

CITY OF WILKES-BARRE
PENNSYLVANIA



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL

DECEMBER 7, 2021

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

ORDINANCES

MINUTES

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

ADJOURNMENT

CITY COUNCIL
DECEMBER 7, 2021

ORDINANCES

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 13 OF 2021 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA ADOPTING THE MAYOR’S PROPOSED GENERAL FUND BUDGET. (SECOND AND FINAL READING)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 14 OF 2021 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 29.240.3 OF ARTICLE VIII OF CHAPTER 29 OF THE WILKES-BARRE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES ENTITLED “DESIGNATED ZONE”. (FIRST READING)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 15 OF 2021 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 2-27 OF ARTICLE II OF CHAPTER 12 OF THE WILKES-BARRE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES ENTITLED “GARBAGE AND REFUSE.” (Fee for recyclable newsprint, commingled recyclable aluminum cans and recyclable ferrous containers) (FIRST READING)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 16 OF 2021 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 30 OF THE WILKES-BARRE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES ENTITLED “UTILITIES.” (Sewers - Annual rental and maintenance fee for persons within the city). (FIRST READING)

MINUTES

Of the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority of October 19, 2021.

Of the Regular Session of City Council of November 9, 2021.

Of the Wilkes-Barre Traffic Committee Meeting of November 18, 2021.

Of the Regular Session of City Council of November 23, 2021.

CITY COUNCIL

December 7, 2021

The City Council of the City of Wilkes-Barre met in Regular Session on December 7, 2021, at 6:04 p.m. (immediately following the Work Session), in City Council Chambers, City Hall, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania for the purpose of general business.

The meeting was organized with Chairperson Tony Brooks in the Chair.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was given.

Roll Call:

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

Also Present:

George C. Brown, Mayor
Tim Henry, City Attorney
Charles McCormick, Administrator
Cathy Payne, City Clerk
Lisa Sanfilippo, Administrative Assistant
Tracy Smith, Assistant City Clerk

City Clerk Cathy Payne read a statement relative to Council's Rules and Procedures.

The Chairperson asked if there was anyone wishing to address Council on pending legislation:

Bob Kadluboski, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the Ordinance adopting the Mayor's proposed General Fund Budget (Council's pension and healthcare and the City Clerk's salary).

Sam Troy, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the Ordinance adopting the Mayor's proposed General Fund Budget (sewer and recycling fee, Coal Street Authority, lowering the property tax and employment tax).

The Mayor explained that the revenue decrease for the Coal Street Authority is because there was a limited amount of activity there due to COVID, so it generated less money.

Mayor Brown clarified that the only bond the city took out was for the pension fund, which the city had no liability to pay (it's paid by ACT 205).

Mayor Brown pointed out that the city is giving back 7.1 million dollars to the people through different programs and has also reduced the parking meters and the price of blue garbage bags.

Jerry Lynott, Times Leader, appeared before Council relative to the Ordinance amending the Downtown Residents Meter Parking Permit Program (how many more spaces will it create).

Kelly Mashinski, Wilkes-Barre, PA answered (from the audience) that it will create approximately 20 new parking spots.

Jason Carr, Saylorsburg, PA appeared before Council relative to the Ordinance adopting the Mayor's proposed General Fund Budget (Council salaries, healthcare, 1.8 million of American Recovery Plan, City Clerk's salary and overtime).

Kelly Mashinski, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the Ordinance amending the Downtown Residents Meter Parking Permit Program.

City Council members agreed to vote on the Ordinances and Minutes as a Consent Agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA (ORDINANCES)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 13 OF 2021 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA ADOPTING THE MAYOR'S PROPOSED GENERAL FUND BUDGET. (SECOND AND FINAL READING)

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Mrs. McBride moved to adopt the Consent Agenda (Ordinances).

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

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

Nays none.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Jessica McClay, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to Council's healthcare, medical buyouts and salaries.

Mr. Brooks informed Ms. McClay that Council has not had an increase in salary since 1999.

Mr. Brooks told Mrs. McClay that he takes the medical buyout and donates it to charity.

Mr. Belusko and Mrs. McBride said they will be taking the same healthcare they took last year.

Mr. Marconi responded that he will be taking healthcare this year.

Sam Troy, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the budget, the Coal Street Authority (decrease in contribution), American Rescue Plan money, garbage bags fees, lower fees and plastic bags.

Mrs. McBride said there was discussion last year on how the city could make the blue bags more affordable for families. She said she is still in favor of reducing the cost for those with lower incomes and for senior citizens.

Brian Ferry, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to transit oriented development, city owned lots, the budget and bicycle and pedestrian studies.

Mr. Brooks said he is in full support of trying to see how we can reestablish Amtrak.

Mr. Brooks also said that he is all for the bike lane strategies and will continue to push along with the MPO and other people within the Administration.

Mr. Marconi thanked Mr. Ferry for his great ideas and suggested meeting with him to discuss them.

Bob Kadluboski, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the budget and Council's pensions and healthcare.

Joe Creekmore, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the property he rents on Darling Street (no heat and sewage/flooding in the basement).

Mayor Brown told Mr. Creekmore he will meet with him after the Council meeting to discuss the situation.

Mrs. McBride told Mr. Creekmore to make sure that he has everything documented for the eviction hearing.

Mrs. McBride said she would like to see what the Health Department said about the property.

John Suchoski, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the Sterling property (reverter clause/time table).

Attorney Henry explained that there was never a reverter clause, it was a right to repurchase. He said changes were made to that to assist them with financing, but he hasn't reviewed it lately, and didn't want to misrepresent anything.

Francesco Malacaria, DSA NEPA, appeared before Council relative to Kirby Park, the homeless population and Keystone Missions.

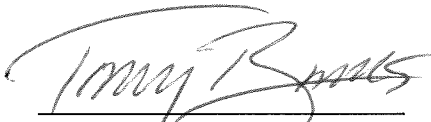
Mayor Brown said he has had two meetings with the Riverfront Parks Committee, the Diamond City Partnership and a teacher of Forestry at Penn State. Their recommendation was to clean the path, which the city is going to do. They said to not remove what is along the riverside because that helps with the flood protection. He said there are also rare species of birds that reside in that area, and there is concern for them.

Mayor Brown pointed out that the city is working with Keystone Mission on how to address the housing situation for homeless people and a Code Blue initiative.

Mark Shaffer, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the homeless, Amtrak and the city's sewer and water lines.


Mayor Brown said that some of the American Rescue Plan money will be allocated to fix the old sewer line.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.



Tony Brooks, Chairperson

ATTEST:



Cathy Payne, City Clerk

