

BETHLEHEM CITY COUNCIL REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING  
OLD COUNCIL

Monday, January 4, 2016 - 7:00 PM  
10 East Church Street - Town Hall  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

INVOCATION

(The Reverend Cannon) Laura Thomas Howell, Obl.S.B., Trinity Episcopal Church, offered the Invocation which was followed by the pledge to the flag.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

1. ROLL CALL

President Reynolds called the meeting to order. Present were Bryan G. Callahan, Eric R. Evans, Michael D. Recchiuti, Cathy Reuscher, Louis N. Stellato, Adam R. Waldron, and J. William Reynolds, 7.

CITATIONS

*Citation - Honoring Michael D. Recchiuti - Member of Council - 2012-2016*

President Reynolds presented a Citation honoring Michael D. Recchiuti as a Member of Council from 2012 through 2016.

Mr. Recchiuti thanked everyone and stated that it has been a real opportunity to serve the Bethlehem community as a Member of City Council. He is truly humbled and honored to be in this position. Mr. Recchiuti stressed that it was a privilege to serve Bethlehem on City Council and he thanked the residents for the opportunity.

President Reynolds remarked that as with all of our three outgoing Council Members, it was an honor to serve with Mr. Recchiuti. He added that he has personally known Mr. Recchiuti for a long time. President Reynolds informed that there is probably no one that knows more or cares more about the City of Bethlehem than Mr. Recchiuti. He knows his knowledge to detail in many ways will be missed by this Council. Addressing Mr. Recchiuti, President Reynolds stated the residents in Bethlehem have been lucky to have you as an elected official for the last four years. There were many times in the past four years where we found each other on the same side of the issues. There were occasional times where they disagreed but President Reynolds always knew that it was coming from a place where we had a legitimate disagreement. There were also some decisions made and votes that Mr. Recchiuti made that were very important in the evolution of Bethlehem to help the City move forward. President Reynolds stated he wanted to say thank Mr. Recchiuti as not only elected official and colleague but also as a resident.

*Citation - Honoring Cathy Reuscher - Member of Council - 2014-2016*

President Reynolds presented a Citation in honor of Cathy Reuscher as a Member of Council from 2014 through 2016.

Ms. Reuscher stated she wanted to extend her thanks to all of Council for putting their trust in her for more than two years ago when she was appointed to fill Mayor Donchez' seat. The past two years at times have been very challenging but most of all extremely rewarding. Ms. Reuscher informed it has been an absolute honor to serve alongside all on Council and to represent everyone in this room and friends and neighbors in this City.

President Reynolds remarked that Ms. Reuscher stepped into a difficult situation when she was appointed to the position for the remainder of Mr. Donchez' term. In many ways she came along at exactly the right time for her personally because she thought about being involved earlier. He knows that she will continue to be involved with her work and job with the Appalachian Mountain Club at Illick's Mill. President Reynolds advised this is something we look forward to and he thanked her for her service.

*Citation – Honoring Louis N. Stellato – Member of Council – 2014-2016*

President Reynolds presented a Citation honoring Louis N. Stellato as a Member of Council from 2014 through 2016.

Mr. Stellato thanked President Reynolds. There are many thanks and goodbyes tonight and he just wanted to thank his fellow Council Members for taking him through these last 14 months. It was a tough ride for him at the beginning but he overcame some of the issues and has learned. Mr. Stellato thanked the other Members of Council for their vote of confidence right from the beginning. He stated humorously that this is the only job he ever had where they called him honorable. He is 73 years old and it took him that long to get that title. Mr. Stellato hopes he lived up to that title and he hopes he met the expectations that everyone had for him from the beginning. He continued it has been a lot of fun, an honor and a pleasure and he thanks everyone from the bottom of his heart. Mr. Stellato also thinks he would be remiss if he did not thank Mayor Donchez and his staff for all the help they have given him; he appreciated everything. Mr. Stellato also thanked the public for coming to the meetings and voicing their opinions. It has been a long 14 months but it has been fun and he will miss this and miss the people.

President Reynolds added that we certainly appreciate all of your service and appreciate all that you brought to City Council. It has been a hectic 14 months for Mr. Stellato but President Reynolds thanked him for putting his name in to fill the vacancy and thanked him for serving.

Mr. Evans remarked that President Reynolds covered this very well so he will be brief. The three Council Members who are leaving City Council each in their own way have been very special in what we are trying to do. They all brought strengths that helped improve what we were as a Council and he thanks them for their service and wishes them well with their families going forward.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of December 8, 2015 were approved.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT (for public comment on ordinances and resolutions to be voted on by Council this evening – 5 Minute Time Limit)

*Planning Commission Appointment*

Stephen Antalics, 737 Ridge Street, stated he commends Olga Negrón-Dipini in that she refused the reappointment to the Planning Commission because she was becoming a Member of Council today. That implied some degree of legality. She could not hold those two positions at the same time. Mr. Antalics noted that today you will be voting on an Administrative Order appointing Mr. Stellato to the Planning Commission as he is a sitting Council Member. Mr. Antalics stated he checked with some people and there is confusion as to legality of it. Some say it is, some say it is not. Personally, he knows nothing at all negative about Mr. Stellato; to him he appears to be a fine gentleman. Mr. Antalics remarked he only came to know him when he was appointed to Council. He continued and asked if anyone in this room recognize the name Bill Scheirer. Mr. Antalics remarked that if any of you attended routinely almost all of the Planning Commission Meetings, Zoning Hearing Board Meetings other Commissions like the Bethlehem Authority you would see him there. A number of you on Council have commended him on his contributions to the City in terms of advice. Mr. Antalics stated he received a few phone calls on this. It is not a matter of personalities; it is a matter of people with ability or knowledge. He has it confirmed that Mr. Scheirer submitted a resume for this position on the Planning Commission. Mr. Antalics noted that the question becomes what is in the best interest of the City of Bethlehem. In terms of integrity, we will make both people equal, intelligence is also equal but then regarding contribution and knowledge, there is a dramatic imbalance. Mr. Antalics stated that he would have liked to have seen this Administrative Order put up to the New Council. He is not saying that this appointment will be bad. Mr. Antalics feels that appointments made should be made with the point of view of the best interest of the community. So you have a choice to table this and move it to the New Council or send it back for a review, because the new Council will have to live with this gentleman. Mr. Antalics mentioned that a number of you have commended Mr. Scheirer from that table for his great contribution and advice and will listen to him. He has a very serious problem with this appointment. Not that it is good or bad but what is the best and it is up to Council to decide what is best for the City.

4. OLD BUSINESS

A. *Old Business – Members of Council*

None.

B. *Tabled Items*

None.

C. *Unfinished Business*

None.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

6. REPORTS

A. *President of Council*

1. *Annual Report*

President Reynolds presented his Annual Report for 2015, as follows:

City Council adopted 50 Ordinances and 292 Resolutions, and conducted 16 Committee meetings.

Some of the Ordinances adopted by City Council include:

- Revisions to Article 112, Campaign Finance Reports, to include that elected official and campaign committees are to provide copies of their Campaign Finance Reports to the City Clerk's Office. In addition to candidates, respective committees are required to provide to the City Clerk's Office notification required to be filed with the Counties if \$500 or more in contributions is received within a week before the election
- Revisions to Article 117, Recreation Commission, changing the name to Recreation Board and appointments are now made by the Mayor.
- Council amended Article 117, Officers and Employees to reflect that members of the Environmental Advisory Council and the Library Board are appointed by City Council. Members of the Bethlehem Human Relations Commission are appointed by the Mayor and City Council.
- An Intermunicipal Government Agreement with Northampton Borough Municipal Authority to delineate the respective rights of the City of Bethlehem and the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority to provide water service to an area encompassed within the territorial boundaries of Allen Township and Hanover Township.
- An Intermunicipal Government Agreement with Lower Nazareth Township to provide Sewer Service to Lower Nazareth Township.
- City Council approved a Street Vacation for a portion of Durham and a portion of Orchard Street that was petitioned by Moravian College for the construction of a Health Science Building.
- City Council adopted various Zoning Amendment Ordinances dealing with tree conservation, impervious coverage, SALDO Recreation Fees, parking, solar devices, the rezoning of a parcel of property on Main Street owned by Moravian College from High Residential (RS) to Institutional (I) for a new Health Science

building, and rezoning the Martin Tower property from Landmark Conservation and Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District (CM-LTN) to Office Mixed Use District (OMU).

- In the area of Finance, an Ordinance was adopted authorizing and directing the issuance of 2015 General Obligation Bonds to refund a portion of the remaining outstanding 2010 General Obligation Bonds and provide funding for the City's Capital Improvement projects. In addition, an Ordinance was adopted authorizing the Parking Authority Guaranteed Revenue Bonds.
- City Council authorized Intermunicipal Agreements with Allentown and Easton for the Regional Expansion of the Shared Lane Markings Network.

Among Resolutions approved by City Council in 2015 were:

- A Resolution authorizing an Inter-municipal Liquor License transfer to 1402-1412 Center Street
- The Members of Council interviewed candidates and passed a Resolution naming George Yasso as City Controller, following the death of City Controller David DiGiacinto.
- In March, Council declared its support for the specific recommendations stated in a letter addressed to the FERC, dated February 25, 2015 and prepared by Mayor Donchez, which are designed to mitigate certain risks posed by the proposed route, design, and construction of the Pipeline. Council also stated its opposition to the proposed route, design, and construction of the PennEast Pipeline that would pass through environmentally sensitive Bethlehem Watershed land and in the area of the City's water transmission.
- A Resolution requesting State legislators to restore language to Title 35 that would allow Bethlehem and Allentown to receive funding and maintain control of their respective 9-1-1 Centers was adopted in April. The funding was restored and in August Council adopted a Resolution authorizing receipt of funds from the State 911 Fund for the City's 9-1-1 Center.
- The Bethlehem Area Public Library submitted contracts for approval for the Phase III of the Bethlehem Area Public Library's Room to Grow project and were authorized by Resolutions.
- A Resolution was adopted that approved the grant application to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to replace the Monocacy Creek Bridge.
- In October a Sublease agreement between the City of Bethlehem and The Appalachian Mountain Club for use of the Illick's Mill building was authorized by Resolution.
- City Council adopted a Resolution authorizing the sale of Raven, Bethlehem Police Mounted Unit horse, upon retirement from the Unit.
- Authorization was given for several Use Permit Agreements throughout the year for events such as the Women's World Cup Viewing Party, Vegfest, Star of Bethlehem Pop Up Bar Event, Runner's World Half Marathon and Festival, Papal Visit Viewing Event, Oktoberfest, to name a few.

B. *Mayor*

1. *Administrative Order – Dr. Arnold Traupman – Historic Conservation Commission – South Bethlehem and Mount Airy*

Mayor Donchez appointed Dr. Arnold Traupman to membership on the Historic Conservation Commission – South Bethlehem and Mount Airy effective through January, 2019. Mr. Evans and Mr. Recchiuti sponsored Resolution 2016-001 to confirm the appointment.

Voting AYE: Mr. Callahan, Mr. Evans, Mr. Recchiuti, Ms. Reuscher, Mr. Stellato, Mr. Waldron, and Mr. Reynolds. 7. The Resolution passed.

2. *Administrative Order – Louis Stellato – City Planning Commission*

Mayor Donchez appointed Louis Stellato to membership on the City Planning Commission effective through November, 2020. Mr. Evans and Mr. Recchiuti sponsored Resolution 2016-002 to confirm the appointment.

Mr. Stellato informed since he is a current Member of the City Council he will recuse himself and abstain from voting.

Mr. Recchiuti stated he just wanted to say that Mr. Stellato will do a great job on the Planning Commission. He continued if he brings half the effort that he brought to City Council to the Planning Commission that would be a tremendous effort for the Planning Commission. Mr. Recchiuti informed that Mr. Stellato has the best interest of the City of Bethlehem at heart and he will continue doing a good job for the Planning Commission and he wishes him good luck on that.

Mr. Evans wanted to add to what Councilman Recchiuti said. There are a lot of people around City Hall that have said they were impressed by Mr. Stellato because he made his rounds and did his homework. He was a very hard working Councilman and very dedicated to the position and he will continue that going forward. Mr. Evans noted that Mr. Stellato's best strength is his ability to listen and ask questions; he has seen this at meetings with him. He will continue to ask questions until he finds out the answers and gets to the bottom of what he is trying to learn. At Council through the months and over the year his decisions have been fair and consistent and there are great reasons behind the decisions. It also it is important to note that he has the ability to remain independent. Mr. Evans noted that even when he first came on Council, in the first few months when he might look to lean on certain Council Members at no time did he show any area where he leaned one way or the other; he remained independent. Mr. Evans thinks that is important for any Commission or Board or Council that is part of the City. Mr. Evans remarked that Mr. Stellato will certainly be missed on Council going forward but he will be a great addition to our Planning Commission. Mr. Evans said he will support this appointment tonight and thanked Mr. Stellato for his service on Council. He wanted to make the point that Mr. Stellato has served our City in many different organizations over many decades so he thanks him for that as well.

Mr. Waldron added that Mr. Stellato will have his full support tonight. He did want to make a point to the speaker who spoke earlier and brought up the name of Mr. Scheirer, who he believes would also have done a tremendous job in this position and he would also have his support in this role too. Mr. Waldron noted however, it is Council's role to advise and consent to the Mayor's appointment and this is the name that was brought forth by the Mayor. Mr. Waldron reiterated that Mr. Stellato has his full support and he thinks he would do a fabulous job in that position.

Mr. Callahan also thanked Mr. Stellato for his service and his integrity. When he joined Council a year and a half ago we wanted to appoint someone that did not want to run for election because we did not want to give someone a leg up on anyone else. Mr. Callahan noted that we asked if you were interested in not running for election and the fact that you stuck by that is appreciated. He thinks Mr. Stellato's work ethic and integrity will be brought also to the Planning Commission and he has his full support.

President Reynolds added that he will also be supporting Mr. Stellato. He was not someone that he had really known until he put his name in for the vacancy. President Reynolds remembers when we appointed Mr. Stellato that Mr. Evans had eloquently gone through some of the things that Mr. Stellato brought to the table and why you would be a good addition to City Council. President Reynolds expressed he supports this appointment tonight. He is happy with his decision to appoint Mr. Stellato to Council, and he will be supporting him for the Planning Commission as well.

Voting AYE: Mr. Callahan, Mr. Evans, Mr. Recchiuti, Ms. Reuscher, Mr. Waldron, and Mr. Reynolds. 6. Mr. Stellato abstained. The Resolution passed.

*Outgoing Members of Council*

Mayor Donchez remarked that he wanted echo the comments made by President Reynolds. He mentioned that they were eloquent regarding the outgoing Members of Council. Mayor Donchez wanted to thank them for their public service and service to the City and he wishes them the very best.

7. ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

A. *Bill No. 52 - 2015 - Amending Article 933 - Recycling*

The Clerk read Bill No. 52 - 2015 - Amending Article 933 - Recycling - Fees on Final Reading.

Voting AYE: Mr. Callahan, Mr. Evans, Ms. Reuscher, Mr. Stellato, Mr. Waldron and Mr. Reynolds, 6. Voting NAY: Mr. Recchiuti, 1. Bill No. 52 - 2015, now known as Ordinance No. 2016-01 was adopted on Final Reading.

8. NEW ORDINANCES

None.

9. RESOLUTIONS

None.

10. NEW BUSINESS

None.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT (for public comment on any subject - 5 Minute Time Limit)

None.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned sine die at 7:28 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk