



LEGISLATIVE BRANCH ▪ CITY OF BINGHAMTON

Hadassah Mativetsky, City Council President

Sarah Dinhofer, City Clerk

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BINGHAMTON

Business Meeting Agenda

City Council Chambers, 38 Hawley Street, Binghamton, NY 13901

6:00 PM Wednesday, January 10, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by President Mativetsky

III. ROLL CALL

Present: Porter, Middleton, Cavanaugh, Hotchkiss, Mativetsky, Rathmell, Dundon

Also Present: Samantha Costello (Deputy City Clerk), Sophie Bergman (Corporation Counsel), Mehtasim Mahfuz (Asst. Corporation Counsel)

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of Business Meeting Minutes 12/27/2023

- a. Motion: Dundon
- b. Second: Porter
- c. Vote: 6-0-1-0
- d. Abstain: Rathmell

2. Approval of Organizational Meeting Minutes 1/3/2024

- a. Motion: Porter
- b. Second: Dundon
- c. Vote: 6-0-1-0
- d. Abstain: Rathmell

3. Approval of Special Business Meeting Minutes 1/5/2024

- a. Motion: Middleton
- b. Second: Dundon
- c. Vote: 6-0-1-0
- d. Abstain: Rathmell

V. APPOINTMENTS

1. Binghamton Local Development Corporation- Cavanaugh
2. Binghamton Urban Renewal Agency- Hotchkiss
3. Commission on Architecture and Urban Design- Cavanaugh
4. Community Development Advisory Committee- Middleton, Citizens TBD — forward resume to clerk@cityofbinghamton.gov
5. Shade Tree Commission- Citizens TBD — forward resume to clerk@cityofbinghamton.gov
6. Traffic Commission- Mativetsky
7. Water Street Development Corp.- Hotchkiss



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VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Residents wishing to submit public comment may do so electronically by emailing their comments prior to 1:00pm on the day of the meeting to clerk@cityofbinghamton.gov or in-person during the meeting. Each resident will have 5 minutes to speak.

- **Matthew Bolisetko**, South Side Binghamton resident - Currently struggling with systemic discrimination as a person who uses drugs, feels as though he has been targeted against by the Binghamton City Police, feels as though he has been targeted by medical community. Mentions several members of Internal Affairs as being particularly problematic. Needs assistance as a houseless individual, would like support in endeavors to continue at Broome Community College. Will follow up with Councilmember Rathmell.
- **Aviva Friedman**, City of Binghamton resident - Sincere congratulations to everyone on Council, particularly Rathmell and Hotchkiss. There are many pieces of legislation that she is hoping to make a priority with this particular Council. Notes hearing that the Mayor is looking forward to putting politics aside —hopeful that we can make that happen. Doesn't seem very promising right now, looking forward to what this Council can do.
- **Kenneth Brown**, City of Binghamton resident - Regarding need for outside counsel for Council: "Any attempt goes against the legal advice..." quote from Kraham about lengthy legal expenses. Notes that Mayor Kraham pretends to care about wasting taxpayer money, goes on to cite Mayor David, tax breaks, mismanagement of JWSTP, police budget, taxpayers not receiving a proper return on investment, spending of previous Council without consulting public ex: ARPA (signed on March 11, 2021) — previous Council spent all of the remaining \$46M in just 125 days with 1200 days still remaining. "Kraham doesn't want to save the city any money. He would not have pursued this in the first place if he did. Fully support your attempt to fill the district seat, but please consider the taxpayer first. Democrats can also wastefully spend — please remember that this is taxpayer money that you are using to fight. True point should be that the City of Binghamton government leg has the power. Be the change."
- **Steven Cilik**, Vestal resident - Affirms Matthew's point regarding houseless population. Need to increase units available for houseless people, references Kathy Hochul's speech. Recommends that Council talk to people that work for ACBC, Veterans Affairs, ask them how they are doing and what Council could be doing to help.
- **Tarik Abdelazim**, City of Binghamton resident - Recommends to "give this group grace: 6 out of 7 legislators that don't have experience stepped up to serve". Notes that City's legal counsel is also new and learning (Sophie Bergman). "Administration will make it difficult for you, we all need to recognize that your effectiveness is contingent on support from legal and executive branches." WSDC agreed to \$1.3M payment and "no one can speak about this"— cites BinghamtonSlushFund.org as source for investigating spending. Notes that this falls on Mayor's office, pushed through this project before seeking community approval, despite protest from school districts. Excited about commitment to "90 Days of Learning". Notes generational continued fiscal mismanagement. "Republicans are like drunken sailors, appreciate your commitment to bring financial accountability to the city. You have a ton of power to do good, you can cast ordinances to fix prior problems."
- **Teri Rennia**, City of Binghamton resident - Comments that the City is in unchartered waters; important that we show some grace as folks get their footing underneath them. Teri is willing to support, while also holding people accountable. "There is the minutia and then the real work—sometimes we are so bogged down in the minutia



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that the real work gets lost. Sometimes people speak in doublespeak. Don't lose focus based on these distractions. Stand strong and firm in convictions and principles. Congratulations, represent the best interests of the city—these votes are not just for today, it's for the future." Also suggests having hard copies at the meeting for the public. Encourages Council to remain open and make it easy for citizen to be involved.

- **Dr. Misty Kirby**, South Side Binghamton resident - Work, volunteer, sit on the board of nonprofit. Refreshing to see a City Council that is reflective of the city. Troubled by the Mayor's "latest distraction game, playing around with my neighborhood's political voice". Notes that police department is claiming to have a "staff shortage" at \$88k while teachers are making \$50k in Binghamton – more teachers killed than police officers. No shortage of police, abundance of poverty. Draws attention to a need for affordable housing, mental healthcare, job training. "Where is the vision for the improvement of all the City? Many housing groups have been asking for help. Why are we making people work so hard to do good work?"
- **Richard Jannaccio**, 6th District Binghamton resident - We the people who should choose our Councilmember— should have a runoff election, preserve right of South Siders to choose. Not up to Mayor/ NYCOM/Corporation Counsel in training. We have laws, precedents. Called Board of Elections in Albany, spoke to Renee: local law would prevail in the event of a vacancy; tie is considered a vacancy; no municipal law trumps the City Charter. Based on this advice, Council makes the appointment to fill vacancies. May change in the future but that is the remedy that we have today; right decision made. Would have personally preferred the runoff, but Council has followed the rule of law.
- **Salka Valerio**, 7th District Binghamton resident - "This is a dream come true. I've become tired of screaming into the void of what the people of Binghamton were asking for while it all fell on deaf ears." Hopeful now, friends are hopeful, community members are hopeful, looking forward to the next few years of possibilities. Suggests bringing back Human Rights Commission. Too many calls about police brutality, lost wages, need a committee where people can come and air grievances. Wants to see the Youth Bureau return — a lot of youth looking for things to do, way to get them involved, more to offer to them, funds to create a Youth Commission where they are involved. Need to fix the Binghamton Bus Station, give equitable access to laundromats, keep police stations open and accessible. Homelessness is increasing rapidly with evictions, displacement, children displaced and going to other districts. Need safe places, more housing, hotels have no space. Willing to volunteer to assist with any housing initiatives.
- **Bob Wilson**, City of Binghamton resident - Advice to Council: be bold and courageous, City has had enough political cowardice to last lifetimes. "We don't need people to be conciliatory to the fascists in the Mayor's office. We need to be bold when it comes to budgetary issues. Where is Phil Strawn? As useful to this city at home as he would be here." Encourages Council President not to police the speech of the city.
- **Dominique Rice**, City of Binghamton resident - Real estate developer from Binghamton originally, returned one year ago to work on housing projects. Working on projects without support or funding — would like to find time to talk with Council about affordable housing. Recommends examining budget and working with local developers to promote housing projects. Would like to discuss future projects, including East Middle School program (having a celebration on 1/11/2023)



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VII. FIRST READING LEGISLATION

Introductory Ordinance 24-01. Considered in Finance: Cavanaugh

An ordinance to amend the 2024 General fund budget to fund a Police Lieutenant position for the whole budget year (2024) and defund a Grade 1 Police Officer for the whole budget year (2024). Increase benefits associated with change of grade

Motion: Cavanaugh

Second: Dundon

Vote: 6-0-1-0

Abstain: Rathmell

Introductory Ordinance 24-02. Considered in Finance: Cavanaugh

An ordinance to amend the BJCSB 2024 Budget to increase hourly rates due to 2.66% CPI increase and change the position count by defunding a position

Motion: Cavanaugh

Second: Dundon

Vote: 6-0-1-0

Abstain: Rathmell

Introductory Ordinance 24-03. Considered in Finance: Cavanaugh

An ordinance to amend the BJCSB 2024 Budget position count to defund one Mechanics Assistant and fund one Mechanics position

Motion: Cavanaugh

Second: Hotchkiss

Vote: 6-0-1-0

Abstain: Rathmell

Introductory Resolution 24-01. Considered in Finance: Cavanaugh

A resolution for Mayor to authorize Bonadio & Co., LLP for audit services

Motion: Cavanaugh

Second: Middleton

Vote: 5-1-1-0

Nay: Porter

Abstain: Rathmell

Introductory Resolution 24-02. Considered in Municipal Affairs: Middleton

A resolution to enter into MOU with Vestal & Johnson City Police SWAT

Motion: Middleton

Second: Dundon

Motion to move legislation to Municipal Affairs Committee: Dundon

Second: Middleton seconds

Vote: 6-0-1-0

Abstain: Rathmell

Motion to vote: Dundon

Second: Middleton



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Vote: 5-1-1-0

Nay: Porter

Abstain: Rathmell

Introduction Resolution 24-03. Considered in Special Rules: Hotchkiss

Motion to withdraw: Dundon

Second: Porter

Vote: 6-0-1-0

Abstain: Rathmell

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

1. Porter
2. Middleton
3. Cavanaugh
4. Hotchkiss
5. Mativetsky
- 6.
7. Dundon

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Cavanaugh

Second: Dundon

Vote: 6-0-1-0

Abstain: Rathmell