



# RENSSELAER CITY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 8

AUGUST 2024

## From the Desk of Mayor Stammel

Office of the Mayor



Mayor Mike Stammel  
518-426-9511

[mike.stammel@rensselaerny.gov](mailto:mike.stammel@rensselaerny.gov)

### Highlights in this month's issue



Barnett Mills  
Groundbreaking



Mega Kone  
Ribbon Cutting



Park Equipment Updates

For the fourth consecutive year, the majority on the Rensselaer Common Council have opted to use taxpayer money to outsource budget modifications, bypassing direct collaboration with Mayor Stammel, who submitted the budget on time. This decision will again delay the budget, costing residents thousands of dollars.

Residents are urged to question why the council can't fulfill their responsibilities on time. The trend of passing the buck persists, with the council majority choosing to hire external help instead of working with the mayor to finalize the city's budget. This year, they plan to spend \$20,000 on an Albany lobbying firm to handle their duties.

Mayor Stammel's invitations for meetings have been ignored by the council, which prefers to delegate their duties. Ironically, this is the same council that imposed a spending freeze to restrict the mayor but has no issue spending \$20,000 of taxpayer money on a consulting firm they are friendly with.

Rensselaer residents continue to bear the financial burden of the Common Council's budgetary antics. This council has a history of turning balanced budgets into unbalanced spending plans, resulting in higher taxes for the community.

By Alderperson: Michael DeFrancisco #6

Seconded by Alderperson: Jim Van Vleet

**RESOLUTION APPROVING AGREEMENT WITH BUDGET CONSULTANT**

WHEREAS, the Common Council of the City of Rensselaer has the need for professional expert Budget Consultant services to assist the Common Council in completing its review and approval of the 2023/2024 City Budget; and

WHEREAS, the attached Agreement for professional expert Budget Consultant services will address the aforementioned needs of the City Council; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the terms and conditions contained in the attached agreement annexed hereto, made a part hereof, and incorporated herein by reference, Park Strategies, LLC agrees to provide the needed Professional Expert Budget Consultant Services, and the compensation to be paid in relation thereto is fair and reasonable, and will be within the financial parameters of the City for the subject servicing; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Common Council for the City of Rensselaer hereby approves and ratifies the attached agreement.

Approved by the Mayor and sufficiently this 7th day of June, 2023

*Michael Stammel*  
Mayor

James Van Wert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
James S. Dombrowski	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Brian Lamb	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Robert P. Kenchak	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Eric Endrey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Kevin E. Blythe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
John Williams	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Steve Zisch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Paul	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent

**CITY OF RENSSELAER**

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY HALL  
62 WASHINGTON STREET  
RENSSELAER, NEW YORK 12144

(518) 426-9511  
Fax: (518) 462-9895

June 15, 2023

City Clerk  
City Hall  
62 Washington Street  
Rensselaer, New York 12144

RE: Veto Message

Dear Clerk,

Pursuant to the Rensselaer City Charter, Section 67, I hereby veto Resolution No. 6, a "RESOLUTION APPROVING AGREEMENT WITH BUDGET CONSULTANT", passed by the Common Council at the June 7, 2023 Common Council Meeting.

I object to such Resolution as a waste of Taxpayers monies in that the City already employs a Comptroller who is available to advise the Common Council on the proposed Budget. I stand ready to work with the Common Council on addressing the needs of the residents of the City of Rensselaer as they relate to the subject matter of the vetoed Resolution.

Thank you for your kind attention and assistance.

Respectfully,  
*Michael Stammel*  
Michael Stammel  
Mayor

## Sign the Petition to Close the Dunn C&D Landfill

Its hard to believe there are only 215 signatures on this petition for this very important issue. The fight needs to continue for a safer and cleaner environment for our children. The Waste Connection's Dunn C&D Landfill next to our school poses a serious health risk, and we need your support to shut it down. The City and Legislature will be meeting with DEC this month to demand closure.

Join us in this crucial effort by signing the petition. We need 785 more signatures. Please scan the QR code below or cut and paste this link into your web browser

<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/close-dunn-cd-landfill-next-to-our-school/>

**Scan this QR with your phone's camera and click the link:**



## Update on City Parks Equipment Installation

As you may know, our Neighborhood Safe Park Project has been delayed due to manufacturer shipment errors of critical parts needed to finish the playground installations. Although the majority of the parks appear assembled, the pieces missing are essential to ensuring the safe use of the playground equipment.

Gallo Construction, our contractor has been working closely over the past month with our distributor to correct this error. Both Gallo and our distributor are equally eager to finalize installation and open the playgrounds to our community.

The missing parts are scheduled to arrive in the second week of August, with installation and safety surfacing set to continue immediately following receiving the missing pieces. It will take approximately two weeks for all of the work to be completed, setting the opening date closer to the end of Au-

# Groundbreaking Event at Barnett Mills Marks a New Era for Rensselaer

The transformation of the former William Barnet & Son Shoddy Mill is the latest example of revitalizing relics from the region's industrial heyday. A groundbreaking ceremony was held on Tuesday, July 30th for the Barnett Mills Redevelopment Project in Rensselaer.

The historic site along the Hudson River is being redeveloped into approximately 70 apartments and 20,000 sq. ft. of commercial space. This event signifies the start of an exciting new chapter for the City of Rensselaer. "This project will be the centerpiece of our city's future economic growth," says Mayor Mike Stammel.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Mayor Stammel, whose vision and dedication have been instrumental in making this project a reality. We also want to thank the many elected officials and business partners who have supported this vision, contributing their time, effort, and resources to this transformational endeavor.

"Mayor Stammel has the right team here in Rensselaer to make this project happen," says Assemblyman John McDonald (D). "We may actually put a satellite office here in Rensselaer because we are here so much," adds Rensselaer County Chamber of Commerce President Norris Pearson. When Mayor Stammel ran for re-election in 2021, remediation work had begun at the Barnett Mills/Hilton Center.

At that time, there were no definite plans for the site, but Mayor Stammel promised to work hard to get a great project underway. Promises made. Promises kept!

Congratulations, Rensselaer! We are finally making CHANGE! IT'S HERE!!!



## Rensselaer City Police Department's National Night Out: A Community Success Story

The Rensselaer City Police Department's National Night Out event on August 6th was a resounding success, bringing together our community for an evening of fun, engagement, and safety awareness. This annual event, designed to strengthen the bond between law enforcement and the community, saw an impressive turnout this year.

Despite a last-minute change of venue to Riverfront Park, the transition went smoothly, thanks to the efficient coordination by our dedicated police department and the tireless efforts of the City's Department of Public Works. Their swift action in preparing Riverfront Park on short notice ensured the event's success. The picturesque setting of Riverfront Park provided the perfect backdrop for an evening of camaraderie and community spirit.

Children were especially delighted with the event, as they received wonderful gifts generously donated by local businesses and community partners. The joy on their faces was a testament to the impact of the community's support and generosity. The gifts ranged from educational supplies and toys to sports equipment and instruments, ensuring that there was something special for every child in attendance. Activities at the event included interactive safety demonstrations, fun games, and opportunities for kids to meet and engage with our local police officers. These interactions helped build trust and foster positive relationships between the youth and law enforcement officers.

Local vendors and organizations set up booths, offering information about community services, health resources, and safety tips. Attendees had the chance to connect with various community groups, learn about the valuable resources available to them, and enjoy delicious food and refreshments.

The success of this year's National Night Out is a testament to the collaborative spirit of the Rensselaer community, highlighting the importance of coming together to support one another and build a safer, stronger environment. The Rensselaer City Police Department extends its heartfelt thanks to the CSX First Responders Children's Foundation for donating all the toys, the City of Rensselaer Police Officers' Union for their generous donations and hard work, the Gerald O'Neil Post for providing funds that allowed us to rent the bounce house, Mega Kone for donating a dunk tank, Cugino's Pizzeria for contributing food and multiple resources to help make the event happen, and the Fire Department for cooking the hamburgers and hotdogs.

We look forward to continuing this tradition and making next year's National Night Out even more memorable. Remember it's the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday in August so mark your calendars. Thank you to everyone who joined us in celebrating our community and supporting our mission to keep Rensselaer safe and welcoming for all.



## Grand Opening of Mega Kone Ice Cream Shop

Mega Kone, a new ice cream shop serving premium soft serve and Perry's hard ice cream, is now scooping happiness at 141 Broadway. The shop is one of several new businesses in the city owned by entrepreneurs Dave and Britney Prime, and opened its doors on June 28th.

Whether you're a fan of classic cones or adventurous sundaes, Mega Kone has something for everyone. They offer delicious Perry's hard ice cream alongside premium soft serve, ensuring there's a perfect treat for every taste bud.



## Amtrak Fireworks Displays

There will be several Fireworks displays from the Amtrak Maintenance Yard at the edge of the River over the next few months.

**September 6th** @ 8:30 pm—Albany Labor Day Parade

**September 7th** @ 8:00 pm—Albany Jazz Fest (Jennings Landing Show)

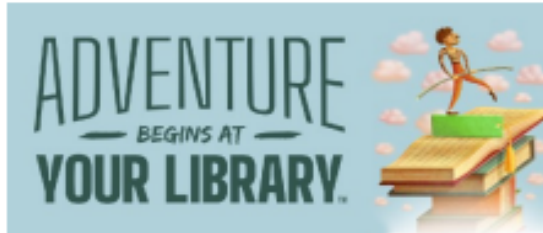


Sign up for our email newsletter!

AUGUST 2024



# RENSSELAER PUBLIC LIBRARY



The Library will be **CLOSED**  
Saturday August 31 and  
September 2.



## Teen GAME DAY

**Thursday August 15**  
**2 PM.** Come play games  
and have snacks! The  
group will decide what to  
play. No sign-up needed.  
Ages 13-18.

## Drop-in Computer help:

Wednesday, August 7  
from 2-3 PM.  
Cornell Cooperative Extension of  
Rensselaer County's Digital  
Literacy Educator is ready to  
answer your technology questions.  
No sign up needed, bring your  
device if possible.

**Friends of the Library** will not be  
meeting in the summer- next  
meeting September 19, 6 PM.

**Summer Reading** runs from June 29 to August 17. Children ages 5-12 can  
come in any time we are open to talk about their reading and get prizes.

**Art Adventures:** Tuesdays at 2 PM, for ages 5-12.

- 8/6- weaving and paper art
- 8/13 monster sculptures

**Pirate Party** Saturday August 3, 1 PM. Ages 5+ Ahoy matey!  
Join us for a party across the seven seas, with pirate food and  
activities. Please sign up.

**Reptile Adventures** Saturday August 10, 1 PM Meet real  
reptiles and learn about their habitats, features and diets. Ages 5+.  
Sign up is required.

**Reader party** Saturday August 17, 1 PM. If you signed up for  
our reader club, you're invited for prizes, pizza and free books.

**Please sign up** for these events, space is limited.

Call **518-462-1193** or go online at **rensselaerlibrary.org**

Library Board meets the first Monday of the month at 4 PM.



Like us on FaceBook for updates and city info.

**Rensselaer Public Library**  
676 East Street  
Rensselaer NY 12144  
(518) 462-1193

**RensselaerLibrary.org**

### HOURS:

- MON 12-5
- TUE 10-5
- WED/THU 10-8
- FRI 10-5
- SAT 10-3
- SUN- CLOSED

# 2024 Summer Music in the Parks

Monday	June 17 <sup>th</sup>	6-8p.m.	Pete and Friends	Riverfront Park (rain Amtrak Train Station)
Monday	June 24 <sup>th</sup>	6-8p.m.	Paul Slingerland and Friend	Riverfront Park (rain Amtrak Train Station)
Wednesday (rain date Thurs.)	June 26 <sup>th</sup>	6-8p.m.	The Lost Art Band	North End Firehouse
Monday	July 1 <sup>st</sup>	6-8p.m.	Donny Elvis	Riverfront Park (rain Amtrak Train Station)
Monday	July 8 <sup>th</sup>	6-8p.m.	Gone Grey	Riverfront Park (rain Amtrak Train Station)
Wednesday (rain date Thurs.)	July 10 <sup>th</sup>	6-8p.m.	Hands of Time	North End Firehouse
Monday	July 15 <sup>th</sup>	6-8p.m.	Standard Addition & Courtney Shane	Riverfront Park (rain Amtrak Train Station)
Wednesday (rain date Thurs.)	July 17 <sup>th</sup>	6-8p.m.	Diva and the Dirty Boys	North End Firehouse
Monday	July 22 <sup>nd</sup>	6-8p.m.	Joe Adi & the Lug Nuts	Riverfront Park (rain Amtrak Train Station)
Wednesday (rain date Thurs.)	July 24 <sup>th</sup>	6-8p.m.	Kilishandra	North End Firehouse
Monday	July 29 <sup>th</sup>	6-8p.m.	Donny Elvis	Riverfront Park (rain Amtrak Train Station)
Wednesday (rain date Thurs.)	July 31 <sup>st</sup>	6-8p.m.	Donny Elvis	North End Firehouse
Wednesday (rain date Thurs.)	August 7 <sup>th</sup>	6-8p.m.	Bobbie Vandetta & the Split	North End Firehouse

## City Signage Project:

## Residents Encouraged to Report Damaged or Missing Signs

Once the budget is approved, the City will embark on a comprehensive signage project to install new signs and replace existing ones throughout the area. This initiative aims to enhance public safety, improve navigation, and maintain the aesthetic appeal of our neighborhoods.

The City is reaching out to residents for their assistance in identifying any street signs, stop signs, or other public signage that require replacement. Your local knowledge is invaluable in ensuring we address all areas in need of attention.

If you are aware of any damaged, missing, or illegible signs, please contact the Department of Public Works (DPW) Office at 518 462-9616. Your timely reports will help us prioritize and efficiently manage the signage project. Together, we can work towards a safer and more navigable city for everyone.





To learn more about the Clearwater or to reserve your next sail, visit their website at:

<http://www.clearwater.org>

See the Clearwater educational sailing vessel docked at Riverfront Park, stop by and talk with the crew.

## City Newsletter - Subscription & Article Submission

The Rensselaer Newsletter began its first launch this past January. Since then it has become the place City Residents look to for news and facts about what's going on in the City. The Newsletter is produced and designed by volunteers Dave Ellis and Madeline Rizzo with content provided by City Hall employees and residents.

Inquires regarding articles, submission of articles or to be added to the Newsletter distribution list please send an email to [Info@rensselaerny.gov](mailto:Info@rensselaerny.gov)

We look forward to hearing from you!

## Common Council Workshops & Meetings

Are you interested in what's happening in Rensselaer? Then please consider attending the Common Council Workshops & Meetings to get the real scoop on what's happening in your City. The Workshops are held every 1st and 3rd Monday of each month and the Council Meeting are held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays both at 6:30 PM at City Hall (see attached Calendar for dates for this month at the end of this Newsletter).

Agendas are posted on the City's website at

<https://rensselaerny.gov/meeting-agendas-and-minutes>

each Monday prior to the Workshops. Your attendance and input are important and your community needs your support. We hope to see you there!





**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF SOUTHERN RENSSELAER  
COUNTY**

HELP SUPPORT OUR LOCAL YOUTH

**5th annual Christian Dabney  
Memorial Fundraiser**

**Kid  
Friendly**

**Full Buffet**

When: Sunday Sept 29th 2024

Where: Bourbon Street Grill

2209 Central Ave.

**Silent  
Auction**

**Face  
Painting**



**BIG PRIZES!!!**

**& MORE!!!**

This memorial fund was created in order to honor and remember our beloved Christian. 100% of all proceeds raised will go to Rensselaer's Boys And Girls Club. This Boys And Girls Club was a special part of Christian's childhood. That is where he spent time laughing, playing basketball and smiling.

We are a 501(C)3 Organization.

Ways to donate:

checks payable to: Christian Dabney Memorial Fund

Venmo: @Marc-DeRusso - memo: CMD Memorial Fund





**H.O.P.E. Food Pantry**  
85 Aiken Ave., Rensselaer, NY  
OPEN to the General Public  
email [greaterhope20@gmail.com](mailto:greaterhope20@gmail.com)



**Regional  
Food Bank**  
OF NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK

Our  
Sponsors

Rens. County Youth & Office of Family & Childrens Services

**Aug. 4, 2024**  
12:00-12:30

### FOOD Distribution

FREE Meat, Fruit, and Vegetables  
FREE Groceries by Hannaford  
FREE Bread by Panera

### FOOD Distribution

FREE Meat, Fruit, and Vegetables  
FREE Groceries by Hannaford  
FREE Bread by Panera

**Aug. 11, 2024**  
12:00-12:30

**Aug. 18, 2024**  
12:00-12:30

**FOOD Distribution**  
FREE Meat, Fruit, and Vegetables  
FREE Groceries by Hannaford  
FREE Bread by Panera

### Food Distribution & Back-to School

FREE Meat, Fruit, and Vegetables  
FREE Groceries by Hannaford  
FREE Bread by Panera

**Aug. 25, 2024**  
10:00 am

An IMPACT Ministry of The:  
**Greater Hope Family Life Center**



### Cate's Kids Back to School Program 2024

Circles of Mercy in Rensselaer wants to continue its collaboration with our friends and donors.

With the new school year quickly approaching, we are hoping you will join us again to support Circles of Mercy - Cate's Kids Back to School Program to collect school supplies to benefit the students and families of the Rensselaer area, where 19.9% of the children live near or below the poverty level exceeding the New York State level of 13.9%.

**PLEASE Help by Donating any of the Following School Supplies  
for  
High School Students in Grades 9-12 and Pre-School Students:**

*If you would prefer to make a monetary contribution, please make checks payable to Circles of Mercy and mail them to the office address listed below.*

- pencils (regular lead #2, color and mechanical)
- pencil sharpener
- erasers (for pencils)
- pens (black or blue)
- markers (dry erase and sharpies - assorted colors)
- other color markers
- pocket folders (assorted colors)
- glue sticks
- scissors
- projector/compasses
- 3 ring binders (in 1½" and 2" sizes)
- loose leaf paper (college ruled)
- graph paper
- subject dividers
- highlighters (yellow)
- rulers (regular with metric)
- Kleenex tissues
- hand sanitizer (small bottles)
- post-it-notes
- backpacks (no rollers/wheels)
- hole reinforcement labels
- combination lock (for gym lockers)
- other electronic items such as: flash drives, ear buds (for computer use)
- scientific calculators (TI-84+Graphing)
- spiral subject notebooks (1, 2, and 3 subject, college ruled)
- plastic zipper pencil cases
- 3" x 5" index cards

**PLEASE drop off any contributions to:**

**Circles of Mercy | 11 Washington Street | Rensselaer, NY 12144**

**by August 19, 2024 - Any Questions Please Call: 518-462-0899**

*Thank you!!*

# City of Rensselaer Events and Meetings

## AUGUST 2024

<b>5 Sun</b>	<b>Mon</b>	<b>Tue</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>Thu</b>	<b>Fri</b>	<b>Sat</b>
				1 Farmer's Market Riverfront Park 4pm—7 pm	2	3
4	5 Common Council Workshop @ 6:30 City Hall	6	7 Common Council Meeting AND PUBLIC HEARING 6:30 @ City Hall	8 Farmer's Market Riverfront Park 4pm—7 pm	9	10
11	12 <i>Planning Commission Regular Meeting 6:30 @ City Hall</i>	13 <i>Planning applica- tions due</i>	14	15 Farmer's Market Riverfront Park 4pm—7 pm	16	17
18	19 Common Council Workshop @ 6:30 City Hall	20	21 Common Council Meeting AND PUBLIC HEARING 6:30 @ City Hall	22 Farmer's Market Riverfront Park 4pm—7 pm	23	24
25	26 <i>ZBA Meeting 6:00 @ City Hall</i>	27	28	29 Farmer's Market Riverfront Park 4pm—7 pm	30 Planning Revisions Due	31

# D I R E C T O R Y

<b>ASSESSOR</b>	518-462-5421	sharon.martin@rensselaer.ny.gov	SHARON MARTIN
<b>BUILDING &amp; ZONING ADMINISTRATOR</b>	518-465-1693	tim.lippert@rensselaer.ny.gov	TIM LIPPERT
<b>CITY COURT CLERK</b>	518-453-4680		
<b>CITY CLERK</b>	518-462-4266	nancy.hardt@rensselaer.ny.gov	NANCY HARDT
<b>DIR. OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	518-462-4839		
<b>ENGINEER</b>	518-694-3968	bill.smart@rensselaer.ny.gov	BILL SMART
<b>FIRE HOUSE, NORTH</b>	518-463-2883		
<b>FIRE HOUSE, BROADWAY</b>	518-465-3243	bill.brooking@rensselaer.ny.gov	BILL BROOKING JR. FIRE CHIEF
<b>HISTORIAN</b>	518-694-3126	victor.batorsky@rensselaer.ny.gov	VICTOR BATORSKY
<b>HUMAN RESOURCES</b>	518-462-0419	irene.sorriento@rensselaer.ny.gov	IRENE SORRIENTO
<b>LIBRARIAN</b>	518-462-1193	jane.chirgwin@rensselaer.ny.gov	JANE CHIRGWIN
<b>MAYOR</b>	518-462-9511	mike.stammel@rensselaer.ny.gov	MIKE STAMMEL
<b>PLANNING DIRECTOR</b>	518-462-4839	thomas.hulihan@rensselaer.ny.gov	THOMAS HULIHAN
<b>POLICE DISPATCHER</b>	518-462-7453		
<b>POLICE CHIEF</b>	518-462-7453	warren.famiglietti@rensselaerpolice.org	WARREN FAMIGLIETTI
<b>PROCESS SERVER</b>	518-720-7106	steve.smith@rensselaer.ny.gov	STEVE SMITH
<b>PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSIONER</b>	518-462-9617	jim.brady@rensselaer.ny.gov	JIM BRADY
<b>CITY GARAGE / DPW</b>	518-462-5512	gene.hilstro@rensselaer.ny.gov	GENE HILSTRO
<b>PURCHASING AGENT</b>	518-462-2251	rich.berhaupt@rensselaer.ny.gov	RICH BERHAUPT
<b>TREASURER</b>	518-462-6424	michael.mizener@rensselaer.ny.gov	MIKE MIZENER
<b>WATER / SEWER DEPUTY COMMISS.</b>	518-462-6466	fran.welsh@rensselaer.ny.gov	FRAN WELSH
<b>YOUTH DIRECTOR</b>	518-462-5488	youth@rensselaer.ny.gov	JIM KONSTANTAKIS