



RENSSELAER CITY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 6

JUNE 2024

Office of the Mayor



Mayor Mike Stammel
518-426-9511

mike.stammel@rensselaerny.gov

Highlights in this month's issue



USS Albany Ceremony



AI Punto Picante



Summer Recreation

From the Desk of Mayor Stammel

I am pleased to provide an update on our efforts to develop a realistic and responsible budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Over the past three months, I have collaborated closely with the City's Department Heads to create a budget that accurately reflects the needs of our community while ensuring prudent use of taxpayer funds.

Our Department Heads have worked diligently to identify and include the essential items required to efficiently run their respective departments. These necessary items encompass a wide range of critical areas, including:

- **Infrastructure Improvements:** Vital enhancements to our city's roads, bridges, and public facilities. A number of things happening behind the scenes to prepare for these improvements.
- **Procurement of Equipment and Vehicles:** Ensuring our departments have the tools and transportation necessary to perform their duties effectively.
- **Engagement of Professional Services:** Securing the expertise needed for specialized projects and initiatives.
- **Contract Allocations:** Allocating funds for various contracts essential to city operations.
- **General Acquisitions:** Acquiring goods and services required for day-to-day operations.
- **Fair Compensation for Labor:** Providing fair salaries and benefits to our dedicated city employees.

To ensure financial transparency, we have meticulously itemized each expense within every department. This detailed approach allows us to present a clear and comprehensive picture of our financial plans.

On June 3rd, I presented this budget to the Common Council. The Council will then review the proposed budget and provide their recommendations for any changes. This collaborative process is crucial to refining and finalizing a budget that serves the best interests of our city.

I want to assure you that the Department Heads and I are committed to using taxpayer funds judiciously. Our aim is to maximize efficiency and effectiveness in all city endeavors, ensuring that every dollar is spent with the utmost care and consideration.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement in this important process. Together, we can ensure a prosperous and well-managed future for Rensselaer.

Celebrating the Kickoff of the 2024 Season with Chief Brooking

On May 4th, the RGSA (Rensselaer Girls Softball Association) welcomed a very special guest to mark the beginning of an exciting season: Chief Brooking. Amidst cheers and applause, Chief Brooking took the mound and threw the ceremonial first pitch, igniting the energy for what promises to be a thrilling season ahead.

Chief Brooking is more than just a ceremonial guest; he's a pillar of support for youth sports and a fervent advocate for the Fire and Emergency Services in our city. His presence at the RGSA event underscored his commitment to both causes, embodying the spirit of community engagement and support.

Joined by on-duty members and volunteers from the Rensselaer Professional Firefighters, who generously contribute their off-duty time to the RGSA, Chief Brooking's involvement heightened the excitement of the occasion. It's a testament to the collaborative spirit within our community, where different entities come together for a common goal.

Chief Brooking led a remarkable effort, responding to the call

from Mayor Stammel and the Department of Public Works (DPW). Over a three-day period, they worked tirelessly to ensure that the fields were in top-notch condition for the upcoming season. Mark Hennessy, President of RGSA, expressed his gratitude, saying, "We successfully mobilized both public and private resources to prepare the complex."

This achievement underscores the power of collaboration between city leadership, public services, and community organizations. Mayor Stammel and Chief Brooking's partnership played a pivotal role in achieving this shared objective, exemplifying effective teamwork and dedication to the community.

As the season unfolds, we extend our best wishes to all the young athletes embarking on this journey. May it be filled with joy, growth, and above all, safety. We encourage everyone to join us in supporting the RGSA every Saturday, as we come together to cheer on these budding athletes and celebrate the spirit of sportsmanship and camaraderie.



USS Albany Memorial Park Unveiled at Riverfront Ceremony

In a poignant ceremony held at Riverfront Park on May 11th, the community gathered to witness the long-awaited opening of the USS Albany Memorial Park. This significant addition to our cityscape pays homage to the six military vessels that have proudly borne the name USS Albany since 1846, culminating in the modern era with a nuclear submarine.

The journey to establish the USS Albany Memorial Park was one of determination and community spirit. Initially intended for Albany proper, the project faced hurdles in gaining approval. Undeterred, the dedicated team behind the initiative, led by Castleton resident and USS Albany veteran Wayne Van Amburgh, persisted in their mission. Their perseverance bore fruit as the memorial park officially opened its doors.

Crucial to the realization of this tribute were the contributions of local businesses and the invaluable assistance provided by members of the Department of Public Works (DPW). Their collaboration ensured that the vision for the USS Albany Memorial Park became a reality, underscoring the power of community cooperation.

The ceremony was graced by the presence of esteemed dignitaries, including County Executive Steve McLaughlin, Congressman Paul Tonko, State Senator Jake Ashby, City Court Judge Linda Blom Johnson, and members of the City Council. Their attendance highlighted the significance of this momentous occasion and underscored the collective pride in honoring our nation's maritime heritage.



100th Anniversary of Crailo State Historic Site

This month, the city celebrated a significant milestone for the Crailo State Historic Site: the 100th anniversary of Susan DeLancey van Rensselaer Strong's generous donation of Crailo to the citizens of New York State. This event also marked the centennial of the New York State Parks and Historic Sites system's founding.

The festivities honored a century of preserving and sharing the rich history and heritage of this cherished landmark. The celebration kicked off with a parade down Riverside Avenue, featuring the Yankee Doodle Marching Band. Attendees enjoyed insightful remarks and had the opportunity to explore Crailo and its exhibits through a self-guided open house tour.



City Demonstrates Fiscal Responsibility with Vehicle Reallocation

In a commendable display of fiscal responsibility, the City of Rensselaer Purchasing Department has reallocated a used vehicle from the Police Department to the Building Department. This move significantly enhances daily operations while maintaining a tight budget.

Previously, the Building Department had only two vehicles for four inspectors, causing delays and scheduling conflicts. To address this, city officials transferred an unused police vehicle to the Building Department. Despite requiring some repairs, the cost was much lower than purchasing a new or used vehicle.

With this third vehicle, the Building Department can now manage inspections more efficiently, reducing wait times and improving service delivery. Mayor Mike Stammel praised the

initiative, highlighting the city's commitment to fiscal responsibility and operational efficiency.

This successful reallocation demonstrates the city's proactive problem-solving and resource management, serving as a model for other municipalities. For more updates on the city's initiatives and projects, please visit the Building Department's website at <https://rensselaer.ny.gov/City-Departments/planning-building-and-zoning>.

Updates can be found on the Building Department's Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RensselaerBuildingDepartment>



Al Punto Picante Restaurant Grand Opening

June 6th was an exciting milestone for our community as we celebrate the grand opening of Al Punto Picante, our vibrant new Mexican restaurant that brings us authentic and delicious flavors. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was a festive event, filled with enthusiasm and community spirit.

Proprietor Jenny Berrio was joined by a distinguished group of attendees to officially inaugurate the restaurant. In attendance were President of the Rensselaer County Chamber of Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce Norris Pearson, Mayor of Cambridge Carmen Bogle (representing Senator Jake Ashby), Rensselaer City Mayor Mike Stammel, Rensselaer City Court Judge Hon. Linda Blom Johnson, Rensselaer City Common Council President John DeFrancesco, and Rensselaer County Chamber of Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce Membership Manager Orion Parrillo as well as many others. With a snip of the ribbon, the journey of Al Punto Picante began, filled with the hopes and dreams of bringing the best of Mexican cuisine to locals and visitors alike.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Jenny and her team. May Al Punto Picante thrive and become a cherished culinary destination in our community. Here's to much success and many flavorful dishes ahead!



Sunoco Gas Station & Convenience Store Opening Soon

The much-anticipated Rensselaer ValueMart Sunoco Gas Station and Convenience Store is on track to open soon. Recent developments at the site indicate that the opening is imminent.

Signage and fuel pumps have been installed, the parking areas are marked, and the surrounding property has been paved. Inside, some

coolers are already stocked, signaling that preparations are nearly complete.

Local residents and commuters can expect an official opening announcement shortly. Stay tuned for further updates as the new Sunoco location prepares to serve the community.



Planning Department Recognizes Intern Lydia Kyaw

Lydia Kyaw, a Senior at Rensselaer High School, interned with the City Planning Department this past year. Lydia's contributions were integral to the success of various projects, particularly in serving as an important voice for youth during planning meetings with community organizations and significantly contributing to the Rensselaer Rising Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Study, thus bridging the gap between the Planning Department and the younger generation; and

Lydia Kyaw's remarkable performance and proactive approach have left a lasting positive impact on the City of Rensselaer Planning Department, leading to the decision to continue and expand the internship program, thereby providing valuable opportunities for future students to gain practical experience and contribute to the community.

Lydia Kyaw is set to attend Siena College in the Fall to study Political Science with the goal of becoming a lawyer, and the knowledge, experience, and skills she has gained during her internship will undoubtedly benefit her in her future academic and professional endeavors, laying a strong foundation for her aspirations.



Memorial Day Parade - A City's Testament to Patriotism and Pride

The annual City of Rensselaer Annual Memorial Day Parade, themed this year around D-Day, was a poignant tribute to our veterans. Rensselaer remembered and honored the service of our veterans and their families, especially those who did not return home from battle. The turnout and support at the city's Memorial Day Parade were outstanding. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the organizers and everyone from the O'Neill Post for their hard work.

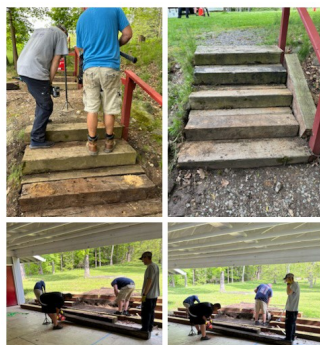
This year's parade held special significance due to the recent loss of Casey Frankoski, who served with the National Guard. Our thoughts are with her family, who are members of our community. Rensselaer is a city that deeply respects and honors its veterans, and this year's parade was a testament to that patriotism and pride. Thank you, Rensselaer!



Rensselaer Firefighters Revamp Camp Adventure Stairs

The Rensselaer Firefighters once again undertake a vital project: repairing the Camp Adventure stairs leading to the waterfront and the stairs beneath the pavilion. The firefighters who generously contributed their time and effort to this endeavor include Chief Bill Brooking, Mark Hennessy, David Mooney, Josh Davenport, Dave Phillips, Jon Anglely, and Zach Pouliotte, also joining them was Mayor Mike Stammel.

Thanks to their dedication and hard work, the steps have been restored, ensuring safe and accessible pathways for our youth as they embark on their summer camp adventures. This collaborative effort exemplifies the spirit of community and the commitment of our local leaders and firefighters to the well-being of our city's residents. The revamped stairs stand as a testament to their collective effort and dedication.



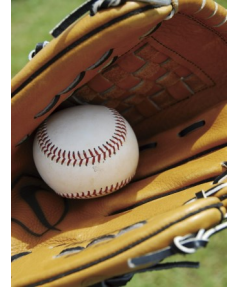


City of Rensselaer

2024 Summer Recreational Program

Coordinator-Jim Konstantakis
Assistant Coordinators - Kristine Kretzschmar & Gabrielle Pike

PHONE: [518-462-5488](tel:518-462-5488)
EMAIL: youth@rensselaerny.gov



Summer Fun Program begins July 2nd

The City's program held at the Boys & Girls Club will run each day from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. through Fri., Aug. 16 and the water park on East Street will run through Sat. Aug. 17. The water park will be open from 10-6 Mon.-Fri. and 10-4 weekends.

The programs offer wholesome recreational activities for all interested children. Most activities will be within the Boys and Girls Club building at 544 Broadway, at Riverfront Park and at the East Street water park.

Fun and games at Riverfront Park: Staff will bring the children to Riverfront Park to play games and enjoy the park.

Community Building: We are also scheduling a few tours within the City. The schedule as follows:

- **Wed. July 17** — City Court, Washington Street. This tour will require club workers and campers to leave the club at 9 a.m. This day is dedicated to criminal court cases. Everyone must be silent throughout the proceedings. After court is over (approximately 11 a.m.), the Hon. Judge Johnson will conduct a mock trial that will include the club members.
- **Thursday, July 25** — The City Police Department on Broadway beginning at 10:30 a.m. An in-depth look at how the force operates and many of the tools they use to protect our residents.
- **Wednesday July 31** — Broadway Firehouse. Tour starts at 10:30 a.m. Last year's tour was much talked about as Captain Bill Brooking and his staff entertained the group with hands-on experience.
- **Thursday Aug. 8** — Crailo State Historical Site, Broadway. Tour begins at 10:30 a.m. Also known as Fort Crailo or the Yankee Doodle House, this fortified brick manor house was built in 1707. It is listed on the National Register of Historical Places. It is steeped in American history with respect to the wartime era that included the French, Indians and British along the Hudson River. Born at the site was the ditty "Yankee Doodle Dandy."

Please **NOTE**: This program is not designed to provide day-care services for unsupervised children. Lunch will **NOT** be provided. You must register your child. Registration can be done at City Hall on Washington Street. Forms can also be picked up at Boys & Girls Club (10 am to 4 pm). Contact the Youth Bureau directly for more information.

Remember we are a NUT FREE program.

Cool off this summer at East Street Sprayground!

Beginning July 2, the Walter S. Pratt Memorial Sprayground located on East Street will be open

Monday-Friday, 10 am to 6 p.m., as well as Saturdays & Sundays, 10 a.m. to 4 pm

Permits are still required and you **MUST** be a City Resident with your zip code of 12144. Contact the City Clerk at (518) 462-4266 to obtain a Resident Card.

Please remember to sign in as you enter the park and show your resident card.

NOTICE: Regarding Solid Waste/Water Bill Payments

Please note that Solid Waste and Water Bills must be received no later than July 12, 2024. Failure to pay by this date will result in all unpaid balances being added as a re-levy to your property tax bill.

Additionally, a non-refundable fee of \$150.00 to \$250.00 will be applied.

For any inquiries about your bill, please contact the Water/Sewer Department at 518-462-6466.

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

We look forward to hearing from you!

Common Council Workshops & Meetings

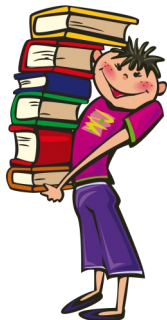
Are you interested in what's happening in Rensselaer? Then please consider attending the Common Council Workshops & Meetings to get the real scoop on what's happening in your City. The Workshops are held every 1st and 3rd Monday of each month and the Council Meeting are held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays 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!

Library Corner

For any of our events requiring sign-up, please call the Library at 518-462-1193.



Choose Your Own Adventure: Summer kick-off

Saturday June 29th from 11-2. Start your summer with a pledge to read every day. Bring in your child to this party! We will have food, balloon twisting, music and a “choose your own Adventure” challenge all around the library. Ages 5-12, no pre-registration needed

Adventure Begins at Your Library 2024 Summer events run from June 29 to August 17. We will be handing out a detailed summer calendar in July and will start sign up lists for events during the kick-off.

Children ages 5-12 can stop in any time during library hours to talk about their reading and get prizes.*

**Please note that we do not have a summer camp, children under 10 must be with an adult unless at a specific event.*



Native Plants with Anita Sanchez

Thursday June 13th at 6 PM.

Learn about what plants are native to this area and how to use them in your garden with author and naturalist Anita Sanchez. Please call 518-462-1193 or [click here](#) to sign up.

Drop-in Tech Help: Wednesday June 5 from 2-3 PM. Cornell Cooperative Extension Digital Literacy educator is here to help with your technology questions. No sign-up needed, bring your device if possible. You can also make an appointment with library staff.



The Library will be CLOSED on June 19 and July 4.

We will be reorganizing our mailing system, if you do not have a current library card with us but still wish to be included in this mailing, please contact the Library at 518-462-1193.

Notary services and computer help are available with appointment, contact the Library directly for details. (Please make appointment to ensure someone is available.)

(518) 462-1193

2024 Summer Music in the Parks

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



City Court Judge Kathleen Robichaud Bids Farewell to the Bench

Judge Kathleen Robichaud, a fixture of the Rensselaer City Court, is retiring after an illustrious career. Her departure marks the end of an era for the local judicial system and the community she has diligently served.

Over the years, Judge Robichaud she has presided over numerous cases, earning a reputation for her deep understanding of the law and her unwavering commitment to justice. Colleagues and

community members alike have praised her for her professionalism and dedication to the principles of fairness.

As Judge Robichaud transitions into this new chapter of her life, we extend our heartfelt thanks and best wishes as she embarks on her well-deserved retirement.

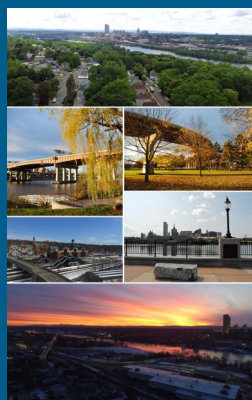


Photo Compilation
by Dave Ellis

*Yard waste (grass
clippings, leaves
brush and twigs
are scheduled for
pick up on
Mondays.*

City Hall Gardens Spring to Life

First a GIANT thank you to all the Garden Club Members for making our 2024 Spring Planting Day a successful afternoon.

It was another great kick-off to our garden season thanks to all of your digging, planting and watering efforts.

Special thanks to the following individuals for their contributions this year:

Flower donations: Tim Lippert, Dave Ellis and Norbert Leppig

Flower selection: Fran Welch & Jim Brady

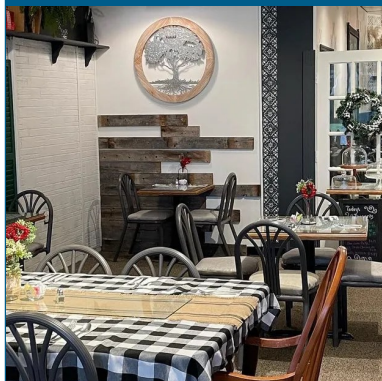
Flower placement and expertise:

Anne Burton

Lily of the Valley Trimming and general garden awesomeness: Jackie Vath - Amy Lolik, Assistant Planning Director and City Hall Garden Coordinator



Grand Re-Opening of Roots Café & Giftique



Join us on Friday, June 14th, at 11 am for the highly anticipated ribbon cutting and Grand Opening of Café Roots!

Located at 705 Columbia Turnpike, this charming Café/Gift Shop and event space offers a variety of locally sourced and created products. Roots Café & Giftique has quickly become a

beloved spot where comfort food and a comforting sense of community flourish.

Come by during the Grand Re-Opening to sample some of their offerings and experience the warmth of this delightful place.

UPSTATE NY 7TH ANNUAL WOUNDED VET RUN



SFC Jacob Pratt

Saturday, July 27th (Rain or Shine)

MOTORCYCLE RIDE

\$20 PER RIDER / PASSENGER / WALK-IN'S

Registration Starts at 9am-Kickstands Up Noon

Purpose: To help support SFC Jacob Pratt

Start: Brunswick Harley, 1130 Hoosick Rd, Troy NY

End: Veterans of Lansingburgh, 777 1st Ave, Troy NY

CEREMONY - FOOD - MUSIC - BEER - VENDORS - RAFFLE ITEMS

BIKE NOT REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE-EVERYONE WELCOME

All proceeds directly benefit this wounded veteran



Those who do not ride please join us at
Veterans of Lansingburgh to welcome bikers and veterans
For Questions: upstatenywvr@gmail.com



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A REAL CIRCUS UNDER THE BIG TOP



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NEW
SHOW**



SCAN ME!

RENSSELAER, NY

Coyne Field | 9 Rensselaer Ave.
Sponsored by The Cyprus Shriners

SUNDAY - TUESDAY
JUNE 30TH - JULY 2ND

SUN 3:00 PM • MON & TUES 6:00 PM

Visit ZerbiniFamilyCircus.com
or call **813-655-5264**



City of Rensselaer Events and Meetings

JUNE 2024

5 Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 Common Council Workshop @ 6:30 City Hall	4	5 Common Council Meeting 6:30 @ City Hall	6	7	8
9	10 Planning Commission Meeting 6:30 pm @ City Hall	11	12	13	14 Planning Apps Due	15 Street Solders @ 10:30—Broadway
16	17 Common Council Workshop @ 6:30 City Hall Music in the Park	18	19 Common Council Meeting 6:30 @ City Hall	20	21	22
23	24 ZBA Meeting 6:00 PM @ City Hall IDA Meeting 4:15 pm @ City Hall Music in the Park	25	26 Music in the Park 6:00	27	28 Planning Revisions Due	29
30						

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