

BETHLEHEM CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
10 East Church Street - Town Hall  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania  
Tuesday, December 20, 2022 – 7:00 PM

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

1. ROLL CALL

Vice President Crampsie Smith called the meeting to order. Present were Grace Crampsie Smith, Wandalyn J. Enix, Hillary G. Kwiatek, Rachel Leon, Paige Van Wirt, and Kiera L. Wilhelm. Michael G. Colón joined at approximately 7:08 PM via GoTo Meeting, 7.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 6, 2022

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

*Bicycling Report Presented*

Resident Scott Slingerland of Coalition for Appropriate Transportation discussed the group's recently released report titled "Bethlehem - The Biking City." Copies were provided to Council. Community forums were held in fall. The resulting report is a collaboration of CAT, the Sierra Club of the Lehigh Valley, and the City of Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council. The report is mostly "raw" ideas of what people like and would like to see more of in Bethlehem as well as ideas and changes that can move the City forward. The report deals with health, economic, and climate change benefits.

Mr. Slingerland noted this report recognizes that Bethlehem already has a great start, but offers opportunities for improvement. There is a lot of overlap in the Broad Street Plan from 2021 to improve conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, residents, businesses, and visitors. They want to see changes to improve traffic, including encouraging traffic calming to lower motor vehicle speed limits. The report also recognizes the Bethlehem Connects Trail Study from 2016. That looked at connecting the South Bethlehem Greenway with Hellertown and the Saucon Rail Trail and even the railroad bed from the Monocacy Way going to Pennsylvania Avenue. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission's Walk/Roll LV Plan 2020 offers additional ideas for the City as does the City's Vision Zero Plan, which was recently updated. This looks at traffic safety, education, and outreach and states that traffic deaths are preventable and that 25 mph is enough speed in the downtown and neighborhoods and that speed limits should be enforced for the benefit of everyone. Lastly is the Climate Action Plan that looks at the greenhouse gas emissions by motor vehicles and land use of impervious surfaces for parking lots and wider roads. He closed by saying that CAT believes that biking is a key piece in solving so many issues: housing, food, transportation, education, etc. CAT is looking at transportation as a key component for the quality of life. CAT wants to make transportation sustainable, affordable, and enjoyable with more bicycling. Mr. Slingerland encouraged Council to read the report and hoped that some of the ideas would be helpful.

*Parking Quest Continues/Thanks to Council for its Service/Speed Limit*

Alex Hirsch said his quest to again be able to participate in the Parking Authority's Residential Parking Program has now reached 158 days. He is optimistic that a resolution will be reached next year. Mr. Hirsch thanked City Council Members and City employees and the Administration for their efforts throughout the year. Referring to Mr. Slingerland's remarks, Mr. Hirsch added that many of the street speed limits in Rhode Island are 25 mph, and the quality-of-life impact is great.

*More Support for a Bicycling Network*

Resident Doug Royston also is a member of CAT. He said the report is really a "response to a lot of great work that the City already has done." The City already has created the foundation for their report with the Climate Action Plan, the Broad Street Study, Monocacy Way, and the Pedestrian Bridge Feasibility Study. As a result, there is a plausible picture of a "European-like biking city that can be had in this town of Bethlehem in the future. The pieces are there." But, he said, the time is coming in which decisions must be made, yet he cautioned against making decisions prematurely. He wanted to emphasize two points. The first is providing a pedestrian bridge, which would serve as the catalyst for safe biking and walking. He referred to providing "the whole bridge" from Illick's Mill to Saucon Valley and is connected by the Greenway corridor. He would be interested in a study of the area included in all of the things that would be connected with this green corridor. An additional area of focus would involve the Center City area from Sand Island to Webster Street Landing. He said there could be a pedestrian hub in the area from Sand Island to First Street to the area of ArtsQuest. He said both of these are platforms that allow for "the real prize in all of this": a biking and walking culture. His second point involved affordable housing. He said there is a tremendous relationship between affordable housing and affordable transportation. Affordable transportation can mean reducing vehicles from two to one or from one to none by walking or biking. He hoped the City would consider the report being given to fully understand the benefits of Bethlehem becoming a biking city.

*Denouncing anti-Semitism*

The Rev. Lindsey Altvater Clifton first spoke as a clergy member of the Bethlehem Interfaith Group. She read a statement in response to recent anti-Semitic events. December 18 began a week to celebrate Hanukkah, which should be a time of joy, but Jews are again this year celebrating "in the face of a rising tide of anti-Semitism." This is demonstrated by remarks made at a recent City Council meeting and an incident this past week at Christkindlmarkt. The statement commended ArtsQuest as well as the mayors of Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton for quickly repudiating anti-Semitism in any form while affirming the diversity of our communities. The Bethlehem Interfaith Group adds its strong condemnation of anti-Semitism and adds the affirmation that a strong society is built upon mutual respect among those of various backgrounds. As a citizen and a local faith leader, she renounces and condemns anti-Semitism, White Supremacy, a Christian Nationalism. She said these are counter to Christian faith and inconsistent with true American values. She encouraged Council to continue to support the common good and continue to offer this City's commitment to welcome and cultivate a place where all people might flourish.

### *Clarifications*

Resident Arthur Curatola said he hoped to clarify for the last time comments he previously made. He said that he is insulted when someone tells him that they feel insulted when people mention the name of Jesus Christ. Mr. Curatola added that he felt insulted for all of the Christians who live in this city, named for where Christ was born. He said the city name should not be one simply used for commercial purposes. Mr. Curatola explained public comments he made about the religion, ethnicity, and gender of American presidents. He said he was just stating facts and provided a breakdown on each. Mr. Curatola said that no matter who we are, few people would agree with us at all times unless we choose only to associate with those who fully share our views. This limits your ability to go as far in life as you otherwise could.

Vice President Crampsie Smith advised Mr. Curatola that he had exceeded his 5-minute time limit and asked if he wished to summarize the rest of his remarks within about 5 seconds or so.

Mr. Curatola said he could not and concluded by wishing all a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah or whatever they may celebrate.

### *A Call for Unity*

Janine Santoro said she thought about making public comments four weeks ago after a first round of public comments, but after comments made at the last Council meeting and more hate speech at Christkindlmarkt, she regrets that she did not say something sooner. She is speaking both as the Director of Equity and Inclusion for the City and as an individual. Two weeks ago, we heard comments at a City Council meeting that were justified as freedom of speech. But, freedom of speech does not mean freedom from consequences. The Christian Nationalist rhetoric that we heard this evening and at previous meetings endorses the false idea that solely Christians, and mainly white Christians, shall “hold and continue to hold power and get to determine the dominant narrative of this City.” This can only happen if they stifle and extinguish the voices of those who are not white and Christian. But she said there are those who speak out against this including Mayor Reynolds and members of the Bethlehem Advisory Board that has created the “No Home for Hate Petition” and has led marches for racial justice and peace and continue to have conversations regarding affordable housing, homelessness, public safety, and other community-centered initiatives that severely impact our historically minoritized residents. Ms. Santoro cited many others, including those now serving on Council, who are working against prejudice and similar forms of injustice. She urged all to get to know their neighbors and to have a dialog with those who are different from you. She also urged those interested in participating in the City’s authorities, boards and commissions to reach communal decisions. Finally, Ms. Santoro appealed to all to work together to make this a beloved community.

### *Comments of Support*

Lynn Rothman described herself as a Jewish resident. She thanked Rev. Clifton and Ms. Santoro for their remarks. She also appreciates the support of Mayor Reynolds and City Council to continue with the separation of church and state. She said she does not take offense to the City of Bethlehem being named after the city where Christ was born, but also believes that everyone

has a right to their own beliefs. She added that a resident's comments referring to City Council as "a few hens in the barnyard" was not respectful to members of Council "who work so hard and do so much for our great city."

#### *Sculpture Approval Process*

Resident William Scheirer addressed sculptures in a public space or which require public money or a public permit. He has held this view for some time, but the recent unveiling of a sculpture at E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Founder's Way has prompted him to speak. He said he respects the sculptor and those who approved the placement, but he does not care for it. He proposed that any sculpture in public space or using public money or requiring a permit be subject to a referendum. A sketch would be prepared and the matter would be subject to a vote.

#### *Questions Remain*

Resident Stephen Antalics said he was disturbed by some statements brought up during public comment at recent meetings. A segment of public comment is offered for any subject. He has used this as a vehicle to ask questions, which he believes are focused on the welfare of this City. He has asked, admittedly often, why a qualified person is not being reappointed to a historic board. Mr. Antalics has received a number of supportive comments from other residents who also want this answer because it affects the welfare of this City. He said it might be classified as "badgering" but he believes this is necessary. He said he has been told privately by an unnamed source who is well-connected to Council that he is viewed by Council Members as a "trouble-maker" and a number of Council Members have stopped answering his emails. If this is the case, he said he will continue to ask questions until he gets answers.

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

#### *Support for Authority Reappointment*

Resident Stephen Antalics referred to agenda item 7B1 involving the Administrative Order for the Mayor to reappoint Sharon Zondag to the Bethlehem Authority. He endorsed her as a dedicated and qualified individual and strongly recommended her approval. Mr. Antalics added that he sees appointments like this somewhat regularly on the agendas, but he rarely sees appointments to historic boards. Practically speaking, he said the historic boards probably have more effect on the City than the other boards and commissions. Control of these boards can be made by appointments of people who will follow the policy of the Administration. He theorized that candidates who are well qualified and who would preserve historic preservation are not being appointed because they may affect the development in this city. He said he did not know if there is a "cozy relationship" between developers and the City. He does not know. Mr. Antalics next returned his comments to Ms. Zondag and recommended her reappointment.

#### 5. OLD BUSINESS

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

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. *City Solicitor – Memorandum and Resolution – Act 57 of 2022 – Local Tax Collection Law Amendment*

The Clerk read a memorandum dated December 13, 2022 with an attached Resolution from City Solicitor John F. Spirk, Jr. The memorandum advised that Act 57 of 2022 amended the Local Tax Collection Law by directing the tax collector to waive additional charges for real estate taxes in certain qualifying situations, as defined by the Act. The Act requires municipalities that levy a real estate property tax to adopt a resolution or ordinance directing their tax collector to implement the Act's provisions for the tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2023.

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

B. *City Solicitor – Assignment and Assumption Agreement – City of Bethlehem, Bethlehem Authority and Utility Services Co., Inc. – Water Tank Maintenance Contracts*

The Clerk read a memorandum dated December 14, 2022 with an attached Resolution and associated Assignment and Assumption Agreement from City Solicitor John F. Spirk, Jr. The Bethlehem Authority currently contracts with Utility Services Co., Inc. for maintenance services for three (3) water storage tanks. The City and the Bethlehem Authority desire to have these contracts assigned to the City as the operator of the system.

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

C. *Business Administrator – Transfer of Funds – General Fund – Fire Salaries, Fire and EMS Overtime*

The Clerk read a memorandum dated December 8, 2022 with an attached Resolution from Eric R. Evans, Business Administrator, recommending a transfer in the General Fund. A total of \$215,000 would be transferred from 19 specified accounts into three accounts – Fire-Salaries, Fire-Overtime, and EMS-Overtime. It was noted that the number of Fire personnel was to be reduced through the attrition of four positions, which has now occurred. As for Fire and EMS overtime, this was attributed to a variety of factors including mandatory quarantines caused by the Omicron variant of Covid-19 for both Fire and EMS personnel, an increase in sick days for firefighters, and a shortage of part-time paramedics requiring overtime coverage by full-time paramedics. It was additionally noted that the sources of funds to be transferred came from payroll accounts that are realizing savings due to vacancies that are the result of the national labor shortage.

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

D. *Director of Budget and Finance – Transfer of Funds – General Fund – Medical*

The Clerk read a memorandum dated December 15, 2022 with an attached Resolution from Linnea Lazarchak, Director of Budget and Finance, recommending a transfer in the General Fund Budget. A total of \$500,000 would be transferred from 11 specified accounts into Account 0801-42085 – Medical Insurance. It is noted that the City remains under the \$7.8 million budgeted

for this line item, but the final weekly medical bills will arrive this week. Ms. Lazarchak recommends the budget transfer in case the money is necessary.

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

7. REPORTS

A. *President of Council*

B. *Mayor*

1. *Administrative Order – Sharon Zondag – Bethlehem Authority*

Mayor Reynolds reappointed Sharon Zondag to the Bethlehem Authority, effective until January of 2028. Ms. Kwiatek and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-248 to confirm the reappointment.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

*Message of Inclusion*

Mayor Reynolds thanked Rev. Clifton for her comments and the statement by the interfaith group on anti-Semitism. He also thanked Ms. Santoro for her words. He said these were apt and accurate. This has been a tough last week or two for a lot of people in the City. Mayor Reynolds attended recent events at Brith Sholom and the Jewish Community Center. One of the questions that has come up with recent anti-Semitic events is, "What should our city do about the fact that we are not immune from the rest of the country in seeing rising anti-Semitism?" It is something that we look at as far as providing safety and security and support and taking action where we can. Over the longer term, we also consider building the type of city that supports everyone no matter their faith or who they love or who they want to be. Nobody as a monopoly of the identity of who we are. Bethlehem's history is like the rest of America's history: There is a lot that we should be very proud of. And there are other things, including these things that are happening now, that we are not only not proud of, but that we find distasteful and abhorrent. We need to be honest about those things. But our mission is to build a city where we support people for who they want to be. For almost 250 years, we have been a country have been protesting injustice. He believes the majority of people in this city believe in celebrating who we are and having conversations of disagreement. We can be both. We can recognize our history and build the type of community, like across America, a multi-cultural, diverse America, where everyone is valued. We have not fully figured out how to do that, but he knows that the Administration, Council, and most of the people in this room are working toward this goal. He said that this spirit and these efforts will continue into 2023 and increase.

8. ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

A. *Bill No. 28-2022 – Adopting the 2023 General Fund Budget*

The Clerk read Bill No. 28-2022 – Adopting the 2023 General Fund Budget, sponsored by Ms. Wilhelm and Ms. Crampsie Smith and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, ADOPTING  
THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR 2023

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 28-2022 now known as Ordinance No. 2022-27 was passed on Final Reading.

*B. Bill No. 29-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Water Fund Budget*

The Clerk read Bill No. 29-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Water Fund Budget, sponsored by Ms. Wilhelm and Ms. Crampsie Smith and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, ADOPTING  
THE WATER FUND BUDGET FOR 2023

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 29-2022 now known as Ordinance No. 2022-28 was passed on Final Reading.

*C. Bill No. 30-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Sewer Fund Budget*

The Clerk read Bill No. 30-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Sewer Fund Budget, sponsored by Ms. Wilhelm and Ms. Crampsie Smith and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, ADOPTING  
THE SEWER FUND BUDGET FOR 2023

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 30-2022 now known as Ordinance No. 2022-29 was passed on Final Reading.

*D. Bill No. 31-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Golf Course Enterprise Fund Budget*

The Clerk read Bill No. 31-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Golf Course Enterprise Fund Budget, sponsored by Ms. Wilhelm and Ms. Crampsie Smith and titled:

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

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, ADOPTING  
THE GOLF COURSE ENTERPRISE FUND BUDGET FOR 2023

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 31-2022 now known as Ordinance No. 2022-30 was passed on Final Reading.

E. *Bill No. 32-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Liquid Fuels Fund Budget*

The Clerk read Bill No. 32-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Liquid Fuels Fund Budget, sponsored by Ms. Wilhelm and Ms. Crampsie Smith and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, ADOPTING  
THE LIQUID FUELS FUND BUDGET FOR 2023

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 32-2022 now known as Ordinance No. 2022-31 was passed on Final Reading.

F. *Bill No. 33-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Capital Budget for Non-Utilities*

The Clerk read Bill No. 33-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Capital Budget for Non-Utilities, sponsored by Ms. Wilhelm and Ms. Crampsie Smith and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, ADOPTING  
THE 2023 CAPITAL BUDGET FOR NON-UTILITIES

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 33-2022 now known as Ordinance No. 2022-32 was passed on Final Reading.

G. *Bill No. 34-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Capital Budget for Water Utilities*

The Clerk read Bill No. 34-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Capital Budget for Water Utilities, sponsored by Ms. Wilhelm and Ms. Crampsie Smith and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, ADOPTING  
THE 2023 CAPITAL BUDGET FOR WATER UTILITIES

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 34-2022 now known as Ordinance No. 2022-33 was passed on Final Reading.



H. *Bill No. 35-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Capital Budget for Sewer Utilities*

The Clerk read Bill No. 35-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Capital Budget for Sewer Utilities, sponsored by Ms. Wilhelm and Ms. Crampsie Smith and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, ADOPTING  
THE 2023 CAPITAL BUDGET FOR SEWER UTILITIES

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 35-2022 now known as Ordinance No. 2022-34 was passed on Final Reading.

I. *Bill No. 36-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Community Development Block Grant Budget*

The Clerk read Bill No. 36-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Community Development Block Grant Budget, sponsored by Ms. Wilhelm and Ms. Crampsie Smith and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,  
ADOPTING THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
BLOCK GRANT BUDGET FOR 2023

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 36-2022 now known as Ordinance No. 2022-35 was passed on Final Reading.

J. *Bill No. 37-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Storm Water Fund Budget*

The Clerk read Bill No. 37-2022 – Adopting the 2023 Storm Water Fund Budget, sponsored by Ms. Wilhelm and Ms. Crampsie Smith and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, ADOPTING  
THE STORM WATER FUND BUDGET FOR 2023

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 37-2022 now known as Ordinance No. 2022-36 was passed on Final Reading.

K. *Bill No. 38-2022 – Fixing the 2023 Tax Rate for All City Purposes*

The Clerk read Bill No. 38-2022 – Fixing the 2023 Tax Rate for All City Purposes, sponsored by Ms. Wilhelm and Ms. Crampsie Smith and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,  
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, FIXING  
THE TAX RATE FOR ALL CITY PURPOSES  
FOR THE YEAR 2023

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 38-2022 now known as Ordinance No. 2022-37 was passed on Final Reading.

L. *Bill No. 39-2022 – Amending Zoning Ordinance – Miscellaneous*

The Clerk read Bill No. 39-2022 –Amending Zoning Ordinance - Miscellaneous, sponsored by Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM, COUNTIES OF  
LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON, COMMONWEALTH OF  
PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF  
THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM AT PART 13 OF THE CODIFIED  
ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM –  
MISCELLANEOUS.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 39-2022 now known as Ordinance No. 2022-38 was passed on Final Reading.

M. *Bill No. 40-2022 – Amend Zoning Ordinance – Design Standards*

The Clerk read Bill No. 40-2022 –Amend Zoning Ordinance – Design Standards, sponsored by Dr. Enix and Ms. Leon and titled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM, COUNTIES  
OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON, COMMONWEALTH OF  
PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF  
THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM AT PART 13 OF THE CODIFIED  
ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM – DESIGN  
STANDARDS

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. Bill No. 40-2022 now known as Ordinance No. 2022-39 was passed on Final Reading.

9. NEW ORDINANCES

None.

10. RESOLUTIONS

A. *Approve Resolution – Act 57 of 2022 – Local Tax Collection Law Amendment*

Ms. Kwiatek and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-249 that authorized that its tax collector is directed, pursuant to mandates of Act 57 of 2022, to waive additional charges for real estate taxes in certain qualifying situations if written notice of real estate taxes imposed was not received, and if application for waiver is made within twelve (12) months from the following date: 1. For the purposes of real property, the date of transfer of ownership, and 2. For manufactured or mobile homes, the date of transfer of ownership or the date a lease agreement commences for the original location or relocation of a manufactured or mobile home on a parcel of land not owned by the owner of the manufactured or mobile home. The term does not include the renewal of a lease for the same location.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

B. *Approve Resolution – Water Tank Maintenance Contracts*

Ms. Kwiatek and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-250 that authorized to execute an Assignment and Assumption Agreement, and such other agreements and documents as are deemed by the City Solicitor to be necessary and/or related thereto, between the City of Bethlehem, the Bethlehem Authority and Utility Services Co., Inc. for the purpose of assigning the Bethlehem Authority's rights, titles, privileges, benefits and interest in, and all the duties and obligations set forth in certain Water Tank Maintenance Contracts to the City of Bethlehem.

Ms. Kwiatek asked why this transfer is necessary.

Mr. Boscola explained that the original contract was signed 10 or 12 years ago. The Authority entered into the contract for tank maintenance, perhaps for expediency purposes. However, the Authority actually should not be entering into contracts. It is just a financing authority. All of the operating and maintenance responsibilities should fall to the City. This is a move to correct the action by shifting the contract from the Authority to the City.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

C. *Approve Transfer of Funds – General Fund – Fire Salaries, Fire and EMS Overtime*

Ms. Kwiatek and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-251 that authorized the transfer of funds to cover overages in Fire Salaries, and Fire and EMS Overtime in the General Fund Budget be transferred as follows: \$8,000 – Council – Salaries, \$5,000 – Council – Temporary Help, \$500 – Mayor – Salaries, \$2,500 – Controller – Salaries, \$15,000 – Controller – Temporary Help, \$5,000 – Law – Salaries, \$10,000 – Community and Economic Development Administrative – Salaries, \$25,000 – Health – Salaries, \$10,000 – Code Enforcement – Salaries, \$5,000 – Community Development – Salaries, \$20,000 – Planning & Zoning – Salaries, \$11,000 – Housing Inspections – Salaries, \$27,000 – Engineering – Salaries, \$28,000 – Streets – Salaries, \$12,000 – Electrical – Salaries, \$5,000 – Grounds – Salaries, \$20,000 – Police – Salaries, \$4,000 – EMS – Salaries, and \$2,000 – EMS – Temporary Help to \$69,000 – Fire – Salaries, \$95,000 – Fire – Overtime, and \$51,000 – EMS – Overtime.

Vice President Crampsie Smith said she had some questions about the overtime situation. She noted that this involves overtime costs for Fire and EMS. She recognized that these are two of the departments that lost positions during Covid. Referring to information provided by Mr. Evans, she said that the highest overtime numbers in recent years came in 2016. This number went down significantly, but has risen again. 2022 provided the second highest rate. She asked what caused this rise. Vice President Crampsie Smith said she was looking to get a handle on how the overtime could be decreased.

Mr. Evans said that if you look at a history of the departments with up and down overtime figures you will see a number of different factors. Public Works, for example, jumps depending on the number of snow events. Police and Fire are different. Some are in regards to staffing. Mr. Evans referred to a graph that he provided that showed a correlation to sick days. When the number of personnel using sick days reaches a certain level, the City must “backfill” with overtime shifts in order to maintain satisfactory staffing.

Vice President Crampsie Smith asked whether more positions were hired or what was done to lower the overtime figure so significantly after 2016.

Mr. Evans said that 2016 predated his arrival as Business Administrator.

Fire Chief Warren Achey said that was prior to his time in this position also, so he could not be sure. But he recalled that the SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) grant expired around that time. This was a grant that allowed the City to hire additional personnel at a reduced rate because of the grant subsidization. He recalled that there were multiple vacant positions when he arrived as chief and that Allentown did not hold an academy around that time, further delaying an increase in the number of fully trained firefighters.

Vice President Crampsie Smith noted that this period of high overtime declined for several years after 2016, but now it is back. She believed it is important, especially with public safety positions, to balance between overtime and hiring more positions. Her concern with high overtime is a safety issue and low morale, especially when overtime is mandated. She hoped that this would be watched in 2023. If there is a need for significant overtime for a public safety staff, at least she will advocate hiring more full-time positions because there is a real risk of injury and errors when personnel are working excessive hours, especially in a public safety field. These are dangerous jobs. We need to do all that we can to keep them safe.

Chief Achey said there have only been three overtime mandates in the Fire Department this year. EMS personnel have had multiple instances, but Fire only three.

Vice President Crampsie Smith emphasized that “That’s an issue. I just want us to be conscious of that next year.”

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

D. *Approve Transfer of Funds – General Fund - Medical*

Ms. Kwiatek and Ms. Leon sponsored Resolution No. 2022-252 that authorized a transfer of funds to cover medical expenses in the General Fund Budget be transferred as follows: \$25,000 – Community and Economic Development Administration – Salaries, \$14,000 – Community and Economic Development Administration – Temporary Help, \$50,000 – Health – Temporary Help, \$15,000 – Code Enforcement – Temporary Help, \$30,000 – Community Development – Temporary Help, \$26,000 – Recycling – Temporary Help, \$38,000 – Housing Inspections – Temporary Help, \$166,000 – Streets – Salaries, \$20,000 – Streets – Temporary Help, \$38,000 – Recreation – Temporary Help, and \$78,000 – Police – Temporary Help to Medical Insurance.

Voting AYE: Ms. Wilhelm, Ms. Crampsie Smith, Dr. Enix, Ms. Kwiatek, Ms. Leon, Dr. Van Wirt, and Mr. Colón, 7. The Resolution passed.

11. NEW BUSINESS

*Proud to Serve with Fellow Council Members*

Ms. Leon said that as a female, as a veteran, as a Christian, and as “someone who knows the story of Deborah” she is very happy to serve with everyone on Council.

*Hope for 2023*

Vice President Crampsie Smith said that she was sure that the feeling expressed by Ms. Leon is mutual for all Council Members. On behalf of City Council, she wished everyone Happy Holidays. Her hope, in this season with multiple holidays and religious celebrations, “can find it in their hearts and souls to respect and embrace our diversity as well as our commonalities. Our diversity is truly our strength and is the base upon this community and it is who we are.”

*A Good Read/Proud of Colleagues and Administration*

Ms. Wilhelm said she has read through the Biking City report and highly recommends that others read it as well. One does not have to be a bicyclist to benefit from what is being discussed. She also thanked Rev. Clifton and Ms. Santoro, Ms. Rothman, and Mayor Reynolds for their comments this evening. She noted that this is the end of the first year for several on Council and that she was incredibly proud to have served with her colleagues and the “incredibly hard-working Administration.” She thanked them for their dedication. She added that she is proud to work for and serve a city that espouses all of the things that Mayor Reynolds described this evening.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 PM.

ATTEST:



Tad J. Miller  
City Clerk