

CITY OF BETHLEHEM
City Council Memorandum

SUBJECT: Resolution in support of naming Chimney Swift the official Bird of Bethlehem
FROM: Olga Negrón, Member of Council
TO: Members of Council
DATE: January 28, 2021

In recognition of the special role that the Chimney Swift plays in our City and its history, attached is a proposed resolution naming the Chimney Swift as the official Bird of Bethlehem. I respectfully ask that this resolution be considered at the February 2, 2021 City Council meeting.



Olga Negrón
Member of Council

CC: Mayor

RESOLUTION NO. 2021- ____

**A Resolution Designating the Chimney Swift as the
Official Bird of the City of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania**

WHEREAS, Chimney Swifts are part of the City of Bethlehem's history. They have been living in our community since the Industrial Revolution, for more than 100 years.

WHEREAS, many bird watchers consider Chimney Swifts especially beautiful to watch. They fly like aerial acrobats in groups of two and three during the day. When they enter their chimneys in large numbers at dusk, they are a spectacular sight to see.

WHEREAS, designating the Chimney Swift as the official Bird of Bethlehem would enhance wildlife protection in our City. Swift populations are in sharp decline. It is estimated their population has decreased by 72% since the mid-1960s. Naming the Chimney Swift as our City bird would help us cherish and protect this species that depends on our urban habitat.

WHEREAS, naming the Chimney Swift the official Bird of Bethlehem could attract bird watchers to our City and have a positive economic impact on our community. According to the 2011 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services National Survey, "bird watchers spend nearly \$41 billion annually on trips and equipment. Local community economies benefit from the \$14.9 billion that bird watchers spend on food, lodging, and transportation. In 2011, 666,000 jobs were created as a result of bird watching expenditures."

WHEREAS, Chimney Swifts are insectivores and contribute to the health and safety of our City and represent a safe and healthy alternative to pesticides. Some sources estimate that Chimney Swifts eat approximately 2,000 insects per day. Currently, it is estimated that there are as many as 2,200 swifts in the old Masonic Temple chimney on the South Side of Bethlehem. This roost could consume about 4,400,000 insects per day. Moreover, Chimney Swifts are relatively clean birds and generally do not leave significant droppings in parks or on houses, buildings, walkways, and parking lots.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Bethlehem that in recognition of the special value of this bird species to our City, the Chimney Swift is hereby designated as the official Bird of the City of Bethlehem.

Sponsored by: _____

ADOPTED by Council this day of , 2021.

President of Council

ATTEST:

City Clerk