

CITY OF WILKES-BARRE
PENNSYLVANIA



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

RESOLUTIONS

ORDINANCES

MINUTES

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

ADJOURNMENT

CITY COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

RESOLUTIONS

Adopting the Luzerne County 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan as the official Hazard Mitigation Plan of the City of Wilkes-Barre and directing the respective officials and agencies identified in the implementation strategy to implement the recommended activities assigned to them.

ORDINANCES

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 8 OF 2020 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE FIRE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE AS ADOPTED BY THE FIRE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION ON OCTOBER 26, 1977 AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL AND THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE ON NOVEMBER 23, 1977. (AGILITY TEST) (SECOND AND FINAL READING)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 9 OF 2020 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 1 OF 1992, ENTITLED “AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING COUNCIL’S RULES AND PROCEDURES”, AS AMENDED. (MATTERS TO BE PLACED ON AGENDA) (SECOND AND FINAL READING)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 10 OF 2020 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 1 OF 1992, ENTITLED “AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING COUNCIL’S RULES AND PROCEDURES”, AS AMENDED. (ORDER OF BUSINESS) (SECOND AND FINAL READING)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 11 OF 2020 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE, LUZERNE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL PREVIOUSLY ENACTED ON MAY 11, 2017, THAT AUTHORIZED THE ISSUANCE OF ITS GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS AND/OR NOTES OF THE CITY, IN THE AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$52,000,000, PURSUANT TO THE ACT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT DEBT ACT, ACT 53 PA.C.S., CHAPTERS 80-82, AS AMENDED, TO PROVIDE FUNDS FOR AND TOWARD CERTAIN PROJECTS RECITED THEREIN. (SECOND AND FINAL READING)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 12 OF 2020 - An Ordinance amending the Community Development Block Grant Consolidated Plan for Program Year 2020. (First Reading)

CITY COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

MINUTES

Of the Regular Session of City Council of September 10, 2020.



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CITY COUNCIL

September 24, 2020

The City Council of the City of Wilkes-Barre met in Regular Session on September 24, 2020, at 6:11 p.m. (immediately following the Work Session), at the Innovation Center, 7 S. Main Street, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania (due to issues with the City Hall elevator) 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	- absent
Brooks, Vice Chairperson	- present
Barrett, Chairperson	- present

Also Present:

George Brown, Mayor
Jay Delaney, Fire Chief
Tim Henry, City Attorney
Frank Hershberger, IT Director
Charles McCormick, City Administrator
Cathy Payne, Assistant City Clerk
Jim Ryan, City Clerk
Lisa Sanfilippo, Administrative Assistant
Joyce Zaykowski, Director of OCD

The City Clerk asked if there was anyone wishing to address Council on pending legislation. There being no one and no phone calls, the meeting continued with general business.

Mr. Ryan said with no objections from Council the Resolutions and Ordinances will be voted on as Consent Agendas.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. R0079-20 to and including No. R0080-20 appeared on the Consent Agenda (Resolutions).

RESOLUTION NO. R0079-20

Whereas, the City of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania is most vulnerable to natural and human-made hazards which may result in loss of life and property, economic hardship, and threats to public health and safety, and

Whereas, Section 322 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) requires state and local governments to develop and submit for approval to the President a mitigation plan that outlines processes for identifying their respective natural hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities, and

Whereas, the City of Wilkes-Barre acknowledges the requirements of Section 322 of DMA 2000 to have an approved Hazard Mitigation Plan as a prerequisite to receiving post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds, and

Whereas, the Luzerne County 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan has been developed by the Luzerne County Emergency Management Agency and the Luzerne County Planning Commission in cooperation with other county departments, and officials and citizens of the City of Wilkes-Barre, and

Whereas, a public involvement process consistent with the requirements of DMA 2000 was conducted to develop the Luzerne County 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan, and

Whereas, the Luzerne County 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan recommends mitigation activities that will reduce losses to life and property affected by both natural and human-made hazards that face the County and its municipal governments,

Now, Therefore Be It Resolved by the City Council of the City of Wilkes-Barre:

- The Luzerne County 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan is hereby adopted as the official Hazard Mitigation Plan of the City of Wilkes-Barre, and
- The respective officials and agencies identified in the implementation strategy of the Luzerne County 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan are hereby directed to implement the recommended activities assigned to them.

RESOLUTION NO. R0080-20

That, the proper city officials are hereby authorized to take any and all necessary actions related to entering a lease agreement with WestGUARD Insurance Company for parking spaces in the Intermodal Parking Garage.

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

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

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

Nays none.

Absent – McBride – 1.

ORDINANCES

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

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 8 OF 2020 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE FIRE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE AS ADOPTED BY THE FIRE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION ON OCTOBER 26, 1977 AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL AND THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE ON NOVEMBER 23, 1977. (AGILITY TEST) (SECOND AND FINAL READING)

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TO PROVIDE FUNDS FOR AND TOWARD CERTAIN PROJECTS RECITED THEREIN. (SECOND AND FINAL READING)

FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 12 OF 2020 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT CONSOLIDATED PLAN FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020. (FIRST READING)

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

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

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

Nays none.

Absent – McBride – 1.

MINUTES

Of the Regular Session of City Council of September 10, 2020.

Mr. Brooks moved to adopt the minutes.

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

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

Nays none.

Absent – McBride – 1.

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Marconi thanked Greg Griffen, Andy Gegaris and Joe McCavanaugh for cleaning up the City cemetery on River Street. He asked the Mayor if the City could pay more attention to the cemetery in the future.

Mr. Marconi discussed the new police substations. He said he thinks they are a great idea but doesn't think the location for District E (General Hospital) is the best place because it is not visible or accessible. He said he would like to get together with the Mayor to discuss another option if possible.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Angel Mathis, Wilkes-Barre, PA appeared before Council relative to off-campus College parties, loitering, littering, need for a streetlight on Beaumont and gutters (full of trash and recycling).

Mayor Brown said the Administration has been in communication with the colleges about off-campus gatherings.

The Mayor said that he will schedule a time for someone from his Administration to meet with Ms. Mathis and walk her neighborhood to look at additional streetlights.

Mr. Marconi agreed with Ms. Mathis that the drains in that neighborhood are filled with plastic. The city cleaned it up twice in the beginning of the year and Mr. Griffen and his crew also cleaned it up twice. Mr. Marconi added that he would like to attend the meeting to walk the neighborhood.

The Mayor said the city has a new vacuum truck to clean the drains and gutters. He said that he will identify that area to be cleaned more periodically.

Mr. Ryan read the following emails submitted to the City Clerk's office for Public Discussion:

From Kenneth J. Weiss, Edwardsville, PA:

Kirby and Nesbitt Parks combined are one of the greatest outdoor recreation areas in all Northeastern Pennsylvania. They provide unmatched natural beauty, sports facilities, picnic areas, trails, playgrounds, and lots of great open space for not only the citizens of the City of Wilkes-Barre, but all of the residents of the greater Wyoming Valley. I regularly ride my bike along the levee trail through the parks, play an occasional round of disc golf on the Nesbitt Park course, and often walk and picnic in Kirby.

These parks were well planned and designed to highlight the natural beauty of the surround area. The trees and landscaping were all specifically chosen for their ability to enhance the park's look and feel. Although these parks are well maintained, many of the trees planted when the parks first opened are getting old and must be removed. It has been my

observation that the trees being removed are not being replaced with anything to help maintain the aesthetics of the parks.

I know budget restraints make it challenging to address every concern presented to council, but I believe a little can go a long way in this situation. Planting just a few new trees each year would be a relatively small cost if this is done consistently for the next few years. I would imagine there are a variety of civic groups that may be interested in helping raise funds and provide support in the effort. The Nature Conservancy, Northeast Audubon Society, PA Sierra Club, and the Boy Scouts are just a few groups that may be able to assist.

It is important to maintain and improve the beauty and ecology of these majestic parks as an asset to our community. I respectfully request that Wilkes-Barre City Council consider putting resources into having new trees planted in Kirby and Nesbitt parks to replace the many trees that have been removed over the last few years. Thank you for your time.

Mr. Barrett asked the City Clerk to make sure the Shade Tree Commission gets a copy of this email.

From Honesty Lopez:

Dear "Wilkes-Barre City Council Members", please support the formation of a Citizens Police Review Board. What this city needs is transparency from the police department. The Citizens Police Review Board is the only way to build a trusting relationship between the police department and the people of this city. The Police Review Board is NOT an attack on the Wilkes-Barre Police Department, rather it is a resource that will make sure all people in this city feel safe. The truth of the matter is, there is a problem with policing in Wilkes-Barre, many people have experienced injustices right here in this city. Now more than ever, we need action. Please vote in favor of the Citizens Review Board Ordinance when it is up for vote again, you owe it to the people who put you in your position.

From Cathy Wolfe, Wilkes-Barre:

I am writing in support of Mayor Brown's Citizens Advisory Committee versus the Civilian Review Board that was voted down.

I believe the Advisory Committee would further improve and enhance the community relations with our police department which already does a tremendous job of being involved in the community with their programs and community policing efforts.

Our police department is very responsive to the community and does not need an untrained special interest group interfering with processes that are already in place.

A Civilian Review Board as proposed would only serve to inhibit how they now protect and serve the community, let alone the costly labor issues that would quickly follow.

Please allow our police officers to not have to be concerned about facing a Citizens Review Board, with subpoena powers and the ability to recommend discipline, whenever they disagree with the decision of an officer who is working to keep us safe.

City Council took the following phone calls (general discussion):

Jason Carr, Saylorsburg, PA phoned in relative to the 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan (when was the public meeting held), Luzerne County Flood Protection Authority (City's DPW removing shrubs and trees on East Ross Street), Mayor's plan to reduce the budget deficit, bonuses for city employees who retire early, and pension meeting.

Chief Delaney told Mr. Carr that all of the public meetings are listed in the 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Mayor Brown said there has been no conversations regarding bonuses for city employees or tax increases.

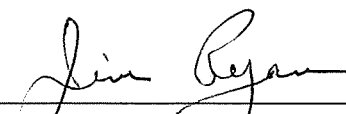
Mayor Brown informed Mr. Carr that the pension meeting notice was posted in both city papers.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.



William Barrett, Chairperson

ATTEST:



Jim Ryan, City Clerk

