

BETHLEHEM CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
10 East Church Street - Town Hall  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania  
Tuesday, October 18, 2022 – 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. Michael G. Colón was absent, 1. Vice President Crampsie Smith congratulated President Colón and his wife on the birth of their baby daughter yesterday.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

October 4, 2022

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

*Parking Problems Persist*

Alex Hirsch returned and said that he has made no progress in resolving his exclusion from participation in the City's Residential Parking Program. Mr. Hirsch has attended several consecutive Council meetings and complained that he has been told by the Bethlehem Parking Authority that he can no longer get a parking permit because he is licensed and his vehicle is registered in Rhode Island despite the fact that he is a part-time Bethlehem resident. He said he was told about a month ago that the director of BPA was trying to think of solutions and that Mr. Hirsch should be patient. Mr. Hirsch said he has received no communication within that time and does not believe he will. He again appealed to Council for help.

Vice President Crampsie Smith said that she would call BPA tomorrow.

*Interest in HCC Appointment*

Resident Marsha Fritz introduced herself to Council and advised that she applied last week to be a member of the City's Historic Conservation Commission. She is a 17-year resident. She was chairwoman of the Historic Architectural Review Board until winter when she was not re-appointed to that Board. She outlined her resume, which includes a Master's Degree in Architecture, and established two design firms spanning 30 years. After moving to Bethlehem, she worked for a museum with a collection of 19 historic buildings. After retiring, she has volunteered with the Moravian Church Archives and with the Moravian Historical Society. She said she would very much enjoy continuing her service by being a member of the HCC. Ms. Fritz referred to her email of interest that she sent to Mayor Reynolds and asked that the City Clerk forward this to City Council Members.

*Contractor Complaint*

Resident Michael Miller said that he has had a problem with a general contractor. He said at least five other City residents have had similar complaints. He contacted Bethlehem police who classified the investigation as fraud and assigned a detective to investigate. This case was combined under the same case number with one that occurred in Forks Township. A City detective followed up with Mr. Miller and said that the Northampton County District Attorney's Office declined to prosecute his case because it was not strong enough. However, District Attorney would be looking into the Forks Township case because there was more supportive evidence. Mr. Miller then said that the Forks homeowner contacted the DA's Office, but was told that they had no record of either case. Now it was stated that the Forks Township Police Department should investigate the case. Mr. Miller is uncertain what happened as to any investigation and feels let down by the agencies involved.

*Wants Qualified Candidates on Boards and Commissions*

Resident Dana Grubb said that Bethlehem's history "is easily the most marketable asset that this town has." This is regularly touted by the leaders of Bethlehem, but "it takes more than gratuitous words." He said some current public officials seem dismissive toward this. He believes there have been recent "political plants" on some of the City's boards and commissions. The best qualified individuals have not been appointed. He cited the example of Ms. Fritz, who spoke earlier during this meeting.

*Appoint Qualified People*

Resident William Scheirer referred to a recent comment by Dr. Van Wirt that the business of the HCC and HARB is history. He said it is important, then, to appoint qualified members to those panels.

*Seeking Answers*

Resident Stephen Antalics referred to Mr. Grubb's earlier remarks about appointing qualified people to these boards and rebuffing those who are qualified is irresponsible. Mr. Antalics said he had previously heard good things about Ms. Fritz and, after hearing her speak tonight, he agrees with those opinions. Mr. Antalics cited Beth Starbuck and Ms. Fritz as qualified individuals who have not been re-appointed to boards in recent times. He said he has sent emails and telephoned the Mayor's Office to get answers, but his emails and calls are not returned. Mr. Antalics returned to Mr. Grubb's remarks and shared concerns about "political plants and non-appointments." He said it would be "gross negligence" for Council to approve anyone other than Ms. Fritz as the next HCC appointment. Mr. Antalics also asked anyone on Council to get an answer from Mayor Reynolds as to why Ms. Fritz was not re-appointed to HARB.

*More Support for Ms. Fritz*

Resident Bruce Haines said he has had projects reviewed by HARB several times and found Ms. Fritz to be professional. He speculated that the reason that she was not re-appointed to that board is because she did not recommend tearing down the 19-century home on Broad Street

to create City View Apartments. "HARB should not be a political body to make sure that developers can move forward with projects," Mr. Haines said.

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

- A. *Director of Community and Economic Development – HOME – American Rescue Plan – Public Hearing Request*

The Clerk read a memorandum dated October 10, 2022 from Laura Collins, Director of Department of Community and Economic Development, requesting that a Public Hearing be scheduled by Council to discuss and consider the Allocation Plan associated with the Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness. This plan was a subject of the joint committee meeting held earlier this evening at which time plan recommendations and implementation were presented. The plan is part of a comprehensive approach to provide necessary sheltering and services to those who are homeless in Bethlehem and the greater Lehigh Valley region. It involves funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the American Rescue Plan program.

*Scheduling Public Hearing*

Dr. Van Wirt made a motion, seconded by Ms. Wilhelm, to schedule a Public Hearing on Tuesday, November 1, 2022 at 7:00 PM in Town Hall.

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 a Public Hearing has been scheduled for Tuesday, November 1, 2022 at 7:00 PM in Town Hall to discuss and consider the Allocation Plan associated with the Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness.

- B. *Director of Water and Sewer Resources – Recommendation of Award – Synagro Central, LLC – Class B. Biosolids Beneficial Use*

The Clerk read a memorandum dated October 13, 2022 from Edward Boscola, Director of Water and Sewer Resources, recommending a contract with Synagro Central, LLC for transportation and disposal of Class B Biosolids from the wastewater treatment plant to beneficial use sites operated by the Contractor and approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. The estimated annual cost of the contract is \$532,750 for each of the

guaranteed two years, 2023 and 2024, of the contract. There is an option for three additional one-year extensions for 2025 through 2027.

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

C. *Director of Planning and Zoning – Resolution – DCNR Funds for Friendship Park Improvements*

The Clerk read a memorandum dated October 13, 2022 from Darlene Heller, Director of Planning and Zoning to allow the City to apply for and accept funds from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for the City of Bethlehem. The City is applying to DCNR for up to \$300,000 to assist in the implementation of improvements at Friendship Park. Matching funds are intended to be allocated through existing recreation funds. This is one of the priority projects of the Northside Alive initiative.

Vice President Crampsie stated that Resolution 10 B is on the agenda.

D. *Director of Community and Economic Development – Resolution – Grants Administrator – Transfer of Funds*

The Clerk read a memorandum dated October 13, 2022 from Laura Collins, Director of Community and Economic Development, seeking a \$10,000 transfer within the General Fund Budget. The \$10,000 would pay for a full-time Grants Administrator position through the end of 2022. The grants administrator would 1) distribute grants associated with the American Rescue Plan program, and 2) assist with identifying, securing, and executing federal, state, and county grants for the City to further additional projects and priorities.

Vice President Crampsie stated that Resolution 10 C is on the agenda.

7. REPORTS

A. *President of Council*

B. *Mayor*

*It's a Girl!*

Mayor Reynolds congratulated President Colón and his family on the birth of a girl.

*Recycling Update*

Mayor Reynolds referred to an announcement weeks ago that the City's trash and recycling contract will not be renewed by the hauler and that prices will no doubt be increasing as a result of current market conditions. He called on DCED Director Laura Collins to provide an update.

Ms. Collins said that bids are being reviewed and are higher than the current contract. The current contract is \$1.17 million and they are seeing an increase of a couple of hundred thousand dollars even among the lowest options. Bids were requested for both the dual- and single-stream

recycling options, which will be evaluated. "We're obviously looking at a pretty large increase, and that's obviously something important to know in advance of the budget process," she said. No contract has been awarded as bids, with their options, continued to be reviewed.

Mayor Reynolds added that the recycling fee will be considered in this process at budget time. He said the increase in labor and fuel costs are among the reasons for the higher bids. Given this anticipated price increase, he said he wanted to keep Council updated.

*Thanks for Smoke Alarms*

Mayor Reynolds thanked Chief Warren Achey, City firefighters, and volunteers from the American Red Cross for recent efforts to install smoke detectors in some City homes.

*We Build Bethlehem Results Event*

Mayor Reynolds noted the City will hold an event from 6:00-7:30 PM on October 26 in the Fowler Center to announce results of the We Build Bethlehem survey. Results will be reviewed as well as how they will be used for planning.

*2023 Budget Release*

Mayor Reynolds announced the 2023 Budget will be released on November 11 in an event from 8:00-9:00 AM in the Blast Furnace Room at SteelStacks. The event will be open to the public.

*Halloween Parade/Homeless Study/Community Center*

Mayor Reynolds also reminded that the Halloween Parade will be held at 2:00 PM on October 30. Former City Councilwoman Olga Negrón will be the Grand Marshal. He also thanked those from DCED, the consultant, and City Council for its support of the draft report of the City of Bethlehem Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness. A preview was presented tonight and will be finalized in the next week or two. Mayor Reynolds also thanked those on Council and others who attended the announcement last week of a planned community center on the South Side. This will include a needs study and a feasibility report.

C. Committee Reports

*Joint Public Safety and Community Development Committee Meeting*

Ms. Leon announced a joint meeting this afternoon of the Public Safety and Community Development committees. Members discussed the Backyard Chicken Ordinance and voted 5-1 to send it on to full Council. The committees also received a presentation on the previously mentioned City of Bethlehem Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness and discussed the use of American Rescue Funds.

8. ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

None.

9. NEW ORDINANCES

A. *Bill No. 25-2022 – Conflict of Interest Ordinance*

The Clerk read Bill No. 25-2022 – Conflict of Interest Ordinance, sponsored by Dr. Van Wirt and Dr. Enix and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE  
CITY OF BETHLEHEM, LEHIGH AND  
NORTHAMPTON COUNTIES, PENNSYLVANIA,  
AN ORDINANCE REQUIRING THE  
MANDATORY RECUSAL OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS  
IN MATTERS THAT THEY HOLD A FINANCIAL INTEREST

Voting AYE: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 6. Bill No. 25-2022 passed on First Reading.

10. RESOLUTIONS

A. *Approve Resolution – Synagro Central, LLC – Blass B Biosolids Beneficial Use*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-211 that authorized to execute an agreement with Synagro Central, LLC for transportation and disposal of Class B Biosolids from the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Dr. Van Wirt asked Mr. Boscola whether this is a new disposal process and where these Biosolids go.

Mr. Boscola said that this has been the process since 2018 when the City entered into a five-year contract. That contract has now expired, and this would be approval for a new contract. Mr. Boscola explained that “beneficial use” means that Biosolids are shipped to farms to serve as fertilizer. Synagro has contracts with farms for the material to be spread on fields. He estimated that 50 percent of the generated Biosolids in this country are disposed of in this way.

Dr. Van Wirt asked what percentage of these solids went into the Bethlehem landfill instead of being disposed of through Synagro.

Mr. Boscola said the heavy metals content is monitored and that some material has been sent to the Waste Management landfill near Pen Argyl, but he did not believe that any has been sent to the Bethlehem facility in many years.

Dr. Van Wirt said she did not have a problem with these details, but she wanted residents to know the process.

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

B. *Approve Resolution – DCNR Funds for Friendship Park Improvements*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-212 that authorized the application of a grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for Friendship Park Improvements.

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

*C. Approve Transfer of Funds – Grants Administrator*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-213 that authorized \$10,000 in the General Fund Budget be transferred from Account 0901-95011 – Civic Expense/ARP Funding/Initiatives, to Account 0304-40004 – Community & Economic Development Temporary help to hire a grants administrator to distribute grants associated with the American Rescue Plan Program.

Ms. Kwiatek asked for an estimate from the Administration on the percentage of time this position would spend on administering versus identifying and securing new money sources.

Mayor Reynolds believed that this position at its start will focus primarily on ARPA grants. As time goes on, this position will take on more and more grant responsibilities. This will be discussed more in the coming weeks during budget consideration. He said there is a lot of money available for these projects at the state and federal levels. This position is needed to try to secure this funding for the City.

Ms. Kwiatek noted that this is listed as a \$10,000 transfer to fund this position for the remainder of 2022. She asked if the Mayor anticipates making this a permanent position.

Mayor Reynolds said this position will be discussed at next week's We Build Bethlehem program. He anticipates it will be included in the 2023 Budget for the full year.

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

*Motion – Considering Resolutions 10 D through 10 G as a group – Certificates of Appropriateness*

Ms. Wilhelm and Dr. Van Wirt moved to consider Resolutions 10 D through 10 G as a group.

*D. Certificate of Appropriateness – 77 West Broad Street*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-214 that granted a Certificate of Appropriateness to install one double sided projecting/blade sign on an existing metal scroll bracket at 77 West Broad Street.

*E. Certificate of Appropriateness – 418 High Street*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-215 that granted a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the existing slate roofing on the porch with GAF Slateline shingles in

the Antique Slate Color and replace miscellaneous rusted downspouts. The new downspouts will be round to match the existing at 418 High Street.

F. *Certificate of Appropriateness – 229 East Church Street*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-216 that granted a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the existing shingle roofing with GAF Slateline shingles in the Antique Slate Color and replace flat roofs with EPDM membrane roofing at 229 East Church Street.

G. *Certificate of Appropriateness – 409 First Avenue*

Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-217 that granted a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the existing slate roofing with GAF Slateline shingles in the Antique Slate Color. New half round gutters and round downspouts will also be installed at 409 First Avenue.

Voting AYE on Resolutions 10 D through 10 G: Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, Ms. Wilhelm, and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 6. The Resolutions passed.

11. NEW BUSINESS

*Upcoming Community Development Meeting*

Dr. Van Wirt announced that a Community Development Committee meeting is scheduled for 5:00 PM tomorrow in Town Hall to discuss Article 349 Financial Accountability Incentive Reporting reports.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 PM.

ATTEST:

Tad J. Miller  
City Clerk