

BETHLEHEM CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
10 East Church Street - Town Hall  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania  
Tuesday, May 5, 2026 - 7:00 PM

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

1. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by President Rachel Leon. Present were Justin Amann, Bryan G. Callahan, Michael G. Colón, Jo C. Daniels, Hillary G. Kwiatek, Collen Laird, and Ms. Leon, 7.

CITATION HONORING: Sgt. Dwight Schaffner - Police

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 21, 2026

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. PUBLIC COMMENT (on any subject not being voted on this evening - 5 Minute Time Limit)

*John Embardino*

Mr. Embardino said trash has been piling up at a neighboring property at 1953 Eaton Avenue. This is in the yard, next to the house, and in a shed. He was advised by City representatives that there is a process that includes providing the property owner with a warning then citation and a period to respond. Mr. Embardino said the magistrate has not scheduled a hearing. Meanwhile, a second citation was issued by the City yesterday. He is frustrated with the process that has not yet resulted in cleanup.

*Mark Sager*

Mr. Sager echoed the comments of the previous speaker. In addition to odor, he reported seeing varmints among the garbage. He agreed there is frustration and urged City action before the situation leads to a clash between neighbors and the occupants.

*Daniel Fratesi*

Mr. Fratesi said the first two speakers covered his main concerns. He, too, asked for City assistance in gaining compliance. He added that the garbage is attracting bugs and birds and said garbage is blowing around the neighborhood. This also is a fairness issue. Others may get the impression that residents do not have to pay for refuse removal and that there are no consequences.

*Mike Albanese*

Mr. Albanese supported the other neighbors who have spoken. He was especially worried about health concerns that may result from the neighbor's trash problem.

*Mark Ozimek*

Mr. Ozimek reported his concerns regarding recent Bethlehem police use of the Steel City Gun Club. He does not have a problem with periodic practice by BPD but believed the use to be excessive on April 30 and May 1. Firing time exceeded 10 PM. He and a neighbor reported the late noise to Northampton County dispatchers. Shooting increased after he called, coincidental or not. He asked that hours be limited to not later than 9 PM. Mr. Ozimek also said that some of those leaving the gun club drove recklessly when leaving. He asked that something be done about the hours of use and driving behavior.

*Dan Skinner*

Mr. Skinner reported an increase in traffic violations in recent years near Elmwood Park. He asked if a speed deterrent device could be implemented.

*Isabelle Tuosto*

Ms. Tuosto thanked the City for updates after she and neighbors a few months ago voiced concerns about odors believed to be coming from Spray-Tek. Conditions are somewhat better. She has spoken with state Rep. Jeanne McNeill. There is hope that new legislation will be adopted to assist residents in this regard.

*Larry Kirk*

Mr. Kirk confirmed the conditions that his neighbors reported concerning 1953 Eaton Avenue. He added concerns about partying, loud music, and harassment of his dogs by some of the participants. He encouraged the City to pay to remove the trash and charge the property owner.

*Terry Kloiber*

Ms. Kloiber presented a traffic safety petition requesting a traffic study for the area of Grandview Boulevard. Specific concerns are speeding, stop sign violations, and pedestrian safety. She suggests speed humps on Grandview and a flashing stop sign at Glendale and Florence Avenues. Her petition has signatures from 46 households.

*Mary Jo Makoul*

Ms. Makoul agreed with Ms. Kloiber on many instances of speeding and other traffic violations in the area. She asked for more enforcement and perhaps the addition of speed-calming measures.

*William Scheirer*

Mr. Scheirer read two quotes on immigration and attributed them to former President Ronald Reagan. He offered these views in contrast to current-day anti-immigration sentiment.

*Stephen Antalics*

Mr. Antalics appreciated those who spoke this evening about the Eaton Avenue trash condition and their spirit of neighbors who take care of each other. City planners view single-family homeownership as a key to a city's success. He noted Bethlehem's shift toward rental units and believes this is leading to a lack of cohesive neighborhood relationships that is leading to decline. He blamed councilmanic action in recent years resulting in zoning leniency that has not been in the interest of the welfare of single-family homeowners but instead to the benefit of developers.

- B. PUBLIC COMMENT (on ordinances and resolutions to be voted on by Council this evening – 5 Minute Time Limit).

*William Scheirer*

Mr. Scheirer commented on the Historic Conservation Commission's recommended approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) on tonight's agenda for demolition of four buildings at 327 South New Street for redevelopment as new construction. He lamented the loss of historic buildings, particularly on the South Side. He added that it is not enough just to protect historic buildings. It is additionally important to protect those around it because if you do not, the context of the history is lost.

4. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Members of Council
- B. Tabled Items
- C. Unfinished Business

5. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Rescheduling Tuesday, May 19, 2026 City Council Meeting to Wednesday, May 20, 2026 due to the Primary Election.

Motion by Callahan, seconded by Kwiatek, to amend the meeting date. AYE: Amann, Callahan, Colón, Daniels, Kwiatek, Laird, Leon, 7. Motion passed.

*1953 Eaton Avenue*

Ms. Kwiatek has spoken with one of the neighbors. Ms. Kwiatek learned from City staff that an additional delay occurred because of an inability for the City to connect with the property owner. A promise was made for cleanup by May 4, but that date passed without progress resulting in a second citation. Ms. Kwiatek observed that there appear to be more nuisances present than garbage such as loud parties and threatening behavior.

Community and Economic Development Director Laura Collins reviewed the enforcement process proscribed by ordinance. This includes trying to gain cooperation with the property owner because, when achieved, it is the fastest route to compliance. When this fails, citations go through the magistrate. In this instance, there has been frustration because the magistrate's office has not scheduled a hearing. She and Mayor Reynolds discussed the difficulties of the City authorizing trash pickup to force compliance. Complications ranged from private-property rights to the unlikelihood of the City being able to recoup the cleanup costs and the unfairness to those who properly pay for trash removal.

Ms. Kwiatek asked whether the City might have more leverage in a situation like this if it had a single-hauler program.

Ms. Collins said a single-hauler system would not shut off collection if payments were not received. A lien would be filed. But Mayor Reynolds added that it is still the occupant's responsibility to put trash out to the curb, so that would have to take place. He added that the relative few problems like this one should not necessitate a major process change unless enough other advantages can be shown.

Ms. Laird asked whether the health issues change the severity of the situation and perhaps trigger other enforcement alternatives.

Ms. Collins said this could be investigated but she was not thinking of any. Conditions are far from condemnation, for example.

Mr. Callahan also asked that the process be reviewed to see whether streamlining could occur, at least in certain instances.

Mayor Reynolds agreed to review the process to determine if ordinance tweaks might be advisable. In this case, it was also noted that the process has been elongated because the magistrate's office has not scheduled a hearing.

*Ms. Daniels*

Ms. Daniels asked about the circumstances involving 723 Broadway.

Ms. Collins said this property was purchased by the Redevelopment Authority in conjunction with Community Action Lehigh Valley. Community Action is responsible for getting the property to pass inspection and sold as affordable housing. Some corrections must be made before this will pass re-inspection. Ms. Collins said she would have to double check circumstances of the inspections process and report her findings to Council.

*Ms. Laird*

Ms. Laird observed that there were several examples tonight of neighbors supporting neighbors. She also said that there have been comments at times, as recently as tonight, that the backbone of a community is single-family property owners. It is harmful to make this assumption. She has been a renter and believes she was a contributor to Bethlehem and knows others who have as well. A lot of good comes from everyone.

Ms. Laird asked about details of the gun club.

Captain William Audelo said that police shooting qualification are usually during the day, but some classes require low light and must be held later into the evening. These particular circumstances can be examined and the time reconsidered for the future.

*Mr. Colón*

Mr. Colón asked if the Citizens Traffic Advisory Committee still meets and suggested that it might be the forum for residents to discuss traffic concerns and propose solutions.

Mayor Reynolds added that a review of the draft Complete Streets Plan will provide residents with another chance to voice opinions.

Ms. Collins said the CTAC meets on the first Tuesday of each month and she can let Council know where the listing can be found on the City's website.

## 6. COMMUNICATIONS

### A. *City Solicitor – Use Permit Agreement – DK Enterprises – The Mom Market 2026*

City Solicitor John F. Spirk, Jr. recommended a Use Permit Agreement with DK Enterprises for The Mom Market 2026 – Item 10 A.

### B. *City Solicitor – Use Permit Agreement – ArtsQuest – 2026 SangriaFest*

City Solicitor John F. Spirk, Jr. recommended a Use Permit Agreement with ArtsQuest for 2026 SangriaFest – Item 10 B.

### C. *City Solicitor – Use Permit Agreement – BEDCO-SSAD – 2026 Live on the Greenway*

City Solicitor John F. Spirk, Jr. recommended a Use Permit Agreement with Bethlehem Economic Development Corporation, by and through its initiative, the SouthSide Arts District for the 2026 Live on the Greenway – Item 10 C.

### D. *City Solicitor – Use Permit Agreement – Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce – 2026 Live in the Garden Concert Series*

City Solicitor John F. Spirk, Jr. recommended a Use Permit Agreement with the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce for the 2026 Live in the Garden Concert Series – Item 10 D.

## 7. REPORTS

### A. *President of Council*

President Leon reminded that the Committee of the Whole will meet at 3 PM on May 12 in Town Hall for elected officials, the Administration, and select employees to receive ethics training as required under Article 104. This date was rescheduled from February 24.

B. *Mayor*

1. *Administrative Order – Lynn Olanoff – Redevelopment Authority*

Sponsors: Ms. Laird, Mr. Amann; AYE: Amann, Callahan, Colón, Daniels, Kwiatek, Laird, Leon, 7. Resolution 2026-073 passed.

2. *Administrative Order – Christopher Curran – Bethlehem Revitalization and Improvement Authority (BRIA)*

Sponsors: Ms. Laird, Mr. Amann; AYE: Amann, Callahan, Colón, Daniels, Kwiatek, Laird, Leon, 7. Resolution 2026-074 passed.

C. *Committee Chairs*

Ms. Laird – Parks and Recreation Committee

Ms. Laird announced the Parks and Recreation Committee met at 5:30 PM today in Town Hall to review the draft version of the 40 in 10 parks plan.

8. ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

None.

9. NEW ORDINANCES

None.

10. RESOLUTIONS

Motion to combine Items 10 A through 10 D: Colón, Amann. AYE: Amann, Callahan, Colón, Daniels, Kwiatek, Laird, Leon, 7. Motion passed.

A. *Approve Use Permit Agreement – DK Enterprises – The Mom Market 2026*

Sponsors: Ms. Laird, Mr. Amann; Agreement with DK Enterprises to execute a Use Permit Agreement for the The Mom Market 2026. AYE: Amann, Callahan, Colón, Daniels, Kwiatek, Laird, Leon, 7. Resolution 2026-075 passed.

B. *Approve Use Permit Agreement – ArtsQuest – 2026 SangriaFest*

Sponsors: Ms. Laird, Mr. Amann; Agreement with ArtsQuest to execute a Use Permit Agreement for the 2026 SangriaFest. AYE: Amann, Callahan, Colón, Daniels, Kwiatek, Laird, Leon, 7. Resolution 2026-076 passed.

C. *Approve Use Permit Agreement – BEDCO-SSAD – 2026 Live on the Greenway*

Sponsors: Ms. Laird, Mr. Amann; Agreement with the Bethlehem Economic Development Corporation to execute a Use Permit Agreement for the 2026 Live on the Greenway. AYE: Amann, Callahan, Colón, Daniels, Kwiatek, Laird, Leon, 7. Resolution 2026-077 passed.

D. *Approve Use Permit Agreement – Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce – 2026 Live in the Garden Concert Series*

Sponsors: Ms. Laird, Mr. Amann; Agreement with the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce to execute a Use Permit Agreement for the 2026 Live in the Garden Concert Series. AYE: Amann, Callahan, Colón, Daniels, Kwiatek, Laird, Leon, 7. Resolution 2026-078 passed.

E. *Approve Resolution – Water and Sewer Resources – Records Destruction*

Sponsors: Ms. Laird, Mr. Amann; Authorized the disposal of public records in the Water & Sewer Department, as set forth in Exhibit A. AYE: Amann, Callahan, Colón, Daniels, Kwiatek, Laird, Leon, 7. Resolution 2026-079 passed.

Motion to combine Items 10 F through 10 H: Amann, Colón. AYE: Amann, Callahan, Colón, Daniels, Kwiatek, Laird, Leon, 7. Motion passed.

F. *Certificate of Appropriateness – HCC – 15 East Fourth Street* to install new fabric with new logo graphics on the existing aluminum awning frame and also to install new window and door decals as signage for a new commercial tenant;

G *Certificate of Appropriateness – HCC – 25 West Third Street* to install three new signs on three different facades; *and*

H. *Certificate of Appropriateness – HCC – 306 South New Street* to replace existing glass transoms above two entrance doors with metal ventilation louvers.

Sponsors: Ms. Laird, Mr. Amann; AYE for 10 F through 10 H: Amann, Callahan, Colón, Daniels, Kwiatek, Laird, Leon, 7. Resolutions 2026-080 through 2026-082 passed.

I. *Certificate of Appropriateness – HCC – 327 South New Street* to demolish all four existing structures to construct a new 7-story mixed-use building with ground floor retail and tenant amenity space.

President Leon explained that she removed this COA from the group because it involves demolition of a series of buildings and the matter is a bit more complicated. The HCC previously issued a COA, and she believed this matter would generate a bit more discussion. She asked Council Solicitor Stephanie Steward to further explain.

Ms. Steward said there is a note that, if approved, the COA being considered would replace the COA granted for the property in 2021. The 2021 COA identified which structures would be demolished and which portion of the façade was to be retained. The new COA would replace the entire façade.

Mr. Colón said it was his understanding that there is a provision under Article 1714 that, under reasonable economic hardship, deviation would be permitted from adhering to the original COA which called for retaining a portion of the original façade.

Ms. Collins agreed. She added that the original COA called for a 9-story building. The new COA calls for 7 stories. The new plan also eliminates a cantilever feature over The Greenway. Both of these features are preferred by the City. The HCC voted unanimous recommendation of the new COA.

Ms. Laird noted that approximately five years have passed since the initial COA. She wondered what progress was being made on this project during that time. It is a slippery slope to allow demolition by neglect, if the developer was waiting for further deterioration to make his point to the City and get his way.

Ms. Collins said the buildings were in bad shape to begin with. She also believed there was not intentional delay, but delays occurred. She added that the changes made are appealing to the City staff.

President Leon asked for a clarification prior to the vote.

Ms. Steward confirmed that if the new COA request were not to pass, the approved COA would remain in force allowing demolition.

Sponsors: Ms. Laird, Mr. Amann; AYE for Item 10 I: Amann, Callahan, Colón, Kwiatek, 4; NAY: Daniels, Laird, Leon, 3. Resolution 2026-081 passed.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned 9:15 PM.

ATTEST:

Tad J. Miller  
City Clerk