

BETHLEHEM CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
10 East Church Street - Town Hall  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania  
Tuesday, May 6, 2025 - 7:00 PM

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

1. ROLL CALL

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

President Colón announced that Council Solicitor Stephanie Steward is participating via GoTo Meeting.

Ms. Leon made a motion, seconded by Ms. Wilhelm, to move New Business to the end of the agenda.

Ms. Crampsie Smith asked the reasoning.

Ms. Leon was aware of a robust discussion during last week's Finance Committee meeting. She wanted to be sure that Council could get through items on tonight's agenda before addressing items that may come up under New Business.

Ms. Crampsie Smith said her concern was that issues brought up by the public tend to be responded to under New Business. She was concerned about the inconvenience a reordered agenda would cause.

Mr. Callahan said it is apparent that New Business will include an important topic. He asked why this should be dealt with near the end of the meeting when many from the public will have gone home.

Ms. Leon said the matter of controversy during the Finance Committee meeting would not be a part of New Business because Item 7 C1 on tonight's agenda deals with a report on that meeting by the committee chair.

Mr. Callahan said he would prefer to keep New Business in its regular place on the agenda but that is just his opinion. It was clarified that matters related to the Finance Committee could be discussed under Item 7 C1.

Ms. Crampsie Smith believed there are some items that will come up under New Business, and it is clear now that those will not involve the Finance Committee. She believed these will be pertinent matters that some in the audience were present to hear. She did not believe it was fair to have them wait until the end of the meeting.

Ms. Wilhelm said, conversely, there are others in attendance who are interested in other matters on the agenda. The same argument can be made on their behalf.

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Mr. Colón, 5; NAY: Mr. Callahan and Ms. Crampsie Smith, 2. The Motion passed.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 15, 2025

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

*Concerns Regarding Homeless*

Elizabeth Krail-Pizarro, President of the Monocacy Homeowners Association, spoke on behalf of 52 homeowners. They are concerned about the homeless living in the encampment under the New Street Bridge. The trash bin provided by the City is helpful but fills up within a few days. Trash then piles up under Route 378 and onto Lehigh Street. This includes mattresses, shopping carts, and more. This is near the Monocacy neighborhood. Neighbors also have safety concerns. A homeless man entered her home. Campfires also could start wildfires. It also is not safe to use the towpath. Some of the homeless harass those walking or attempt to steal their bicycles. The HOA is additionally concerned about resulting decreasing property values. She asked whether the City or the railroad can do something about this growing problem.

*Sidewalks and Trees*

Business owner Anthony Spagnola spoke about the Business Privilege Tax that he and other owners pay. In round numbers, he said the 5,000 businesses pay a total of \$5 million annually. He is aware of intentions to replace sidewalks from New Street to Brodhead Avenue for \$300,000. He asked why this job would be bid out rather than being done inhouse. Mr. Spagnola also noted several dead trees and said the City should be more proactive in replacement.

*Improve South Side Parks*

Resident Charlene Jenkins said parks are being renovated but not on the South Side. Allowing these parks to deteriorate pushes youths away and increases the likelihood that they will turn to crime.

*Police Issues*

Resident Joseph Lee said his complaints against others have been dismissed by City police. He said he will continue to bring these matters to Council at its meetings.

*Firefighter Staffing*

Lou Jimenez, President of Firefighters Local 735, referred to a recent statement he issued on social media. He urged that the City increase its firefighter staffing especially with the increase in multi-occupancy apartments and general City growth. There is a particular need to increase staffing at the northwest fire station.

*Reject Heavy-Handed Policing*

Resident Harry Faber said the genocide in Gaza has now reached 577 days. Meanwhile, Fascism has escalated in the United States under President Trump especially in the area of policing. He asked whether Bethlehem and its police will stand with the people or collaborate with the federal government. He urged Council to divest from militarized policing and reject federal grants aimed at weaponizing police officers against our communities. He also urged protection of dissent. He added that Council should support Palestine against genocide and take a stance.

*Political Beliefs*

Resident Arthur Curatola repeated the belief that elected officials are paid too much and added that the Mayor's position would be best filled by a female because women leaders negotiate. Men tend to want to fight.

*Upcoming Election*

Resident Stephen Antalics offered his thoughts on the upcoming election for City offices. He began by saying that a single-party government is not the best government. Six Democrats and one Republican will be running for four Council seats on May 20. A bicameral Council would provide checks and balances. Mr. Antalics also referred to the results of a survey he previously conducted to gauge the satisfaction of audience members concerning Council members' performances. Normally, incumbents are re-elected but he pointed out that one member received an "F" rating. Mr. Antalics also repeated his belief that length of residency is a critical factor to make a good elected official.

As the meeting was about to move to Public Comment matters involving agenda items, President Colón noted that all have the right to free speech but, historically, City Council has tried to leave the politics of City business outside of Town Hall and limit reserve the inside of for City government issues.

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

*Opposes Zoning Map Amendment*

Resident Harry Faber urged Council to oppose Item 9 A involving a proposed zoning map amendment for 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Martin Court. The hypothetical businesses that would be added would be in opposition to the walkable concept of the neighborhood.

Mr. Lee interrupted the speaker and an argument broke out.

President Colón asked that Mr. Faber be allowed to continue without interruption.

Mr. Faber continued but Mr. Lee again made derogatory comments including using profanity.

President Colón forcefully asked Mr. Lee to "remove himself from this meeting."

Two police officers flanked Mr. Lee to encourage him to leave. He walked into the hallway and left Town Hall.

President Colón continued on with the meeting.

4. OLD BUSINESS

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

5. NEW BUSINESS (Moved to the end of the agenda by prior vote)

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. *City Solicitor – Amendments to Civil Service Board Rules – Fire Department Regulations*

The Clerk read an April 17, 2025 memorandum and attached Resolution and exhibits from Assistant Solicitor Matthew Deschler to amend the Civil Service Rules relating to the Fire Department. Attorney Deschler explains that Pennsylvania certification requirements for fire inspectors have changed. The City's Civil Service Commission voted 3-0 on April 15 to recommend amending the Civil Service Rules.

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

B. *Director of Water and Sewer Resources – 2025 12 Eighth Avenue Valve Replacement – Joao & Bradley Construction*

The Clerk read an April 15, 2025 memorandum and proposed Resolution from Director of Water and Sewer Resources Edward Boscola. The memorandum seeks authorization to execute an agreement with Joao & Bradley Construction Co. of Bethlehem to provide materials and labor to install a total of four valves for two projects. The cost is \$337,491, and the work is to be completed within 180 days of the Notice to Proceed. There are no renewals. Three bids were received, and the selected contractor was found to be the lowest responsible bidder.

President Colón stated Resolution 10 B is on the agenda.

C. *City Solicitor – ArtsQuest – 2025 Tacofest*

The Clerk read an April 30, 2025 memorandum from Solicitor John F. Spirk, Jr. with an attached Use Permit Agreement and a Resolution. The Permittee is ArtsQuest and the event is the 2025 Tacofest. The event will take place from noon until 6 PM on June 1. The permit duration will be from 9 AM until 9 PM on the same date. The premises will include 1<sup>st</sup> Street from Polk Street to the eastern terminus and Founder's Way between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets.

President Colón stated Resolution 10 C is on the agenda.

D. *City Solicitor – MANA (Mount Airy Neighborhood Association) – 2025 Rose Garden Farmers Market & RoseFest*

The Clerk read an April 30, 2025 memorandum from Solicitor John F. Spirk, Jr. with an attached Use Permit Agreement and a Resolution. The Permittee is the Mount Airy Neighborhood Association. The sub-Permittee is HBC, LLC d/b/a Hijinx Brewing Company. The events are the 2025 Bethlehem Rose Garden Farmers Market and the RoseFest Pop Up Event. The Farmers Market will be held each Saturday between June 7 and October 11 from 9 AM until 1 PM. The RoseFest Pop Up Event will be June 21 only from 11 AM until 1 PM. The duration will be the same dates from 8 AM until 2:30 PM for the Farmers Market and 10 AM until 2 PM for RoseFest. The premises will include the Bethlehem Rose Garden Park.

President Colón stated Resolution 10 D is on the agenda.

E. *City Solicitor – Greenlight Networks PA – Ground Lease at 247 E. North Street aka 248 E. Garrison Street*

The Clerk read an April 30, 2025 memorandum from City Solicitor John F. Spirk, Jr. with an attached Resolution and Communications Ground Lease Agreement. Greenlight Networks PA, LLC wishes to use 220 square feet at 247 East North Street, also known as 248 E. Garrison Street, for the installation and operation of communication equipment for internet service and other computing, communications, information, or data transmission services.

President Colón stated Resolution 10 E is on the agenda.

F. *Director of Public Works – Bethlehem Aquatic Club – Resolution with attached Donation Agreement*

The Clerk read an April 30, 2025 memorandum and proposed Resolution with exhibits from Public Works Director Michael Alkhal. The memorandum seeks approval to accept from the Bethlehem Aquatic Club the donation of a pavilion to be erected at the Memorial Pool facility at 259 Illick's Mill Road.

President Colón stated Resolution 10 F is on the agenda.

G. *Director of Water and Sewer Resources – 20245 26 Sludge Return Piping – Verdantas, LLC*

The Clerk read an April 30, 2025 memorandum and proposed Resolution from Edward Boscola, Director of Water and Sewer Resources. The memorandum seeks authorization to execute an agreement with Verdantas, LLC of Bethlehem to advance plans for modifications to the Wastewater Treatment Plant's Final Clarifier Recirculation System to final design, including specifications suitable for bidding and construction services. The cost is \$82,920, and the work is to be completed by January 31, 2026. Four proposals were received to the City's RFP, and Verdantas, LLC's proposal was deemed to be the best fit.

President Colón stated Resolution 10 G is on the agenda.

H. *Assistant Director of Planning and Zoning – Memo – SALDO*

The Clerk read an April 11, 2025 memorandum from Assistant Director of Planning and Zoning Craig Peiffer advising that the City's Planning Commission at its April 10 meeting voted 4-0 to recommend favorable adoption by City Council of an updated Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. Mr. Peiffer requests that consideration of adoption be placed on a future City Council agenda.

President Colón said he would accept a motion and a second to schedule a Public Hearing on July 15 to consider amendments to the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

Ms. Kwiatek made a motion, seconded by Ms. Leon, to schedule a Public Hearing for July 15 at 7:00 PM in Town Hall to discuss proposed amendments to the City's SALDO.

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

President Colón said a Public Hearing will be scheduled for July 15 at 7 PM in Town Hall to discuss proposed SALDO amendments. He also said that First Reading is anticipated on August 5.

7. REPORTS

A. *President of Council*

President Colón expressed thanks to police present who assisted in restoring order at tonight's meeting. In his 10<sup>th</sup> year on Council, this was the first time that he experienced behavior to that degree.

B. *Mayor*

*7B1. Administrative Order – Lucas Wolk – Bethlehem Zoning Hearing Board*

Mayor Reynolds appointed Lucas Wolk to the Bethlehem Zoning Hearing Board. The appointment is effective through May of 2030. Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón sponsored Resolution 2025-072 to confirm the appointment.

Ms. Crampsie Smith noted that this is a very important board. She did not see anything on Mr. Wolk's resume related to zoning experience. What kind of training do new members receive?

Laura Collins, Director of Community and Economic Development, said Zoning Board members and those on similar boards begin with guidance from inhouse staff. All also are encouraged to receive training through the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission. Mr. Wolk expressed interest after attending some zoning meetings. City staff determined he was intellectually capable, had sufficient interest, and is professional to make him a suitable candidate.

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

The Mayor asked Fire Chief Michael Reich for an update on Friday's four-alarm fire at Five 10 Flats. Despite extensive damage, the Chief praised the efforts of City first responders, mutual aid agencies as well as the assistance of the Health Bureau, the Department of Community and Economic Development, Northampton Community College's Fowler Center, and others. Firefighting efforts were successful and no injuries were reported. (Chief Reich's memo is attached.) Mayor Reynolds praised the professionalism and readiness of coordination of the first responders and other City departments.

All Council members expressed gratitude toward the efforts.

Ms. Crampsie Smith additionally asked Chief Reich's assessment, given this large fire, of the adequacy of the number of City firefighters.

The Chief said there were a lot of grievances and other issues when he took the helm a year ago. A relationship has been since been built with the union. Monthly meetings have improved relations. Many issues have been resolved. One issue has been staffing. This resulted in arranging a second academy each year for the past two years to qualify new firefighters to fill openings. A second academy had not been done in 30 years. Thirty personnel will have been sent to academies within the past two years. The cost is \$525,000, not including their salaries. There also have been many retirements in recent years, so participation in a second academy in a given year has made a tremendous difference in terms of replacement. Chief Reich also is recommending studies of the City's firefighting needs to project meeting needs from City growth and resources. A staffing level evaluation would be included.

Mayor Reynolds added that there have been about 30 retirements within the last two years. The roster is down 14 firefighters from its full complement of about 90. The plan is to fill open positions, and he believes retirements will slow down. Then the staffing level will be studied to determine today's needs.

C. Council – Chairpersons Reports

7C1. Ms. Crampsie Smith – Finance Committee

Ms. Crampsie Smith announced that the Finance Committee met on April 29. The Committee voted to advance all seven proposed budget adjustments to Council tonight for First Reading. Procedural review of accounts payable and electronic bill payment occurred. Some new policies are in place and electronic bill payment is being pursued. A continuous review of best practices and policies will continue.

8. ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

8A. Bill No. 22-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Bethlehem Health Bureau – General Fund

The Clerk read Bill No. 22-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Bethlehem Health Bureau – General Fund, sponsored by Ms. Wilhelm and Ms. Laird and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,  
AMENDING THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR 2025.

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Mr. Callahan, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 22-2025, now known as Ordinance No. 2025-19, passed on Final Reading.

8B. Bill No. 23-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Bethlehem Choice Neighborhoods – General Fund

The Clerk read Bill No. 23-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Bethlehem Choice Neighborhoods – General Fund, sponsored by Ms. Wilhelm and Ms. Laird and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,  
AMENDING THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR 2025.

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Mr. Callahan, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 23-2025, now known as Ordinance No. 2025-20, passed on Final Reading.

9. NEW ORDINANCES

9A. Bill No. 21-2025 – Zoning Map Amendment – 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Martin Court

The Clerk read Bill No. 21-2025 – Zoning Map Amendment – 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Martin Court, sponsored by Mr. Colón and Ms. Kwiatek, and titled:



AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,  
AS AMENDED, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE  
OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA, BY  
AMENDING THE CITY ZONING MAP.

Ms. Laird will not support this amendment. She believes the purpose of the existing zoning designation was to provide a walkable area to serve the adjacent neighborhood. This would not be accomplished by providing one or two businesses in which one of the primary goals would be to get cars in and out as quickly as possible. The location is a space next to a grocery store in a city that struggles to keep walkable grocery stores. She is additionally concerned about pedestrian safety.

Ms. Kwiatek had similar concerns and believes that rezoning requests should have a "pretty high bar." There was a reason that this land had its existing zoning designation, so there should be a good reason to change it other than the simple desire of a particular developer. She cited 119 Technology Drive and the developer's assurance that there was no interest in developing the property as designated. Patience to maintain the existing zoning paid off for a project yielding jobs, she said.

Ms. Crampsie Smith said she often is a stickler about rezoning, but she believes this is appropriate because this would simply expand the adjacent shopping district. She added that a car wash is needed.

Ms. Leon believed this is an appropriate change because of the proximity to Route 378. She believes that concerns to maintain the walkability can be worked out by the applicant and the City working together in the planning stage.

Ms. Wilhelm felt similarly. She asked Ms. Collins to explain how these conversations with the developer would take place to ensure a satisfactory and safe result.

Ms. Collins said potential other design elements would be discussed during the planning process along with existing signalized intersections. She does not believe that this alternate plan would drastically alter the vehicular traffic patterns in the area. This is a matter of coordinating design elements.

President Colón said he is comfortable supporting this amendment. The land is adjacent to the zoning district to which this change would be made. He is also sympathetic to the shifting market the developer spoke of two meetings ago when he said that restaurant operators today want drive-thru capabilities. He believes this plan would help boost the 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor.

Mr. Callahan announced that he will recuse himself. He cited Council's Conflict of Interest Ordinance, which has a \$500 threshold on campaign contributions. Mr. Callahan said he received that amount from the developer. (Editor's Note: Mr. Callahan's Disclosure of Conflict of Interest Form is maintained with the original set of minutes.)

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, and Mr. Colón, 4; NAY: Ms. Kwiatek and Ms. Laird, 2; ABSTENTION: Mr. Callahan, 1. Bill No. 21-2025 passed on First Reading.

9B. *Bill No. 24-2025 – Budget Adjustment – PennDOT Allocation Check – Liquid Fuels Fund Budget*

The Clerk read Bill No. 24-2025 – Budget Adjustment – PennDOT Allocation Check – Liquid Fuels Fund Budget, sponsored by Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón, and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,  
AMENDING THE LIQUID FUELS FUND BUDGET FOR 2025

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Mr. Callahan, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 24-2025 passed on First Reading.

9C. *Bill No. 25-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Police Vehicle Insurance Reimbursement – Non-Utility Capital Fund*

The Clerk read Bill No. 25-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Police Vehicle Insurance Reimbursement – Non-Utility Capital Fund, sponsored by Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón, and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,  
AMENDING THE 2025 CAPITAL BUDGET FOR NON-UTILITIES

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Mr. Callahan, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 25-2025 passed on First Reading.

9D. *Bill No. 26-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Reconciled HUD System – Community Development Block Grant Fund*

The Clerk read Bill No. 26-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Reconciled HUD System – Community Development Block Grant Fund, sponsored by Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón, and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,  
AMENDING THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
BLOCK GRANT FUND FOR 2025

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Mr. Callahan, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 26-2025 passed on First Reading.

9E. *Bill No. 27-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Full-Time Paralegal Position – General Fund*

The Clerk read Bill No. 27-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Full-Time Paralegal Position -- General Fund, sponsored by Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón, and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,  
AMENDING THE GENERAL FUND FOR 2025

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Mr. Callahan, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 27-2025 passed on First Reading.

9F. *Bill No. 28-2025 – Budget Adjustment – LVHN Portable Cribs – General Fund*

The Clerk read Bill No. 28-2025 – Budget Adjustment – LVHN Portable Cribs -- General Fund, sponsored by Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón, and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,  
AMENDING THE GENERAL FUND FOR 2025

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Mr. Callahan, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 28-2025 passed on First Reading.

9G. *Bill No. 29-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce Foundation Northside 2027 Planter Project– General Fund*

The Clerk read Bill No. 29-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce Foundation Northside 2027 Planter Project – General Fund, sponsored by Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón, and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,  
AMENDING THE GENERAL FUND FOR 2025

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Mr. Callahan, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 29-2025 passed on First Reading.

9H. *Bill No. 30-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Recycling-PA DEP 902 Grant – General Fund*

The Clerk read Bill No. 30-2025 – Budget Adjustment – Recycling-PA DEP 902 Grant – General Fund, sponsored by Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón, and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,  
AMENDING THE GENERAL FUND FOR 2025

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Mr. Colón, 6; ABSENT: Mr. Callahan, 1. Bill No. 30-2025 passed on First Reading.

Mr. Callahan left the meeting for a period and was not present to vote on agenda Items 9 H. and 10 A-10 C.

10. RESOLUTIONS

A. *Approve Resolution – Amendments to Civil Service Board Rules – Fire Department Regulations*

Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón sponsored Resolution No. 2025-073 that hereby approved the amendments to the rules and regulations recommended by the Civil Service Board of the City of Bethlehem on April 15, 2025, which are attached to this Resolution as Exhibit "A" and which shall take immediate effect.

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Mr. Colón, 6; ABSENT: Mr. Callahan, 1. The Resolution passed.

B. *Approve Resolution – 2025 12 Eighth Avenue Valve Replacement – Joao & Bradley Construction*

Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón sponsored Resolution No. 2025-074 that authorized to execute an Agreement with Joao & Bradley Construction Co. to install a total of four valves for two projects.

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Mr. Colón, 6; ABSENT: Mr. Callahan, 1. The Resolution passed.

C. *Approve Use Permit Agreement – ArtsQuest – 2025 Tacofest*

Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón sponsored Resolution No. 2025-075 that authorized to execute a Use Permit Agreement with ArtsQuest for the 2025 Tacofest.

Voting AYE: Ms. Leon, Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Laird, and Mr. Colón, 6; ABSENT: Mr. Callahn, 1. The Resolution passed.

D. *Approve Use Permit Agreement – MANA (Mount Airy Neighborhood Association) – 2025 Rose Garden Farmers Market & RoseFest*

Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón sponsored Resolution No. 2025-076 that authorized to execute a Use Permit Agreement with the Mount Airy Neighborhood Association for the 2025 Bethlehem Rose Garden Farmers Market and the RoseFest Pop Up Event.

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

- E. *Approve Resolution – Greenlight Networks PA – Communications Ground Lease at 247 E. North Street a.k.a. 248 E. Garrison Street*

Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón sponsored Resolution No. 2025-077 that authorized to execute a Communications Ground Lease Agreement with Greenlight Networks PA, LLC for use of property at 247 East North Street, also known as 248 East Garrison Street.

Ms. Kwiatek asked the purpose of this agreement.

Mr. Alkhal said that Greenlight Networks is an Internet service. They want to lease ground space for relays on poles that provide service. He believes they intend to offer Internet service within the City.

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

- F. *Approve Resolution – Bethlehem Aquatic Club – Resolution and attached Donation Agreement*

Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón sponsored Resolution No. 2025-078 that authorized to execute a Donation Agreement by and between the City of Bethlehem and Bethlehem Aquatic Club, Inc. and such other agreements and documents as are deemed by the Solicitor to be necessary for the purpose of accepting a donation of a permanent pool pavilion structure at Memorial Pool to be acquired and installed at the expense of Bethlehem Aquatic Club, Inc.

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

- G. *Approve Resolution – 2025 26 Sludge Return Piping – Verdantas, LLC*

Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón sponsored Resolution No. 2025-079 that authorized to execute an Agreement with Verdantas, LLC. to advance plans for modifications to the City's Waste Water Treatment Plant's Final Clarifier Recirculation System to final design, including specifications suitable for bidding and construction services.

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

- H. *Certificate of Appropriateness – HCC – 905 West Market Street*

Ms. Crampsie Smith and Mr. Colón sponsored Resolution No. 2025-080 that authorized to construct a new concrete patio enclosed by a stone veneer wall.

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

5. NEW BUSINESS (Moved to the end of the agenda by prior vote)

- A. Rescheduling May 20 Council meeting to May 21 due to Election Day

President Colón noted that the next Council meeting night would coincide with Election Day, a day in which City Hall is closed. He said he would be willing to accept a motion and a second to move the meeting to the next evening, Wednesday, May 21 at 7 PM.

Ms. Leon made a motion, seconded by Ms. Wilhelm, to move the next meeting to Wednesday, May 21 at 7:00 PM in Town Hall.

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

*Ms. Leon*

Ms. Leon referred to the question during Public Comment as to whether there is the ability for Public Works staff to assist in upgrading sidewalks.

Mr. Alkhal said the South Side sidewalks that were mentioned are being funded by a secured grant. Some sidewalks in the past were funded by CDBG funds. Otherwise, sidewalks must be replaced by abutting property owners. As for doing inhouse work rather than paying contractors, Mr. Alkhal said Public Works staffing is not sufficient to take on such projects in addition to the 20 properties it already maintains. Work like sidewalks gets bid out to contractors.

Ms. Leon also asked how often trees within the Central Business District are inspected.

Mr. Alkhal said that trees are much like sidewalks in terms of reporting. The City does not routinely inspect the health of trees. It relies on abutting property owners to maintain them. However, if a dead or damaged tree is reported or is spotted by a City employee, the City follows up with a homeowner.

Ms. Leon also asked how new business owners become aware of their responsibilities regarding trees and sidewalks.

Mr. Alkhal said the responsibilities are spelled out in City Ordinances. He added that all municipalities have similar requirements, so business owners should know that they have certain responsibilities.

Mr. Callahan again offered that the appearance of the Main Street area is even more important now that Bethlehem recently received the No. 1 Main Street designation by USA Today and last year became a World Heritage Site. The appearance should make visitors want to return rather than never come again. He has been talking with affected business owners. Sidewalks will be an area of interest, and the expense will have to be worked out. He has been told that revenue for many of these businesses is down 20 to 30 percent and they are struggling. Many do not have the money to put into sidewalk repair. Anything the City can do to help this would be of benefit to everyone. These business owners will be sending the Mayor a list of their priority projects.

Mayor Reynolds responded that DCED has been discussing these issues with the Downtown Business Association for several months. One of the items discussed is what projects are one-time costs versus ongoing expenses. Grant funding is being sought for the light poles, for example. The City also would like to hear chosen priorities presented by the group. Often a consensus cannot be reached, so the City does not know how to respond.

Mr. Callahan noted that these businesses pay a business tax. He believes that some of this tax money should be used to boost certain business areas, such as 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets and Main Street.

Ms. Crampsie Smith said it was noted at the April 29 Finance Committee meeting that the Business Privilege Tax fund is overperforming. Money was taken from the surplus to pay for a paralegal position. She wanted to see some of this money going to pay for expenses that would directly benefit the business community. She agreed with Mr. Callahan that the anticipated boost in tourism necessitates the best possible appearance of the City.

Mayor Reynolds said this concept is one of the reasons that he has encouraged the Bethlehem Parking Area to reinvest some of its revenue into downtown projects. He added a reluctance to transfer money in the middle of a year from an overperforming fund to an area of need in order to be certain that the higher level will hold up for the entire year. Budget time is a better time to consider such a move. Still, he was not fully opposed to the idea.

Ms. Crampsie Smith said she also has heard that a Public Works employee is assigned to do certain tasks in the Business District. She asked how this works.

Mayor Reynolds said there is a worker who handles Main Street. The problem has been that instead of him doing fill-in tasks, some business owners assume that he is to do all of the tasks, which over-taxes his time.

*Ms. Laird*

Ms. Laird asked whether sidewalk or tree replacement can be considered part of façade upgrade programs.

Ms. Collins believed not.

Ms. Laird asked whether a brochure or similar product could be created to advise property owners of their responsibilities as they relate to elements such as sidewalks and trees.

Mayor Reynolds said this could be done and it would be good but this is a matter of priorities. There are only so many people to do the work. He hopes this can be done someday.

Ms. Collins added that much of this information exists. The challenge has been getting people to go to the website to see it.

Mayor Reynolds said these worthy projects and limited resources to get them done are why the City sometimes hires consultants to do the worthwhile work that otherwise would not get done.

Ms. Laird noted a Presidential Executive Order on policing and asked Chief Kott whether she is seeing any impacts relating to the City.

The Chief said nothing at this time, although there have been many changes coming from Washington, so that could change.

Ms. Laird also noted the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) accreditation that the City has achieved and wondered whether this can help insulate the Department from any drastic changes coming from the federal government.

Chief Kott said it could.

Mayor Reynolds added that CALEA is mostly about the people who are hired for the police force, not just the policies. Following CALEA and its training regimen tend to produce good people and a good force.

*Ms. Kwiatek*

Ms. Kwiatek thanked Mr. Alkhal for meeting with west side residents about some damage to cars in recent years.

*Mr. Callahan*

Mr. Callahan wanted to clarify his motivations for comments made during the April 29 Finance Committee meeting. He pointed to Controller George Yasso's finding a few years ago of irregular financial practices by the former Budget and Finance Director that led to prosecution. Mr. Yasso raised some concerns about a year ago about other financial practices that needed to change. Nothing changed for most of that time. This situation was discussed at the recent Finance Committee meeting. Although these more recent practices are not criminal, Mr. Callahan believed the Administration should have been more "hyper-sensitive" to Mr. Yasso's concerns in light of the prior issues. Mr. Callahan said he was only asking Business Administrator Eric Evans whether he notified the Mayor of Mr. Yasso's most recent concerns. He believed that Mr. Evans did not want to answer this question. Mr. Callahan heard at the Finance Committee meeting that these procedures to avoid paying late fees for bills and gain other financial efficiencies are being fixed but he asked why these process improvements took one year. He asked again whether Mr. Evans notified the Mayor of Mr. Yasso's concerns.

President Colón noted that this was a long topic of debate at the Finance Committee meeting. He did not want to hear a long repeat of the same matters discussed.

Mayor Reynolds said that Mr. Evans works closely with the Controller's Office. There are constant discussions. The Mayor believed the gist of the answer during the committee meeting was that Mr. Evans notifies the Mayor of "systemic" problems. For example, the Mayor was aware of illegal matters involving the former Budget and Finance Director dating back to February of 2022. These more recent matters do not involve fraud. They are more about efficiencies such as whether minimal late fees are incurred and eventually waived or electronic payments are made rather than the use of checks. These day-to-day process decisions are not of



the importance to discuss with the Mayor. Instead, they are discussions between the Controller's Office and Financial Services.

Mr. Callahan understood that but believed the matter should have been brought to the Mayor's attention it was taking nearly a year to make progress. Mr. Callahan believed this question was fair and that it was his job as a City Councilman to raise the issue because it sounded as if this matter was not properly addressed until recently.

Ms. Crampsie Smith, Finance Committee Chair, wanted to clarify some things. She said within a one-week period, there were late fees of \$120. This is significant. There also was a missed discount of \$1,400. The amount being lost was not just cents. Still, she considered the April 29 session a productive meeting that brought to light that changes are being made to tighten up the process. She agreed that Council members have the right and responsibility to ask difficult questions. She agreed with Mr. Callahan that he was asking a question that was being avoided.

Mr. Callahan said he was finished with that matter but raised another issue. He mentioned a recent flier that was circulated in the community that raised old questions. The subject of the flier is a December 28, 2022 email from Realtor Lucy Lennon that she posted on her Facebook page and sent to a local blogger. Mr. Callahan read the email in its entirety. (Editor's Note: Mr. Callahan requested that this email be included in its entirety in the minutes. The email is attached to these minutes.) Mr. Callahan said he hoped the content of the email was not true, but he spoke with Ms. Lennon and she believes it to be so. He said he has spoken with some of these developers who confirmed their reasons for becoming disinterested in the purchase.

President Colón recognized that Mr. Callahan consulted with Solicitor Steward prior to tonight's meeting before bringing this matter to the floor. President Colón wanted to allow Mr. Callahan his opportunity to speak just as he had other speakers tonight with whom he disagreed. But he wanted to offer context. President Colón noted that the email and Facebook post was from 2 ½ years ago. An anonymous flier has been alluded to. This is campaign season. Historically, government and political matters have been kept separate in Town Hall.

Mayor Reynolds addressed the matter. He said there was a lot of misinformation in the email. He made no threats. He said that City Solicitor Spirk and former Assistant City Solicitor Loren Speziale were present during a meeting with Ms. Lennon and can attest that nothing inappropriate was said.

Solicitor Spirk agreed that he attended the meeting. The Mayor never used terms such as "eminent domain" or anything similar. He added that these accusations do not make sense. Most big developers do not scare easily. They are not easily intimidated. He added that Lehigh University is the big South Side property owner. They would have been more of the competitor to other developers. Finally, Solicitor Spirk said he is always mindful of litigation, and it would not be wise to conduct the equivalent of a deposition tonight. (Attorney Speziale was not present at tonight's meeting.)

Mr. Callahan said he found it strange that there were multiple developers interested in the properties, and they all backed off at some point. Only Lehigh University bid. He spoke to

an unnamed representative of Lehigh who said the University did not care about what the Mayor wanted. They could hold onto the property and deal with a different Mayor in office.

Mr. Callahan also said the flier was not anonymous. The source was a PAC from Philadelphia that supports moderate candidates on the Republican and Democrat sides.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned 10:16 PM.

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tad J. Miller", is written over the printed name.

Tad J. Miller  
City Clerk



# **CITY OF BETHLEHEM**

## **Department of Fire**

*10 East Church Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18018-6025*

[www.bethlehem-pa.gov/fire](http://www.bethlehem-pa.gov/fire)

Phone: 610 865-7140

Fax: 610 997-5746

TDD: 610 865-7143

### **INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE**

Date: 5/6/25

To: File

From: Chief Michael Reich

Subject: 510 E 3<sup>rd</sup> St fire information

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#### 510 E 3<sup>rd</sup> St fire information as of 5/6/2025

- At 1:17p, on May 2, 2025, multiple telephone calls and fire alarm signals were received by Northampton County 911 Center reporting a structure fire.
- The 510 E 3rd St building is five stories in height and contained 95 apartments on floors 2-5 and seven businesses on the 1st floor.
- The City of Bethlehem Fire Department was dispatched and arrived on scene at 510 E. 3rd St within 1 ½ minutes. While enroute, the fire was upgraded to a 2nd alarm.
- The fire was upgraded to a 3rd and eventually 4th alarm. Strong winds at the time fanned flames across the rooftop. All City Fire units were on scene fighting the fire and 19 City of Bethlehem firefighters were called in from home to assist.
- The Allentown Fire Department assisted at the fire scene and covered other emergency calls in the City until Bethlehem reserve engines were staffed.
- The City of Bethlehem Police Department assisted in successfully evacuating all residents without any reported injuries. Most notably, they carried a wheelchair dependent person down 5 floors to safety
- There were also no injuries of emergency personnel reported and 1 civilian treated for a rolled ankle and then released.
- The BPD, housing inspectors and other City personnel were able to gather residents of 510 Flats in a nearby parking lot while our Health Bureau conducted an intake of ## residents, gathering crucial information.
- A temporary shelter was established across the street from the fire building, at the Northampton Community College Fowler Center.

- The College also provided a meeting space in the Fowler Center for City Emergency Management to open an Emergency Operations Center to assist managing the incident.
- The City of Bethlehem Health Bureau assisted staffing the shelter, organizing evacuees and transportation needs.
- The 510 Flats apartment management team arranged for hotels for all 135 residents.
- The LANTA bus company provided transportation for residents to the hotels as needed.
- The Red Cross was also on scene assisting residents, with ongoing support since.
- The Lehigh Valley County Animal Response Team (CART) responded and setup in the Fowler Center parking lot to assist numerous resident pets. No pets were injured during the fire.
- The fire was brought under control at 6:50pm. Residents on scene were escorted into the building to get their essential items. All residents were clear from the fire building and the temporary shelter was closed at 8:43pm.
- The fire originated on the roof of the building and the cause of the fire is under investigation by the Fire Marshal's office. The Fire Marshal's office will release an update next week when the cause of the fire is confirmed.
- Red Cross is still involved and working with tenants who are in need of assistance
- The property management group is working with all residents on housing options
- The damage restoration company has sealed up the building against further water incursion, working to assist residents moving out their property, and working with our Building Department to coordinate salvage, repairs, permits, etc.
- Property insurance adjusters are working to evaluate the structure and determine a total dollar loss
- Building owner group will work with Chief code official Mike Simonson for permit needs and repair work moving forward
- Personnel working the incident:
  - City of Bethlehem Fire Department-
    - 18 firefighters and officers on shift
    - 2 Lt Inspectors, the Deputy Chief and Myself
    - 19 Callout firefighters and officers
    - 41 total BFD personnel
  - City of Bethlehem EMS- 7 Paramedics
  - City of Bethlehem Police- 15 officers
  - City of Bethlehem Office of Economic and Community Development- 6 personnel
  - Bethlehem Health Bureau- 5 personnel
  - Allentown Fire Department- 8 firefighters and officers
  - Bethlehem Township Fire Department- 7 firefighters and officers
  - Easton Fire Department- 6 firefighters and officers
  - Hanover Township, Northampton County, Fire Department- 3 firefighters and officers
  - LANTA- 1 bus with driver and a supervisor
  - Lower Saucon Fire Department- 4 firefighters and officers
  - Nancy Run Fire Company- 6 firefighters and officers
  - Palmer Municipal Fire Department- 10 firefighters and officers
  - Red Cross- 3 staff on-scene

- Lehigh Valley CART Team- at least 8 personnel
  - Northampton Community College Public Safety- 2 officers
- Personnel
  - 85 firefighters on scene
    - 41 Bethlehem firefighters
    - 14 Allentown and Easton firefighters
    - 30 Neighboring department volunteer firefighters
  - 48 support personnel from other agencies and City departments
  - Total of 133 personnel responded to the emergency scene.
  - And, several area fire departments provided coverage of neighboring communities while their departments were assisting at the fire.
- 6 total aerial apparatus were used
  - 3 City of Bethlehem
  - 1 Allentown
  - 1 Nancy Run
  - 1 Palmer Municipal
- Since January of 2000, this is the 8<sup>th</sup> 4-alarm fire in the City based on available fire records
- Approximately 350,000g of water was used to control the fire
- A very special thank you to the Northampton Community College who so graciously allowed us to use the Fowler Center as a temporary shelter!
- Without the collective efforts of everyone mentioned above, we could not have achieved successful resolution to the emergency in the time we did and with no reported injuries. Everyone's actions
- This was an example of not just the cooperation of departments within the city but between the City, outside agencies and the community all coming together for this incident.

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Copies To: Council, Mayor Reynolds Date: 5/6/2025



Transcript of printed email record from Lucy H. Lennon on Dec. 28, 2022

First off—let me apologize for the length of this post...it's a doozy...

I am writing this for many reasons, for the protection of my clients, and for my own safety and peace of mind.

Let me begin.

I am a Realtor, who proudly calls Bethlehem my home-both professionally and residentially. I am quite outspoken in my love and appreciation of the city, it's employees, small business community, schools and residents. I've always felt that City Hall was a great resource for me ( and others ) to guide us through permits, zoning and development. And now, more than ever, it's all changed. Now The Mayor and The Economic Development Department have become actual obstacles in my ability to make a living and my clients ability to choose whom they do business with. Ethically not what I would expect from my elected city officials. As you may know, I have 3 churches and 1 parking lot listed for sale. The parking lot being a large piece of property in the city that the city has an eye on for over 20 years. These churches are facing a financial crisis and in order to continue with their service to God, the community and their ministry, they have made a decision to sell their properties and merge to a new location.

The City has approached the churches through the members themselves, myself, and various methods. I personally was told to inform any other interested parties that the city was interceded in the property and if another interested party had ongoing/projected projects-to remember that they would have to deal with the city. I was also informed, personally, that if their offer was not accepted they could always take the property through eminent domain ( the mayor said this with a chuckle, shared with a member of ED )

I showed the property to both developers and other non profits. 2 developers, who were very interested and wanted to submit an offer told me in no uncertain terms that they were told to back away, from the city. An additional developer's realtor insinuated the same.

In the end 3 offers were submitted. The "winning" offer was hands down better for my clients-in terms, timing, lack of contingencies and pricing. The churches with their attorney's blessing, voted unanimously to reject the city's offer and accept an offer from another non profit.

Fast forward ...

The churches have now received notice that The Bethlehem Parking Authority will be filing to take the property by eminent domain. This would in essence potentially crate a delay, if not a cancellation of the contract to sell to their buyer. And cause a financial catastrophe for the churches' future.

Here are my questions...

When did it become ok for the Mayor and his administration to dictate who buys or sells property in the city of Bethlehem?

Is the city of Bethlehem now in the real estate business?

When did the threat of eminent domain become a weapon?

You may ask why I am bringing this to light ...

I now fear my client may be bullied into bankruptcy or financial and spiritual ruin. I worry that my other clients may now experience difficulties in City Hall.

Any me personally? I'm not quite sure what they can do, but so far I've seen vindictive and unprofessional behavior and it can only make me wonder....

PLEASE SHARE