

BETHLEHEM CITY COUNCIL REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
OLD COUNCIL

Monday, January 5, 2026 - 7:00 PM
10 East Church Street - Town Hall
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

INVOCATION

Rabbi Michael Singer, Congregation Brith Sholom, offered the Invocation.

1. ROLL CALL

President Colón called the meeting to order. Present were Bryan Callahan, Grace Crampsie Smith, Hillary Kwiatek, Colleen Laird, Rachel Leon, Kiera Wilhelm, and Michael G. Colón, 7.

CITATIONS

Citation – Honoring Grace Crampsie Smith - Member of Council – 2019-2026

President Colón presented a Citation in honor of Grace Crampsie Smith as a Member of Council from 2019 through 2026, including a period as its Vice President. Ms. Crampsie Smith also served as Chair of the Finance and Public Works committees, and as a member of the Parks and Recreation, Community Development, and Public Safety committees.

Several Council members complimented her efforts and wished her well. Ms. Crampsie Smith appreciated the comments and said it has been an honor and a privilege to serve. She said she voted her conscience in all matters. This approach brought varying results of collaboration but also discord that sometimes went too far. She encouraged Council to maintain decorum and a motivation to work toward the public good.

Citation – Honoring Kiera Wilhelm – Member of Council – 2022-2026

President Colón presented a Citation honoring Kiera Wilhelm as a Member of Council from 2022 through 2026. Ms. Wilhelm was Chair of the Human Resources and Environmental Committee, and served as a member of the Parks and Recreation and Community Development committees.

Several Council members also commended Ms. Wilhelm's efforts including her meeting preparation and communication skills. Ms. Wilhelm thanked all for the opportunity to serve. She urged new Council members to keep their values clear, do research and consider their vote but keep an open mind to opposing views that may lead to new perspectives, and to not be afraid to disagree but also to not be afraid to agree either.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 16, 2025.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Prayer for the City

Pastor Timothy Smith of New Christian Harvest Church of Allentown offered a prayer on behalf of the City.

High Water Usage Notification

Resident Mark Will-Weber provided Council with a list of additional cities that offer water usage monitoring apps such as AquaHawk. He asked why all of these cities can offer this form of consumer protection but Bethlehem does not. He also provided a sheet detailing Bethlehem's existing high usage notification procedure. Mr. Will-Weber said residential customers will only be notified if they are using 3,000 gallons of water a day or more. Leaks or other causes resulting in less usage may still incur higher bills but may not bring notification from the City allowing correction. This is not the real answer. Offering an app allowing customers to monitor their accounts is fair.

Lost Mission

Resident Stephen Antalics assessed that the present Council meetings have taken on an air in which public input is tolerated but almost ignored. Residents are at times criticized by Council for their public comments. He believes Council has lost its mission as an advocate for public welfare and become an extension of the Administration. He offered this assessment as a warning to incoming Council members.

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

None.

4. OLD BUSINESS

A. Members of Council

Ms. Crampsie Smith

Ms. Crampsie Smith wanted to address this matter to Mayor Reynolds but noted that he was not in attendance. She returned to a concern that she raised at the December 16 meeting about the elevators at the new Walnut Street Garage not working. Ms. Crampsie Smith said the Mayor at that meeting attributed the problem to the union workers. She has since been notified by

union representatives who said that this was not correct. Inspection violations were found for the elevator involving the general contractor. None involved the union elevator workers. She believed the Mayor should publicly apologize to the union elevator workers. The Administration also should follow up to make certain that the violations are corrected and proper certifications are received.

- B. Tabled Items
- C. Unfinished Business

5. NEW BUSINESS

None.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Deputy Director of Community Development - Bethlehem Housing Authority (BHA) - General Fund Budget Transfer

The Clerk read a December 22, 2025 memorandum and proposed Ordinance from Deputy Director of Community Development Sara Satullo. Ms. Satullo explains that the City and the Bethlehem Housing Authority intend to jointly apply for a Fiscal Year 2025 Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grant. This complex process will require a professional services agreement with a grant writer. The two entities will split the cost. Ms. Satullo recommends transferring \$20,000 received through revenue account 001A-304923 - BHA-Grant Prep to Expense Account 0304-42047 - Department Contracts.

President Colón stated that Ordinance 9 A is on the agenda.

- B. Director of Human Resources - 2026 08 Contract St. Luke's Hospital Occupational Medicine

The Clerk read a December 19, 2025 memorandum and proposed Resolution from Director of Human Resources Michelle Cichocki. Ms. Cichocki recommended a contract with St. Luke's Hospital Occupational Medicine to perform Department of Transportation-regulated drug and alcohol testing. The three-year contract would run from January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2028 at a cost of \$7,000 per year. There are three renewal options.

President Colón stated that Resolution 10 A is on the agenda.

7. REPORTS

- A. *President of Council*

- 1. *Annual Report*

President Colón presented his Annual Report for 2025. (See attached.)

B. *Mayor*

No report.

8. ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

None.

9. NEW ORDINANCES

A. Bill No. 01-2026 - Bethlehem Housing Authority (BHA) - 2025 Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grant - General Fund Budget Transfer

The Clerk read Bill No. 01-2026 - Bethlehem Housing Authority (BHA) - 2025 Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grant - General Fund Budget Transfer, sponsored by Ms. Leon and Ms. Wilhelm and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING
THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR 2026.

Voting AYE: Mr. Callahan, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 01-2026 passed on First Reading.

10. RESOLUTIONS

A. Approve Resolution - 2026 08 Contract St. Luke's Hospital Occupational Medicine

Ms. Leon and Ms. Wilhelm sponsored Resolution No. 2026-001 that authorized to execute an Agreement with St. Luke's Occupational Medicine to provide Department of Transportation-regulated random drug and alcohol testing.

Voting AYE: Mr. Callahan, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

B. Approve Resolution - Certificate of Appropriateness - HCC - 13-15 East 3rd Street

Ms. Leon and Ms. Wilhelm sponsored Resolution 2026-002 that authorized to modify the existing sign band and storefronts.

Voting AYE: Mr. Callahan, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

12. ADJOURNMENT SINE DIE

The meeting was adjourned sine die at 8:01 p.m.

ATTEST:

Tad J. Miller
City Clerk

2025 Council President's Report

Twenty twenty-five marked Bethlehem's first full year on the UNESCO World Heritage stage. A September 6 community celebration was held on and around Payrow Plaza to commemorate the Inscription and Bethlehem's contributions as part of the transnational Moravian Church Settlements site.

City Council was pleased to enthusiastically support this celebration as well as the efforts leading to Bethlehem's inclusion on this prestigious list of world landmarks. Council also continues to support its partnership in this venture with the City providing the site coordinator and contributing toward the salary of the site manager. The World Heritage distinction brings recognition, honor, and many visitors to Bethlehem to see all that makes our city special.

Twenty twenty-five also saw the fruits of labor paying off as approved plans and signed contracts led to a redeveloped Walnut Street Garage re-opening in late November. The 517-spot, \$27 million project was completed on time to welcome Christmas shoppers...as promised.

And more was set in motion in 2025 for the coming year and beyond. These actions took place during 24 regular Council meetings and 11 committee meetings. In addition, Council conducted 20 hours of budget hearings spread over four nights. The year's body of work led to passage of 57 ordinances and 188 resolutions. Key action included review leading to the first major revision of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance in 50 years.

Some of Council's other actions contributed to the closing of the Greenway Trail Gap and significant improvements to the Monocacy Trail. Council also has been pleased to authorize grant applications and contracts leading to the near completion of a revitalized Friendship Park. Meanwhile, plans progress to improve all City parks within the next 10 years through the 40-in-10 plan. Similarly, Council enthusiastically supports the Complete Streets Plan as it aims to make our City thoroughfares safer and more welcoming to all – motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists alike. This plan will integrate a redevelopment of Broad Street beginning in 2026, converting this area to a safer and more appealing corridor.

On the subject of redeveloped streets, Council also has been eager to authorize the redesign of Linden Street to restore two-way traffic flow. This effort is expected to begin in March and wrap up in fall. Plans to do much the same with Center Street are not far behind.

Council also has been committed to supporting efforts to improve affordable housing and combat homelessness. Some of these projects include the Gateway on 4th, plans for a new Bethlehem Emergency Shelter, and the redevelopment of Pembroke Village. Funding was sparked by community recovery money from the pandemic a few years ago, and progress continues as various aspects reach milestones toward completion.

Finally, as we near the end of this, our last meeting together as a council, I wish to thank Ms. Crampsie Smith and Ms. Wilhelm for their many contributions. I also want to welcome Mr. Amann and Ms. Daniels to the new council as we look forward to what they have to offer. Also, after four years, I'll be passing the gavel to a new president. My term as this body's leader has expired, but my Council term will continue. It was a pleasure to serve you as a council as well as the residents of the City of Bethlehem. My role may change a bit and I will be seated slightly to my left, but my commitment to do what is right for the betterment of this City will not. Thank you to all for the opportunity.

Sincerely,



Michael G. Colon

BETHLEHEM CITY COUNCIL REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
NEW COUNCIL

Monday, January 5, 2026 – 7:00 PM
10 East Church Street - Town Hall
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

1. ROLL CALL OF HOLD-OVER MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

The Clerk called the Roll of the hold-over Members of Council. Present as hold-over members were: Mr. Callahan, Mr. Colón, and Ms. Laird, 3.

2. PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES OF ELECTION

The Clerk affirmed that the Certificates of Election for the Controller and members of Council had been presented.

3. SWEARING-IN CEREMONIES

A. *Controller – George Yasso*

Brian J. Panella, Northampton County Common Pleas Court Judge, administered the Oath of Office to George Yasso, duly elected Controller, for the four-year term ending January of 2030.

B. *Members of Council – Justin Amann, Jo Daniels, Hillary Kwiatek, and Rachel Leon*

Judge Panella administered the individual Oaths of Office to Justin Amann, Hillary Kwiatek, and Rachel Leon, duly elected members of Council, for their four-year terms ending January of 2030. District Judge Jason Knisley administered the Oath of Office to Jo Daniels, a duly elected member of Council, for her four-year term ending January of 2030.

4. ROLL CALL OF NEWLY CONSTITUTED COUNCIL

The Clerk called the Roll of the Newly Constituted Council. Present were: Justin Amann, Bryan G. Callahan, Michael G. Colón, Jo Daniels, Hillary Kwiatek, Colleen Laird, and Rachel Leon, 7.

5. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION - PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

The Clerk stated that the members of Council shall nominate a President and Vice President from the floor. An election of each will be conducted by roll call vote.

Matthew Potts, Esq., Acting Council Solicitor, conducted the nominations and election for the President of Council, to serve for the years January 2026 – January 2028. Attorney Potts noted, in accordance with the Rules of City Council and Robert's Rules of Order, the election procedure will be as follows: He will ask for nominations for the Office of President of Council. Each Council member may nominate not more than one person; no second is required. Attorney Potts stated that after each nomination for the Office of President he will ask if there are any additional

nominations. When there are no additional nominations, he will declare the nominations closed. Attorney Potts informed they will then proceed to the election, and he will ask the Clerk to call the roll. Each Council member will respond by declaring his or her vote by stating the name of the person they are voting for as President. A Council member is allowed to vote for him or herself. Attorney Potts reported that four votes are required for election and after the President is elected, we will repeat the same process for Council Vice President.

NOMINATIONS - PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL - January 2026 - January 2028

Ms. Kwiatek nominated Ms. Leon for the office of President. There were no additional nominations for President.

Acting Solicitor Potts asked the Clerk to call the roll.

ELECTION - PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL - January 2026 - January 2028

Voting AYE: Mr. Amann, Mr. Callahan, Mr. Colón, Ms. Daniels, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Ms. Leon, 7. Acting Solicitor Potts announced that Ms. Leon was appointed President by a 7-0 vote.

6. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION - VICE PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL - January 2026 - January 2028

Acting Solicitor Potts conducted the nominations and election for the Vice President of Council, to serve for the term January 2026 - January 2028.

NOMINATIONS - VICE PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL - January 2026 - January 2028.

Mr. Amann nominated Ms. Laird for Vice President. Mr. Colón nominated Ms. Kwiatek for Vice President.

Noting no additional nominations, Acting Solicitor Potts asked the Clerk to Call the Roll.

ELECTION - VICE PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL - January 2026 - January 2028

Voting was as follows: Mr. Amann - Ms. Laird, Mr. Callahan - Ms. Laird, Mr. Colón - Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Daniels - Ms. Laird, Ms. Kwiatek - Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird - Ms. Laird, and Ms. Leon - Ms. Kwiatek: Ms. Laird, 4 and Ms. Kwiatek, 3. Acting Solicitor Potts announced that Ms. Laird was appointed Vice President by a 4-3 vote.

Ms. Leon took the President's seat and proceeded to run the meeting.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Interfaith Appreciation

Resident Stephen Antalics continued an anecdote that he began during Public Comment of the “Old Council’s” meeting. He spoke to Rabbi Singer about his interactions with the Jewish faith.

Thank You to Council

Resident Mark Will-Weber thanked Council for its efforts and for “putting up with some heat” from residents.

8. REPORTS

A. President of Council

President Leon observed that Council has had some representation milestones in recent years for women and women of color. She said it is an honor and a privilege to see the City move forward in a direction of inclusiveness.

B. Mayor

No report.

10. BENEDICTION

Rabbi Michael Singer, Congregation Brith Sholom, offered the Benediction.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

ATTEST:

Tad J. Miller
City Clerk

