

CITY OF WILKES-BARRE
PENNSYLVANIA



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL

JANUARY 30, 2020

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

CONSENT AGENDA (RESOLUTIONS)

CONSENT AGENDA (ORDINANCES)

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

ADJOURNMENT

CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 30, 2020

CONSENT AGENDA (RESOLUTIONS)

Reappointing Hayden White to the Zoning Hearing Board.

Execute any and all necessary documents related to accepting the proposal submitted by TOPP Business Solutions for copy machines and related services for various city offices.

MINUTES

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

CONSENT AGENDA (ORDINANCES)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 1 OF 2020 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SEC. 7-19 OF CHAPTER 7 OF THE WILKES-BARRE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES ENTITLED “PERMITS AND INSPECTIONS.” (FEES FOR PERMITS) (FIRST READING).

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 2 OF 2020 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 26 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE ENTITLED “STREETS, SIDEWALKS AND OTHER PUBLIC PLACES.” (PAVE CUTS) (FIRST READING)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 3 OF 2020 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA ADOPTING THE MAYOR’S PROPOSED AMENDED GENERAL FUND BUDGET. (FIRST READING)

CITY COUNCIL

January 30, 2020

The City Council of the City of Wilkes-Barre met in Regular Session on January 30, 2020 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 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 C. Brown, Mayor
Darren Snyder, Controller
William Harris, Director of Planning/Zoning
Tim Henry, City Attorney/Deputy Administrator
Brett Kittrick, Finance Director
Charles McCormick, City Administrator
Cathy Payne, Assistant City Clerk
Lisa Sanfilippo, Administrative Assistant
Jim Ryan, City Clerk

Mr. Harris presented the wife of the late Barry Payne a Resolution from Council thanking him for his service on the Planning Commission.

Mr. Ryan read a statement relative to Council's Rules and Regulations.

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 Resolution reappointing Hayden White to the Zoning Hearing Board, the Resolution accepting the proposal from TOPP Business Solutions (RFP) and the Ordinance adopting the 2020 budget (PILOT, decrease in expenses in Building Inspection).

Attorney Henry explained that the TOPP Business Solutions contract was not put out for bid because they are part of the COSTARS program, which means the state bids it for the municipalities. Attorney Henry added that the new contract saves the city \$300 a month.

Mr. Kittrick said that the line for contracted building inspections is for \$400,000 in 2019, he explained that in 2020, for budgetary purposes, the Administration is going to net that against the revenue, so it's already factored into the permit revenue line.

Mayor Brown informed Mr. Troy that Hayden White is in the audience because Mr. Brooks asked the Administration to have new appointees attend meetings.

Jim Burden, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the Ordinance adopting the 2020 budget (employee raises).

Mayor Brown informed Mr. Burden that the raises he's talking about were done by Executive Order by the prior Mayor. He added that some of the employees that received raises had taken on additional duties.

Hayden White, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to his reappointment to the Zoning Board.

Mr. Barrett asked when he was first appointed to the Zoning Hearing Board.

Mr. Hayden replied that he has been serving on the board since 1996.

Resolution No. R0003-20 to and including the Minutes appeared on the Consent Agenda (Resolutions).

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. R0003-20

Whereas, Section 1401 of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Wilkes-Barre allows the Mayor, with the advice and consent of City Council, to appoint by resolution residents of the City of Wilkes-Barre to serve as members of the Zoning Hearing Board;

Whereas, it is the desire of the City of Wilkes-Barre to reappoint the person referenced below to the Zoning Hearing Board:

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the following person is hereby reappointed as a member to the Zoning Hearing Board:

Name

Term Expires

Hayden White
19 Vulcan Street
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702

January 24, 2025

RESOLUTION NO. R0004-20

That, the proper city officials are hereby authorized to execute any and all necessary documents related to accepting the proposal submitted by TOPP Business Solutions for copy machines and related services for various city offices.

TOPP Business Solutions is a vendor authorized to do business under Pennsylvania's cooperative purchasing program (COSTARS).

MINUTES

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

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

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.

ORDINANCES

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

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 1 OF 2020 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SEC. 7-19 OF CHAPTER 7 OF THE WILKES-BARRE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES ENTITLED "PERMITS AND INSPECTIONS." (FEES FOR PERMITS) (FIRST READING)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 2 OF 2020 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 26 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE ENTITLED "STREETS, SIDEWALKS AND OTHER PUBLIC PLACES." (PAVE CUTS) (FIRST READING)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 3 OF 2020 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA ADOPTING THE MAYOR’S PROPOSED AMENDED GENERAL FUND BUDGET. (FIRST READING)

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

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.

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Marconi said he has been fielding residents’ complaints about garbage on Washington Street, North Main Street and Sycamore Street. The property on Sycamore Street had garbage piled a few feet high. He said he reported it to the Administration, and it was taken care of within 36 hours. He thanked the Mayor and the Administration for their quick action to the problem.

Mr. Marconi also thanked Mr. Greg Griffen and his team for helping clean up the city.

Mr. Marconi mentioned that in the past Ms. Gilbert McBride brought up landbanks and it appeared that Council was interested. He said he thinks that Council and the Administration should take a hard look at the subject. There are other neighboring communities that are doing it and it appears to be working. He said he reached out to a gentleman named Joseph Chacke and is waiting for a response. He said he would like the city to take a closer look at the issue.

Mayor Brown discussed Mayor Lombardo’s landbank program in Pittston. He said he has met with Mayor Lombardo and he has offered to help the city with it. Mayor Brown said he would like Council to be part of the meeting.

Mr. Barrett said in the case of the large pile of trash on Sycamore Street, the city has to do everything they can to identify persons responsible for it.

Mrs. McBride reported the roof on one of the dugouts at Mayflower Park (Little League Field) is peeling off and there’s graffiti on some of the billboards.

Mr. Brooks thanked the Administration for picking up the mattress on Arch Street and Greg Griffen and his group for cleaning up Arch Street.

Mr. Brooks thanked Mr. Frati and the Administration for the demolition of the church on Parrish and Lloyds Lane.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

John Suchoski, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to Sphere International (reverter clause) and blight in the city (database).

Mayor Brown told Mr. Suchoski that representatives from Sphere International were in his office this week. They will be starting work on that property shortly. They are going through the permit process. The first thing they have to do is demolish the buildings and when the weather is right, they will start with the foundation. The Mayor mention that this is going to be an on-going project and it won't be built in one year.

Mayor Brown said that the Administration will be addressing blighted properties, graffiti, and dirty neighborhoods. He said they have a program that they are going to start instituting where the city will have resources out in the street, five days a week, going down the city streets identifying problematic properties and code violations.

Attorney Henry told Mr. Suchoski that the Redevelopment Authority is essentially defunct, and they have some debt and would not be able to help the city with blighted properties.

Mrs. McBride thanked Mr. Suchoski for putting together a database of blighted properties. She asked if he would email it to her so she can look it over for her district.

Jim Burden, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to painting lines, and installing signs on East Northampton Street, stationing a cop at Harris' Garage (East Northampton Street) at 3:00 p.m. (fights), cars parked on Grant Street that haven't been moved in months, snow removal on abandoned properties, 424 East Northampton Street (TV's sitting out front) and blighted properties.

Attorney Henry told Mr. Burden that it is the responsibility of the homeowners to shovel sidewalks.

Mrs. McBride told Mr. Burden that he can contact her with any issues in his district and she will pass them on to the Mayor's office.

Tony Thomas, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to blight in the city and creating green space.

Mr. Marconi said he was up and down North Main Street and a lot of the homes are in rough shape. He said he wrote down about 12 addresses and he will be reporting them to Mr. McCormick.

Jessica McClay, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to the increase in Workers' Comp in the budget (light duty), Sherman Hills (do they pay for rental inspections), telephone pole (Verizon)/hole (gas company) in front of 463 N. Pennsylvania and which Council members are contributing to the pension and taking healthcare or the buyout.

Attorney Henry gave the following answers:

1. Light duty is offered to all union members.
2. Sherman Hills does get inspected by City Inspectors or Third-Party Inspector.
3. He will report the telephone pole issue to Mr. Frati.

Mrs. Gilbert said that she takes the Healthcare and opted out of the Pension.

Mr. Brooks replied that he contributes 7% into the pension and takes the buyout.

Mr. Barrett said he doesn't participate in the pension and does not take the healthcare.

Mr. Marconi said he does not take the pension and takes the buyout.


Mr. Belusko responded that he takes the medical and pension.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.



Bill Barrett, Chairperson

ATTEST:



Jim Ryan, City Clerk