

CITY OF WILKES-BARRE
PENNSYLVANIA



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL

JANUARY 24, 2019

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

CONSENT AGENDA (RESOLUTIONS)

CONSENT AGENDA (ORDINANCES)

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

ADJOURNMENT

CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 24, 2019

CONSENT AGENDA (RESOLUTIONS)

Reappointing Dr. Elliot Silkowski to the Board of Health.

Authorizing the Mayor to submit an Application for Traffic Signal Approval to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

MINUTES

Of the Reorganization Meeting of City Council of January 7, 2019.

Of the Regular Session of City Council of January 10, 2019.

Of the Parking Authority of December 18, 2018.

Of the Zoning Hearing Board of December 19, 2018.

CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 24, 2019

CONSENT AGENDA (ORDINANCES)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 1 OF 2019 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT CONSOLIDATED PLAN FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2018. (SECOND AND FINAL REASING)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 2 OF 2019 – AMENDING SECTION 12-27 OF ARTICLE II OF CHAPTER 12 OF THE WILKES-BARRE CODE OF ORDINANCES ENTITLED “GARBAGE AND REFUSE”. (RECYCLING FEE) (FIRST READING)

CITY COUNCIL

JANUARY 24, 2019

The City Council of the City of Wilkes-Barre met in Regular Session on January 24, 2019 at 6:00 p.m., in City Council Chambers, City Hall, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania for the purpose of general business.

The meeting was organized with Chairperson Mike Belusko in the Chair.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was given.

Roll Call:

Brooks	- present
Gilbert	- excused
Merritt	- present
Barrett, Vice Chairperson	- present
Belusko, Chairperson	- present

Also Present:

Darren Snyder, Controller
Rick Gazenski, Administrator
Maureen Collins, Assistant City Attorney
Cathy Payne, Assistant City Clerk
Jim Ryan, City Clerk
Lisa Sanfilippo, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Belusko read the following statement:

As City Council Chairman and on behalf of this City Council, I would like to make a brief statement regarding Officer Collins. Obviously, this Council is extremely concerned over the allegations revealed this week. As everyone is aware the criminal investigation by the State against Officer Collins is in the very early stages. Additionally, the City has begun an internal investigation related to this matter. This is now a personnel issue subject to City investigation. It would be inappropriate for this Council to offer any further comment. Residents, I ask you, any questions related to this situation, please address directly to the City Administration.

City Clerk Jim Ryan read a statement relative to Council's Rules and Procedures.

The City Clerk asked if there was anyone wishing to address Council on pending legislation.

Sam Troy, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the Ordinance amending the Recycling Fee (why is the raise necessary / does the city make money on recycling).

Mr. Belusko explained that in 2018 the City made a profit of approximately \$15,000 on recycling. Since October, the recycling is now costing the city approximately \$100,000, because they stopped buying recycling (across the country). To make up for that the city is raising the fee by \$10.00. It was already approved in the budget.

Mr. Ryan said that one of the things that they say is causing it is because of the restrictions that President Trump has put on China. China is a major entity that takes the recycling and they have increased their prices dramatically.

Jim Burden, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the Ordinance amending the Recycling Fee (separate cans and plastic).

John Suchoski, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the Ordinance amending the CDBG Consolidated Plan.

Mr. Barrett mentioned that the City's recycling program has been recognized by the State time and time again as being a model program. Besides recycling, the city also does a great job picking up yard waste, Christmas trees and other things all year round. There is a cost built into all of that and no one pays us for it. He said there is cost to the city for the employees, the vehicles, the fuel and equipment. He said the city isn't trying to make money on it, it is a service to the residents.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. R0008-19 to and including the minutes appeared on the Consent Agenda (Resolutions).

RESOLUTION NO. R0008-19

Whereas, Section 13-6 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Wilkes-Barre authorizes the Mayor, with the advice and consent of City Council, to appoint by resolution members of the Board of Health of the City of Wilkes-Barre;

Whereas, it is the desire of the City of Wilkes-Barre to reappoint the person referenced below to the Board of Health of the City of Wilkes-Barre;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the following person is hereby reappointed as a member of the Board of Health:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Elliot Silkowski 128 Noble Lane Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702	December 31, 2023

RESOLUTION NO. R0009-19

Be It Resolved, by authority of the City Council of the City of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, and is hereby resolved by authority of the same, that the Mayor of said municipality is authorized and directed to submit the attached Application for Traffic Signal Approval to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and to sign this Application on behalf of the Municipality.

MINUTES

Of the Reorganization Meeting of City Council of January 7, 2019.

Of the Regular Session of City Council of January 10, 2019.

Of the Parking Authority of December 18, 2018.

Of the Zoning Hearing Board of December 19, 2018.

Mr. Merritt moved to adopt the Consent Agenda (Resolutions).

The motion was seconded by Mr. Brooks and adopted by the following yea and nay vote:

Yeas Brooks, Merritt, Barrett and Belusko (Chairperson) – 4 – being a majority of the members elected to City Council.

Nays none.

Absent – Gilbert – 1.

ORDINANCES

The following Ordinances appeared on the Consent Agenda (Ordinances):

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 1 OF 2019 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT CONSOLIDATED PLAN FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2018. (SECOND AND FINAL READING)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 2 OF 2019 – AMENDING SECTION 12-27 OF ARTICLE II OF CHAPTER 12 OF THE WILKES-BARRE CODE OF ORDINANCES ENTITLED “GARBAGE AND REFUSE”. (RECYCLING FEE) (FIRST READING)

Mr. Belusko moved to adopt the Consent Agenda (Ordinances).

The motion was seconded by Mr. Brooks and adopted by the following yeas and nays vote:

Yeas Brooks, Merritt, Barrett and Belusko (Chairperson) – 4 – being a majority of the members elected to City Council.

Nays none.

Absent – Gilbert – 1.

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Brooks mentioned that there are 21 historic preservation projects going on throughout the city, including the First Baptist Church on South River Street.

Mr. Merritt said that when Wilkes-Barre General Hospital first opened the helicopter pad all the traffic coming in came over the river and the noise was less disturbing to the neighbors. Now they are coming through the east side of the hospital and alarming the residents all hours of the day. He asked if the Administration could reach out to them and see if they can bring their air traffic over the river as in the past.

Mr. Merritt said he was asked if the city could accent the stop signs on North Main & West Linden Streets (red blinking light).

Mr. Gazenski told Mr. Merritt that it was discussed today at the Traffic Committee meeting.

Mr. Merritt reported faded street markings on Guthrie Hill (blind hill in both directions). He asked that it be restriped.

Mr. Barrett mentioned that Spring Street in East End (between Home Depot and Mundy Street) is in deplorable condition. He asked the Administration to reach out to the State (since it is part of Business Route 309) to address the problem.

Mr. Barret reported a caved in utility cut at 19 Kidder Street.

Mr. Belusko said that he receives a lot of calls during snow storms from residents saying that haven't seen a plow truck. During the recent storm he said he went to DPW to see the operation for himself and to get a better understanding of how things work. He said the process ran like a well-oiled machine and the trucks are out there.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Jamie Fleming, Union Representative, PASNAP – WBGH Nurses Union, appeared before Council to ask for support relative to their contract.

Mr. Belusko offered his support and wished the union good luck with negotiations.

Mr. Brooks also said that he supports the nurses' union completely.

Mr. Brooks stressed to the Administration that Commonwealth Health Systems might be sold yet again to another entity, only because of the advertisements that the University of Pittsburgh Medical College keeps doing over and over again. He said if that happens and we go from a for-profit to a non-profit that impacts the city's budget seriously. He encouraged the Administration to reach out to Commonwealth and UPMC to discuss it.

Jim Burden, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the need for street signs on East Northampton Street ("25 mph / School Zone").

Mr. Belusko told Mr. Burden that he should go to the next Traffic Committee and explain the situation to them, and Mr. Gazenski will check into it in the meantime.

Greg Griffen, Chairman, Citizens Opioid Committee, Swoyersville, PA appeared before Council to update them on the opioid epidemic.

Sam Troy, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the progress of the projects for the former Sterling property and the property on Northampton & Main Streets, the Assistant City Attorney and Deputy Administrator positions and city finances.

Mr. Gazenski told Mr. Troy that the project for the Sterling Lot should start moving along within the next 12 – 14 months.

Mr. Gazenski said that the property on Northampton and Main Streets is owned by Sphere International and they are still in negotiations with a few of the building owners in the area.

John Suchoski, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to applying for the Act 13 Grant Program funded by the Marcellus Shale Natural Gas Impact Fee Revenue and body cameras for police officers.

Mr. Belusko said that the body cameras would be a great expense and may be an issue with the union. He also said that the cameras could be turned on and off, so they wouldn't be the answer.

Mr. Gazenski said that the city is not looking into the Marcellus Shale grant money until the LSA grants are approved. He said the city must spend the money they have before asking for more. He said they will be addressing it by February.

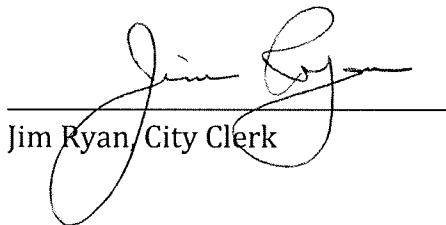
Mr. Suchoski pointed out that the cut off for the Marcellus Shale grant is February 1, 2019 and urged the city to apply.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.



Mike Belusko, Chairperson

ATTEST:



Jim Ryan, City Clerk