

BETHLEHEM CITY COUNCIL MEETING
10 East Church Street - Town Hall
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, October 17, 2023 – 7:00 PM

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

1. ROLL CALL

Vice President Crampsie Smith called the meeting to order. Present were Wandalyn J. Enix, Hillary G. Kwiatek, Rachel Leon, Paige Van Wirt, Kiera L. Wilhelm, and Grace Crampsie Smith, 6; ABSENT: Michael G. Colón, 1.

CITATIONS:

Vice President Crampsie Smith observed that Brian Salabsky and Thomas Bokan were not present on the occasion of their retirements, but that both were thanked for their more than 20 years of service each to the Fire Department. Their Citations will be mailed.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Vice President Crampsie Smith stated that prior to the consideration of the regular Agenda items, City Council will conduct a Public Hearing on the City's proposed application for a federal Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing program (PRO Housing) grant for up to \$10,000,000 to support the Administration's implementation of the City's Comprehensive Housing Strategy.

6 A. The Clerk read a September 28, 2023 memorandum from Laura Collins, Director of the Department of Community and Economic Development, with an attached Resolution to support a grant request for up to \$10,000,000 from HUD's Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing program. The funds will be used to support the Administration's implementation of the City's Comprehensive Housing Strategy.

Vice President Crampsie Smith called the Public Hearing to order and stated that she would recognize a representative from the Administration to address this matter.

Ms. Collins said the City intends to submit this grant application to HUD. This requires making the application available for public inspection for at least 15 days and conducting a Public Hearing. The application was posted on October 10 in City Hall, on the City's website and at the Bethlehem Area Public Library's main and South Side branches. Written public comment continues to be accepted. In addition to this evening's Public Hearing, a daytime Public Hearing will be held at 11:00 AM on October 20.

Ms. Collins said this is the first time that this federal grant has been available. It is designed to identify and remove barriers to affordable housing production and preservation. Eligible uses of funds include "activities that further develop, evaluate, and implement housing policy plans, improve housing strategies, and facilitate affordable housing production and preservation." Approximately 20 awardees nationwide will receive between \$1 million and \$10

million. The City is applying for \$10 million to support the implementation of its Comprehensive Housing Strategy, Opening Doors, which the Administration presented to City Council's Community Development Committee last week. This plan was developed with the consideration of about \$7.4 million that the City made available over the next five years, breaking down to \$5 million in City's Affordable Housing Fund, \$500,000 from the Choice Neighborhoods planning grant, some Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocations over the next five years, and some additional funding sources. Ms. Collins said the City is moving ahead with implementing the plan, but the grant would supplement existing funds and "exponentially increase" the number of units the City might be able to produce or preserve. She explained that this is "not a grant that is required to implement the plan, but it would have tremendous impact in terms of the quantity of units that we would be able to potentially create."

Ms. Collins said the plan itself serves as the foundation for the application. The City put itself in a good position to be competitive because all of the background including need has been done. That includes four primary areas for funding, updating zoning and land use to encourage a variety of housing types and in-fill development, offer incentives to create and preserve affordable housing, foster partnerships with the Bethlehem Housing Authority, and protect tenants at-risk of displacement and increase the supply of deeply affordable units. "Those strategies fortunately reflect solutions to the exact type of barriers that the grant itself is asking communities to attempt to overcome which are, for example, regulatory environment challenges, availability of land/land use development costs and access to funding," she said. "It's really a perfect grant opportunity for where we are right now. We're excited about the opportunity." She also said that it is extremely competitive. A Resolution will be on the agenda during tonight's regular City Council meeting, which will follow this one. She added that any public comment received tonight or on Friday will be submitted to HUD as part of the grant application.

Council Comment

Council had no comments or questions.

Public Comment

Path of Grant Money Questioned

Resident Mary Jo Makoul asked the source of the grant, specifically if the money was only for those who live in Pennsylvania.

Ms. Collins said it is a federal grant.

Ms. Makoul asked whether "an outside builder" could apply for some of this money.

Ms. Collins said that we are applying as a city and, if awarded, the money would come to the City to implement the Housing Strategy Plan.

Ms. Makoul sought clarification that this money would not in some way go to a developer.

Vice President Crampsie Smith said an award would come to the City and then the Community and Economic Development office would determine how the money would be distributed. Grant money would be specifically for affordable housing.

Ms. Collins nodded in agreement.

Ms. Makoul said she just did not want the money “to go to a multi-billionaire out of Florida.”

What is “Affordable Housing”?

Resident Angela Mitchell asked what “affordable housing” really means.

Vice President Crampsie Smith asked Ms. Collins if she wanted to respond.

Ms. Collins said they are taking public comment which will be included in the application process and a response can be made along with that submission.

Dr. Van Wirt also said that this has been addressed in detail during a three-hour meeting on October 10. This meeting was recorded and is available in its entirety on YouTube. This includes the 10-point process that the City has determined to be the best way to move forward. She invited Ms. Mitchell to watch the meeting by Googling Bethlehem Community Economic Development Committee Meeting to follow the whole plan and what it means for the City.

Vice President Crampsie Smith added that “affordable housing” is very individualized. The bottom-line definition is that affordable housing is when someone is paying 30 percent or less of their income for housing costs.

Doing the Math

Resident William Scheirer said affordable housing is “an elusive concept” especially when you get to the actual numbers. A couple of years ago, it was said that the median annual household income in Bethlehem was \$52,000. That is \$1,000 a week, based on a 40-hour week, that works out to \$25 an hour. Using the 30-percent rule from HUD, that says that you should not be using more than 30 percent of your income on housing, that comes to a rent of \$1,300 a month. That is pretty low. It also means that, since we are talking about median income, half the households in the City could not afford to live in the affordable housing.

Help the Homeless

Resident Arthur Curatola said the affordable housing qualification is aimed at those making “a decent income”, but he asked, “What about the homeless people”? He asked if the City is doing anything to help them. He said he still sees a lot of homeless people. He said the City is not helping the homeless. We should be using some of the money to be helping the homeless. Mr. Curatola said the City should help the homeless get housing so that they can become productive. Some of the grant money should go toward helping the homeless.

There being no additional comments, Vice President Crampsie Smith announced that Resolution 10 E is on the agenda for tonight and adjourned the Public Hearing at 7:26 PM.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

October 3, 2023

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

Complaint about Insurance Companies

Resident Arthur Curatola complained that insurance companies avoid paying claims. He wondered whether the City has any legislation to regulate this. He cited some personal injury and property claims that he was involved in and did not believe he received fair compensation.

Rethink Proposed Sewer Rate Increase

Resident Mary Jo Makoul noted discussion at the October 3 Council meeting about a proposed sewer fee increase of 8 percent. It was stated that, if approved, this would amount to about a \$24-per-year increase. While that might not sound bad, it will create a hardship for those residents on fixed incomes, she said. Ms. Makoul said the Social Security cost of living adjustment for 2024 will be 3.2 percent. That averages out to be about a \$50 increase. The Medicare deductible will increase by \$14. The Part B increase will be \$9.40 per month. Many insurance policies not covered by Medicare also are increasing their rates. Considering these and other increases, she disagreed that the estimated \$24 per year sewer increase would not be a hardship for some people and asked Council to “take a hard look at how an increase of this size will impact the bottom line of its senior residents.”

Meeting with Developer?

Resident Paul Fondl expressed disappointment in a City government that would allow a developer to build the proposed Hanover Apartments, “a massive complex that will overshadow all of the surrounding neighborhood.” He asked when the City will stop the overdevelopment of West Bethlehem. He also predicted that apartments will be built near the Sayre Mansion that would block the view of South Mountain. He said the small-town appeal will be lost at this rate. Mr. Fondl asked if the City would try to schedule a meeting with the residents, developer, the owner, and the City to try to work out differences rather than engaging in a court fight. Mr. Fondl again suggested installing anti-skid macadam on the intersection near the proposed apartments that includes Hanover Avenue and West Broad Street. The motor vehicle accidents continue.

Alternate Parking Garage Plan

Resident James Follweiler offered an alternative proposal to replace the Walnut Street Parking Garage. The existing proposal represents a reduction in parking, builds a smaller and taller garage that violates the Historical District standards, locates the garage farther away from Main Street, and splits off property for use for an apartment building. Mr. Follweiler displayed his vision for the new garage. A key component would be relocating the Bethlehem Police

Department to the ground floor of the new facility. He cited benefits including central location, welcoming new facilities compared to dark and unhealthy existing quarters, freeing up limited parking at City Hall, and improve recruiting possibilities with the modern facilities. Mr. Follweiler's plan also would rebuild the garage within its existing footprint. The main pedestrian entrance should be at the western end facing Main Street to make a welcoming entrance to our downtown historic sites. Commercial spaces could be constructed from the police station down facing the alley. Mr. Follweiler said he would delete from the Bethlehem Parking Authority proposal the apartment building. Such a plan could be shifted within the Northside Alive! footprint. He reminded that the clock is already ticking on demolition and reconstruction now that a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition has been approved by Council. He asked for consideration for his alternative plan.

Thanks for Progress, More Help Needed

Resident Angela Mitchell thanked City Council for helping her to resolve some Cherokee Street issues including filling one tree well and having some tree complaints inspected. She also walked her neighborhood with the Deputy Director of Public Works to review her traffic concerns. She continues to request a traffic light or illuminated stop signs to try to reduce accidents. Ms. Mitchell asked that the City again try full-width street cleaning. She said a few cars did not move when this was done before, but most did. Garbage remains an overall problem. It overflows and gets blown around and does not get cleaned up. Ms. Mitchell said there is an aroma of garbage in the street. She suggested increasing the frequency of trash and recycling pick-ups.

Police Matters

Resident Robert Virgilio reminded Council of his request a month ago for the City to provide a crime map or log to inform residents of crime. He asked if there had been progress.

Vice President Crampsie Smith said not to her knowledge, but suggested that Mr. Virgilio might discuss it with Chief Michelle Kott after the meeting.

Mr. Virgilio said he called police to his home after front steps were demolished. Neighborhood cameras captured images of a garbage truck hitting the steps. He complimented the police officer for investigating, following through and citing the driver. The citation means that Mr. Virgilio will be compensated to replace the steps.

As the owner of a small company, Mr. Virgilio is aware of the importance of retaining employees. The training costs and loss of experience are big problems for any employer, but especially for a police department. He encouraged trying to give incentives for veteran officers to stay instead of seeing them leave once they have worked 20 years for the Department. Many retire at that point and go and work elsewhere.

Disputed Water Bill

Resident Mark Will-Weber said he and his wife, Sally, went on a five-week vacation last January. Upon return, they were told that 54,000 gallons of water was used at their home in that time. Suspecting a major leak that would consume that much water, they hired a plumber.

However, that plumber could not find a cause. They have been told by the City that they owe for the usage. Mr. Will-Weber said they disagreed with the reading and charge, but they paid the bill in order to not incur late charges. He said he was not addressing Council to get his money back. Instead, he was here to lobby Council for some changes.

Mr. Will-Weber explained that the meter is 30 years old. The City replaced the meter as the Will-Webers' protests continued. Mr. Will-Weber said he was told by the City that the meters never fail. Mr. Will-Weber asked that Council scrutinize the water and sewer penalty phase. He noted that his quarterly bill was about 9 times its normal rate. The couple allegedly used 54,000 gallons that quarter. Their annual use the year before was 26,000 gallons.

Mr. Will-Weber said his annoyance about the \$500 quarterly bill was not just about the money. This is more a matter of anxiety and principle. He added that a sewer fee of \$130 was waived, but Mr. Will-Weber brought a check to return the \$130, stating he does not want a favor from the Water & Sewer Department. He believes there are "some predatory practices" going on. He said he knows of some other people who had similar higher water bills during a period in which they were on vacation. Plumbers also found nothing wrong at their homes.

Parking Appeal Continues

Alex Hirsch termed his proposed amendment a simple request in his ongoing effort to once again be able to participate in the Residential Parking Permit program. He again asked that part-time residents be allowed to participate.

Incomplete Advertising Pamphlet

Resident William Scheirer complained about a pamphlet called Bethlehem Map & Guide that advertises area attractions such as restaurants, hotels, and recreation. He said there is almost no mention of anything in West Bethlehem. He added that there are some key sites missing including the Rose Garden, Bethlehem Municipal Golf Course, and the skating rink. He inferred that City workers produce this publication. He complained about a culture in City Hall over the past 20 years. He said some work hard, but there are some employees whose top priorities are collecting their paycheck and leaving on time.

MyBethlehem App

Resident Terry Kloiber asked how the MyBethlehem app works. She estimated that she has reported problems five times. One serious matter was fixed immediately. But several matters that she reported have brought notifications that the matters have been resolved. When she walks by these areas, however, conditions remain the same. She again reported these incidents and again received notification that they were closed out but, again, found the same conditions. Ms. Kloiber asked who oversees this app and why is it not accurate?

Vice President Crampsie Smith apologized for Ms. Kloiber's experience. She invited her to stay after the meeting to discuss it with someone from the Administration.

History of Catering to Special Interests

Resident Stephen Antalics said he did not comment during the Public Hearing earlier tonight because his focus was more an historical one. He finds it more appropriate to comment during this meeting. He said affordable housing in Bethlehem began to deteriorate when the City began to expand. This was driven by private interests, chiefly those of Bethlehem Steel Corp. and Lehigh University. Properties were bought up by non-resident landlords. In collusion with the City, the City stopped inspecting the residences. Northampton Heights was condemned and torn down because Bethlehem Steel wanted to construct the Basic Oxygen Furnace on that land. An entire block of Packer Avenue and north was condemned and torn down allowing Lehigh to build. Private interests remain today and the City supports them. Definition today has allowed a core of student housing. Bethlehem is the only City in Pennsylvania allowing five students to rent a home. This further continues today with the plans to demolish the Walnut Street Parking Garage.

Resident Request for Committee Meeting

Bruce Haines, managing partner of the Hotel Bethlehem, emailed a request to Council President Colón and Community Development Chairwoman Van Wirt requesting a committee meeting as soon as possible for residents to discuss the replacement of the Walnut Street Parking Garage. He has not heard back from either. He now presumes that he was not using the proper procedure. Mr. Haines asked how a resident can request a committee meeting to discuss the Walnut Street Garage. He stated he specifically wishes to discuss the deficiencies with the existing plan. Mr. Haines is trying to get out ahead of the restriction that was noted on October 3 when the COA was considered for demolition of the existing garage. In that case, issues had to be related to the historic issues rather than the "whole project." He said the height will be able to be discussed, but he does not believe that the Historic Architectural Review Board will have the purview to set capacity standards. He believes the replacement garage will be too tall and too small. He suggested that Mr. Follweiler's proposal made earlier tonight could be discussed at a Council committee meeting. Mr. Haines noted that Mr. Follweiler's alternate plan would eliminate the proposed apartment building that is said to exceed the four-story maximum in the Historic District. Maintaining the current height limit is critical, Mr. Haines said. He said the apartment building can be built outside the Historic District. He also considers the idea to move the Police Department to the middle of the Historic District to be "brilliant." The key to Mr. Haines asking for a committee meeting is to weight options instead of "rubber stamping" what is being proposed.

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

None.

5. OLD BUSINESS

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

6. COMMUNICATIONS

B. *Director of Water and Sewer Resources – Contract Approval Form – 50 Willowbrook Road Water Main*

The Clerk read an October 10, 2023 memorandum with an attached Resolution from Edward Boscola, Director of Water and Sewer Resources, recommending approval of an Agreement with Joao & Bradley Construction Co., Inc. of Bethlehem. The contractor will provide labor and materials to relocate the City's 30-inch water main along Willowbrook Road in Allen Township to support a Northampton County bridge replacement project. This includes a 50/50 cost share with Northampton County. The cost to the City is \$357,850. The work is to be completed within 180 days of the Notice to Proceed. There are no renewals. The contractor was found to be the lowest responsible bidder among four bids received.

Vice President Crampsie Smith stated Resolution 10 A is on the agenda.

C. *Director of Community and Economic Development – Local Share Authority Grants: Rose Garden, Sidewalks (Monroe County), and Sidewalks (Lehigh Northampton)*

The Clerk read an October 12, 2023 memorandum with three attached revised Resolutions from Laura Collins, Director of Community and Economic Development. Ms. Collins advised that these are minor revisions specifying the names of City officials who must sign grant project submissions.

Vice President Crampsie Smith stated Resolutions 10 B through 10 D are on the agenda.

D. *Director of Community and Economic Development – 2023 57 EPA Brownfield Grant Writing*

The Clerk read an October 11, 2023 memorandum with an attached agreement and Resolution from Laura Collins, Director of Community and Economic Development, recommending an agreement with the Helmer Company of Macungie. The contractor would review information concerning the availability of the EPA's Brownfield grant program, coordinate a budget and community involvement, and assist the City in completing a formal grant submission. The amount of the contract is not to exceed \$5,000. Its term ends by November 13, 2023. There are no renewals.

Vice President Crampsie Smith stated Resolution 10 F is on the agenda.

E. *Director of Community and Economic Development – Grant Resolution Memo – Facades*

The Clerk read an October 12, 2023 memorandum with an attached revised Resolution from Laura Collins, Director of Community and Economic Development. Ms. Collins states that the revisions come at the request of the Pennsylvania DCED to include the amount of funding and the name of the grant program in the Resolution.

Vice President Crampsie Smith stated Resolution 10 G is on the agenda.

F. *City Solicitor – Use Permit Agreement – Chamber Foundation – 2023 Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony*

The Clerk read an October 12, 2023 memorandum from Solicitor John F. Spirk, Jr. with an attached Resolution and associated Use Permit Agreement. The Permittee is the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce Foundation, by and through its Citizens Christmas City Committee. Subpermittees are Lost Tavern Brewing, LLC, and Franklin Hill Vineyards, Inc. The Agreement is for the 2023 Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony. The Agreement is from 9:00 AM until 8:00 PM on November 24, 2023 and covers Payrow Plaza.

Vice President Crampsie Smith stated Resolution 10 H is on the agenda.

7. REPORTS

A. *President of Council*

Councilmanic Appointments

1. *Councilmanic Appointment – Joyce Hinnefeld – Bethlehem Area Public Library*

Council President Colón reappointed Joyce Hinnefeld to the Bethlehem Area Public Library effective through January of 2026. Mr. Colón and Dr. Enix sponsored Resolution No. 2023-207 to confirm the reappointment.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 6. Resolution passed.

2. *Councilmanic Appointment – Jane Gill – Bethlehem Area Public Library*

Council President Colón reappointed Jane Gill to the Bethlehem Area Public Library effective through January of 2026. Mr. Colón and Dr. Enix sponsored Resolution No. 2023-208 to confirm the reappointment.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 6. Resolution passed.

B. *Mayor (Provided by Business Administrator Eric Evans)*

Administrative Order

1. *Administrative Order – 2023-25 Mark Jobs – Bethlehem Revitalization and Improvement Authority*

Mayor Reynolds reappointed Mark Jobs to the Bethlehem Revitalization and Improvement Authority effective through October of 2028. Mr. Colón and Dr. Enix sponsored Resolution No. 2023-209 to confirm the reappointment.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 6. Resolution passed.

C. *Committee of the Whole*

Vice President Crampsie Smith reported that the Committee of the Whole met earlier tonight to review the Five-Year Capital Improvement Program. This meeting was for informational purposes only. The proposed 2024 Non-Utility Capital Plan that is incorporated in the Five-Year Capital Improvement Program will be reviewed by Council again during budget meetings as par of the proposed 2024 Non-Utility Capital Budget.

D. *Community Development Committee*

Dr. Van Wirt reported that the Community Development Committee met on October 10 and heard Part 4 of the Administration's Comprehensive Housing Strategy update. The Administration presented "Opening Doors: Strategies to Build Housing Stability in Bethlehem." She noted that all four meetings may be viewed on YouTube.

8. ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

8A. *Bill No. 37-2023 – City Solicitor – Ordinance – Article 347 Amendments*

The Clerk read Bill No. 37-2023 – City Solicitor -- Ordinance – Article 347 Amendments, sponsored by Dr. Enix and Ms. Crampsie Smith and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM, COUNTIES OF
LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON, COMMONWEALTH OF
PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING ARTICLE 347 OF THE CODIFIED
ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM, TITLED
“MUNICIPAL CLAIMS FOR DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS –
SCHEDULE OF ATTORNEYS FEES TO BE ADDED”

Ms. Kwiatek said her question somewhat involves charges for delinquent water and sewer accounts, so she asked Mr. Boscola about circumstances involving tonight's public comments made by the Will-Webers. She said it was disturbing to hear that a resident who has evidence that they were not home for the period in question and has evidence there were no major leaks is being charged for what seems like an obvious mistake. They paid, so they did not have to pay the delinquent fee, but she asked Mr. Boscola to comment. She asked if it was possible for someone who knew they would not be home to hook up a hose and use their water. Otherwise, how could Mr. Boscola account for this usage?

Mr. Boscola said it would be inappropriate to publicly disclose details of the Will-Webers' account, but he believes that the City responded appropriately within the guidelines of the water ordinance. As to the old-style water meters, Mr. Boscola said they work similar to an old-style car odometer with wheels that spin to show usage. A mode of force is needed to move the numbered wheels that indicate the amount of usage. A disc inside the water meters can only move if water pushes through it. The meters do not spin on their own. He used the analogy of a car parked overnight in a garage. A car sitting idle would not register more mileage. If it had an extra 1,000

miles on the odometer, it would have had to have been driven 1,000 miles. The same is true of water meters. If the water is turned off, the meter does not advance. In the Will-Webers' case, the couple does not know where the water went. Nor does the City. What is known is the meter reading. It was tested and was found to be measuring accurately. He said that is all that can be done within the ordinance. However, Mr. Boscola said the City has the right to waive any penalties. He believed that was done as the circumstances were reviewed.

Vice President Crampsie Smith asked about a red flag feature. She asked whether the new meters have this feature, but the old meters do not and whether Mr. Boscola could explain.

Mr. Boscola said the new meters are electronic. There are no moving parts. The City has the ability to program them to provide a signal that an account is registering usage much greater than the norm. About one-third of City customers have the new meters. Mr. Boscola also cautioned that the signaling feature does not work very well for residential customers because the usage is so low and very inconsistent because of vacations or seasonal needs. It is hard to set an alarm that registers abnormal use. The alarms are more helpful for industrial and commercial customers that consistently use a lot of water. There are some limitations of what those alarms can do.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 6. Bill No. 37-2023, now known as Ordinance No. 2023-36, was passed on Final Reading.

9. NEW ORDINANCES

None.

10. RESOLUTIONS

A. *Approve Resolution – 50 Willowbrook Road – Water Main*

Mr. Colón and Dr. Enix sponsored Resolution No. 2023-210 that authorized to execute an Agreement with Joao & Bradley Construction Co., Inc. to relocate a 30-inch water main along Willowbrook Road in Allen Township.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 6. The Resolution passed.

B. *Approve Resolution – DCED – Local Share Assessment Grant – Rose Garden Park*

Mr. Colón and Dr. Enix sponsored Resolution No. 2023-211 that authorized a request for a Lehigh County Local Share Assessment grant of \$284,870 from the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be used for capital improvements at the Rose Garden Park and that Mayor J. William Reynolds and City Controller George Yasso shall be the officials empowered to execute all associated documents and agreements.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Mr. Crampsie Smith, 6. The Resolution passed.

C. *Approve Resolution – DCED – Local Share Assessment Grant Monroe County*

Mr. Colón and Dr. Enix sponsored Resolution No. 2023-212 that authorized a request for a Monroe County Local Share Assessment grant of \$370,000 from the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be used for the Southside Bethlehem business district sidewalk repair and replacement program and that Mayor J. William Reynolds and City Controller George Yasso shall be the officials empowered to execute all associated documents and agreements.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Mr. Crampsie Smith, 6. The Resolution passed.

D. *Approve Resolution – DCED – Local Share Assessment Grant Sidewalks (Lehigh Northampton)*

Mr. Colón and Dr. Enix sponsored Resolution No. 2023-213 that authorized a request for a Lehigh/Northampton County Local Share Assessment grant of \$370,000 from the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be used for the Southside Bethlehem business district sidewalk repair and replacement program and that Mayor J. William Reynolds and City Controller George Yasso shall be the officials empowered to execute all associated documents and agreements.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Mr. Crampsie Smith, 6. The Resolution passed.

E. *Approve Resolution – DCED – Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing Program Grant*

Mr. Colón and Dr. Enix sponsored Resolution No. 2023-214 that authorized to execute a request for a Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing grant for up to \$10,000,000 from HUD toward its Opening Doors: Strategies for Building Housing Stability in Bethlehem plan and that the Mayor J. William Reynolds, Director of the Department of Community and Economic Development Laura Collins, and Controller George Yasso shall be the officials empowered to execute all associated documents and agreements.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 6. The Resolution passed.

F. *Approve Resolution – DCED – 2023 57 EPA Brownfield Grant Writing – Helmer Group Contract*

Mr. Colón and Dr. Enix sponsored Resolution No. 2023-215 that authorized to execute an agreement with the Helmer Group to perform EPA Brownfield Grant Writing services.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 6. The Resolution passed.

G. *Approve Resolution – DCED – Keystone Communities Program – Façade Grant*

Mr. Colón and Dr. Enix sponsored Resolution No. 2023-216 that requests a Keystone Communities Program grant of \$50,000 from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to be used for the Bethlehem Commercial Façade Program and that the

Mayor and Controller shall be the officials empowered to execute all associated documents and agreements.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 6. The Resolution passed.

H. Approve Use Permit Agreement – Chamber Foundation – 2023 Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

Mr. Colón and Dr. Enix sponsored Resolution No. 2023-217 that authorized to execute a Use Permit Agreement with the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce Foundation by and through its Citizens Christmas City Committee for the 2023 Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 6. The Resolution passed.

I. Certificate of Appropriateness – 155 East Market Street

Mr. Colón and Dr. Enix sponsored Resolution No. 2023-218 that granted a Certificate of Appropriateness for 155 East Market Street to permit a previously installed decorative screen on top of an existing brick wall.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 6. The Resolution passed.

J. Certificate of Appropriateness – 41 East Market Street

Mr. Colón and Dr. Enix sponsored Resolution No. 2023-219 that granted a Certificate of Appropriateness for 41 East Market Street to install solar panels on the roofs of the main house and garages.

Ms. Kwiatek was pleased to see this COA. This is the first modification she can recall under the Solar Ordinance revision. She was pleased to see the great care taken by the historic review board in dealing with this matter. She looks forward to seeing more solar panels in the Historic District.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Mr. Crampsie Smith, 6. The Resolution passed.

11. NEW BUSINESS

A. Rescheduling of the Tuesday, November 7, 2023 City Council Meeting to Wednesday, November 8, 2023 due to the General Election

Ms. Wilhelm moved, seconded by Dr. Van Wirt, to reschedule City Council's first meeting in November to Wednesday, November 8, 2023 since the normal meeting date of Tuesday, November 7, 2023 is the General Election Day.

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 6. The Motion passed.

Vice President Crampsie Smith stated the Tuesday, November 7, 2023 City Council Meeting has been rescheduled to Wednesday, November 8, 2023 at 7:00 PM in Town Hall.

Kudos to Grant Funding Efforts

Dr. Van Wirt said a majority of what was voted on tonight involved grants for DCED. She said this funding makes lives for our residents better. She thanked all involved for their hard work that shows.

Smoke Shops Concerns/Thanks for Public Works' Efforts

Ms. Leon raised concerns about smoke shops. She said she does not know how much the City can regulate. She questioned a sign for a smoke shop that she believes is within the HCC district. That is being looked into. She also questioned activities of one that is near Liberty High School. She would like to compare the operations to regulations in place. She is concerned about activities near schools in particular. Ms. Leon also thanked Public Works for efforts in response to complaints along Cherokee Street. She believes these efforts have given neighbors some hope.

Garbage Concerns

Ms. Kwiatek noted that there is a common theme being heard in Public Comment: garbage. Tonight, she heard that Mr. Virgilio's stairs were wiped out by a garbage truck as well as the inadequacy of trash pick-up from Ms. Mitchell. "We are hearing that the way that garbage is being collected in this city is not functioning well," she said. This should be addressed.

Intersection Discussed

Vice President Crampsie Smith told Mr. Fondl that the intersection that includes Hanover Avenue and West Broad Street was discussed earlier tonight during Council's Committee of the Whole meeting. She said that Public Works Director Michael Alkhal assured Council that that intersection is on the radar for review at some point.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned 8:48 PM.

ATTEST:

Tad J. Miller
City Clerk