

**Rochester City Council Workshop
July 17, 2018
Council Chambers
7:00 PM**

COUNCILORS PRESENT

Councilor Abbott
Councilor Bogan
Councilor Gates
Councilor Gray
Councilor Hamann
Councilor Hutchinson
Councilor Keans
Councilor Lachapelle
Councilor Lauterborn
Councilor Torr
Councilor Walker
Councilor Varney
Mayor McCarley

OTHERS PRESENT

Blaine Cox, City Manager
Terence O'Rourke, City Attorney
human, resident
Gregg DeNobile, Resident
Matthew Ellis, Resident
Karen Watkins, Resident
Dan Harkinson, Resident
Shannon Theriault, Resident
Ray Barnett, Resident
Paul Martin, Resident
David Ellis, Resident
Kristen Cadwalader, Resident
Shawn Hooper, Resident
Linda Maynard, Resident
Kila Downum, Resident
Elizabeth Atwood, Resident
Amanda, Resident
Andrew M, Resident
Robin Ricker, Resident
Jennifer Santos, Resident
Joe Hannon, SOS Recovery
Kyle Costello, Resident
Dot Montoya, Resident
Kristine Connor, Resident
Tom Kaczynski, Resident
Crystal Kelly, Resident
David Anderson, Resident

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Mayor McCarley called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Deputy City Clerk Cassie Givara took a silent roll call. All Councilors were present.

2. Communications from the Mayor

Mayor McCarley revised the agenda to move Communications from the Mayor before Public Input. She indicated that there were quite a few people gathered to speak, so she suggested presenting the certificate of appreciation first.

2.1. Certificate of Appreciation – Kristine Connor

Mayor McCarley presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Kristine Connor. Kristine Connor has volunteered her time over the past three years to cleaning up the City and keeping the community looking beautiful. Ms. Connors was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation along with a gift bag and gift certificates to thank her for her hard work and betterment of the City of Rochester.

3. Public Input

human, resident, spoke about his perception that Rochester has become a more dangerous place to live.

Gregg DeNobile, resident, asked for clarification on how the agenda would proceed for this meeting; would those gathered have a chance to speak after the presentation by SOS Recovery, or would the only opportunity to speak be at public input. Mayor McCarley indicated that the public input portion of the agenda was the only opportunity for the public to speak.

Mr. DeNobile also inquired about the recent Economic Development activity where a consultant had been brought in for downtown revitalization. The consultant had talked about cutting through red tape to get things accomplished, but Mr. DeNobile felt that the City had added red tape in other areas.

Matthew Ellis, employee of Friendly's on South Main Street, discussed the increase in illegal activity in that area and, in turn, increased police presence and attention to those working downtown. He expressed a need for change in the downtown area.

Karen Watkins, resident and submitter of the petition to relocate SOS Recovery, wanted to clarify that the petition was not meant to directly attack SOS, but rather the activity that has occurred around the center. Ms. Watkins expressed concern for the safety of the people living and working in the downtown area as well as the adverse effect she feels the recovery center may have on local businesses.

Dan Harkinson, resident and pastor at First Congregational Church, spoke in support of SOS Recovery and refuted the allegations made against the church in the petition.

Ray Barnett, resident, inquired about the contracts with Rochester Management and Middle Management which had expired with the City on June 30, 2018 and asked for an update on the contents of the contracts. Mr. Barnett also inquired about the increase in City contribution towards dental benefits for City staff, meeting minutes not being posted online, impact fees on new construction, and fairness of City taxation.

Paul Martin, resident, appeared before the Council to address Planning Department, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment processes.

Andrew, resident, spoke about the issues with substance use and illegal activities in Rochester. He also spoke about aggressive panhandlers in the downtown area.

David Ellis, resident, talked about the differences between Rochester now versus when he was a child over 30 years ago.

Kristin Cadwalader, owner of Postal Center USA, said she felt the area around her store had seen an increase in activity from the homeless population and substance misuse activity over the past 6 months. She reported having to ask for the assistance of the Rochester police department on an almost daily basis.

Shawn Hooper, Owner of Moe's Subs, also spoke about the increase in substance misuse activity in downtown and suggested that Rochester needs a more visible police presence.

Linda Maynard, Secretary of the First Congregational Church, spoke in support of the church against the allegations brought forth in the petition to relocate SOS Recovery.

Kila Downum, resident, spoke in support of SOS Recovery and the support and structure they gave her following a move from California to Rochester. Ms. Downum urged people to remember that the people they were discussing are not just “drug addicts” but are family members and friends.

Elizabeth Atwood, Rochester resident and SOS Employee, spoke in support of SOS Recovery. Ms. Atwood stated that SOS is not the cause of the issues in Rochester but rather the Recovery Center was placed in Rochester due to the problems which already existed.

Amanda, resident, spoke in support of SOS Recovery and the positive change they are making for a stigmatized community.

Robin Ricker, resident and SOS Recovery Coach, spoke in support of the organization.

Jennifer Santos, resident and SOS Recovery staff, spoke about how the organization helped get her life back on track after incarceration.

Joe Hannon, resident, doctor and former State Representative, spoke about his own recovery and his support for SOS Recovery where he sits on the board of advisors. Mr. Hannon spoke about how addiction can happen to anyone. It’s not an “us” versus “them” issue. Those suffering should be treated as human beings.

Kyle Costello, resident, spoke in support of SOS Recovery without whom he feared he would be dead.

Dot Montoya, resident, spoke of her experience with recovery after issues with addiction occurred later in her life and how SOS Recovery helped her get her life back on track.

Kristine Connor, resident, thanked the City for their support and appreciation and spoke in support of SOS Recovery. Ms. Connor said she was proud to live in Rochester and

Tom Kaczynski, resident, inquired about the cost of the Tri City Mayor's Task Force for Homelessness' Master Plan through Strafford Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Kaczynski spoke about affordable housing and building codes.

Crystal Kelly, resident, spoke in support of SOS Recovery and how they help to empower and support those with substance misuse issues.

David Andersen, resident and pastor, spoke in support of SOS Recovery. Mr. Anderson spoke of the importance of recognizing those with substance misuse issues as people, friends and family members and treating them accordingly.

4. Communications from the City Manager

No Discussion

5. Presentation: SOS Recovery, John Burns

John Burns of SOS Recovery presented a slideshow detailing the services SOS Recovery offers. Mr. Burns spoke about the mission of the organization and the support they provide for those requesting help. Mr. Burns detailed the demographics and statistics to give a clearer picture of how SOS benefits those seeking assistance.

6. Department Reports

No Discussion

7. Other

Councilor Gray requested that Council invite the Chief of Police as well as the members of the Police Commission to attend the next Regular City Council Meeting on August 7, 2018 in order to talk about the issues of drug use and criminal activity which had been discussed this evening.

Mayor McCarley indicated that this discussion may need to take place at the

workshop on August 21, 2018, but they would reach out to the Police Commission to see if they can attend.

8. Non-Meeting/Non-Public

None

9. Adjournment

Councilor Walker **MOVED** to **ADJOURN** the City Council Workshop meeting at 9:04 PM. Councilor Lachapelle seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cassie Givara
Deputy City Clerk