

BETHLEHEM CITY COUNCIL REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING  
OLD COUNCIL

Monday, January 3, 2022 – 7:00 PM  
10 East Church Street - Town Hall  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

INVOCATION

Father Alexandros Petrides, St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, offered the Invocation which was followed by the pledge to the flag.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

1. ROLL CALL

President Waldron called the meeting to order. Present were Bryan G. Callahan, Michael G. Colón, Grace Crampsie Smith, Olga Negrón, Paige Van Wirt and Adam R. Waldron, 6.

*Communication 6 A added to Agenda*

President Waldron announced there will be a Communication added to the agenda tonight. This is the resignation of Mayor J. William Reynolds from City Council effective prior to his taking office as Mayor earlier today.

President Waldron mentioned this is his last meeting and the microphone system took a dive tonight, which he hopes is not an indication of him leaving. So for Council Members and the Mayor you will have to hold down the button on the microphone to speak.

CITATIONS

*Citation - Honoring Bryan G. Callahan - Member of Council – 2014-2022*

President Waldron presented a Citation honoring Bryan G. Callahan as a Member of Council from 2014 through 2022.

Mr. Callahan remarked he wanted to attend this meeting in person to respect the process but with the Omicron virus taking off he does not want to jeopardize himself or his children. He wishes all the new Council Members the best of luck and the same to Mayor Reynolds. Thank you.

*Citation – Honoring Olga Negrón - Member of Council – 2016-2022*

President Waldron presented a Citation in honor of Olga Negrón as a Member of Council from 2016 through 2022.

Ms. Negrón thanked President Waldron and added this is a bitter sweet day for her and she does have a big smile on her face although you cannot see it with wearing a mask. She will enjoy her time with her granddaughter and husband. She is looking forward to her retirement.

*Citation – Honoring J. William Reynolds – Member of Council – 2008-2022*

President Waldron presented a Citation honoring J. William Reynolds as a Member of Council from 2008 through 2022.

Mayor Reynolds thanked President Waldron and pointed out it was an honor to serve with his colleagues for the past 14 years. He looks forward to continuing our working relationships. He congratulated Councilwoman Negrón for her time on City Council and Councilman Waldron and Councilman Callahan for their service as well.

*Citation – Honoring Adam R. Waldron – Member of Council – 2014-2022*

Michael Colón presented a Citation honoring Adam R. Waldron as a Member of Council from 2014 through 2022.

Mr. Waldron thanked all of his colleagues and pointed out what a long, strange, trip this has been. Eight years ago he was in a much different point in his life as to where he is now, personally and professionally. He felt it was time for him to step aside and let some new voices enter the conversations that happen in this room on the first and third Tuesday. In his past 4 years as President of Council it has been quite a wild ride as he and Mr. Vidoni sat in this room sometimes by ourselves holding virtual meetings through the peak of the pandemic. Those were some lonely dark moments. But as we see all the folks who are in this room tonight, that brings some joy and prosperity and hope to what we have created in this city. Now under the new leadership of Mr. Reynolds as our Mayor he feels confident to step aside and create some space for some new folks to bring some new ideas and new energy to the conversation. Mr. Waldron noted he is not going anywhere, his roots are here with his family and he will continue to tune in and make himself available in any way he can to help serve this wonderful city. He thanks his colleagues and all the folks who make things tick in City Hall for all their time and knowledge. He looks forward to watching from the sidelines as we continue the next chapter in the City of Bethlehem. Thank you all.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT (on any subject not being voted on this evening – 5 minutes time limit)

*New President of Council*

Stephen Antalics, 737 Ridge Street, 1201 Butztown Road, noted over the years he has attended quite a number of Council Meetings. He has observed Council Members like Paul Calvo, James DelGrosso, Dolores Caskey, Michael Schweder, Jean Belinski, David DiGiacinto and

others. He has observed the present Council and there is one Member of Council that he believes stands out. Mr. Antalics has no political interest in this; his interest is in good government. He has made very objective observations and evaluations and he strongly urges that maybe for one time Council may listen to public comment that they strongly consider Dr. Van Wirt as President of Council. This is because he has great respect for her ability, knowledge, and background in civic development. Also, her lack of political bent, that is impressive. She spoke to the people and to the issues. He thinks that the new Council would do a great service to Council if they appointed Dr. Van Wirt as President.

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. Mayor J. William Reynolds – Resignation from Council

The Clerk read a memorandum dated January 3, 2022 from Mayor J. William Reynolds resigning from City Council effective today, January 3, 2022.

7. REPORTS

- A. *President of Council*
- 2. *Annual Report*

**President Waldron presented his Annual Report for 2021, as follows:**

During 2021, Bethlehem City Council held 24 regular meetings and 16 Committee and budget meetings, adopted 231 Resolutions, and passed 41 Ordinances. Below are some highlights from Council's 2021 legislative year.

In 2021, our City government continued adapting to the Covid-19 pandemic in order to protect public health while continuing to provide the highest quality services to our residents and surrounding municipalities. City Council commends former Mayor Robert Donchez and the Health Bureau for their exemplary leadership and hard work during this pandemic, which is now entering the third year.

In order to increase transparency, City Council started live streaming Council meetings in 2019 and that has been made permanent as Town Hall is now wired with the necessary audio

visual equipment to allow for future streaming of council and other government meetings from Town Hall.

City Council reviewed and took action on several financial matters during 2021.

Council approved the Mayor's proposed 2022 budget after amending it to add an additional \$1.5 million dollars into the City's American Rescue Plan Community Reinvestment Allocation. Council also conducted an oversight hearing on funding related to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, also known as the CARES Act, and reviewed and approved related budget adjustments and funding allocations.

Moreover, Council authorized a grant to fund renovations at the Bethlehem Public Library and a PA Infrastructure Investment Authority grant to fund work on the City water system. Additionally, Council passed Administration-initiated bills modifying water rates and charges along with certain EMS fees.

In 2020, Council passed an Administration-proposed ordinance that established a user fee for stormwater collection and management, and in 2021, Council passed an ordinance implementing a fee credit and appeal system to enhance equity and provide a mechanism for appeals.

This year in 2021, Council conducted its fourth annual Financial Accountability Incentive Reporting hearing to evaluate the effectiveness of economic development incentives and increase transparency. These annual hearings are conducted in the Community Development Committee to review administration reports submitted to Council pursuant to Article 349 Economic Development Incentive Reporting and Evaluation, established in 2018.

The Public Safety Committee reviewed a planned reorganization of the Bethlehem Police Department and Council members made a number of inquiries related to a new program where the Health Bureau and the Police Departments work together to assist vulnerable individuals going through mental health and other crises by providing more effective social service referrals.

After review in the Community Development Committee, Council passed an ordinance establishing an affordable housing Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance program in the City of Bethlehem. The program is designed to incentivize private development of affordable housing units in the city and to fund housing and rental assistance-related programs. Council also adopted a resolution approving the City's Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice and passed an Administration-initiated bill amending Article 1739 related to inspections of regulated rental units.

In 2021, Council considered several zoning map and text amendments including text amendments related to the former Martin Tower site, establishing a student housing zoning overlay district, first floor commercial uses in the CB and CL zoning districts, and pertaining to multi-family dwellings in the CB and CL zoning districts.

Council conducted several Public Works committee meetings on a new stormwater management fee program, a proposed responsible contractor ordinance, a proposed bid

preference ordinance, and city land transfers. Council also approved a street vacation ordinance vacating portions of Luna and Bushkill Streets.

Council also authorized a number of contracts, use permit agreements, and certificates of appropriateness, and approved Councilmanic Appointments and Administrative appointments to various City boards, commissions, and authorities.

Moreover, in 2021, Council adopted a resolution urging the City to incentivize operation of a grocery store at the Ahart's Market site in order to promote equity and protect the health and well-being of individuals and families in South Bethlehem and also adopted a resolution urging passage of legislation in the PA House to address the widespread nuisance of fireworks in the city.

Finally, after a groundswell of community attention, City Council adopted a resolution designating the Chimney Swift as the official Bird of the City of Bethlehem.

President Waldron remarked as he wraps up his second term as President of Council it has been quite a journey and ride. Sitting in this chair is challenging at times to try to manage inclusion and try to give everybody an opportunity to have their voice. A few years ago he was criticized heavily for having for what is called a soft gavel, meaning he was allowing folks to speak at length and perhaps too much. He thought a lot about that criticism and he thought it was fair. He wanted to be criticized for having a soft gavel and not a hard gavel. He hopes that the precedent that he tried to help create will continue in whoever sits in this chair next. In the past few years he has not even picked up this wooden gavel because he did not find it to be necessary to help foster conversation to the point where he was presented with a home-made soft gavel. His only criticism would be that there are not 3 more he can take home for his children. This will be a nice reminder of his time on Council in his ongoing efforts to help try to foster dialogue that was sometimes pretty contentious and uncomfortable but at the end of the day he thinks it helped everybody understand the perspectives of Council and better help understand the perspectives of the public. President Waldron believes that is why we are all in this room this evening. He is happy to step aside in his role on Council but also his role as President which can be challenging at times, much different than sitting in the other 6 positions. If whoever fills this chair he hopes they will continue that legacy to try to foster as much inclusion and positive dialogue as he has tried to do the past 4 years. He thanks Mr. Spirk and his son for the token of the soft gavel.

B. *Mayor*

Mayor Reynolds remarked he can only get to say this once to President Waldron. He has no report tonight.

8. ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

None.

9. NEW ORDINANCES

None.

10. RESOLUTIONS

None.

11. NEW BUSINESS

*Second Council Meeting in January*

President Waldron announced the second meeting in January will be held at our regular time on Tuesday, January 18, 2022 at 7:00 pm in Town Hall.

*Strike at Coca-Cola Company-Police Presence*

Ms. Crampsie Smith remarked she did not want to bring this up but she did get several calls of concern last week so she wanted to bring this up briefly tonight. She had several complaints and concerns last week from her constituents regarding police roster duty that is being utilized to provide security at the formerly known Coca-Cola Company during the current labor management conflict that has resulted in a strike. She did speak to Police Chief Michelle Kott and she thanks her for the very detailed and quick response to the matter. It seems like she is certainly getting reports from one side and actually Ms. Crampsie Smith has gotten reports from the other side, her constituents. In the interest of time she wanted to bring up a few concerns just to have them on the record. Her concern with this is that we are already understaffed because we are not at capacity in our police force at this point. She is assuming with COVID that we would have some police effected by COVID so if we are using department staff even on overtime, she is concerned if this is adversely affecting the public safety of the community. She is afraid we are putting a strain on our police force. Again, even if the officers are doing this on their own time and overtime, it is putting a strain on those officers and consequently the community. Her concern also is that she heard there was only one incident and the person that was the culprit in that incident has been removed from the picketing line. Her question is, why cannot the company utilize 911 like every other entity, if there is an emergency, they can call 911 and it can be responded to in a timely manner. That would be rather than having someone providing security at the facility as well as at the sites of stores where deliveries are being made. She is also concerned because it is a slippery slope when we are getting involved in labor management disputes unless it is absolutely necessary. These are very emotionally charged circumstances as we all know and as a city she does not want to be perceived as us aligning with one side or the other. Ms. Crampsie Smith is asking what are the criteria for where and when we engage in roster duty and while the company is reimbursing us for the income of the officers, the other issue is the pension costs. Last year we eliminated 4 firefighter positions from our budget. The one thing she keeps hearing from our finance and budgetary department is that pension costs are a real strain on the city. Although the company is reimbursing us for the income of the officers on roster duty this is increasing the pension and ultimately increasing the pension cost and putting further strain on the city. That is something we have to consider. She does not want to take away from the ceremony and celebratory spirit of the night. She just wanted to put this on record since she has had so many complaints from her constituents. She asks that we continue this dialogue in the future and perhaps we can discuss this at a Public Safety Committee Meeting in the future.

Mayor Reynolds asked Police Chief Kott to explain the particulars of the situation which was laid out in the memo that was sent today.

Chief Kott explained she also shared the concerns of Ms. Crampsie Smith as well. In the perfect scenario everyone involved out at that labor management issue at the Coca-Cola facility would be cooperative and civil as they were when we first learned about the labor management dispute on December 7, 2021. Officers were called out due to word of their being picketers, our patrol officers and supervisors made contact with both sides and explained the picketer's right to be out picketing for their rights. Although we also explained to the picketers about the management rights of where their property was and for all sides to be respectful and that they can engage in picketing, their first amendment rights, however they could not impede traffic on Industrial Drive in going in and out of the Coca-Cola Facility. Also, they could not engage in any type of disorderly criminal behavior. Sadly cooperation and that civil nature broke down and we received a number of reports of disorderly behavior occurring from some individuals impeding traffic, truck traffic on Industrial Drive and going in and out of the Coca-Cola facility. Also, threatening drivers that were going to the Coca-Cola facility to pick up product to take out and deliver. Also, they were utilizing flashlights and red dot lasers to disorient drivers. Chief Kott was so concerned about those allegations that she reached out that next day on December 8, 2022 to Fire Chief Warren Achey so he could share that information with our City Fire and Paramedic personnel, in case they had to respond to the industrial park area, so no one would be hurt or killed if they were out in the roadway or if anyone was trying to disorient any drivers. After that the Coca-Cola management reached out to the City of Bethlehem Police Department and requested a police presence to try to keep the peace. Only after both sides were contacted and explained that officers were not there to take sides, that our sole purpose was to make sure that there was free traffic flow, that individuals constitutional rights were being protected and they were freely able to exercise them. Also, that individuals were not being disorderly and threatening individuals. Chief Kott noted after that was explained to both sides a roster request came before her and again as she stated on December 7, 2021 when the individuals involved were cooperative and civil and there were no reports of any issue, there was no need for a roster assignment. However, after those allegations came before her and not only allegations from individuals involved in the dispute as well as officers that made contact with individuals out at that location, information she received from surrounding jurisdictions, where there were issues at local gas stations where delivery drivers were trying to take their product to drop off and were being harassed by individuals that were following them from the Coca-Cola facility while they were doing their runs. Chief Kott stated she made that decision; she made that decision as well after looking at the calls for service out at the Coca-Cola facility at 2150 Industrial Drive. She pulled up their report management system and saw that since the picketing began our day shift officers, multiple day shift officers and supervisors had to respond and then later that day, middle shift, patrol officers and supervisors had to respond on December 7, and December 8, 2021. She made that decision based upon that disorderly behavior that was being reported, the impeding of traffic flow, and the strain on our patrol personnel. Industrial Drive is at the very end of the City's jurisdiction and taking those patrol officers, as was mentioned, she understands if there is an issue someone can just dial 911 but logistically getting the right amount of personnel out there depending on what is going on especially after knowing there are these issues, in her opinion that would be negligent. Patrol officers were responding out there and it was pulling officers from being able to respond to calls here in the city to the taxpaying residents. That is another reason why with having this roster option available she felt it was inappropriate to assign a permanent patrol officer whose primary responsibility, he or she would be responding to calls for service as they are coming in,

whether it be emergencies on 911 or through the non-emergency line. Our roster assignments are a form of extra duty. She pointed out that extra duty means that the officer's responsibility is not to answer those 911 and non-emergency calls. Our officers are located in either a vehicle and in this case a vehicle out at the Coca-Cola facility, just maintaining an officer presence. A lot of times roster assignments are dictated by either the potential for there to be some type of law enforcement service or there will be the need for some type of law enforcement service. However, in the vast majority of the roster assignments we have had over her 18 year career here, just the presence of an officer alone is enough to have individuals remain civil, have a good time, or exercise their constitutional rights without anyone having to be arrested. In the past we have had a number of organizations and entities that have requested a roster assignment from the Bethlehem Brew Works to McDonald's over at the 5 points, the Walmart distribution center, WLVT, Wind Creek Casino, the USW Union Local 2599, Reeb Millwork, to name a few. So there are a number of organizations that we have dealt with. Chief Kott does not want you to think that any decision was made without being an informed decision. In addition to looking at the calls for service, in addition to looking at what kind of behavior is going on there, before we approve a roster assignment, she and her administration look at any jurisdictional issues. Also, any operational issues, we look at that and is it going to strain personnel. If we do not have a roster assignment, is that going to result in more overtime needed because there are patrol officers being drawn to that location where we know there is a problem. She added, as well as looking at any liability issues. We have stood by and maintained the safety and traffic flow at other labor management issues such as the Peeps 2016 labor management dispute where we were able to just peacefully stand by and make sure that all parties were safe and secure and there were no issues. Chief Kott felt that her memo covered many of her concerns and with the new Administration in place she is not even sure if it has been 8 hours since the inauguration of the Mayor but it is something that we will continue to talk about. Her hope is that both sides can be civil and that there is not a need for a roster officer to be at that location. She does assure that it is a very dynamic situation and something that we are constantly addressing and she is very much aware of personnel issues at this time. Chief Kott mentioned there is another issue she would like to bring up. Since 2012 with the new collective bargaining agreement, there is vastly coming the majority of officers in our department where roster pay does not go into their pension calculations. That was an issue that was identified by the former Administrations and handled through the collective bargaining agreement. So yes, there are some officers under the old contract that are grandfathered in that are receiving some contributions towards it but the vast majority of our officers that were hired after 2012 are no longer getting that calculated into their pension. It would be though, if overtime was incurred due to the continued calls for service out at that location.

Ms. Crampsie Smith thanked Chief Kott for that information. She asked when the last reported incident was.

Chief Kott stated last Thursday, December 30, 2021.

Ms. Crampsie Smith asked if there have been any incidents where there was any kind of physical harm or has it all be verbal.

Chief Kott explained to her knowledge nothing physical other than the trying to disorient drivers and the verbal.



Ms. Crampsie Smith does have the utmost respect for Chief Kott and she values her decisions but she had to speak on behalf of her constituents that contacted her. She comes from a family of many police officers and a family of Union works and Union laborers and a family from CEO's so she can see every aspect of this situation. She just feels that as we talked today, she wishes that it could be mediated quicker and we could get police off the roster duty. She still has several concerns about the roster duty and she hopes we can continue to have that dialogue, perhaps at a Public Safety Committee Meeting. She knows other Council Members in the past have brought the issue up about roster duty.

Mr. Callahan noted he agrees with Chief Kott and hopes that there is not any violence or any physical issues out there. He also agrees that no one should be blocking the smooth flow and exit of trucks from the property. He received a lot of the same phone calls as Councilwoman Crampsie Smith did from a lot of the Union members. He is pro-Union and not hiding that from anybody. The issue that he has a concern about is that the one side of the road, the opposite side of the plant has a sidewalk and the side of the plant does not have a sidewalk but there is a right of way that the city has, and he believes it is 8 to 10 feet off the curb line, he asked if that is correct.

Chief Kott stated she would have to look into that.

Mr. Callahan asked if Chief Kott could look into this and let Councilwoman Crampsie Smith know since this is his last moments on Council. He hopes that the police are allowing the picketers to be on the side of the property of the plant which they are allowed to, it is in their right to be on that side as long as they are staying within the right of way of the property and not getting past that 8 to 10 foot right of way. He has been told that the police officers are asking the picketers not to be on the right of way on the side of the plant and that they have to move across the street which from everybody he had talked to the picketers have the right to be in that right of way area on the side of the plant. Mr. Callahan knows this is a tough situation for everybody but Coca-Cola has to step up and do what is right for the workers of America and resolve this issue. He asked Chief Kott to get back to Councilwoman Crampsie Smith and let her know. If they are allowed to be in that right of way area that the police officers that are on roster duty are notified about it and permit and allow those picketers to be on that side of the plant as long as they are in the right of way.

Mayor Reynolds explained they certainly hope that they come to an agreement as quickly as possible and we hope that the workers receive what they deserve going forward. In his conversations with Chief Kott today and our Legal Department, we do not want a situation where roster duty officers are there permanently because we do not know how long this is going to last. He went into his conversation with Chief Kott in believing one thing and then Chief Kott explained to him and he realized how complicated the situation is and also each decision that Chief Kott made was predicated on something else that happened the week before and the week before that. He did not know that beforehand. Mayor Reynolds noted when he received that information from Chief Kott he started to understand how the situation got to this point and realized it is not something straightforward. As Chief Kott said to him, it is not about taking sides in the labor dispute, it is not about a management labor issue, it is about if we are calling officers that are on regular duty it is taking them away and that is not fair to the taxpayers and those officers. That being said, we do not want permanent roster duty there and we do not know how long this will last. One thing we have done today is talk to our Legal Department and to Chief Kott about some of the options going forward to make sure that we do not have long term roster duty in this type of situation. Nobody

wants that and whether or not it is Coca-Cola hiring whatever private security, on their own end, those are conversations we are having and we are hoping to come up with some recommendations for this situation and other situations in the future.

12. ADJOURNMENT

President Waldron remarked we will conclude this current meeting before we transition to the Oath of Office for the newly elected Council.

The meeting was adjourned sine die at 7:46 p.m.

ATTEST:

Robert G. Vidoni, Esq.  
City Clerk

BETHLEHEM CITY COUNCIL REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING  
NEW COUNCIL

Monday, January 3, 2022 – 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: Michael G. Colón, and Paige Van Wirt, 2.

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*

Nicholas E. Englessen, Magisterial District Judge, Northampton County, administered the Oath of Office to George Yasso duly elected Controller, for the four-year term ending January 2026.

B. *Members of Council – Grace Crampsie Smith, Hillary Kwiatek, Rachel Leon, and Kiera L. Wilhelm*

Nicholas E. Englessen, Magisterial District Judge, Northampton County, administered the individual Oaths of Office to Grace Crampsie Smith, Hillary Kwiatek, Rachel Leon, and Kiera L. Wilhelm, duly elected Members of Council, for their four year terms ending January 2026.

4. ROLL CALL OF NEWLY CONSTITUTED COUNCIL.

The Clerk called the Roll of the Newly Constituted Council. Present were: Michael G. Colón, Grace Crampsie Smith, Hillary Kwiatek, Rachel Leon, Paige Van Wirt and Kiera L. Wilhelm, 6. The seat of J. William Reynolds was vacant as a result of his election as Mayor effective January 3, 2022.

5. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION - PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL.

The Clerk stated the Members of Council shall nominate the President of Council and the Vice President of Council in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. Nominations are from the floor. An election of the President of Council and Vice President of Council are in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order and by roll call.

John J. Spirk Esq., City Council Solicitor, conducted the Nominations and Election for the President of Council, to serve for the years January 2022 – January 2024. Attorney Spirk noted in accordance with the Rules of City Council and Roberts 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 Spirk 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 Spirk 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 Spirk 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 2022 - January 2024

Dr. Van Wirt queried if she could say a sentence or two as she nominates.

Attorney Spirk stated she may.

Dr. Van Wirt remarked she wanted to acknowledge Mr. Antalics kind words. There is an old Buddhist saying, "When the student is ready the Master will appear." Sometimes she feels like Mr. Antalics is the obi-wan Kenobi and as much as she would like to be Luke Skywalker to your Jedi Master she cannot do it. Her day job is much too overwhelming to be President of Council it deserves to be done well.

Dr. Van Wirt nominated Michael G. Colón.

Attorney Spirk asked the Clerk to Call the Roll.

ELECTION - PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL - January 2022 - January 2024

Voting for Mr. Colón: Mr. Colón, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Ms. Wilhelm, 6.

The Election of Mr. Colón as President of Council for the years January 2022 - January 2024 was adopted by a vote of 6 in favor.

6. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION - VICE PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL - January 2022 - January 2024

John J. Spirk, Esq., City Council Solicitor conducted the Nominations and Election for the Vice President of Council, to serve for the term January 2022 - January 2024.

NOMINATIONS - VICE PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL - January 2022 - January 2024.

Dr. Van Wirt nominated Ms. Crampsie Smith.

Attorney Spirk asked the Clerk to Call the Roll.

ELECTION - VICE PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL - January 2022 - January 2024

Voting for Ms. Crampsie Smith: Mr. Colón, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Ms. Wilhelm, 6.

The Election of Ms. Crampsie Smith as Vice President of Council for the term January 2022 - January 2024 was adopted by a vote of 6 in favor.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

*Courtesy to the Floor*

Stephen Antalics, 737 Ridge Street, 1201 Butztown Road, remarked he was quite taken by the comments of the past President of Council and his liberal policy on courtesy of the floor. Prior to that people were cut off right at 5 minutes, not even allowed to finish a statement. That does not send a good message to the public. Consequently, a number of regulars coming to Council Meetings stopped coming. He called them and asked why. They said that Council does not listen to us when we speak. Mr. Antalics thinks that the past President is making amends for that and he hopes that is not violated in a sense that at a Council Meeting recently with then acting President of Council he was gavelled in less than one minute over 5 minutes which shocked him. He hopes that is not a precedent.

*Administrative Orders*

Adam Waldron, 511 Second Avenue, remarked in the past 8 plus years this is only his second time standing up at this podium, it is a very much different feel to this room. There were 3 things he wanted to touch on this evening. First he wanted to say congratulations to Mr. Colón who is now our elder person on Council. It is great to see Mr. Colón fill in here as President of Council. Mr. Waldron added he took his job very seriously on Council in the Presidents role and he is sure that Mr. Colón will continue that as well as the folks who came before us. Secondly, he wanted to put his full support behind the two nominees from the new Administration this evening, Ms. Collins and Mr. Spirk in their roles. They will be tremendous assets to the City Administration and he encourages all to support them this evening. Lastly, he could not help but notice the large gender gap that we have up on Council, it is wonderful and heartwarming and he is excited for the new Council, congratulations to you all.

8. REPORTS

A. *President of Council*

B. *Mayor*

*Congratulations/New Members of Council*

Mayor Reynolds congratulated Mr. Colón and Ms. Crampsie Smith on being elected President and Vice President. He also wanted to congratulate the new Members of City Council. One thing we have in common is that he is sure you all were nervous about forgetting some of those words as they were being told to you to say. This morning he was almost forgetting those words. He wanted to welcome you to City Council as well. He congratulated Ms. Negrón and Mr.

Waldron who he had the pleasure of serving with for years. There are several people in our Administration and he includes himself, who consider ourselves fortunate to call Ms. Negrón a friend. When you look at where the city is now compared to where it was 6 or 7 years ago there are a lot of conversations we have now where Ms. Negrón was the first person to advocate for. Anywhere you go in the city you will find somebody when you mention the name Olga Negrón they get a smile on their face and there is an energy that was reflective in her support during her time on City Council and we wish you well as you are leaving, which is bitter sweet. Mayor Reynolds remarked he has gotten to know Mr. Waldron over the 8 years, he had not known him beforehand. He thinks it is difficult for anybody to be on City Council after going to a regular day job, everyone in this room has probably seen Mr. Waldron on a ladder and him working and coming here with paint on him. He has been able to run a first rate small business and also do the one thing, stay standing after having 4 children under the age of 5. That is a testament to your service to the city and we are sad to be losing you but you did not run for City Council because of those commitments you made to your family. We wish you well, congratulations on a great 8 years. Mayor Reynolds wanted to thank everyone here; he knows that a lot of people on City Council had attended his swearing in this morning as well as a lot of their family members and others, thank you for that support. One thing that we all can agree on is that it is an historic day in City Council history as we have a majority female City Council for the first time ever. If everyone took their masks off we would see a lot of people smiling. He has two Administrative Orders here but he wanted to say that he does have his team here. We did not have to reappoint people who are staying in their current jobs so that is why there are not too many names to be appointed. Our doors are open with the Department Heads and the Mayor's Office, Janine, Angie, and Steph are always available as well to meet and to help move the city forward. We have here in attendance, Eric Evans, Business Administrator, Warren Achey, Fire Chief, Dr. Michelle Kott, Police Chief, Michael Alkhal, our long time Public Works Director, Edward Boscola, Director of Water and Sewer. He wanted to give a special thanks to Ms. Augello, Mrs. Santoro, and Ms. DelGrosso who he believes are working on hour 14 of being here. When he asked them if they planned to attend the Council Meeting tonight there was not a hesitation, he did not even have to ask them, partly because they wanted to be a part of the experience of the swearing in of City Council but also because they are excited and energetic as to what is in front of us as a city. He wanted to thank them. The first Administrative Order we have is John F. Spirk, to be the City Solicitor. He has had a long career as both Council Solicitor and before that he was the City Solicitor for Mayor John Callahan and before that he worked down at Northampton County. One thing he can say about Mr. Spirk, the biggest compliment he could give to anybody is that Mr. Spirk is always confident in his ability to find an answer. He will never say I know this for certain until I look it up. That is one thing we have appreciated certainly during his time on City Council as he has helped us through a lot of big questions. We are nominating him to be the City Solicitor. He added that Laura Collins is a Bethlehem resident and that he got to know her back in the days of Obama campaigning who has been an attorney in Washington, D. C. and she is coming to lead our Community and Economic Development Department. She has reached out to everybody on City Council to sit down and start those relationships. She is excited to be joining us as well. We as a team are excited about where we are going as a city and we could not be more enthusiastic. We will switch it up as to who is sitting at this table. One thing going forward is that you will see different members of the team sitting at this table including days when he is not sitting at this table. We are a team that makes decisions in conjunction with City Council and with our

community. That is the spirit we talked about this morning when Ms. Santoro and I gave some remarks and the spirit we will take forward as well.

1. *Administrative Order – John F. Spirk, Jr., Esq. – City Solicitor*

Mayor Reynolds appointed John F. Spirk, Jr., Esq., as City Solicitor, effective as of January 3, 2022. Dr. Van Wirt and Mr. Colón sponsored Resolution No. 2022-001 to confirm the appointment.

Ms. Crampsie Smith stated she will miss Mr. Spirk as our City Council Solicitor. He has been so valuable to her and helpful in her first two and a half years on Council. Our loss is the city's gain so best of luck as the City Solicitor.

Dr. Van Wirt echoes what Ms. Crampsie Smith has said. It has been a pleasure working with Mr. Spirk, thank you for your time on Council.

President Colón echoes the comments from his colleagues. He has sat in the President's Chair a few times as Vice President over the years and he probably called Mr. Spirk more in those couple of times in his previous 6 years just making sure he was doing things by the book. He always appreciated his responsiveness and quick communication getting back to us. While he will be a loss to Council, he definitely will be an asset to the City.

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

2. *Administrative Order – Laura Collins – Director of Community and Economic Development*

Mayor Reynolds appointed Laura Collins as Director of Community and Economic Development, effective as of January 31, 2022. Dr. Van Wirt and Mr. Colón sponsored Resolution No. 2022-002 to confirm the appointment.

President Colón welcomed Ms. Collins and wished her the best in her new role.

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

9. NEW BUSINESS

*Public Comment Calling In*

Ms. Crampsie Smith wondered if we could revisit the opportunity for community members to call in for public comment. Given the COVID numbers she thinks that some people may not want to and should not attend these meetings. She is asking that we reconsider that.

Dr. Van Wirt echoes again Ms. Crampsie Smith. It is important to have the community call in and it is important for Council Members to retain the option of participating remotely. Both

those things work in synergy with each other to help provide the greatest amount of input and presence during these important meetings.

*Thank you*

Ms. Kwiatek thanked everyone who came to the meeting tonight to witness our swearing in. It is a big day for our city; she has been excited all day. She was happy to be here for our Mayor's swearing in as well. She appreciates you all having your hand on our backs as we take on this weighty responsibility.

*Calling in for Public Comment/Appointing New Council Member and Council Solicitor*

President Colón explained we have already had internal discussions about opening up the lines to those watching at home on YouTube to be able to comment remotely for those who are not comfortable or are not able to make it out to Town Hall. So we can look at incorporating that as we continue to the GoToMeetings as we witnessed with Mr. Callahan tonight earlier. Allowing that opportunity for Members of Council to participate remotely and members of the public also to those in attendance tonight as you witnessed Mr. Reynolds step down from Council, City Council will be in the next 30 days appointing a 7<sup>th</sup> member of Council to fill that role. We will use the Clerk's Office and the City's website and the future City Council Meeting to give instruction on how any of those interested parties can reach out, who are interested in being appointed, to fill the City Council seat vacated by Mayor Reynolds. We will have more information on that process to come along with the fact that City Council will be in the position to appoint a new City Council Solicitor because this will be Mr. Spirk's last meeting up here at the dais. Briefly he wanted to thank his colleagues present and new for appointing him as President of Council. This is the beginning of his 7<sup>th</sup> year on Council. He served as Vice President of Council and sat in this chair for a few meetings. He appreciates the vote of confidence by his colleagues and looks to serve with competency and integrity in this role. Even though he may sit here and it says President on his nameplate he reminds everyone that we all are equal when the Clerk calls our names to vote. Every member of Council, whether it is a senior member or someone appointed tonight, we all get our names called and we all cast our vote equally. More importantly as Mr. Waldron said, this is an historic night as we now have 5 female members of City Council for the first time in the city's history with a 7<sup>th</sup> person to be appointed in the next few weeks. That is something that should be celebrated and nothing should take away from that this evening.

10. BENEDICTION

Father Alexandros Petrides, St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, offered the Benediction.

11. ADJOURNMENT

President Colón thanked everyone for coming out this evening and he congratulated the new Members of Council.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.



Bethlehem City Council Reorganizational Meeting  
New Council  
January 3, 2022

7

ATTEST:

Robert G. Vidoni, Esq.  
City Clerk