening, everyone. Last week we enjoyed two ribbon cuttings in our downtown area, Eternal Bouquets on North Street and Dayes Premium Coffee Roasters. And it was a great opening and ribbon cutting. And we have another one tomorrow on North Street, 10 North Street, Art Vicki Creations. Come by and that's at 1:30 tomorrow and we'll be cutting the ribbon again. And we're looking forward to some more businesses opening up with -- throughout the city and some more ribbon cuttings as we -- as we continue.

Also, tonight your support on the transfer of 220 1/2 Linden to the CDA. We would like to get this into the CDA, so we can rehab it and get it into our home ownership program.

And that's all I have for tonight.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Any questions for Maria?
Thank you, Maria.

MARI BRUNI, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Thank you.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: DPW Commissioner

JACOB TAWIL, DPW COMMISSIONER: Good evening, all. We are working with -- to update you about the

capital projects. One of them we are working on the 26 million dollar traffic operations with Boyce Excavations and the engineers to try to phase the project in there because we are talking about 20 intersections in the City of Middletown. So if we start working on them all, you know, similar times or something like that, we penalize the City. So we're trying to be very careful where to start from. We're going to be focusing on starting from downtown and then branching outwards while maintaining the traffic throughout the construction. So that's, that's progressing. And we're really excited about this project.

Another project -- at the next Council meeting we're going to be submitting a request from you to -- for well pickup for spring cleanup. And we're proposing some dates and we need the Council resolution. For that I'll tell you roughly what we have right now. We're starting -- we're proposing to start on the 25th of April. And that would be the 2nd Ward. The 1st Ward would be the 2nd -- 2nd of May and then 4th Ward the 9th of May and then the 3rd Ward would be the 16th of May. And that's for the bulk pickup, spring cleanup.

And we're going to have the electronic drop off day on May 28th. So I'm just giving this information to the public tentatively. It's not final until you guys --

until the Council votes on it and approve it. And then the dates will be determined. So just giving people's heads up where we're going to start and when the electronic drop off is going to be.

With that being said, I'm going to right now. If you have any questions for anybody.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Any questions for Jacob? Alderman Kleiner.

ALD. KLEINER: Just a quick question, Commissioner. When -- for Lincoln's birthday people were early on putting out their recycling cans. So we've got to see them out for a day. And so many of them had the tops up and overflowing and such. Would you just remind people about please don't overfill the cans and how it could make it difficult?

JACOB TAWIL, DPW COMMISSIONER: Yeah, absolutely. Thank you very much for bringing that up. Alderman Kleiner was driving, you know, was driving around and he sent me some pictures in there of some recycling carts in there and they had some material right next to the material on top of them. And, and really this is what we are trying to avoid. I keep saying the -- the public in general, they've been very cooperative with us and we appreciate that very much, so does the Mayor, so does the Council. We really

appreciate it because the -- the program is a great success for us with the mechanical arm.

However, you know, just keep that in mind. Please do not put anything outside the containers and try not to overfill the containers so that the cover is open all the way to the back. I mean, if it's a little bit open that's fine, our trucks can handle it. But try not to do it, please. If you need additional carts, you can order additional carts from -- call us from DPW. It's \$100 for the whole year. It's worth it. But there are so number -- limited number of carts you can have. But it's something to consider. If you do generate more than one cart, you're welcome to have a second one at \$100 charge. And the same for recyclables, if you have too much recyclables and you want to have a second cart, by all means do that.

But it's very important for our program to be successful for us to try to reallocate our manpower from sanitation department to other departments in there to make it pay for us, the investment in the new arms. You need -- we need your cooperation, please. Do not overfill and do not put anything on the side. From the very beginning we -- we sent code enforcement. We issued some violations and it was very few violations. Everybody is cooperating as far as we're concerned and we appreciate that very much.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Anyone one else? Thank you, Jacob.

JACOB TAWIL, DPW COMMISSIONER: Thank you.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Fire chief.

NICK BARBER, FIRE CHIEF: Good evening, everybody. Hope everybody is doing well. Just wanted to update everybody that the new Cascade System, installed, up and running at the central firehouse. The old one was 24 years old. It seen better days, so we donated it for parts to outside departments.

To date, we've had 140 alarms. We're up about 40 compared to what we had in the last couple of years.

And the department is looking at having our annual awards dinner June 25th, so mark that in your calendars. It will be at the Town of Wallkill Golf Course.

And recruitment is back up and running. We're currently interviewing more candidates for becoming volunteer fireman here in the city. So we have a couple on the applications in and we'll be interviewing and hopefully send them off to school. Any questions?

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Any questions for the fire chief? Thank you, Chief.

NICK BARBER, FIRE CHIEF: Thanks.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: City Treasurer.

KELLY ANN KELLY, CITY TREASURER: Good evening.

I do not have anything.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Any question for Kelly?

Thank you, Kelly.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Police Chief.

JOHN EWANCIW, POLICE CHIEF: Good evening. Just a few things this evening. Once again, I'd like to remind the public and everybody listening that we have our police exam coming up on April 9th. The last day for filing for the exam is March 7th.

Additionally, we set up two, two events to help the potential candidates. One is going to be March 2nd here in this room. It will be a open house question and answer opportunity for people to come and ask us whatever they want about the -- the process, the hiring process, the test. That will be from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on March 2nd. And the other is going to be with a company that we've utilized in the past and has been a successful program. It's through Police Tutorial Services on Sunday, March 27th. They're going to offer a cram course for anyone that is taking the exam, our police exam or any police exam this coming spring. It's going to be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. It's a Zoom platform. And they've -- because of our continued partnership with them, they've reduced the price

from 225 to 125 for people taking our exam. So I think it is well worth it. It will give a little bit of insight.

Other than that, I'd like to just recognize two of our new officers that graduated from the police academy today. The Orange County Police Chiefs Associate held their graduation of police academy today at the Paramount Theatre. Twenty-five police officers graduated today, two of which were ours for the City of Middletown. That would be Officer Euvin and Officer Zhagui, so congratulations to them.

Other than that, I have nothing this evening.

ALD. MASI: Chief, you just want to remind people who are going to take the test if they took it this past September, the procedure.

JOHN EWANCIW, POLICE CHIEF: Absolutely. What Mr. Masi is speaking of is because we are doing the test, the police exam earlier this year, it's typically in the fall, we were fortunate to be able to get a spring spot, so anyone that took a police officer exam anywhere in the State of New York this past fall can apply for our exam. They pay the initiation fee, but their test score from their previous fall's exam would carry over to our current exam.

One other thing while we're on that topic also is

we are doing a bilingual exam as well. There's the English proficiency and the Spanish proficiency exam, so.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Anyone else? Thank you, Chief.

JOHN EWANCIW, POLICE CHIEF: Thank you.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Superintendent of recreation.

RAELYNN BERTHOLF, SUPERINTENDENT OF RECREATION:

Good evening, everyone. Before you tonight everyone got a copy of 2021 annual report for you to look over. If you have any questions I'll gladly take any emails or phone calls about the annual report.

Also tonight we have two resolutions. The first one Nicole and I have been working very hard on the proposal for the Orange County Bureau for funding for 2022. So we're just asking for the resolution approving the Mayor to sign the contracts and receive all the funding along with it.

And, also, our second resolution to appoint a new member to the Recreation Commission, Lynnette Williams. She was just hired at the Middletown High School as the head principal. We are looking forward to having her onboard. Her relationship to the community and also being in the high school and having that direct connection to all

the students there, giving her information and also having the advice and suggestions of the students coming in to us at our Rec Commission. And, also, the reappointment of Shawna Strenfel who is very committed to Middletown and the Rec Commission and the whole city and everything we have to offer.

And last but not least, I would like to welcome our newest employee, Contessa Beckford. She's our new Provisional Program Coordinator.

CONTESSA BECKFORD, PROVISIONAL PROGRAM

COORDINATOR: Hi, guys, I have (inaudible).

RAELYNN BERTHOLF, SUPERINTENDENT OF RECREATION:

We are very excited to have her. She comes highly recommended from every reference, everyone in the community who knows her. She was at the Y previously. So her face is very familiar to the community. And she comes, like I said, highly, highly recommended, very well educated, very well spoken. And we are definitely looking forward to the future with the rec department and all the ideas and all -- everything that she's going to bring. So I'd like to welcome Contessa Beckford.

RAELYNN BERTHOLF, SUPERINTENDENT OF RECREATION:

Who'd like to say a brief, brief few words.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Welcome.

CONTESSA BECKFORD, PROVISIONAL PROGRAM

COORDINATOR: Sorry, I just have a tag along tonight. I just want to say thank you for the opportunity. And I'm so excited about joining the awesome team and the great things that they are doing. And it's truly a pleasure to be part of the City of the Middletown and this awesome team. Yay. Thank you.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Welcome.

RAELYNN BERTHOLF, SUPERINTENDENT OF RECREATION:

And that's all. Any questions?

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Any questions for Raelynn?

RAELYNN BERTHOLF, SUPERINTENDENT OF RECREATION:

Nope. Thank you.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Thank you, Raelynn.

City Clerk.

RICHARD MCCORMACK, CITY CLERK: Nothing this evening.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Any questions for our Clerk? No.

All right. Let's move over to Alderman. Mr. Masi.

ALD. MASI: Nothing this evening.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: All right. Mr. Witt.

ALD. WITT: Thank you. Just one thing.

Tomorrow, Wednesday, February 16th from 4:30 to 7:30, the Middletown School District is going to be distributing at no cost these COVID test kits at Carter Elementary School. Carter Elementary School is what people may know as the former mechanic's town. That's now Carter. And we also need you to come in. They changed the building a couple of years ago, so now the front is the back and the back is the front. So please enter through Schutt Road and make a right and there's a big circle. And we'll be able to take care of you. Thank you.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Alderman Green.

ALD. GREEN: Thank you very much. Sorry. We -- Jerry and I will be having our 2nd Ward constituents meeting on March 14th. So we will have another meeting before then. We just wanted to give everyone an opportunity to -- to get it on your schedule. That will be at 7 p.m. here in City Hall.

And I just want to welcome everyone who's new. We have new volunteers coming, new police officers, new employees. Feels like spring already with all this new stuff, so it's -- it's a great thing to see and just means that we're moving forward. Thank you.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Alderman Kleiner.

ALD. KLEINER: Thank you. My first question is

when will the State of the City Address be?

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: The 23rd.

ALD. KLEINER: It's definitely the 27th. And
that will be at --

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: The 23rd.

ALD. KLEINER: Wait, the 23rd. Okay.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: The 23rd at 7 p.m.

ALD. KLEINER: At 7 p.m. Okay. Thank you.

I -- I just want -- I want to thank Jeff Shumard who retired this last Planning Board meeting. He's retired as of March 4th. He's been our Planning Board Engineer for a long time. And actually an appearance by Larry Rizold (phonetic) to wish him well. And if you don't know Jeff's father who was also Jeff, he was Jeff W. Shumard, was a long time Public Works Commissioner in the City of Middletown. So I wish Jeff well. I thank him for his service.

Also, I want to thank Shawna Strenfold and welcome Lynnette Williams to the Parks and Rec Commission. It's -- it's -- it's a really necessary job. And -- and Shawna has been great. She's been chairman for the last year years. We have sirens going by.

I also want to congratulate her husband coach Tim Strenfold who was recognized as high school coach of the

year in New York State. I thought that was a great honor for a Middletown coach.

I also want to remember Evelyn Issics (phonetic) who passed away since the last meeting. Evelyn was Middletown educator, long time school board member and (inaudible) Heights neighbor. So she will be missed and condolences to her family.

And we also had a meeting here with Senator James Skoufis who is going to be our senator come January of next year. And we -- in redistricting we've been added to his senate district. And it was a very good meeting and a very good discussion. I'm looking forward to him representing us.

And that's it. Thank you.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Alderman Ramkisson.

ALD. RAMKISSOON: I have nothing this evening.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Alderman Johnson.

ALD. JOHNSON: Thank you. As you know, we had a tentative Legislative Committee meeting scheduled this evening. I cancelled that. In the last 96 hours, I've spoken with three interested parties regarding this particular issue. And I would say that my assessment is that the idea has been eclipsed by the process or lack thereof. And interested parties will regroup and produce a

conversation and it will be apparently more collaborative and inclusive. And they'll get back to us in a timely manner if deemed appropriate. Thank you.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Alderman Jean-Francois.

ALD. JEAN-FRANCOIS: Yes. Good evening. Sparrow and I had our constituents meeting this past Saturday. We were looking forward to having a great conversation with our constituents, but unfortunately no one showed up at the meeting. So Sparrow volunteered --

ALDERMAN: Doing a good job.

ALD. JEAN-FRANCOIS: So Sparrow volunteered to cook cookies next time at our next meeting, so hopefully people will show up. Thank you. That's all I have.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Alderman Tobin.

ALD. TOBIN: Nothing this evening.

12. New Business.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: New Business.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: New business.

12. New Business.

COUNCIL CLERK: Good evening. We have a Resolution sponsored by Alderman Witt authorizing the Mayor to submit a funding proposal to the Orange County Youth Bureau.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: A resolution sponsored by

Alderman Witt, seconded by Alderman Green. Any discussion?

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Roll.

Roll Call: Ayes: Tobin, Jean-Francois, Johnson, Ramkissoo, Kleiner, Green, Witt, Masi, President Rodrigues. Motion carries.

COUNCIL CLERK: We have a Resolution sponsored by Alderman Green authorizing the transfer of 2020 1/2 Linden Avenue to the Community Development Agency.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: A Resolution sponsored by Alderman Green, seconded by Alderman Jean-Francois. Any discussion? Roll

Roll Call: Tobin, Jean-Francois, Johnson, Ramkissoo, Kleiner, Green, Witt, Masi, President Rodrigues. Motion carries.

COUNCIL CLERK: We have a Resolution sponsored by Alderman Kleiner authorizing the Mayor to sign an agreement with the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Resolution sponsored by Alderman Kleiner, seconded by Alderman Masi. Any discussion? Roll.

Roll Call: Tobin, Jean-Francois, Johnson, Ramkissoo, Kleiner, Green, Witt, Masi, President Rodrigues. Carries.

COUNCIL CLERK: Resolution sponsored by Alderman

Masi authorizing the Otisville Country Fair to borrow two portable lights.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Resolution sponsored by Alderman Masi, seconded by Alderman Johnson. Any discussion? Roll.

Roll Call: Ayes: Tobin, Jean-Francois, Johnson, Ramkissoo, Kleiner, Green, Witt, Masi, President Rodrigues. Carries.

COUNCIL CLERK: Resolution sponsored by Alderman Witt appointing members of the Recreation Commission.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Resolution sponsored by Alderman Witt, seconded by Alderman Kleiner. Any discussion? Roll.

Roll Call: Ayes: Tobin, Jean-Francois, Johnson, Ramkissoo, Kleiner, Green, Witt, Masi, President Rodrigues. Carries.

That concludes new business.

13. Local Laws

(None this evening.)

14. Audit of Claims and Accounts

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: Audit.

ALD. MASI: Mr. President, I move the accounts be audited, the claims be adjusted, and the City Treasurer be authorized to issue warrants for their payment.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: A motion by Alderman Masi,
seconded by Alderman Green.

Roll.

Roll Call: Ayes: Tobin, Jean-Francois, Johnson,
Ramkissoo, Kleiner, Green, Witt, Masi, President
Rodrigues. Motion carries.

15. Adjournment.

PRESIDENT RODRIGUES: 7:50, move for adjournment.

ALDERMAN: So moved.

(PROCEEDING CONCLUDED)

CERTIFICATE

I, LISA KANE, certify the foregoing transcript of proceedings
prior to New Business of the February 15, 2022 Middletown City
Council meeting was prepared using the required electronic
equipment and is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Signature: *Lisa Kane*

Date: March 16, 2022

Agency: American Legal Transcription
11 Market Street, Suite 215
Poughkeepsie, New York 12601

**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN, NEW YORK
COMMON COUNCIL
RECORD OF VOTE**

THE FOLLOWING WAS PRESENTED

By Ald. Witt

Sec'd by Ald. Green

Date of Adoption 02.15.22

Index No: 42-22

NAMES AYES NOES ABSTAIN ABSENT

Ald. Tobin	X			
Ald. Jean-Francois	X			
Ald. Johnson	X			
Ald. Ramkissoon	X			
Ald. Kleiner	X			
Ald. Green	X			
Ald. Witt	X			
Ald. Masi	X			
Pres. Rodrigues	X			
TOTAL	9			

RESOLVED; that the Common Council of the City of Middletown concurs with the Board of Estimate and Apportionment and authorizes the Mayor to submit a proposal to the Orange County Youth Bureau for funding and following approval authorize the Mayor to sign any and all necessary contracts on behalf of the City of Middletown.

**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN, NEW YORK
COMMON COUNCIL
RECORD OF VOTE**

THE FOLLOWING WAS PRESENTED

By Ald. Green

Sec'd by Ald. Jean-Francois

Date of Adoption 02.15.22

Index No: 43-22

NAMES AYES NOES ABSTAIN ABSENT

Ald. Tobin	X			
Ald. Jean-Francois	X			
Ald. Johnson	X			
Ald. Ramkissoon	X			
Ald. Kleiner	X			
Ald. Green	X			
Ald. Witt	X			
Ald. Masi	X			
Pres. Rodrigues	X			
TOTAL	9			

RESOLVED; that the Common Council of the City of Middletown concurs with the Board of Estimate and Apportionment and approves the transfer of 220 ½ Linden Avenue to the Community Development Agency for the purpose of implementing the property into the homeownership program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Common Council of the City of Middletown concurs with the Board of Estimate and Apportionment and approves authorizes corporation counsel to prepare and the Mayor to execute the necessary documents.

**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN, NEW YORK
COMMON COUNCIL
RECORD OF VOTE**

THE FOLLOWING WAS PRESENTED

By Ald. Kleiner

Sec'd by Ald. Masi

Date of Adoption 02.15.22

Index No: 44-22

NAMES AYES NOES ABSTAIN ABSENT

Ald. Tobin	X			
Ald. Jean-Francois	X			
Ald. Johnson	X			
Ald. Ramkissoon	X			
Ald. Kleiner	X			
Ald. Green	X			
Ald. Witt	X			
Ald. Masi	X			
Pres. Rodrigues	X			
TOTAL	9			

RESOLVED; that the Common Council of the City of Middletown concurs with the Board of Estimate and Apportionment and authorizes the Mayor to sign an agreement with the LIHWAP – NYS Low Income Household Water Assistance Program.

Benefits are administered through the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) and are based on the amount of unpaid water and wastewater bills owed by applicants up to a maximum of \$2,500 per drinking water or wastewater provider, or \$5,000 if drinking water and wastewater services are combined, per applicant household.

Benefits are paid directly to the household's drinking water and/or wastewater vendor(s).

**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN, NEW YORK
COMMON COUNCIL
RECORD OF VOTE**

THE FOLLOWING WAS PRESENTED

By Ald. Masi

Sec'd by Ald. Johnson

Date of Adoption 02.15.22

Index No: 45-22

NAMES AYES NOES ABSTAIN ABSENT

Ald. Tobin	X			
Ald. Jean-Francois	X			
Ald. Johnson	X			
Ald. Ramkissoon	X			
Ald. Kleiner	X			
Ald. Green	X			
Ald. Witt	X			
Ald. Masi	X			
Pres. Rodrigues	X			
TOTAL	9			

BE IT RESOLVED that the Common Council of the City of Middletown authorizes the use of two portable lights by the Otisville Lions/Country Fair during the 32nd Annual Otisville Country Fair from Wednesday, August 24, 2022 through Monday, August 29th.

The Otisville Lions Club/Country Fair will be responsible for any damages incurred during the use of the lights and will make any necessary repairs at their expense.

**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN, NEW YORK
COMMON COUNCIL
RECORD OF VOTE**

THE FOLLOWING WAS PRESENTED

By Ald. Witt

Sec'd by Ald. Kleiner

Date of Adoption 02.15.22

Index No: 46-22

NAMES AYES NOES ABSTAIN ABSENT

Ald. Tobin	X			
Ald. Jean-Francois	X			
Ald. Johnson	X			
Ald. Ramkissoon	X			
Ald. Kleiner	X			
Ald. Green	X			
Ald. Witt	X			
Ald. Masi	X			
Pres. Rodrigues	X			
TOTAL	9			

RESOLVED that the Common Council of the City of Middletown concurs with the Mayor's reappointment and appointment to the Recreation Commission:

Reappointment of Shawna Strenfel, Terms expires 3/24/27

Appointment of Lynette Williams, Term expires 3/24/25.
Ms. Williams is filling the unexpired term of Rolin Lybolt.