

BETHLEHEM CITY COUNCIL MEETING
10 East Church Street - Town Hall
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, September 20, 2022 – 7:00 PM

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

1. ROLL CALL

President Colón called the meeting to order. Present were Grace Crampsie Smith, Wandalyn J. Enix, Hillary G. Kwiatek, Rachel Leon, Paige Van Wirt, Kiera L. Wilhelm, and Michael G. Colón, 7.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 6, 2022

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

Hill-to-Hill Bridge Concerns

Resident Peg Church complained about speeding, pollution, and littering on the Hill-to-Hill Bridge. She said the 30-mph speed limit is greatly exceeded and many are not driving safely. She asked who is monitoring and enforcing. She added that she has been waiting two years to have the speed measured in this area, but has been told that this is a costly process. She also noted pollution resulting from vehicle emissions and said this is unhealthy for pedestrians. And, she noted that litter has not been picked up on the bridge. She has asked how many arrests and tickets have been issued, but has not been told. She again requests these statistics.

Suggestions for the RPP

Alex Hirsch told Council that his issue has not been resolved with the Parking Authority. He has not heard from them since the last City Council meeting. Mr. Hirsch has been before Council three times to complain that he is no longer able to participate in the Residential Parking Program in his Center Street neighborhood. He continues to live part time in Bethlehem, but his license and vehicle registration are done through Rhode Island where he also lives part time. Mr. Hirsch also does not work in the City. Working in the City would be an exception to his exclusion from the RPP. Mr. Hirsch proposed amending ordinance subsection 534.06 (f), under special permit, requiring proof of full-time employment within the City to substitute full-time employment within Northampton or Lehigh counties. Mr. Hirsch said he works in Wilson.

Gun Range Questions

Louis Xenophon, Jr. said he is a former longtime resident now living in Northampton. He said he was among a group who provided children's firearms safety programs there for years, but

his group was recently notified that they would no longer be permitted to do so. He does not know why this happened. He said that City police officers use this range. Mr. Xenophon asked why the group is no longer permitted use of the range.

President Colón said this is not an issue that Council is aware of, but welcomed Mr. Xenophon to speak to someone from the Administration after the meeting.

Single-Use Plastic Bag Ban Update Sought

Resident Josie Miserendino asked the status of the single-use plastic bag ban that was submitted by the Environmental Advisory Council months ago. She added that she and others would be willing to assist with this initiative if requested to do so by the City.

Odor Complaint

Resident George Andrews complained of odors which he attributed to nearby Spray-Tek. He said that he and neighbors cannot get answers as to whether emissions are cancerous. The building is across Route 22 from his neighborhood. Mr. Andrews pointed to several supporters in the audience and added that he had information with him that this facility was “let go” from previous locations because of odors. He added that he spoke with a DEP official in his driveway two days ago. The odor was not detected at that time, but the official has smelled the odor elsewhere and agreed that it is awful. Mr. Andrews also asked that a stop sign be placed on Aster Road near the King’s Mansion Park. Cars speed along Aster Road in the area of this park. There are no crosswalks or other signs in the area.

President Colón said that Mr. Andrews and supporting residents could speak to the Administration after the meeting.

Curb Problem

Resident Tara Mahoney said she spoke to Council about a year ago regarding her property and a section of Stanhope Street that has been sinking for the past year. She said she spoke to Public Works Director Michael Alkhal last year, who said it was too late in the season to do anything about it; however, she still does not have a satisfactory answer. In consultation with Section Engineer Anthony Moussa, Ms. Mahoney said her handicapped sidewalk ramps were dug up. A sinkhole opened a few weeks ago. This was filled by the City with blacktop. Ms. Mahoney said that Mr. Moussa admitted that the sinking of Stanhope Street has damaged her curbs, which she said the City is willing to replace. However, before this can be done, she was told she must first have two pieces of cement removed. She has gotten conflicting information whether to start this work. She contacted the Mayor’s office for a meeting, but none was arranged. Most recently, Mr. Moussa said that Ms. Mahoney must get \$1 million coverage on her homeowner’s insurance and add the City as an insured. She has been denied by her insurer, who said she could only get \$500,000 worth. She called the City’s attorney, but has not yet received an answer. She asked Council what she should do to advance this issue. President Colón encouraged Ms. Mahoney to speak with members of Council or the Administration after the meeting.

International Day of Peace

Resident Arthur Curatola reminded that “Wake Up, Rise Up, Live for Peace” is a livestreaming program being run in conjunction with the International Day of Peace, which is September 21. He encouraged viewership.

HCC Candidate

Stephen Antalics referred to a Council Member’s comments at the August 2 Council meeting about failing to re-appoint certain members to commissions and boards over the years. The Council Member believed that a pattern was emerging that these members were not re-appointed if the Mayor did not agree with their stances. Mr. Antalics agreed with this observation. Mr. Antalics said that Marsha Fritz had formal training in historic preservation training and worked with dedication as the HCC chairperson. Yet, Mayor Reynolds did not re-appoint her to the Board. Instead, three other names appeared on the September 6 agenda for Administrative appointment to historic commissions although consideration was removed from the agenda. “Conspicuous by its absence was the name of Marsha Fritz,” he said. This absence has raised concern among some residents. One resident has emailed the Mayor a number of times to ask why but has not received a reply. Mr. Antalics said that Council acts as part of the checks and balances to the Administration. He urged a majority of Council to reject candidates offered to serve on the HCC until the name of Ms. Fritz is offered.

Speeding/City Hall Parking Garage/Board Appointment

Resident William Scheirer added his concerns over speeding on the Hill-to-Hill Bridge. He also complimented the City on the new City Hall garage floor. He noted an apparent conflict in the garage signs, however. One reads that there is to be no public access Monday through Friday before 5 PM. The other says not to park in numbered spaces. He said there are only a few unnumbered spaces in the garage, and they are almost always occupied by City-owned vehicles. He suggested that this could be cleared up. Lastly, he added the hope that anyone appointed to HARB or the HCC would have an interest in historic conservation.

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

Skyline West Review Urged

Resident Paul Peucker said he is an historian and archivist of the Moravian Church in American Northern Province who has attended several meetings of the international working group that is preparing the UNESCO World Heritage nomination. He is concerned that the Skyline West project proposed at 143 W. Broad Street could endanger the application process for Bethlehem’s World Heritage nomination. He noted that HARB last week approved the project based on its current guidelines; however, he believes that a review under these guidelines is no longer sufficient. The proposed project is located in the buffer zone of the nominated World Heritage site. Mr. Peucker said that any project within Bethlehem’s proposed heritage site and buffer zone should be reviewed according to appropriate standards. The buffer zone, according to the operational guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, serves to protect the nominated property. He said the proposed project would tower over the Colonial Industrial Quarter. “The big question is will such a project endanger Bethlehem’s World Heritage nomination?” The International Council on Monuments and Sites associated with UNESCO

recommends conducting a Heritage Impact Assessment. Reviewers under the process could make this predetermination before construction occurs and a potential nomination is rejected. Mr. Peucker suggested following the UNESCO recommendations and perform the assessment. He asked Council to withhold approval of this project until the assessment is done by this independent third party who has performed similar assessments elsewhere. He added that loss of this nomination is a very real possibility if unsuitable development is permitted, citing Liverpool, England and Dresden, Germany. He further asked Council to pass a Resolution to make it mandatory that a Heritage Impact Assessment is to be performed and submitted for any project within the proposed World Heritage Site and its buffer zone before any irreversible actions are taken. He also urged Council to instruct the Administration to put all needed procedures and policies in place related to the potential World Heritage status of Bethlehem.

Support to Delay Skyline West COA

Resident Bruce Haines supported the recommendation of Mr. Peucker. He said that there is no project in Bethlehem that is more important than getting the World Heritage Site designation. He called this a monumental achievement that would put Bethlehem on the world map. He speculated that HARB was not aware that the preview process was an option. Mr. Haines also recommended delaying the Skyline West request until the independent assessment can be performed. He added that he is not against the Skyline West project, but he agreed that any project within the site or buffer zone should be subject to the independent review. Mr. Haines said that he is planning a modification to the Historic Hotel Bethlehem and would be willing to be subject to independent review. He said he would not want to be the one who caused Bethlehem to be rejected in its bid for World Heritage status.

5. OLD BUSINESS

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

6. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. *Director of Planning and Zoning – 2 Zoning Text Amendments – Miscellaneous and Design Standards*

The Clerk read a memorandum from Darlene Heller, Director of Planning and Zoning recommending two Zoning Text Amendments – 1. Miscellaneous and 2. Design Standards. The Community Development Committee reviewed the proposed zoning amendments at its September 6, 2022 meeting and Voted 3-0 to recommend that the amendments be forwarded to Full Council and be the subject of a public hearing.

Scheduling Public Hearing

President Colón then asked for a motion and a second to schedule a Public Hearing on November 15, 2022 to consider these zoning text amendments.

Dr. Van Wirt made a motion, seconded by Ms. Crampsie Smith, to schedule a Public Hearing on Tuesday, November 15, 2022 at 7:00 PM in Town Hall.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Motion passed.

President Colón stated a Public Hearing has been scheduled for Tuesday, November 15, 2022 at 7:00 PM in Town Hall. The Ordinance will be placed for First Reading on the December 6, 2022 City Council agenda.

B. Assistant City Solicitor – Resolution – Proposed Amendments – Rules and Regulations of Civil Service Board relating to Police Department

The Clerk read a memorandum dated September 2, 2022 from Assistant City Solicitor Matthew Deschler, Esq. recommending Council's review and approval of proposed amendments to the Rules and Regulations of the Civil Service Board relating to the Police Department. The Civil Service Board met on August 16, 2022 and recommended enactment of these amendments.

President Colón stated Resolution 10 D is on the agenda.

C. Business Administrator – Ordinance – 2022 General Fund Adjustments – Police Equipment

The Clerk read a memorandum dated September 6, 2022 from Business Administrator Eric Evans with an attached Bill amending the General Fund Budget. This adjustment reflects the insurance proceeds received to cover the costs of replacement of a police vehicle that was damaged in an accident. The addition of the \$26,656 would increase the General Fund to \$96,362,798.

President Colón stated Ordinance 9 A is on the agenda.

D. Business Administrator – Ordinance – 2022 General Fund Adjustments – Police Overtime – Musikfest

The Clerk read a memorandum dated September 6, 2022 from Business Administrator Eric Evans with an attached Bill amending the General Fund Budget. This adjustment reflects the Roster Duty proceeds received from ArtsQuest to cover the costs of police overtime during Musikfest. The addition of the \$27,500 would increase the General Fund to \$96,390,298.

President Colón stated Ordinance 9 B is on the agenda.

E. Director of Planning and Zoning – 2023-2027 Capital Program

The Clerk read a memorandum dated September 9, 2022 from Darlene Heller, Director of Planning and Zoning to which is attached the 2023-2027 Capital Program. At its September 8, 2022 meeting, the City Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the 5-Year Capital Program.

President Colón stated a Committee of the Whole Meeting has been scheduled for 6:00 PM in Town Hall on October 4, 2022 to review the Capital Improvements Program.

F. *Business Administrator – Ordinance – 2022 General Fund Adjustments – Distressed Homes*

The Clerk read a memorandum dated September 14, 2022 from Business Administrator Eric Evans with an attached Bill amending the General Fund Budget. This adjustment reflects the reimbursement from the Redevelopment Authority to cover the costs of the demolition contract for 1218 and 1220 Center Street. The addition of the \$168,000 would increase the General Fund to \$96,558,298.

President Colón stated Ordinance 9 C is on the agenda.

G. *City Solicitor – Resolution – Agreement between the City of Bethlehem and the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem related to the demolition of 1218 and 1220 Center Street*

The Clerk read a memorandum dated September 15, 2022 from City Solicitor John F. Spirk, Jr., Esq. with an attached Resolution and Associated Agreement between the City of Bethlehem and the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem related to the demolition of 1218 and 1220 Center Street.

President Colón stated Resolution 10 E is on the agenda.

H. *Director of Public Works – Recommendation of Award – Construction Masters Services, LLC – Cloverleaf Street Drainage*

The Clerk read a memorandum dated September 14, 2022 from Michael Alkhal, Director of Public Works, recommending approval of a change order to a contract with Construction Masters Services, LLC. The change order is necessary to cover the additional cost of regrading of the subsurface due to UGI lowering its gas line to meet the required depth after the regrading of the street. The additional cost would be \$11,581.01 bringing the total contract cost to \$101,573.28. The term of the contract is 60 days, and there are no renewals. The City anticipates reimbursement for this change order.

President Colón stated Resolution 10 F is on the agenda.

7. REPORTS

A. *President of Council*

B. *Mayor*

Fred Bonsall Honored for Service

Mayor Reynolds read a Proclamation to Fred Bonsall for his participation with HARB for 44 years, including 34 years as its Chairman. The Proclamation noted that the Central Bethlehem Historic District is “a shining example throughout the Commonwealth and beyond of the effectiveness of historic commissions in preserving and enhancing community neighborhoods and commercial downtowns” and added that much of the District’s architectural and economic success might not have been possible without Mr. Bonsall’s consistent leadership. Mayor Reynolds proclaimed September 20, 2022 as Fred Bonsall Day.

Mr. Bonsall called his years of service a very rewarding experience.

Administrative Order – Mary Mulder – Fine Arts Commission

Mayor Reynolds reappointed Mary Mulder to the Bethlehem Fine Arts Commission, effective until June of 2025. Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-192 to confirm the reappointment.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

City Hall Garage Floor

Mayor Reynolds thanked Public Works Director Michael Alkhal for a large effort and the fine appearance of resurfacing the City Hall Parking Garage floor.

Successful Live on the Greenway

Mayor Reynolds deemed Live on the Greenway a success and said it will serve as a model for future events to “activate the Greenway.” He called it a great day.

We Build Bethlehem

The Mayor also announced that the We Build Bethlehem event will be from 6:00 to 7:30 PM on October 26 at the Fowler Center. Data has been gathered regarding pandemic priorities over the past six months and how we are going to invest in those priorities going forward.

C. *Committee of the Whole – (President Colón)*

President Colón announced that the Committee of the Whole met tonight at 5:30 in Town Hall to discuss Dr. Van Wirt’s proposed Conflict of Interest Ordinance. This was tabled for further discussion at the July 6, 2022 Committee of the Whole Meeting. At this afternoon’s meeting, this matter was again tabled for further discussion at a future date.

8. ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

None.

9. NEW ORDINANCES

A. *Bill No. 22-2022 – Amend 2022 General Fund – Adjustments – Police Equipment*

The Clerk read Bill No. 22-2022 – Amend 2022 General Fund – Adjustments – Police Equipment, sponsored by Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING
THE 2022 GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 22-2022 passed 7-0 on First Reading.

B. *Bill No. 23-2022 – Amend 2022 General Fund – Adjustments – Police Overtime – Musikfest*

The Clerk read Bill No. 23-2022 – Amend 2022 General Fund – Adjustments – Police Overtime – Musikfest sponsored by Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING
THE 2022 GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 23-2022 passed 7-0 on First Reading.

C. *Bill No. 24-2022 – Amend 2022 General Fund – Adjustments – Distressed Homes*

The Clerk read Bill No. 24-2022 – Amend 2022 General Fund – Adjustments – Distressed Homes sponsored by Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING
THE 2022 GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Ms. Kwiatek said that, as a liaison to the Redevelopment Authority, she has been involved in the discussions about these two homes. There has been a lot of discussion about spending a lot of money on these two properties; however, a thorough explanation has been provided demonstrating the need for demolition. She is comfortable with making this decision to do so. This is not a good situation, but it needs to be done.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 24-2022 passed 7-0 on First Reading.

10. RESOLUTIONS

A. *Approve 2022 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG)*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-193 that authorized to execute the grant award documents for funds to be received under the 2022 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) in the amount of up to \$17,894 that will be used by the Bethlehem Police Department to continue improvements in computer hardware and software.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

B. *Approve Records Destruction – Department of Controller*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-194 that authorized the disposal of the Department of Controller's public records, as stated in Exhibit A.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

C. *Approve Records Destruction – Law Bureau*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-195 that authorized the disposal of the Law Bureau's public records, as stated in Exhibit A.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

D. *Approve Resolution – Amendments to Rules and Regulations of Civil Service Board relating to Police Department*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-196 that authorized amendments to the rules and regulations recommended by the Civil Service Board of the City of Bethlehem regarding the Police Department as recommended by the Civil Service Board on August 16, 2022 known as Exhibit A which shall take immediate effect.

Ms. Leon asked Chief Kott to highlight the changes being made. Chief Kott described the changes as being procedural in nature to help in the hiring process. Chief Kott said that, similar to other industries nationwide, law enforcement is experiencing a shortage of applicants. The first change would reduce the number of active hours of experience from 4,000 to 2,000. This applicant still would have to have Act 120 required certification and still would have to go through in-house training. The reduction in hours would help to attract perhaps someone who recently graduated from the police academy, worked at another police department, and is attracted to Bethlehem. Vouchers are being eliminated. They required notarization, which was an extra step. It was believed that the three required references would suffice. The physical fitness exam would now be required before the written exam. Since each booklet for the written exam costs money, it is better to hold the written exam after the physical exam to save this money in the event that the applicant does not pass the physical exam. It also would no longer be necessary that someone conducting the background check be from the Criminal Investigations Division. Other qualified officers, perhaps on light duty, could perform this task. A polygraph test would still be required; however, the language would no longer specify that this occur after the background check is conducted.

Mayor Reynolds added that Bethlehem is not the only city facing these types of hiring challenges. The City is looking at its Civil Service rules and other hiring practices to better ensure getting good and diverse applicants. This is a conversation with the Chief as well as Human Resources Director Michelle Cichocki.

President Colón recognized this challenge in hiring quality police officers as well as employees in many occupations. He wished them well in their hiring efforts and thanked the Civil Service Board for volunteering their time to help in the process.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

E. *Approve Resolution – Agreement between the City of Bethlehem and the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem related to the demolition of 1218 and 1220 Center Street*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-197 that authorized to execute an agreement with the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem and such other agreements and documents as are deemed by the City Solicitor to be necessary and/or related thereto, for the purpose of providing emergency relocation assistance and demolition of blighted properties located at 1218 and 1220 Center Street, according to the terms and conditions indicated therein and made a part hereof.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

F. *Approve Resolution – Recommendation of Award – Construction Masters Services, LLC – Cloverleaf Street Drainage*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-198 that authorized to execute an agreement with Construction Masters Services, LLC to implement a change order associated with a contract to provide regrading of the subsurface for the Cloverleaf Street Drainage project.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

G. *Certificate of Appropriateness – 143 West Broad Street-postponed until October 4, 2022 City Council Meeting*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new multi-family residential building with a parking deck and amenities at 143 West Broad Street. The project previously received approval for the demolition of the existing structure at the June 19, 2018 City Council Meeting.

Ms. Leon made a motion, seconded by Dr. Van Wirt, to postpone this Resolution until the October 4, 2022 City Council meeting.

Ms. Crampsie Smith said her only concern was whether two weeks will be enough time to investigate any concerns with the Certificate of Appropriateness.

President Colón viewed this, as he had in similar circumstances, that additional time extensions could be approved if matters are not sufficiently clear to vote. He said he generally prefers to have a set date on the calendar.

Voting AYE on the motion: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The motion passed.

H. *Certificate of Appropriateness – 518 Long Street*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-199 that granted a Certificate of Appropriateness to install wood doors at an existing courtyard entrance for privacy at 518 Long Street.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

I. Certificate of Appropriateness – 443 Center Street

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-200 that granted a Certificate of Appropriateness to paint trim on the home and install Victorian gas lamps and posts on both sides of the front sidewalk on the interior side of the existing gate at 443 Center Street.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

11. NEW BUSINESS

5-Year Capital Plan Review

President Colón announced that another Committee of the Whole meeting has been scheduled for 6:00 PM on Tuesday, October 4, 2022 in Town Hall to review the Administration's 5-Year Capital Plan.

Joint Public Safety and Community Development Committee Meeting

Public Safety Chairwoman Leon announced there will be a Joint Public Safety and Community Development Committee Meeting at 5:00 PM on Tuesday, October 18, 2022 in Town Hall. The subject will be the proposed Backyard Chicken Ordinance.

Concern for Flooding in Puerto Rico

Ms. Leon also extended her thoughts to everyone in our community who is affected by the devastating flooding in Puerto Rico resulting from Hurricane Fiona.

Bike City

Ms. Kwiatek recognized a great turnout of cyclists and those concerned about pedestrian/cycling accessibility in the City at the recent Bike City event. This was co-sponsored by the EAC, Coalition for Appropriate Transportation, and the Sierra Club. There were enthusiastic discussions on increasing bicycle ridership and decreasing car trips which is good for safety, the environment, and good for our neighborhood businesses. The group intends to create recommendations to be submitted to City Council.

BHA Director Retiring

As liaison to the Bethlehem Housing Authority, Ms. Kwiatek attended the most recent Board meeting at which Executive Director Jay Schuster announced that he will be retiring in early December. She thanked him for his many years of service, especially for managing the BHA

through the difficult period of the pandemic. She encouraged the BHA Board to work with the City to cast a wide net and conduct a national search. She said the City is at an important point regarding housing, and the BHA will be a key part in any work to increase and improve access to affordable housing. She believes it will be extremely important that the next director be able to have the experience, skills, creativity and collaborative instincts to capitalize on the available opportunities to the City and the region.

Ensuring Public Comment Follow-up

Ms. Crampsie Smith asked a procedural question regarding follow-up to resident questions asked at Council meetings during Public Comment. She wanted to be sure that matters are being attended to, since sometimes residents leave before meetings end perhaps precluding the opportunity to speak to Council Members or the Administration afterward.

Mayor Reynolds referenced President Colón's remarks earlier in the meeting. Sometimes the questions or comments involved something the Administration has been working on for a long period of time. He said he is not always aware of the circumstances. So, if an immediate answer is not available or clarification is needed, his office follows up. If the person does remain to discuss the matter after the meeting, clarifications or updates can be offered. Mayor Reynolds added that response to Public Comment is one of the reasons that Department Heads attend Council meetings. He said that someone will try to catch a resident and obtain more information, including contact information, if they are leaving before the meeting is over.

Ms. Crampsie Smith recognized these efforts, but asked whether anyone follows up on agenda notes or any other efforts to address all raised concerns.

Mayor Reynolds said they do and added that public concerns raised in other ways, such as by email, also receive follow-up.

Celtic Fest Reminder

Ms. Crampsie Smith also reminded that Celtic Fest will be celebrated this weekend.

Public Comment Explained

President Colón followed up on the Public Comment discussion of a few minutes earlier. He said that this is the opportunity to hear the comments of the public. He understands that this forum might not always be what the public expects. There likely will not be the "back and forth" discussion that some might anticipate. This is because Council may not have all of the information. He said that he does not like to speak on details that he is not confident about. Council is not present in City Hall every day to be privy to all that Department Heads might be. But he encouraged the public to continue to bring matters before Council at these meetings, email Council, email the Clerk's Office, and then we try to collaborate with the Administration to try to work out issues. He thanked Ms. Crampsie Smith for her question and to Mayor Reynolds for his insights.

Awaiting Recycling Bids

Mayor Reynolds updated a discussion of a few weeks ago in which it was announced that the current hauler will not be renewing the recycling contract because of rising costs. The Administration warned at that time that there could be a sharp price increase. Requests for Proposals have been sent out, and the Administration is awaiting bids. A promise was made to keep Council updated.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

ATTEST:

Tad J. Miller
City Clerk