

CITY OF WILKES-BARRE
PENNSYLVANIA



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL

MAY 14, 2020

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

RESOLUTIONS

MINUTES

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

CITY COUNCIL
MAY 14, 2020

RESOLUTIONS

Approving the disposition of records from the Finance Office as set forth in the Municipal Records Manual.

Approving the disposition of records from the City Clerk's Office as set forth in the Municipal Records Manual.

Approving the disposition of records from the Code Enforcement Office as set forth in the Municipal Records Manual.

Authorizing the proper city officials to sign any and all necessary documents related to awarding the contract to the most qualified firm for the 2020 Street Paving Project (Payment to be made from OECD Budget).

MINUTES

Of the Special Session of City Council of April 30, 2020.

Of the Regular Session of City Council of April 16, 2020.

Of the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority of March 17, 2020.

CITY COUNCIL

May 14, 2020

The City Council of the City of Wilkes-Barre met in Regular Session on May 14, 2020, at 4:16 p.m. (immediately following the Work Session), at the Police Station, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania for the purpose of general business. (The meeting was conducted and streamed on YouTube for public viewing due to COVID-19.)

The meeting was organized with Chairperson Bill Barrett in the Chair.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was given.

Roll Call:

Belusko	- present
Marconi	- present
Gilbert McBride	- present
Brooks, Vice Chairperson	- present
Barrett, Chairperson	- present

Also Present:

George Brown, Mayor
Maureen Collins, Assistant City Attorney
Butch Frati, Director of Operations/Deputy Administrator
Tim Henry, City Attorney
Frank Hershberger, IT Director
Charles McCormick, City Administrator
Cathy Payne, Assistant City Clerk
Lisa Sanfilippo, Administrative Assistant
Jim Ryan, City Clerk

City Clerk Jim Ryan announced that Council would take questions/comments on agenda items from the public over the phone. There being no phone calls, the meeting continued with general business.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. R0032-20

A Resolution of the City Council, of the City of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania declaring its intent to follow the schedules and procedures for the disposition of records as set forth in the Municipal Records Manual approved December 16, 2008 (as amended March 28, 2019).

Whereas, a Local Government Records Committee was created by Act 428 of 1968 and empowered thereby to make rules and regulations for records disposition; and

Whereas, the Municipal Records Manual was approved by said committee on December 16, 2008; and

Whereas, the City of Wilkes-Barre desires to dispose of records according to statutory requirements:

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the City Council of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, that it intends to follow the schedules and procedures for disposition of records as set forth in the Municipal Records Manual approved on December 16, 2008 (as amended March 28, 2019).

Office/Department: Finance Office

Box Number, Record title, dates

Cubic Feet

Please see the attached documentation list

65 Total Boxes

81.90 Total

Mr. Belusko moved to adopt the Resolution.

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

Yeas Belusko, Marconi, McBride, Brooks and Barrett (Chairperson) – 5 – being all of the members elected to City Council.

Nays none.

RESOLUTION NO. R0033-20

A Resolution of the City Council, of the City of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania declaring its intent to follow the schedules and procedures for the disposition of records as set forth in the Municipal Records Manual approved December 16, 2008 (as amended March 28, 2019).

Whereas, a Local Government Records Committee was created by Act 428 of 1968 and empowered thereby to make rules and regulations for records disposition; and

Whereas, the Municipal Records Manual was approved by said committee on December 16, 2008; and

Whereas, the City of Wilkes-Barre desires to dispose of records according to statutory requirements;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the City Council of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, that it intends to follow the schedules and procedures for disposition of records as set forth in the Municipal Records Manual approved on December 16, 2008 (as amended March 28, 2019).

Office/Department: City Clerk

Box Number, Record title, dates

Cubic Feet

Please see the attached documentation list

77 Total Boxes

97.02 Total

Mr. Brooks moved to adopt the Resolution.

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

Yeas Belusko, Marconi, McBride, Brooks and Barrett (Chairperson) – 5 – being all of the members elected to City Council.

Nays none.

RESOLUTION NO. R0034-20

A Resolution of the City Council, of the City of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania declaring its intent to follow the schedules and procedures for the disposition of records as set forth in the Municipal Records Manual approved December 16, 2008 (as amended March 28, 2019).

Whereas, a Local Government Records Committee was created by Act 428 of 1968 and empowered thereby to make rules and regulations for records disposition; and

Whereas, the Municipal Records Manual was approved by said committee on December 16, 2008; and

Whereas, the City of Wilkes-Barre desires to dispose of records according to statutory requirements;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the City Council of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, that it intends to follow the schedules and procedures for disposition of records as set forth in the Municipal Records Manual approved on December 16, 2008 (as amended March 28, 2019).

Office/Department: Code Enforcement

Box Number, Record title, dates

Cubic Feet

Please see the attached documentation list
59 Total Boxes

74.34

Mr. Marconi moved to adopt the Resolution.

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

Yeas Belusko, Marconi, McBride, Brooks and Barrett (Chairperson) – 5 – being all of the members elected to City Council.

Nays none.

RESOLUTION NO. R0035-20

Whereas, the City of Wilkes-Barre is advertising for proposals for engineering services for the 2020 Street Paving Project.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by the City Council of the City of Wilkes-Barre that the proper City officials are hereby authorized to sign any and all necessary documents related to awarding the contract to the most qualified firm for the 2020 Street Paving Project.

Payment to be made from OECD Budget.

Mrs. McBride moved to adopt the Resolution.

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

Yeas Belusko, Marconi, McBride, Brooks and Barrett (Chairperson) – 5 – being all of the members elected to City Council.

Nays none.

MINUTES

Of the Special Session of City Council of April 30, 2020.

Of the Regular Session of City Council of April 16, 2020.

Of the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority of February 18, 2020.

Mr. Barrett moved to adopt the minutes.

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

Yeas Belusko, Marconi, McBride, Brooks and Barrett (Chairperson) – 5 – being all of the members elected to City Council.

Nays none.

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Belusko asked the Mayor if he receives numbers regarding the Census and where the city stands in the County and/or State on returns and is the City promoting it.

The Mayor responded that he has not received any numbers so far. He said the Administration has reached out to different groups within the city asking for their support so we can get everybody counted.

Mr. Belusko asked the Administration to give some thought to putting an advertisement in the paper.

Mr. Marconi thanked Mr. Frati and Mr. McCormick for all their help in his district.

Mr. Brooks thanked the Mayor for expanding the restaurant program to include small businesses.

Mr. Barrett thanked the City Clerk's Office for all their work relative to the disposition of records.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Jason Carr, Wilkes-Barre, PA called relative to City Council being required to correspond with each other and constituents through City Council email accounts, healthcare for Mr. Belusko and Mrs. McBride (consider Medicaid or Obamacare), refinancing debt, pension plans, selling the sewer system to fund budget shortfalls or pension gaps, list of sewer repairs and associated cost for the repairs, budget shortfalls due to the pandemic, new request for KOZ designation, KOZ extensions, plans to help the citizens who are unemployed and how is the city letting citizens know about crime in the city.

City Council/Administration responses:

Attorney Henry said he is not aware of any internal policy that requires City Council to use city email to correspond with residents.

Mr. Ryan said that he is not aware of any policy either.

Mrs. McBride said she does not qualify for Obamacare, since her employer, the City, offers health insurance. She said before she accepted the city's healthcare plan, she exhausted every avenue, and the city's plan was the only option.

Mayor Brown told Mr. Carr that he has had communications with some financial experts to determine if refinancing is something that would be beneficial to the city.

The Mayor informed Mr. Carr that the Administration has not done anything regarding the sale of lease of the sewer due to the COVID virus and the damage to City Hall. The issues have been put on hold for the time being; it will be resurrected once we get back to normalcy.

The Mayor said there has been a reduction in the Mercantile tax income and permit fees, but we have been in communication with federal representatives asking them to include us in the next package for financial relief to help us make up for the loss of revenue.

The Mayor said there have been no new requests for KOZ designations.

Mr. Barrett said anyone in the city who is unemployed should contact the Pennsylvania Unemployment Office for assistance.

Mayor Brown mentioned that he has received calls from residents who haven't received their unemployment check. He said he reached out to State Representatives asking them to get involved and to make phone calls to try and get our residents' payments done as quickly as possible.

Mr. Barrett pointed out that the police department is very transparent about getting crime information out, normally through Facebook, press releases and Crime Watch.

John Suchoski, Wilkes-Barre, PA called relative to the North Washington Street Bridge, pool house at Hollenback, how can OCD money be used for restaurants, 448 S. Franklin Street (porch falling off) and changes to City Council meetings once the State opens.

City Council/Administration responses:

Mayor Brown informed Mr. Suchoski that it is not OCD money being used for the restaurants, it is Enterprise Zone money, that was sitting in an account that has not been utilized for over 14 years. The money was designated only for the downtown at one time, but the city received permission from the Office of Community and Economic Development to use that money city-wide.

The Mayor explained that 448 South Franklin Street is in bankruptcy court and the city doesn't have the ability to address it right now.

Mr. Barrett said he doesn't know when Council meetings will return to the way they were held, but in the interim we will continue to do as much as we can to conduct meetings as thorough as we can.

Angel Mathis, Wilkes-Barre, PA, called in relative to the storm drains on Beaumont Street, request for a streetlight on Lauffer Lane, parking permits for Beaumont Street and how many times a sidewalk can be marked for repair (North Main Street).

City Council / Administration responses:

Mr. Frati said the City has the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority committed to come into the area tomorrow at some point and start helping us clean some of the catch basins.

Mr. Frati said he will send the city electrician out to check on the street light request. It is not as easy as one may think. The only way to determine if additional streetlights can be put up is physical investigation. There has to be a neutral line and a primary line and if there are then the city can ask PP&L to install a drop for us. He said it could take months, but he will start the investigation process tomorrow.

Mr. Barrett said that he would have to ask the Traffic Committee to look at permit parking on Beaumont Street.

Mr. Marconi told Ms. Mathis that he checked out the storm drain and there were a lot of recyclables covering it. He said he would be more than happy to clean them up by Saturday if that is ok with everyone.

Mr. Marconi said he also checked out the sidewalk on North Main Street and it is lifted three or four inches. It is marked for peoples' safety. He agreed that something should be done there.

Mr. Frati told Mr. Marconi that he would rather he not clean up the storm drain and leave it up to the Public Works employees. He said he will make sure it gets done as quickly as possible.

Mr. Frati explained that any sidewalk that is lifted, is not the city's responsibility. The city does not mark sidewalks. Sidewalks are the property owner's responsibility (Ordinance). He said Ms. Mathis sent him a picture of the sidewalk and the marking was probably the property owner's way of alerting everyone to it.

Mr. Barrett thanked the IT Department and the Clerk's Office for all their help with the meeting.

Mayor Brown announced that as of Monday, the city will be aggressively addressing graffiti throughout the city. A taskforce has been put together and are going out every day identifying it. The city will be addressing buildings with graffiti by notifying the owner of the building and letting them know that it is their position to take care of it and if not, the city will do it.

Mr. Barrett asked the best way for someone to report graffiti.

The Mayor said to call his office directly.

Steve McCarsky, Citizens' Voice Reporter, called in relative an update on the City Hall roof.

City Council/Administration response:

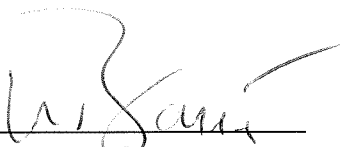
Mayor Brown said the roof turned into much more of a problem than expected. The cost of the project is going to be approximately \$500,000. Beside the roof, there has been damage to the fourth floor. The Mayor said the floor was damaged and unfortunately there is asbestos in the flooring, so we have to hire a contractor to come in and remove that the

proper way and install a new floor. Also, the scaffolding has to come down, which will be a two-day project. There is no timeline for completion, but they will continue to work on the roof next week.

Mr. Barrett announced the next meeting of City Council will be a Combined Session on May 28, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

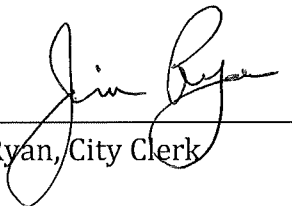
Mr. Barrett said the reason the meetings are being held at 4:00 p.m. is to minimize the time that everyone has to be together. It's at the end of the workday and no one has to come back later in the day.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.



Bill Barrett, Chairperson

ATTEST:



Jim Ryan, City Clerk

