



Allentown

435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, Pa. 18101

Minutes - Final

City Council

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

Invocation:

Pledge to the Flag

Roll Call

Present: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Courtesy of the Floor

Courtesy and Privilege of the Floor Rules

Contract Approvals

[15-6787](#)

R44

Authorization for Contract price increase of 10% or more for an existing Contract over \$40,000.00, that was previously Bid and Awarded under City Policies, with A B E Doors & Windows, Inc. in the amount of \$20,000.00, to cover future Risk claims in 2024. This was previously bid for time and materials contract for on-call, on-site Overhead Door replacement, repair, inspection and maintenance, at various City owned and/or operated facilities. The resulting agreement shall include all labor, equipment, licensing, materials, tools, travel and all other items necessary to complete orders on an "as needed" basis. Services will include but not limited to emergency repairs, preventative maintenance, general repairs, and repairs to springs and tracks, as well as door replacements when necessary.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [R44 - A B E Doors Windows \(002\)](#)

[Resolution #30814](#)

Ms. Sarrah McNeil stated that ABE Doors & Windows, Inc. is a previously awarded contract that is requesting additional funds in the amount of \$20,000 to cover future risk claims. Due to the cost of the Change Order being over 10 percent of the contract amount, it is being presented here before Council.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked Mr. Ferry if he could clarify why they need this \$20,000. Is there damage to doors? What is the reason for the increase?

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that he believes that the purpose of contract approval is to review the procedure related to the contract. He stated that he is happy to ask Mr. Ferry to answer your question. As he understood it, the purpose of this portion of the agenda is to review the procedures under which contract that was done. He stated that he believes Ms. McNeil did that.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated Mr. Mayor you are right, but thank you.

Mr. John Ferry stated the reason for the increase. This isn't just risk claims, this is also preventative maintenance. Any kind of maintenance done on city garages. It is a little more expensive so they had to ask for additional money.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any other comments from the dais or from the public.

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 30814

Minutes of Previous Meeting

[15-6786](#) February 21, 2024 City Council Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [February 21, 2024 City Council Meeting Minutes](#)

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

[15-6803](#) March 20, 2024 City Council Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [March 20, 2024 City Council Meeting Minutes](#)

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Communications

Executive Session: Council held an executive session this evening at 5PM to review potential litigation issues that relate to council's investigation.

Council's office received a petition requesting an intermunicipal liquor license transfer for City Center Hospitality Ten, LLC located at 950 Hamilton Street. The Public Hearing on the transfer will take place on Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at 6:15 PM.

Chasers: If you parked in the city lot next to City Hall, please see the City Clerk for a voucher.

Old Business: None

REPORTS

Budget and Finance: Chair Napoli, Hendricks, Gerlach

The Committee met on March 27th at 6 PM; the next meeting is scheduled for April 10 at 5:30 PM.

Community and Economic Development: Chair Hendricks, Mota, Napoli

The committee has not met since the last council meeting; the next meeting is scheduled for April 10th at 5:45 PM.

Human Resources, Administration and Appointments: Chair Affa, Napoli, Santos

The Committee has not met since the last council meeting; there are no future meetings scheduled at this time.

Parks and Recreation: Chair Santos, Affa, Gerlach

The Committee met this evening, the next meeting is not yet scheduled.

Public Safety: Chair Zucal, Hendricks, Mota

The committee met this evening; the next meeting is not yet scheduled.

Public Works: Chair Gerlach, Affa, Zucal

The Committee met this evening, the next meeting is not yet scheduled.

Rules, Chambers, Intergovernmental Relations, and Strategy: Chair Mota, Napoli, Gerlach

The committee met on March 27th at 5:30 PM, the next meeting is not yet scheduled.

Controller's Report (3 minutes)

NONE

Mayor's Report (3 minutes)

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated since the last City Council meeting, they were thrilled to welcome the US Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra to Allentown. He was here in part to celebrate the anniversary of the Affordable Care Act which has dramatically changed the fortune of many Allentonians and has improved our economy. He thanked Councilperson Mota for being able to join them for part of the visit where he held a round table at Sacred Heart Hospital. He looks forward to future visits from administration officials. In the future, they encourage the administration officials to bring checks with them. He stated that is always appreciated. Earlier today, they held a press conference celebrating the improvement in Allentown's bond rating. He thanked Mr. Hendricks. He stated that the administration has the utmost respect for former and current Council Presidents. He thanked Mr. Hendricks for joining them at the press conference. They are absolutely thrilled to report to City Council that Moody's upgraded the city of

Allentown's credit position. In part because of their confidence in the city's leadership, particularly our financial leadership driven by Ms. Patel and her team deserve a tremendous amount of credit for their capable and stable stewardship of our city's budget and finances. He recognized the work that City Council has done to support our team and the development of that budget. The other major factor that would contribute to the improvement of our credit rating is the strength of the local economy. The city economy is doing very well. Jobs are being added, wages are increasing, the city is in good shape economically in Allentown and in the Lehigh Valley. They are continuing to work to make investments to get more Allentonians into the labor force and accessing good jobs in the Lehigh Valley. He is incredibly hopeful for a re-compete grant from the Economic Development Administration. Overall, incredibly good news. Imagine if your credit score was in the 800s. That is where they are headed in Allentown. The really great thing and the thing that they should understand as Council people is when they are faced incurring debt to make improvements to our fiscal plants here, whether it is improvements to the public safety building to take care of our police officers or building a new central fire station. It will lower the cost of incurring debt which will improve the city's ability to invest in other things they do in the city. It is incredibly good news. On Saturday, he was talking to Councilperson Santos. Her stepbrother was disappointed that he could not get all the candy he wanted at the Bucky Boyle Easter Egg Hunt. Good News! The Mayor's office is coordinating with the Police Athletic League to host an Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday at Jordan Park at noon. He stated that he doesn't think they have a City Council division, but they are welcome to hunt for Easter Eggs as well. He stated to City Council and all of his fellow Allentonians to take care and looking up at the sun. The solar eclipse is on the way. He understands there will be some celebrations across Allentown. He stated to take care of their eyesight and make sure you are using approved glasses. Whatever they look like and let him know how they look. He stated that concludes his report and is able to take any questions Council may have.

[15-6829](#) Controller Reports

Attachments: [Controller Report](#)

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE (To be Voted On):

[15-6697](#) Bill 13
Providing for the vacation of Type Street from the centerline of South Eighth Street to its West Terminus in the Third Ward of the City of Allentown:

Attachments: [Bill 13 Type Street - Street Vacation](#)
[Type Street - Street Vacation Map](#)
[Type Street from S 8th Street to its West Terminus - Street Vacation Petition \(Mayor's Request\)](#)
[Staff Engineering Report for Type Street - Street Vacation](#)
[Letter from the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission regarding Type Street from 8th Street to its Immediate Western Terminus](#)
[Allentown City Planning Commission Action on Vacation of Type Street](#)
[Planning Staff Report - Vacation of Type Street](#)
[Planning Commsission Minutes February 13, 2024](#)
[Type Street from S 8th Street to its West Terminus - Mailing Labels](#)
[The Morning Call Ad 7600484](#)
[Type Street from S 8th Street to its West Terminus - Mailing Labels \(2\)](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or the public.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that this was forwarded unfavorably to City Council to not vacate.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that the appropriate amount of discussion occurred at the committee meetings, but the administration wants to reiterate that they disagree with the findings of the Planning Commission in this case and recommend that the street be vacated.

Yes: 1 - Santo Napoli

No: 6 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, and Candida Affa

[15-6749](#)

Bill 23

Amending Section § 5-21 Contracts, E (2) to read as follows:: The selection process shall be based on the objective criteria contained in the RFP and shall be conducted by a Selection Committee composed of the Director of Finance, Department Head, Bureau Manager, and any other staff deemed appropriate except in the case of an investigation authorized by ordinance under Section 201 of the Home Rule Charter wherein the ordinance shall authorize a selection committee.

Sponsors: Gerlach, Hendricks and Mr. Zucal

Attachments: [Bill 23 Investigation](#)
[Ordinance #15998](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that he would like Council's Solicitor to comment on

this. This appears to be a two part amendment. He asked if he is correct on that.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that there were talks that perhaps someone would want to add an amendment on whether or not there should be a designee. The way he sees what is in front of them right now is the addition of the language which accepts the case of investigation authorized by ordinance under Section 201 of the Home Rule Charter where the Ordinance shall authorize a selection committee. He stated that is what is in front of you right now.

Mr. Michael Hanlon asked Council would someone like to do the housecleaning amendment that has been suggested by the administration with no impact that you would add as a designee.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any public comments.

A motion was made by Santo Napoli, seconded by Daryl Hendricks, after the Director of Finance add or designee

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 15998

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 15998

[15-6763](#)

Bill 24

Amending the 2024 Capital Fund Budget to provide for a supplemental appropriation of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) from the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges, Inc. (NSPCB). These funds are a contribution to go towards the construction of Bogert's Bridge rehabilitation.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 24 - Bogert's Bridge Donation - NSPCB](#)
[Ordinance #15999](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there are any comments.

Ms. Natalie Santos stated that this was in her committee and it was forwarded favorably to tonight's meeting.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or any comments from the public.

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 15999

[15-6764](#)

Bill 25

Amending the 2024 Capital Fund Budget to provide for a supplemental appropriation of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) from the National Society for the Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania, Inc. (TBCBSP). These funds are a contribution to go towards the construction of Bogert's Bridge rehabilitation.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 25 - Bogert's Bridge Donation - TBCBSP](#)
[Ordinance #16000](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that he knows that they got some grants prior to the project. Has anything been started on it as far as re-fabbing it.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that Mandy can speak more to the actual work that has begun and encouraged them to take a walk at Bogert's. There is a really cool plan for the inside of the bridge that will proceed.

Ms. Mandy Tolino stated that some money has been spent on design and that is where they are right now. The engineers are getting the permitting and hopes to put it out for bids for construction soon for the construction can start next year. So far the funds that have been spent are for mostly engineering.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked if they have enough funds to complete the project.

Ms. Mandy Tolino stated without it going out for bid construction, they don't know for sure. They hope so, but because things are more expensive now. They don't know until they get those bids back.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any other comments from the dais or any comments from the public.

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 16000

[15-6766](#)

Bill 27

Amending the 2024 Fire Department budget to provide for a supplemental appropriation of Seven Hundred Seventy-Nine Thousand Two Hundred and Twenty-Eight Dollars (\$779,228.00) from Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development Local Share Account grant for the purchase of a new fire truck.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 27 - Fire LSA Grant Appropriation](#)
[Ordinance #16001](#)

Mr. Ed Zucal thanked Ms. Mota and stated that this was in his committee and it was sent favorably, 3 - 0.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or the public.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked who is the manufacturer and who does most of them today.

Chief Efrain Agosto stated Seagrave.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated Seagrave. He stated that the city has been purchasing vehicles up until the lease. They switched over to Seagrave. He stated that he appreciates Council's support and the Commonwealth support of investments in our fire apparatus. This continues with the supply chain delays associated with the delivery of fire apparatuses. It is stunning. The continued investment will keep them rolling and keep the residents safe. Seagrave's seems to be a more suitable choice a the moment for ongoing investments. He would really love a manufacturer of fire engines come to Pennsylvania and help address some of these supply chain issues. He knows that communities across the country are facing delays in delivery of new rolling stock.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that he fully supports it. He was just curious who was the manufacturer and who does most of them today.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked about the building. He is not sure if it is the old school.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that everyone wants Mack to go back to the business.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked why is it taking so long. She stated that he mentioned it is going to take some time.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated it is supply and demand.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated it is unbelievable.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that Covid did not even help.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that Covid doesn't help and the manufacturers

around the country where they are manufacturing pharmaceuticals or they are manufacturing consumer goods. Manufacturers are struggling to find people. That has a significant impact on the delivery of these trucks.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Mayor Tuerk. She asked if there were any other comments from the dais or from the public.

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 16001

[15-6768](#)

Bill 28

Amending various sections of the city code by removing penalties providing for imprisonment as a means of enforcement.

Sponsors: Gerlach and Mr. Zucal

Attachments: [Bill 28 De-imprisonment](#)

[Ordinance #16002](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked who would like to talk about Bill 28. She asked if there were any comments.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that he doesn't know, but maybe Mr. Hanlon can answer this. He doesn't know anyone that has been imprisoned as a result of these codes since that he is aware of.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that he thinks that Councilperson Gerlach asked that in the committee meetings.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she means and don't know if there are anyone there that didn't cut their grass and that is why they are there. It kind of goes back to similar where the Parking Authority and it just don't make sense.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that she is just glad that it is happening.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that this is something that they brought up just over a year ago to Councilperson Gerlach. They were surprised to see the number of instances of the word imprisonment in the city's code. There is no reason for city code to mention imprisonment. He suggested that the Parking Authority on the side of one of the garages was a reference to going to jail if you don't clean up after your dog. Definitely remove that one too.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she guess she will bounce off of that. She just really went through those 99 and tried to pick ones that just are clearly not criminal offenses. She encouraged the administration and anyone else

on Council who maybe has more of a bit of conservative perspective to look at these and think what else shouldn't we be incarcerating people for.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that she agrees and thanked Ms. Gerlach.

Mr. Santo Napoli commended Ms. Gerlach for bringing that up. He knows that the administration brought it up as well at the Parking Authority. They took a look at the ordinances in regards to the Parking Authority and got rid of 13 that mentioned the word imprisonment. He thinks that this is a no brainer, but good job by all.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated definitely. Any comments from the public.

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 16002

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that there are a number of items on the Consent Agenda. Is everybody ok with the items on the Consent Agenda before he reads them.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked who is Ms. Hailey.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated Yvette Hailey is the wife of Pastor Ben Hailey who is the Pastor at Union Baptist Church. She is currently an alternate on the Civil Service Board.

Mr. Ed Zucal thanked Mayor Tuerk.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there are any public comments.

Mayor Matt Tuerk gave one point of clarification. Ms. Wilt is going to be completing the term of a current Recreation Board member who is stepping down.

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

[15-6777](#)

R45

Certificate of Appropriateness for work in the Historic Districts:

- 112 N. 11th Street
- 1109 W Turner Street
- 1142 Emmett Street
- 1515 Linden Street
- 240.5 Hall Street
- 403 N 8th Street
- 1021 Linden Street

Attachments: [R45 March HARB Approved Resolution](#)
[HARB Final Reviews March 2024](#)
[Resolution #30815](#)

Enactment No: 30815

[15-6772](#)

R46
John Stribula, Civil Service Board, 3/21/2028

Attachments: [R46 John Stribula - Civil Service Board](#)
[Memo from Mayor Matt Tuerk regarding John Stribula - Civil Service Board](#)
[Civil Service Board List](#)
[Resolution #30816](#)

Enactment No: 30816

[15-6773](#)

R47
Walter Felton, Civil Service Board, 3/21/2028

Attachments: [R47 Walter Felton - Civil Service Board](#)
[Memo from Mayor Matt Tuerk regarding Walter Felton - Civil Service Board](#)
[Civil Service Board List](#)
[Resolution #30818](#)

Enactment No: 30818

[15-6774](#)

R48
Yvette Hailey, Civil Service Board, 3/31/2028

Attachments: [R48 Yvette Hailey - Civil Service Board](#)
[Memo from Mayor Matt Tuerk regarding Yvette Hailey - Civil Service Board](#)
[Civil Service Board List](#)
[Resolution #30819](#)

Enactment No: 30819

[15-6775](#)

R49
Nancy Wilt, Board of Parks and Recreation, 1/20/2026

Attachments: [R49 Nancy Wilt - Board of Parks and Recreation](#)
[Memo from Mayor Matt Tuerk regarding Nancy Wilt - Board of Parks and Recreation](#)
[Parks and Recreation Board List](#)
[Resolution #30820](#)

Enactment No: 30820

RESOLUTIONS FOR FINAL PASSAGE (To be Voted On):[15-6671](#)

R31

Council recommends ARPA funds not appropriated be directed to towards offsetting any potential tax increase and used for critical infrastructure projects.

Proposed Amendment: Amend the resolution to take the 1.2M from community reinvestment and place it into the general fund to be used for recommendations from the housing study.

Sponsors: Affa, Hendricks and Mr. Zucal

Attachments: [R31 ARPA Resolution](#)
[ARPA Funds Cash Summary 3.22.2024](#)
[Resolution #30821](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she would like to make an amendment.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or any comments from the public.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that this will be on the amendment.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that basically what's on the books right now is to take the \$1.2 million from the Community Reinvestment Fund which is the money that was going to the nonprofits to do different items. Instead of doing that, taking that \$1.2 million. They wanted to take that \$1.2 million and use that to offset a potential tax increase in the future or address infrastructure needs. They wanted to take that money and use it for to offset a potential tax increase and for structural needs. She is saying let's not do that and instead let's take that \$1.2 million and use it to actually implement the recommendations that this housing study the city got going on will make in the very near future. It is important. Housing, not just like developers who are building affordable housing. They are talking of any of the recommendations that could come from this study could be things that can touch to reentry. They can touch into mental health. They can touch a wide variety of services that nonprofits provide. She stated that she hears them and she would be worried, like wait. Hold up. We were promised money. She would venture to say that the vast majority of organizations will be able to work with the Council and this administration and be able to access that money. She stated that they can allocate the money, but they are not doing the actual work. Nonprofits are doing that work. Either way.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated one point of clarification, when you say they, you are referring to the authors of the resolutions. He stated when Ms. Gerlach says they want a reapportion or reallocate the money.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she doesn't know where he stands on this, but the people on the resolution. She stated let's not do that and let's give the money to the housing study.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated to restate that, you are taking the \$1.2 million, putting it into the cost recover funds. You are taking that fund out and putting into a DCED account and in June when all the dust settles when you know the outcome of the housing strategy, the full Council will meet when you know the outcome and at that particular time discuss particular allocations.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that they cannot move the money away from the ARPA funds. If it is part of the ARPA funds and move it into the General Fund. When you say CED department, that is moving money into the General Fund. That is against the rules of the ARPA. American Recovery Act does not allow that.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that you can designate that as long as it stays within that ARPA fund. You can designate it whatever way.

Ms. Vicky Kistler stated that to comply, the city would have to and stated Ms. Patel please correct her if she is wrong. Put this money into revenue replacement. Then designate General Fund money to the DCED account which would remove the ARPA deadlines, stings and regulations and then it would be able to be used to address the housing study. She stated that if they simply move this from where it is into DCED, it would violate the ARPA violations and the city would lose the money.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that he thinks her point was it would go into replacement funds and cost recovery. She is saying what you are saying.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated revenue replacement.

Ms. Vicky Kistler stated that it should go to revenue replacement and then General Fund dollars to go DCED.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that the revenue replacement is still the will of Council. According to Ms. Gerlach's amendment, the will of Council according to the amendment, the funds would be used to support the findings of the Housing Study that the city is performing. That is something

obviously the administration complies with.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that they should delete the part that says Community and Economic Development department.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated could we get a cleared up language for this. She wants to make sure that she is down to do this.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that Council has their lawyer here.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated this to the director, he believes Ms. Gerlach's attempt was to use it for revenue replacement, but then she wanted that \$1.1 million to come back and go into one account.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that is the end result that Vicky Kistler's department has \$1.2 million that they can use to implement the findings of the housing study inclusive of community servicer organizations. She stated that is the final result.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated to the audience if they mind sitting down and promised them that they would be the first one and Ms. Andrene will be the second. This might take quite some time. 40:53

Attorney Charles Smith stated that Ms. Kistler's point is that if it is designated as revenue replacement that it needs to be placed into the General Fund and not to DCED. He stated that is what she is saying. He stated that is the piece they want to get right. They don't want to run a foul on ARPA regs.

Ms. Vicky Kistler stated that the second step is to take money from the General Fund and create the new account in the DCED budget.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that the second step is most important because what she is afraid of she will be honest that they would put the money in revenue replacement and they won't do anything with the housing. She stated with this motion that will happen.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that they would need to do an ordinance to do the transfer.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that they need to do an ordinance to do a transfer from the General Fund to CED.

Ms. Vicky Kistler stated after Council approves it into the revenue replacement. She stated if that is what they want to do.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that would have to happen at a whole separate meeting.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that you need the 14 days.

Mr. Matt Tuerk stated that this is just a resolution so it is just expressing your intent. He stated that he would not get too particular about this thing.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated 14 days from now. That's it.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that this is a Resolution.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated irrespective of the timing, the administration has appeared before Council before and said that they are committed to following that guidance. They communicated before that the ARPA funds that were given to the city of Allentown by the federal government were to be used in collaboration and the administration gave some recommendations. Council has a plan for it and they basically followed Council's direction. If Council as a body votes to go in this direction, that is the direction they go in.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any other comments from this dais.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach asked if she would be able to make a motion to suspend the rules and introduce an ordinance tonight to transfer funds to the General Fund into the CED account for the purposes of the housing study.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that is a Chuck question.

Mr. Charles Smith stated no.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that is pretty tricky. You would have to suspend a lot of rules. The state laws.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated let's go.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that he is not anxious to do the ordinance tonight, but anxious to get the resolution right.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she hears him.

Mayor Matt Tuerk offered to Ms. Gerlach stating that they have not yet finished the housing study. That has yet to be complete. He thinks if they

time this properly, they are looking at the housing study in May.

Ms. Vicky Kistler stated May or June.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated May or June. If they time it right, they can issue the housing study and immediately print the ordinance and make the transfers supporting the housing study once you see what's in it.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that again, she really is scared because she has seen this happen before where they say they are going to do something and they can look at her all they want to, but they say they are going to do something and when it comes time to do that thing, they don't do it because conversations get had between now and then. She stated that is really her hesitancy now that she sees how this is structured. She stated that will be on the rest of them. She will be introducing an ordinance to transfer funds and how they vote is how they vote. They are saying that they are making a commitment and some of them say that they want the money to be used to support the results of the housing study and when that comes, she hopes that they all stand by that. Those who vote yes.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that he wants to say this that the money is sitting there and they can't do anything with it until an ordinance is introduced. They can't spend it. It would be accumbent upon the administration anyway to introduce an ordinance. That money is not going anywhere until they do something.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she is ok with that change.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there any other comments from the dais.

Mr. Santo Napoli asked if they are on the amendment still.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that they are still clarifying the amendment.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked Attorney Smith to clarify the amendment.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that Council is amending the Resolution to take \$1.2 million from the Community Reinvestment and designate it for revenue replacement and transfer it to the General Fund.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that is correct.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that then you transfer it to the General Fund and designate that it shall be used for recommendations from the housing study.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she is ok with that.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that what he did was designate it for revenue replacement. Transferred it to the General Fund and said that it will be used for recommendations from the housing study. That is the language that was in there and he is using it. He is trying to make it compliant to the ARPA regs.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated as long as it is compliant, she is ok with that language.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that the administration is ok with that language then.

Mr. Patrick Palmer, 617 Allen Street, asked if there a more concrete date than May or June when the housing study is going to be finished or can they get that.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that the administration said May or June or that's when they know it is going to come at that timeframe.

Mr. Patrick Palmer asked if the city already had funds set aside for the housing study.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that the housing study was already planned and paid for. What they are talking about now and what he seconded was when that housing study is complete, instead of it going on a shelf and collecting dust, they are going to put \$1.2 million behind the results of it.

Mr. Patrick Palmer asked what were they going to do with the results before. Just leave it on the shelf like you said and collect dust.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that his point is that they have an opportunity to actually put some funds behind it and help get folks out.

Mr. Patrick Palmer asked what was the purpose of the housing study. What was the end result going to be if you did not have this \$1.2 million.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that when they are finished they are going to obviously find ways to address the recommendations the best they could. They were waiting for the results. Until they have those results, they don't know what the recommendations are at this point. Once they get that, then they can actually make a plan, but a plan also requires money. Their idea was to put \$1.2 million behind it and have these local nonprofits actually

help with the plan.

Mr. Patrick Palmer stated that they did not have a money plan before. It sounds like there was no money to back this before with this \$1.2 million. He stated unless you can explain differently for him because maybe he is just confused.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked does the administration have any comments. She suggested after the meeting, Mr. Palmer stay and they will talk to him.

Mr. Patrick Palmer stated that for him, it is out of nowhere and it is throwing him off. He is trying to figure it out where it came from and where it is going.

Ms. Andrene Nowell, 1637 W. Washington Street, stated usually when you do a study and it is a comprehensive study, the findings that come back from that is usually outside of the scope of what's been happening before. When the study comes back, it is probably going to have things on there that is recommended, that you need funding for, and you might need to tap into outside resources to get back. It doesn't necessarily mean that the organizations that are here will be able to provide those resources. There are resources that are needed now to address the needs that are there right now. Like, Mr. Palmer said, if you guys decided to do this plan like the Allentown School District when they are doing strategic planning and all of that stuff. They know that they have to plan ahead and have the funding to have to implement whatever comes back from that. To hear the expression that the fact that you guys don't really have any funding or have any plan for what supposed to be there is alarming.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that they did not say that.

Ms. Andrene Nowell stated that it seems like it was implied. If it wasn't said then fine. She asked are they saying that it is support and funding there. It is all about trust. Week after week after week as an organization and plenty of organizations showed up and advocated for that \$1.2 million for work that needs to be done right now. The reason why it is still there because they were told that they had to wait until CDBG funding was allocated and they were told how to apply for that funding. Herself and other organizations that are here have been sitting here waiting to be able to apply for these funds. Now, they are hearing that it was sitting there collecting dust and now being reallocated which isn't correct. It causes them as the public to not trust you guys. She stated that she would like that to change. That is something that she is working on her side, across the street. She would like this to change here as well. The word is the word. She understands in business, things change. She understands that you

have to make different business decisions. When you are dealing with a public that is dealing with the struggle to trust this dais, you have to make decisions that work for the public and listen to the public. The public said it needed \$1.2 million to put into the streets to support what is happening right now. She stated to do right by the public.

Ms. Phoebe Harris, 1817 17th Street SW, stated that ARPA - The American Rescue Plan is federal money, correct. How can you take federal money that is for one thing and then put it in the general fund. She knows for herself at the school district, they cannot take federal money and put it into the General Fund. She stated that they just can't do it. She is trying to figure out how you can possibly do that. When Covid hit, there were organizations and nonprofits that hit the streets. She was part of it. She was a volunteer from 2019 to 2022 with the Ortiz Ark Foundation. They were outside feeding the community. The Allentown School District had to keep their numbers up for lunch programs and breakfast programs. They fed on Fridays so they can get that extra money to keep the money coming in from the federal government lunches. They made sure that families, 600 - 1,000 families were fed every Friday. Usually, these lunches and breakfasts were done for the whole weekend. She stated that they thought that the \$1.2 million was going to come back to those nonprofits that were on the ground, not sitting, not closed because some nonprofits were closed and not people sitting in their houses, but out there doing the job. They had nonprofits checking on children so that the parents can go to work. They were knocking on doors. They did not go in, but they checked on those children to make sure they were safe, they had something to eat, and they were doing the work. Then they bought desks because kids did not have anywhere to do their homework. Then the community started building desks for them. Just for Allentown. The Allentown School District gave out desks. This was boots on the ground and thinking outside the box. Why are you taking that \$1.2 million and taking it somewhere. She stated that she understands the housing study. That's fine. However, those small nonprofits that were doing the work needs to be reimbursed. They need to be reimbursed. She is no longer with any nonprofits except Doleman Black Heritage Museum and that is in Hagerstown, MD. She is asking and begging Council to please consider those nonprofits that really did the work, didn't only show up for news programs or just to show off. The ones that did the work behind the scenes and made show that their children and parents and even when it came to the rent rebated and the rental assistance and the moratorium for the mortgage. They got those applications in with no money coming in.

Mr. Pas Simpson, 215 N. Ninth Street, stated that he has been here once this year because it is disheartening to watch the bait and switch. There were people who came in here and fought for what is about to be taken

away from them. Let's not talk about the five years that took them to get here before Covid. He stated that he has always been boots to the ground. He is always boots to the ground. It is not about him though. It is about the people who are consistently showing up here. He gave them credit for continuing to come. He doesn't believe that they are going to keep their word. He has seen things get passed, sat on, sit in committee, never hit the people. watch people die, and never help. He stated that they can't keep doing that to our people and think that you represent us. You represent a small portion of this community instead of the large portion that keeps coming to you. The large portion that kept showing up. There were some that showed up and he has brought youth here all summer. They were here every two weeks begging for the same things, but his momma didn't raise a beggar. His momma raised a doer so he is going to do what he got to do. He is asking this Council to do the same. He stopped coming because he is going to bring his own money into the city stating watch him. What is the sense of fighting for something that you don't care about. He stated that he is asking them to care and put their best foot forward because there are people that are starving. During Covid, him and his brother back there passed out over 250,000 diapers to families that needed it. He stated Cynthia you know. He stated that they provided food in food deserts for our elderly and for our children. They never asked for anything. They made ways out of no way. Some of the larger nonprofits that you talk about, they were scared to come out during Covid. If you want to know the face that you saw most of the time, it looks like him and like his brother back there because they were the ones outside. They were the ones that were leading when the fire went down and talking to the Red Cross because they didn't know what to do. They were the ones that were opening up their doors when nobody else wasn't to make sure people were safe. He asked Council to match their efforts. Stop bait and switching. Stop approving something here and then moving it over there when they are not looking. He stated stop telling them they are going to do something for them and never come through. Anywhere else it would be not only disrespectful, it would be disheartening and you wonder why some of them don't trust or don't show up. He stated that Council has an opportunity to be different and do different.

Ms. Cynthia Velez, 1205 Gordon Court, stated that she has been doing nonprofit work for a lot of years, specifically with one company. She has been going out into the streets and would like to know who is holding these studies for the housing. Is it someone living in a loft. Is it someone living in the streets. Who is holding these studies? She would give anything for anyone to come with half of these people, the nonprofits that are out in the streets. See them in their faces when they glow when you give them that food or some place to stay. They need that because if the right people are not holding that study, she doesn't believe in it. She believes in the

nonprofits that she has been working with. Going under bridges and feeding the homeless. Taking her own shoes off and giving it to a young girl. Saving someone from sex trafficking. They are out in the streets and she would love Council to come out in the streets with them. See what they are actually doing. She said believe in it as much as she does. As much as all of them do. They open their doors, their hearts, and she cries because they can't save them all, but they are trying. Give it to the people that needs it. The ones that are out there in the streets that are showing their faces. That are doing the work. She stated that she is out there with them. It is not easy. You want to save everybody, you can't. If you take that funding and put it some place else, and it disappears, you guys got to sleep with that. She stated that she can't sleep at night knowing that one of her clients is having a crisis because they have no food, no way to feed their children. She stated that they knock on that door. They take those sheets, pillows, pay for hotels, find resolutions, but if you take that make sure that the right people are doing the study because if not, it is going to disappear and whose going to live in it, the people that don't need it. She stated that we need it. They need it. Give it to the nonprofits. Give it to the people.

Ms. Jessica Ortiz, 523 Tilghman Street - Ortiz Ark Foundation, stated that she came with a hat and a little a mess. She undergoes dialysis and had to skip it to be here. She stated that is real. Nonprofits are the catalyst for community development for individuals and families. She has been here going on two years on the same topic. When Cynthia Velez stated that she took off her shoes, she walked around barefoot for an entire day because she gave her shoes to a young girl that was homeless who didn't have any. She took the sex trafficking girl into her house because they did not have any money left in their bank accounts to put them somewhere. Her biggest question, and it nothing against those who get money, but why are the smaller nonprofits always the ones that you want to make the tax increase adjustments from. She stated that \$3 million was given out to the larger nonprofits. She has nothing against any of them and this is not about them. This is about them sharing a crumb and now fighting for the crumb when they have bee fighting for the people. She asked if they could imagine a day without nonprofits. You couldn't even live in this city. She saw that the city needs new fire trucks. She stated that they love that because they are the ones at the fires. She saw two little girls jump out of a burning building because their brother threw them out of a window. She is not a firefighter. She has been at crime scenes where she has to hold somebody's blood until an ambulance and the police get there. She stated that she is not an EMT and she is not a police officer. She is none of the above. All of them and many of them with no money had to go and get different credentials. They got certified nurses certificates. They paid to be credible messengers because that is what they were told by Council. Only

those who were certified would get these things. Only those who had credentials. She got her doctorate over the last two years so that she didn't have to keep hearing that there are other organizations whose executive directors have a doctorate and she didn't have one while going through dialysis, while going through physical health. You know why, because she lives here and love Allentown. She has to fight for people that are parking and boots and getting towed away. She has to go to two or three tent cities to take food and clothing from her own. She stated that they don't get any funding. She stated that they don't get zero dollars to do this. She stated that they do come together because it does take a village. She stated like Pas said, why do we have to beg. She stated that they are begging to keep our community safe. The importance of fire trucks. The importance of police cars. We is the importance of the people doing the work in the front line. You would never send soldiers in to battle without the proper utensils and tools for the others to come from behind with the tanks. She stated that they need all the tanks and need all because they are on the front line and are getting exhausted. She has to have a new team every three months. Not because they are not good people. It is because they burn out. They can't get paid. They don't get a stipend. They have to struggle to keep their families together. It is exhausting. It is really exhausting. Many of them houses are going under conditions. They were out today giving out things. It is raining. She doesn't see many nonprofits on the executive level doing what we do. She stated that they cannot continue to be the afterthought of the city. We cannot be the one that you say ok, we are going to take a little bit of your money. That is like giving your kid money under the pillow when the tooth fairy and say oh, I need it back to pay the electric bill. How do you say that? How do you continue to do that? She stated that she is a realtor and knows how important housing studies are. Why is that our problem? PFHA, FHA, and all these people have done studies. Lehigh County has one published online. Why are we reinventing the wheel? She stated that they know the problem. Why aren't they included in these conversations. She was here two weeks ago to advocate for something else and beholds to her there was another grant going out and only one organization's name was on there when there is a lot of them and a lot more than the ones that are getting the money on the front line are the ones out there doing the work. Why do they keep having to say this to you guys over. You guys say and she is really trying to respectful and work with everybody. You guys say you want to help and want to hear what we have to say, but you really don't. It is like when the kid is saying why he didn't do his homework. She stated that yeah, I heard this before. She stated that she know that you guys have to feel like this. She stated that they are getting the same answer. We got y'all. Give us a little more time, May or June. We are going to do a housing study and we are going to get the money. Last year was this, you got to get certified for Credible Messenger. We got to certify the certifiers. She stated that they

keep hearing different reasons. They went through hoops and they went through fire. They went through wind, streams, storms, and went through Covid. Her office was open every day during Covid filling out rental applications with not one dollar compensation for the entire first year. They were forced to by computers and do this and do that. They can't afford to continue to save the community on their own dime. It is not their responsibility. It is great to have the fire truck there, but if the firemen doesn't speak English or Spanish or Syrian, guess what, it happens and they call us. She stated what if they don't show up. Now, we have people living on the street because they didn't know to wait two hours because that's how long it takes for Red Cross to come. Two hours for the Red Cross because now they are going to be homeless because they didn't know what to do. That's the reality. What do we do? Oh, we didn't know it was rental assistance open. These are the questions and the answers that we have because we are frontline. You can't pay for the tank, if you can't pay for the soldiers on the frontline.

Ms. Mary Tomlinson, 300 block of Liberty Street, stated that she lives and works in Allentown and would like to share her concerns. Last year's budget process was brutal and divisive you may remember. Our budget needs to invest in our entire community. Investment in our community and public safety prevents crime and builds communities rather than dividing them. She stated that we in the city needs a fair process for ARPA and all funding that supports true public safety and building the capacity of community organization. Watching our community fight over crumbs is depressing. She supports this amendment and any efforts to protect this ARPA money from reallocation away from community organizations. She supports increasing the support for our community organizations. She stated the following are good examples are ARPA funding being allocated currently and other communities across the country and places where leadership is prioritized by the investment in their communities. In Denton, Texas they committed \$5.5 million towards housing assistance, building a shelter, and eviction prevention. Cleveland allocated \$1.9 million in ARPA money for medical debt relief. Atlanta is giving \$5 million to cure violence programs. Houston committed \$21 million to programs that provide support during mental health crisis calls. Los Angeles County is giving \$18.5 million to support its alternative crisis response project. Boston will use \$3 million for workforce development programs for young adults and returning citizens. Louisville has committed \$8.5 million to support young people who are struggling to find a job or school. Vermont Housing Improvement Program is providing \$5 million in grants to property owners to repairs properties that are vacant or threatened to become vacant. The city of Pittsburgh is giving \$19.5 million for Lead Service Line and support and implementation of the Lead Safety Law. North Carolina Division of Public Health is investing \$150 million in testing water for lead mitigation,

hazards and public schools and supporting inspections and abatement in schools and childcare facilities. Vermont Healthy Homes is repairing water and wastewater systems on owner-occupied and manufactured homes. She stated that she hopes the city will make the best decisions in truly supporting our community and make our community stronger. Please let's give our community, our community leaders and our community organizations the respect that they deserve. She thanked Council for their service to the community.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there was anyone else.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that is just on the amendment. You have to vote on the resolution as amended. He stated that he has folks that already spoke, but wanted to speak on the resolution itself.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated let's do comments from the dais first. She asked if there were any comments from the dais.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated just a point of clarification, for the ordinance that needs to be introduced that will initiate the transfer of funds from the General Fund to CED. She heard the administration say that is something they support. That is something that you all will introduce or is it something that she needs to bring forward.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that they will be writing that ordinance. To further though, R31 was a resolution that was authored by Councilperson Hendricks, Councilwoman Affa, and Councilman Zucal. The original resolution was to transfer the \$1.2 million to the General Fund for revenue replacement. The amendment is now creating an environment that will write the ordinance that will make the General Fund transfer into a new account where they will use those funds to address consequences of the housing study. A lot of what Ms. Tomlinson mentioned are eligible projects.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that you will do that at the April 17th meeting.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that they can reasonably. Yes. They can put together the ordinance for transfer by the April 17th meeting. He doesn't think that should be a problem.

A motion was made by Ce Ce Gerlach seconded by Santo Napoli to amend the resolution to take the 1.2M from community reinvestment and place it into the general fund as cost recovery to instead use the 1.2M to be used for recommendations to implement from the housing study and allocate that money into an account with the Community and Economic Development Department and Council will have a meeting of the full Council in June to discuss this strategy which will be inclusive of community serving organizations.

Santo Napoli, asked that his second be withdrawn.

Enactment No: 30821

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach asked if they need to take public comment.

Ms. Karen Ocasio asked for clarification. If they do what Ms. Kistler said it is moved to the General Fund and then it is moved to another account. Does that mean once the restrictions from ARPA are taken off, does that mean that those funds are fair game for anybody to do anything with.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated no.

Ms. Karen Ocasio asked would it say that they have to use that \$1.2 million for the things that are stated under ARPA.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated no.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that it is not going to be as restricted.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that they just took it away from ARPA.

Ms. Karen Ocasio stated that is like a restriction because they know things get extended. Situations happen and they need that \$1.2 million. She wants to get clarification just to make sure that \$1.2 million is not going to go anywhere.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that is why we are doing this.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that it is transferred, but it is frozen.

Ms. Karen Ocasio stated that she wants to make sure that it is locked in and all of a sudden they don't have the ARPA funds. She wanted to make sure that was the case. Also, she thinks that the mayor said that the application doesn't open until October.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that was for CDBG.

Ms. Karen Ocasio stated oh, so that does not pertain to this.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or the public.

A motion was made by Ed Zucal, seconded by Ce-Ce Gerlach, to add Now Therefore Be Resolved By the City Council of Allentown that and the amendment would be that you take \$1.2 million of ARPA funds and use it as revenue replacement in the General Fund. Transfer that money into an account in the CD department and within one month develop an application process.

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 30821

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 30821

[15-6797](#)

R50

Police Officer Appointments

Attachments: [R50 Hiring Patrolmen](#)

[Resolution #30822](#)

[Resolution #30822](#)

Assistant Chief James Gress stated that he will be very brief. The first candidate that they are bringing tonight is Jose Espinosa. He is from Lancaster, PA from the Civil Service List. He is 41, a graduate of Monroe College, and Harry S. Truman High School. He is a graduate of the Academy from a few years ago and he currently works for the city of New York Police Department, but he is born and raised in Allentown and wants to come back to Allentown and bring his family here. The second one is Mr. John Weaver from Northampton, PA. He is 25 years old. He is a graduate of Northampton Area High School and he is not Act 120 certified. He will begin the Academy in June. He is currently with the US Navy. The third one is Mr. Michael Treadway from Macungie, PA. He is 31 years old and is a graduate of Bucks County Community College and Penn Ridge High School. He also needs to attend the Police Academy starting in mid June. He comes to them from the Department of Homeland Security.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or the public.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that he knows that everybody pays close attention to the number of sworn officers. This will bring the city to 216 sworn officers which seems that the city hovers around. He stated that he met all the candidates and they are exceptional candidates.

Ms. Candida Affa stated to Mayor Tuerk that she did not hear what he said. Right now, we have.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that this will bring us to 216 sworn officers.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Mayor Tuerk.

Yes: 6 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

No: 1 - Ce-Ce Gerlach

Enactment No: 30822

[15-6798](#)

R51

Authorizes the submission of the City's application for the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency 2024 Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) in the amount of Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000.00).

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [R51 PCCD JAG Grant](#)

[Resolution #30823](#)

[Resolution #30823](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated with this grant and knows that some grants will cover the planning portion and implementation and possible evaluation and data collection. She asked if they know if this grant will.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that this is a JAG Grant from the Department of Justice. A portion will be used for planning, but he will ask Assistant Chief Gress to go into greater details.

Assistant Chief James Gress stated with PCCED Grants has to align with the PCCED Strategic Framework and this one does. The goal of this is to enhance our CIS Program that we currently have. It would pay for an additional CIS worker in full. This is a co-responder model. The proposal is for police and the CIS workers to work together and respond to calls together. There is a study included with it from Pine Brooks that they will be studying the program from Cedar Crest College. The Police Innovation and Community Engagement Analysis will pay for the overtime for officers as well. Like on the backside, if officers are assigned to this unit and they are responding and there is a need to backfill positions that will pay for that overtime as well. It will pay for a parallel and any additional equipment like software or iPads that are needed for evaluations. The whole program is meant to connect the dots and the resources that some of the crisis and people experiencing mental health crisis need. This is exactly one of the objectives that PCCE is authorizing and there is no match to it and there is no cost to the city.

Mayor Matt Tuerk added that this is as PCCED accompanies other federal monies that the city continues to pursue for the development of alternative response models that you have discussed at length with the team.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she just wants to confirm. Hopefully, they

can later explore maybe having other organizations in addition to Cedar Crest do some of the data collections. She stated that she knows that she communicated with Chief Roca about other funding opportunities. She hopes that even more continue to.

Assistant Chief James Gress stated that there have been more federal announcements for some very similar projects and stated absolutely.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any other comments from the dais or any comments from the public.

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 30823

[15-6792](#)

R52

Authorizes the participation in the 2024 cohort of the Pennsylvania Blueprint Communities program.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [R52 Blueprint Communities](#)
[Resolution #30824](#)

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that they were incredibly happy to be considered with along the Allentown Housing Authority as the lead applicant for this blueprint community grant. Their requirement is that Council pass a Resolution that appoints one of our planning team for the blueprint community. That is all it is. Trevor Torrmann is our Senior Planner. He is an exceptional individual and will be participating with Allentown Housing Authority's Blueprint Community Project.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Mayor Tuerk and asked if there were any comments from the dais or from the public.

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 30824

[15-6785](#)

R53

Approves two transfers: (1) \$15,000.00 in Building Standards & Safety for the Nuisance Property Appeals Board's Legal Counsel Fees; and (2) \$13,000.00 in Information Systems Needed to Replace the Current Mail Center Unit (Current Device Will Be End of Life in 2024).

Attachments: [R53 Transfer Funds](#)
[Nuisance Property Appeals Board's Legal Counsel Fees](#)
[Need To Replace The Current Mail Center Unit \(End of Life in 2024\)](#)
[Resolution #30825](#)

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that these are simple transfers for legal fees to improve outcomes in Nuisance Abatement conditions and that mail sorter is done. They are considering a transfer to allow them to more efficiently treat our mail.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Mayor Tuerk and asked if there were any comments from the dais or from the public.

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 30825

[15-6795](#)

R54

Authorizes the Administration to sell the City-Owned Real Property at 1001 1007 W. Hamilton St, Allentown PA, identified as Tax Map Parcel No. 549699283455.

Attachments: [R54 10th and Hamilton](#)
[Exhibit A](#)
[Exhibit B](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she will be voting against this because by doing so it will take what would be a traditionally more of a public process that won't exist necessarily. She also don't want if she could be honest what she foresees happening is some more luxury housing being put up with a restaurant underneath, some type of retail underneath and some parking in the middle. She always said if she got on Council, she would not contribute to the gentrification of her neighborhood so she has to vote against this.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Ms. Gerlach and asked if there were any other comments from the dais or the public.

Officer David Benner, 1005 Hamilton Street, stated that he is the FOP President for Queen City Lodge 10. He stated that he doesn't know why they are talking about this, selling the police station property there when they don't have anything in place and has spoke to Mayor Tuerk and Chief Roca at length about having a proper transition for the new station that you guys are proposing. He stated that they have assured him several times that they will have x, y, and z lined up. He stated that they selling this or

proposing it before they have anything in place is backwards how you do anything. The men and women that he represents is very concerned about this because they are used to certain amenities that are in their CBA and he doesn't thin they are going to be followed. If they allow the sell of this without things in place, they are just going to go backward. He asked why would they sell the police station without having another one in place. He asked where are you going to put us. In his power, he can tell them this is that if they move forward with this, he has to file an emergency injunction and a ULP to try to stop this because he knows they are not going to give them apples for apples. He doesn't understand why they would be looking to do this and they didn't talk more about this. He stated that he spoke to Chief Roca and he is inline with himself and the members that he represents. He stated that Chief Gress he imagines you as well in that the rumor was you would move them back down to 4th Street. They cannot sustain the parking. There is no parking. There is no locker rooms. There is nothing. He asked that they not try to stop further progress as far as a new station. He stated that he is all for it. There has to be a process to do this. He stated that if they vote to sell it right away, the mere fact that this was brought up all of a sudden and the property value was set at \$750,000 and it stated in the bill that this is a big tax revenue. It is not even a quarter acre of land. He stated that they want to get this out of here. He can only speculate and saying it respectfully that there is some sort of backdoor deal being done on the property and the last time someone did that they are sitting in federal prison.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated come on guys, come on.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated to Ms. Mota that he takes offense to the backroom. It is disrespectful speech. He thinks Office Benner went well beyond the boundaries that you set as Council President for discourse in this room.

Officer Benner stated that he is not implying you. He is just stating that they talked about this you said we will do this the proper way and all of a sudden throwing it out here to be sold is not the proper way. It is going to create more problems and more money to just sell it without anything planned. He stated tonight, if you could think about what he is saying, what the men and women that he represent are concerned with. If the mayor would have come up here and said hey, we have x, y, and z, this spot and it fits our criterion. he wouldn't even be here. He stated that they don't have that and he knows they are not going to have that. He stated that they spoke about it.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that the action they are asking Council take here is simply authorizes them to begin the sales process. It is preposterous to

suggest that this administration or any administration would leave some of our most critically needed employees hanging in the lurch. It is totally ridiculous to suggest that. It is insulting frankly to suggest that there are some sort of backdoor deal in place. They are asking Council to do with this Resolution is allow them to begin a process that would culminate with the sale of the property. It doesn't mean that they sale the property and is transacted tomorrow. It is a long process. They are working with a realtor right now t articulate the needs of the departments that we have a transition plan in place. They have to begin somewhere with the sale of the building otherwise Council will if and he thinks he is following Officer Benner's properly otherwise Council will be sitting with a vacant building at 10th and Hamilton for some amount of time while they begin the process of selling after they completed the construction on the new building. Nobody wants that. They are trying to coordinate things so they can maximize value for the city of Allentown, for the employees of the city of Allentown, and especially the residents of the city of Allentown.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that she is trying to understand this. The officers are now housed and we know we are building a new and they will be transferred there eventually. Why can't we pass this right now and keep the officers there, unless you do have a plan.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that the plan that they are developing, the city appointed realtor Chris Raab and evaluating the needs of the department and identifying temporary space to house.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that if they don't pass it tonight, these officers still will be housed there. She asked Officer Benner if he wanted the officers to stay there until there is a plan to move or a plan to move into the new building. She asked Mayor Tuerk why can't they do that. She asked if they can leave the officers in there.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that you can pass this Resolution tonight. They can begin the process of transacting the property, of selling the property and can continue to occupy. he stated that when Council passes this Resolution, they don't roll the wrecking ball up to 10th and Hamilton. That is not how this works.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that they don't know that. If Council passes this, someone has an opportunity to come in here and say exactly what Ms. Gerlach said. They are going to put a restaurant here, but the police are gone.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that they are not going to enter into an agreement to use our police officers without an option. He stated that they describe

this is full.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that if they don't pass it, they allow the police officers to stay there until there is a better solution. If Council passes this, someone can come out and buy this.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated no. If you pass this, you authorize the mayor to enter into an agreement. He stated that they describe this process to members of Council at an executive session related to the disposition of real estate. He stated that he is not going to enter into an agreement that puts our officers at a disadvantage. That is simply not going to happen.

Ms. Candida Affa asked why not wait another year until that is almost complete. Why now? She stated that he still will be able to sell the building a year from now or six months.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that the desire at this point is to get everything lined up so they can transact quickly when the time comes. There is no intent to evict our officers from 10th and Hamilton until there is a plan in place. This is laying the groundwork that would allow them to could that transaction and to conduct that sell.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that she is kind of confused and stated Officer Benner spoke and seems not to know what the plans are. He is advocating for his officers. She believes that it what she was hearing. She asked if the police officers know about the plan that you guys are looking for a place to lease until this thing gets sold.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that Chief Roca and the police administration have been collaborating with our officers with the design of the new building. They are collaborating and Chief Gress can speak more of how he has been conducting the search for temporary space.

Assistant Chief James Gress stated that they actually done two presentations for employees of the police department, both civilians and sworn on the Alloy5 results of the location and design and what this all is going to look like. It was attended by a few officers and a few civilians that work here. They have been collaborating with Christopher Raab from Chris Raab Real Estate on S. 4th Street, the city's realtor to find a place. He talks to Chris Raad almost every day. He talked to him earlier today. He is meeting with Mike Butz tomorrow about some possibilities. He stated that they talked to Mr. Jaindl as well and a few others about some possibilities. Hopefully, they can find a temporary location until this is all complete. The DCED application that Chief Agosto and himself worked on for the additional RFP will be submitted this Friday through DCED.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that it is incumbent upon the administration to keep the members of the police force informed. He thinks that Chief Gress is committed to keep the FOP involved in the selection process. They are early in the stages of articulating the needs for a temporary space. He assures Officer Benner and members of the FOP that they are not going to jam everybody in to 4th Street before its done. They care for the officers with the highest level of respect and care for their needs. They will make sure it is done in the search process. The Resolution that is before City Council at the moment allows them to begin the process of transacting the property. It doesn't complete the process of transacting the property.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked how are they doing in finding a place for police officers. How is the search going?

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that is where Assistant Chief Gress is working with the realtor Chris Raab. They have needs articulated from the process that lead to the concept plan for the improvements of the public safety building. It is temporary space so they are continuing to figure out what will work. He stated that there are some option available to them in the downtown. They are collaborating with the Jaindl Company on potential space, needs. It is temporary space. They obviously have to take care of our officers when leasing the temporary space.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated just one quick question, in the event that it would be sold provided to another place for police officers. What would be the ability for them to remain there until the place is found.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that in the events that the city finds a buyer and come to an agreement of sale, a provision of the agreement of sale would mean that the officers will remain in that site until they can find a temporary space. That is a standard provision and Santo would be able to speak to this. When you sell a building, you can build those provisions into the agreement of sale to ensure that the existing occupant has an opportunity to remain there and satisfy their needs.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that the buyer would have some say on that as well.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated yes, that would affect and that gives them additional urgency to find temporary space for our officers.

Ms. Phoebe Harris stated that she is asking the City Council to table this. The summer of 2020 in this nation was crazy. The Allentown Police Department did so well and allow young people to express their discord in their faces. They didn't do anything. Other cities lost their minds, they were

burning buildings, bricks were going everywhere. She stated that they did not have that in Allentown because we had a police department that made sure it didn't escalate anything. She stated that she has to give it to them because everybody else from Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, but the third largest city, we didn't have that problem because the police department did their job. She asked how is she going to tell the police department that they did their job then, but now because somebody wants to buy that building, we are going to put you somewhere else. No, we are not going to disrespect out police who give their lives everyday. They don't know if they are coming home or not. They don't know this. She knows this for a fact because her ex is an ex Fed Cop. He did a protective service for the Secretary of Veteran Affairs. That's real stuff. These cops, this is real. Everyday and for us to de-house them and put them somewhere temporarily where they don't know or can't lay their space there. They don't get their lockers. That's wrong. She stated that she is going by ASD. They build the school first. If you build it, they will come. She stated that they built the school first and then they sold the building. Build the facility first and then you can sell the building. Give those cops the respect, our police officers the respect that they deserve. She stated that is what she is asking and she is asking them to table it. because we don't want them not knowing what is going to happen to them. How in the world they are going to feel everyday not knowing. Give them what they deserve and what they earned by putting their bodies on the line for us everyday.

Ms. Karen Ocasio stated that in 2020, they all dressed in blue to Back the Blue and Benner truly cares about his guys and they have a brotherhood. She stated that her having to work in APD it's supposed to be a brotherhood in which they all stick together. She is a little conflicted right now to not see that. Benner is a really good president and cares for his people and they should definitely support what they are doing and what he is trying to do and just completely table this until further notice until we have an appropriate place for them. She stated that she thinks here in the city of Allentown and in a lot of organizations, the upper management makes decisions and they really don't take into an account the people that it directly affects. That is where the problems lie. There is no problem working with the FOP directly and getting their two cents in and making sure that everybody is on the same page. They may not agree completely, but come to some kind of understanding. Show you can work together and listen to him. He really actually cares for the people that is working in the police department. Listen to what he is saying and take it to account. She seconded what Ms. Harris said and stated that it should be tabled.

Mr. Chris Blount, 2354 S. Sixth Street, stated that he grew up knowing the majority of the police officers in Allentown. He stated Chief Gress and Officer Benner. He knows them well and this time he has to stand on the

side of Officer Benner because if he had a plan in place, he would not have come here and said what he said. If you explain to them what the process was and you already had a process of transition, he would not have said what he said. In order for him to come up here and said what he said, he had to get the permission of the majority of his body. He stated that you two know that as well that you don't just get to come up and speak on your personal behalf as the president of any union. He stated that Officer Benner has been a upstanding guy and he has know the majority of the cops coming up. He knows very few of them now, but he still stands by them based on the fact that if hasn't been a lot of the situations that have been stated earlier in other cities. Not just in 2020, but very seldom throughout the course of his life here in Allentown, for 56 years. He thinks it is something that should be tabled. Even if you put a deadline on it, you run the risk of losing a future buyer because of impatience. If you give that freedom to the city, there is a distrust obviously between the administration and the workforce. Not that they are a part of it, but obviously there is some discord. In attempts to prevent that growth and that increasing, it doesn't hurt to table it. It doesn't hurt to say no to it tonight.

Mr. Patrick Palmer, 617 Allen Street, stated that it takes a lot of guts to come up here and say this. He is actually agreeing with Mr. Blount. He agrees to table this because just with the sale of the building you could still write up the information way ahead of time before you are actually selling the building. If you don't anywhere to place them, what does happen if an offer comes in that you do like. At that point are you going to tell them no because you don't have anywhere to place our officers or are you going to take that offer. Things like that kind of come into play and so he would 100 percent would agree to table this right now or shoot it down and bring it back again. Right now, it would look bad to put the cart before the horse and make sure you have all your ducks in a row before you before you do tell our officers, hey, look we are getting rid of our building.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that he has a question. He stated hypothetically he doesn't know who can answer this. This is all about the process starting the RFP and just getting that part started. Hypothetically, if a buyer appears in nine months, does Council approve that transaction in nine months.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated what Council is doing now and they described this to you all in the executive session is giving the administration the authorization to transact that property and put it into the hands of a public process so they package alongside an adjacent parcel at the Parking Authority. The Parking Authority will conduct the process of selling the two properties. It would be some funds that would come back to the City of Allentown. They ultimately have the ability to, if they don't like the deal that

the Parking Authority gets for us, they can say no to that. They are going to and this begins the process. With all due respect, the feelings of Officer Benner and the FOP are absolutely taken into consideration. He stated to Ms. Affa, this doesn't leave them without a home. This merely begins the process of the sale. He stated that their administration has demonstrated over years that they have a strong commitment in meeting the needs of our police officers. Unfortunately, some of the speakers didn't have the opportunity to see the presentation that Alloy5 did with regards to the proposed improvements that they are making to the Public Safety Building. There is nobody left out in the street in this respect. They are beginning the process that would lead to the transformation of an important corner. That is one thing that shouldn't been left unconsidered here. They are working to revitalize Allentown's downtown. Right now, this building he described to them all it was done during the Alloy5 presentation. It was built in 1939. It has done duty as a diner. Some of you remember it as Benny Offers. It has been a dentist office. It has been a parking deck and right now, the continued operations of the building is a disrespect to our officers. He stated that they want to take every reasonable action to get them in to new digs that appropriately respects the position they hold in our community. That would require some temporary space, but that is part of this process. They are seeking to sell this property for some financial compensation to the city, but the ultimate improvement is getting officers into a suitable space and continue the revitalization of Hamilton Street.

Ms. Barbara Redmond stated that you are going to sell your property and move into an apartment. That doesn't make any sense until you find something else. You are going to be cramped up somewhere in a small place and you sold your property and the police officers are going to be uncomfortable and it is not going to work out. She stated she thinks as Ms. Affa is saying, it should be tabled.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that this is his explanation for seconding it.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that a motion to table must be decided without debate. Once it is a motion to table, there is a second, you got to vote. He stated those are your Rules.

A motion was made by Candida Affa, seconded by Ed Zucal, that this Resolution be tabled.

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

[15-6808](#)

R55

Approves the expenditure not to exceed \$300,000 for the purpose of engaging a firm to examine procedures related to hiring, terminations, discipline, promotions, compliance with civil rights and discrimination statutes and the Charter's provisions of a merit based personnel system,

and review of salary adjustment for city employees since January 1, 2022 in terms of compliance with the city personnel code as well as other state and federal employment statutes.

Attachments: [R55 Res to Engage](#)

[Resolution #28898](#)

[Resolution #28908](#)

[Resolution #30826](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or any comments from the public.

Ms. Karen Ocasio stated that they are just trying to get clarification on exactly what they are talking about. She asked if they are on R55 and asked what is this regarding to.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that expenditure for the external investigation.

Ms. Karen Ocasio asked for the external investigation.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated with a cap of \$300,000.

Ms. Phoebe Harris asked if it is going to start at \$300,000 or all \$300,000.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated a cap.

Ms. Phoebe Harris asked cap it at \$300,000. She asked what firm are you going to get that is going to be able to dig and go through all personnel files for \$300,000.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that his answer to that is that will be up to the investigator.

Ms. Phoebe Harris asked if they had an investigator in mind.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that they are not at that point yet.

Ms. Phoebe Harris stated that she knows going back to her own, she knows what it costs to do a thorough investigation. She stated that she is hesitant to say that you should cap it at \$300,000 because there may be more things that are going to be coming up or not. However, she said she doesn't think they should limit themselves. This is very real. The complaints are very real and in order to get a credible company and not a flyby night company or somebody that is not trustworthy, that price is going to be difficult. She asked them to do this because they do need this to start, but not let that be the cap. She stated that she knows it is a lot of

money, however, you have insurance. You do have city insurance. These allegations are real. They are egregious and just is so. In order to get to the truth, and we must get to the truth no matter what side it goes on and she is going to have faith in all of them because they elected them. She stated that she has faith in this because this is something you have all stood for and the city of Allentown thanks them for standing for that. She thanked them and asked them to look at that \$300,000 just in case you have to come back to us and ask for more.

Ms. Barbara Redmond, NAACP Allentown Branch, asked if they contacted anyone yet, investigators. She asked if they tried to get an estimate of what it would cost before they cap that.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that they are not at that point yet. He stated first of all, they need to approve the money. They can't start an investigation without money. This is the figure they are at, at this point.

Ms. Barbara Redmond asked Mr. Zucal if he is saying that it cannot exceed \$300,000.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that they currently have it capped at that.

Ms. Barbara Redmond stated that it is going to be capped at that. What is you need more? What happens?

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that they most likely would have to come back to Council. Ms. Barbara Redmond stated you would come back to Council and ask for more money.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated yes.

Ms. Barbara Redmond thanked Council.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach asked for them to add on the word initially. She asked if that would hurt or help things to have the word initially.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated if you want to make that amendment.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated to add the word initially before the word exceed so it would read approves an expenditure and not initially exceed \$300,000. That would leave it open if they needed to come back. In case things are a bit more complicated.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or the public.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that this amendment is no such thing as a cap then. A cap is a cap.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that this amendment changes the cap.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that then we no longer have a cap. She stated that they can go to a million dollars.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated well.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that they can go to a million dollars. She stated you got to remember we have taxpayers.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that the purpose of her amendment is not for that. The purpose of her amendment is to address the scenario in which they reach that \$300,000 and Mr. Zucal stated that they can then come back to make that explicitly clear within this Resolution. That was the way she thought of doing so, but if that doesn't that was her intent.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any other comments.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated no.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the public.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that his only concern is when you dealing with this amount of taxpayer money, not to have a process of picking vendors or going through an RFP process. It is a slippery slope. He worries about how it is worded. It gives a lot of leeway to future City Council to maybe let it get a little too political. A little weaponized and that is a concern. He thinks that they have to look at the unintended consequences of what this legislation doesn't say. What he means by this is what it doesn't say is what it can enable and right now, there is a lot of gray areas here and he thinks they have to be at least having that conversation that he thinks there needs to be a little more details on how this would actually happen so that it would be done in a way that it is becoming of our body.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Mr. Napoli and asked if there were any other comments from the dais or from the public.

Ms. Phoebe Harris stated to Mr. Napoli that she understands what he is saying because you don't want it to go too far, however, you are a

governing body, you have been on this board quite a few of you have been on this board since 2017 because that when she started and some of them got on there too. She got seven years in. Those of you that have less years, you can talk to your peers that had a longer time and you can talk to Ms. Gerlach who already been on the school board and she understands what happens with investigations because they had it during their time and during her time on the board. I may run a little bit more. She stated that she doesn't think that they as a body will let this be politicized. She stated that she has very much faith in them all that you will keep it simple. You will keep it directed towards the investigation and that's it. Now, after this, if you want to put into a policy after you have gone through it and you see and put in a policy then that would stop any thing being politicized. She stated that she understands what Mr. Napoli was saying. Yes, that is what you do. You find out and go through this investigation and find out what you need to know nd the ends and outs of it, the mistakes, or correctness or whatever you have to learn and then you put a policy in.

A motion was made by Ce-Ce Gerlach, seconded by Ed Zucal, to add the word initially before the word exceed so it would read approves an expenditure and not initially exceed \$300,000.

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 30826

Yes: 6 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, and Candida Affa

No: 1 - Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 30826

[15-6807](#)

R56

City Council recommends the Mayor conduct a systematic study of the deployment of electric or hybrid vehicles prior to making any changes to the vehicle fleet.

Sponsors: Gerlach, Hendricks and Mr. Zucal

Attachments: [R56 Electrified Fleet](#)
[Resolution #30827](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that he was one of the sponsors of this. He thinks it is important that a full study be done before they go to a further electric vehicles. One of his concerns is that they buy an electric vehicle and they don't have the mechanics trained in doing so when working on these vehicles. What they should have done was considered leasing. These are things that all should have been done prior to them purchasing the electric vehicle. It is important. There are a lot of risks involved and he

doesn't think they are there yet quite honestly. He is no expert, but he knows there are some out there and what they need to do is do a study before they go any further with electric vehicles.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that she agrees with Mr. Hendricks, but she thinks they are there. She believes a study and one vehicle that they mayor may have and thinks he could have done it a different way. The idea of changing those gas meters down there and for a building inspector to go out and drive around Allentown. She stated that she thinks they are there. She agrees that they need the data, they need especially if he is going to have it for the next six months, eight months or whatever. Make sure we get the data and how much money you have saved with this and where you tend to go with it. She stated that she believes in climate control and believes there is no reason to have those big monstrous cars we have done there to drive around in the city. She agrees that data is going to be very important for them to move forward on something like this.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Ms. Affa and asked if there were any other comments.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated actually when he read the Resolution headline, he hoped it said commends the mayor for beginning the study of electric vehicle study. They actually have quite a bit of work underway. When he read the Resolution and at risk of extending the night and he knows they are here late, but the Resolution mentions that Council approves the creation of a Sustainability Coordinator position who will begin the evaluation here. He did want to update Council that they did here form Veronika who is the Sustainability Coordinator and started on March 18th. She is working with the Department of Public Works and they have received funds through the EECBG which is a Department of Energy Program that is going to fund a Fleet Electrification Pilot that should allow them to purchase seven vehicles in the next couple of years. She's began work there already and also begun to evaluate infrastructure investment opportunities through a number of charitable organizations including having a conversation with PPL Foundation related to investment and charging infrastructure in the parks that would prevent them to invest in electric grasscutters and other parks maintenance vehicle equipment. He wanted to run down quickly the Fleet Manager has begun a current fleet assessment that includes usage analysis of all vehicles. They begun the infrastructure investment related to Councilman Hendricks concerns related to maintenance, but also that charging infrastructure. He has asked Ms. McNeil to begin a procurement strategy that would prioritize and phase the acquisition of additional electric vehicles. He stated that Ms. Patel is looking into as part of our Capital Needs Assessment, they will be conducting a financial analysis of the usage of electric vehicles. Obviously,

implementation planning will be part of an eventual study that they hope to deliver to Council as well as policy development, Stakeholder Engagement Plan. He was surprised to learn in his initial analysis that the city of Allentown does not have a Vehicle Acquisition Policy. It does not have a Vehicle Replacement Policy either. Independent of the nature of the vehicle, they need to develop and prepare and communicate an overall vehicle policy. And, finally, they need to develop and Communication Reporting Plan to Ms. Affa's point. It is better to communicate the objectives of the administration with regards to electric fleet conversion. He thanked them for the reminder to communicate out the work that they have begun. He stated that they take it very seriously. He stated that they are excited about the future opportunities to both economies and to take action to negate the impacts of climate change that the city of Allentown is responsible for.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any other comments.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that it is great that it will be communication. She thinks if all of that was said before people found out that there was like and she thinks it is on the market price of \$70,000 something. She stated that she knows the city paid less than that. It is luxury electric vehicle and all the questions of where do we charge this thing at. If all of that communication would have happened before, she doesn't think that this Resolution would be before us. She stated so it is appropriate for this conversation.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that they appreciate the Resolution. Thank you.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any other comments from the dais or the public.

Ms. Tinku Khanwalkar, 208 N. Marshall Street and a member of the Allentown Environmental Advisory Council with the lead on energy issues, stated as a result of Mayor Tuerk's explanations, she can cut short a lot of her comments which were pretty much what the mayor just said. She does want to applaud City Council for recognizing the need of the city to have a policy on electric vehicles and the person that should lead the development in that would be our Sustainability Coordinator. She really thank City Council for ultimately agreeing to include the Sustainability Coordinator position in the city's budget. This is precisely among the things that the new Sustainability Coordinator is working on as Mayor Tuerk just said. Last year, the Allentown Environmental Advisory Council assisted the city in becoming eligible for a grant from the Department of Energy in the amount of \$170,000. That is the grant that Mayor Tuerk just mentioned. This grant is for the city to develop and implement energy efficiency strategies and plans that could really save the city a great deal of money. A lot of the city's

issues can begin to be addressed through reducing the unnecessary expenditures that the city currently has driving around huge vehicles. The fuel cost is which is mind-boggling. This grant is only \$170,000, but they are looking for it to ultimately be able to save them tremendous amounts of money. The Allentown EAC was always instrumental in obtaining a shared Energy Manager which the DEP chose to be Wilson Engineering. Veronika has been working with the Allentown EAC and Wilson Engineering as well as the Federal National Renewable Energy Lab which has been allowed to give them 20 hours of free technical advice as they go forward with getting their Energy Management Plan put together and part of that Energy Management Plan is a Pilot EV Program. She stated that \$170,000, the current intent is to use the bulk of it to do a Pilot Program on electric vehicles. They are looking at probably about seven or so electric vehicles and maybe 12 charging stations to do exactly what you suggested Councilman Zucal to look at what does it mean for the city to start electrifying its fleet. What kind of maintenance does electric vehicles need? What kind of training do our employees need to have those? What issues do they face with charging stations? This is a very very important Pilot Project and strongly recommend to City Council that if they are going to pass a Resolution, please word it in a way that doesn't preclude the city from continuing forward with this Pilot Project on the electric vehicle component of this project.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or the public.

Ms. Barbara Redmond, NAACP Allentown Branch, stated that is all well in good what she said, but that is after the fact. She stated that she thinks that should have been presented before the car was purchased. She feels like as citizens of Allentown they should be aware of what is going on before you go and purchase a car without them knowing anything about it.

Mr. Patrick Palmer, 617 Allen Street, asked what kind of electric vehicle is it.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that he just wants to remind people that what's in front of Council is a Resolution to conduct a systematic study.

Mr. Patrick Palmer asked if they can't talk about the actual vehicle.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that there should be some relevance.

Mr. Patrick Palmer stated that he was just wondering because they were talking about the grant that went with it.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that you asked about a specific vehicle. That is fine to do that.

Mr. Patrick Palmer asked based on the grant that went with it, did this vehicle itself need to be purchased or just any electric vehicle. He asked Attorney Smith if he is allowed to ask that question.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that obviously when someone comes up to speak, they have to speak in reference to the actual Resolution.

Mr. Patrick Palmer stated that the grant kind of went into this.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated no grant went into that.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that it is to establish a program in the future.

Mr. Patrick Palmer stated that he just wanted to know about that, but thank you.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Mr. Palmer and asked if there were any other comments.

A motion was made by Cynthia Mota that this Resolution be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Enactment No: 30827

ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION (To be referred to Committee with public comment prior to referral)

[15-6788](#)

Bill 29

Amending the 2024 General Fund Budget to provide for a supplemental appropriation of Fifteen Thousand (\$15,000.00) Dollars from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Office of The State Fire Commissioner (OSFC) Grant to the Allentown Fire and EMS Department for the purchase of items related to training, safety and equipment.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 29 EMS OSFC Grant](#)
[Ordinance #16004](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or the public.

REFERRED TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Enactment No: 16004

[15-6789](#)

Bill 30

Amending the 2024 General Fund Budget to provide for a supplemental appropriation of Sixteen Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty One Dollars And Ninety-Nine Cents (\$16,951.99) from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Office of The State Fire Commissioner (OSFC) Grant to the Allentown Fire Department for the purchase of Hydra Ram forcible entry tools.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 30 Fire OSFC Grant](#)
[Ordinance #16005](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or the public.

REFERRED TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Enactment No: 16005

[15-6790](#)

Bill 31

ADOPTING FUND BALANCE POLICY FOR THE CITY OF ALLENTOWN
Reminder: code this up

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 31 Fund Balance Policy](#)
[Ordinance #16006](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that this is consistent with the recognition that they received from Moody's earlier. The recommendation is that the city has a Fund Balance Policy. He stated that they will discuss it at length at a future committee meeting. He commended the members of the administration for putting together a policy that would continue to keep Allentown in good financial shape.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Mayor Tuerk and asked if there were any comments from the public.

REFERRED TO THE BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Enactment No: 16006

[15-6791](#)

Bill 32

Amending the 2024 General Fund, the 2024 Risk Fund, the 2024 Solid Waste Fund, the 2024 Stormwater Fund, the 2024 Equipment

Replacement Fund, the 2024 Golf Fund, and the 2024 Housing Fund by appropriating funds from the un-appropriated balances for the rollover of encumbrances for the prior year commitments.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 32 Purchase Order Roll Over](#)
[Ordinance #16007](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or the public.

REFERRED TO THE BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Enactment No: 16007

[15-6794](#)

Bill 33

Amending the 2024 ARPA Fund Budget to provide for a transfer of One Million (\$1,000,000.00) Dollars from Ripple Community Inc. to the Revenue Replacement category of the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) award for HVAC systems. Ripple Community Inc. will receive One Million (\$1,000,000.00) Dollars in funding from the CDBG HOME-ARPA program as indicated in DCED's resolution to amend the 2021 One Year Action Plan allocation.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 33 Transfer of Ripples Funds](#)
[Ordinance #16008](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated just a couple items and wanted to make sure that by the time the CED Committee happened and definitely by the time they vote on this a final time, if they can get some information to help them make their votes. It would be helpful to know and most of them have never heard of HOME ARPA money from conversations she had with some of them. It would be helpful to know how much in total HOME ARPA money the city received. How much has been spent; on what; and if there is any left, what the plans are for that money that hasn't been allocated in addition to potentially Ripple. It would be helpful to know how the reporting criterion for a recipient of HOME ARPA may or may not differ then the regular ARPA. It would be helpful to know if who can be served using HOME ARPA money does or does not differ in regular ARPA money.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stat to Ms. Gerlach that they are happy to provide a complete report on the past use of CDBG dollars and what they can do with CDBG Home Dollars. What they intend to do is CDBG HOME dollars. He stated that they will try to capture all the questions. He asked if Ms. Gerlach

asked about HOME or HOME ARPA.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that it is HOME ARPA and not CDBG.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that they will prepare the complete report for them. They were able to capture most of those specific questions, but if you can provide those specific questions in writing via email, it will make it easier for our team to deliver a prompt report in time for that CED committee meeting.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she will draft the email now.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated perfect.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the public.

Ms. Jessica Ortiz stated that she got two questions: 1) they didn't have to submit for the ARPA funds stating here we are talking about it again. They got mushed to the HOME ARPA or whatever we call it. She stated that she is all about the homeless, but that is one community they service. She stated that she said this before. It is nothing taken away from Ripple, they have been kind. It is astonishing how they just have a whole bill and a conversation to move to reference. They are now getting a whole other money. Where is this \$1 million? She stated that they have been fighting earlier over \$1.2 million. This \$1 million should have been part of that conversation. We are going to take that money and give it to you or we can do this with that. We can take that from the homeless. This is a whole other \$1 million because now they are getting from another pot. That is not a discussion. She really appreciates what Ce Ce asked is because one of the questions was why they haven't heard of the HOME ARPA. Why is this the first time? Why do they always have to get to this point? She stated that people like her is considered hostile or against the system. She stated that she has one goal and it is the betterment of Allentown. Most of the nonprofits are the same. Why do they have to wait to find something on an agenda when they get that email from Mr. Hanlon this is what's on this week on the agenda. There are no bulletins on the website or nothing on the Facebook Page like when there are ribbon cuttings or new buildings coming up. There is a whole hooray. Why isn't there a whole hooray when there is money. She could have submitted a proposal. Currently, the Arc has an entire community center that needs to be rehabbed. She couldn't fix it with a million dollars. They can a shelter, apartments, a pantry. She can give a whole presentation if she had one million dollars. A million dollars for an HVAC System. They need it. Just like Da Vinci needed it for their HVAC System. Yet, there are so many problems that the rest of them are taking on and that \$1 million that's getting transferred is never

even part of the conversation. That is another million that is now available that is not being talked about.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any other comments from the public.

REFERRED TO THE COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Enactment No: 16008

[15-6796](#)

Bill 34

Amending the 2024 General Fund and Information Systems budget to accommodate the reorganization of positions to allow the Department of Information Systems to operate more efficiently, prepare for future project work and be in compliance with the home rule charter.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 34 IT Reorg](#)
[IT Office Manager - Job Description](#)

Mr. Ed Zucal stated for Attorney Smith to correct him. Since this is a tabled item, it is non debatable.

A motion was made by Ed Zucal, seconded by Daryl Hendricks, that this Bill be tabled.

Yes: 6 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, and Candida Affa

No: 1 - Santo Napoli

[15-6800](#)

Bill 35

Amending the 2024 Capital Fund Budget to provide for a transfer of Fifty-One Thousand One-Hundred Ninety-One Dollars and Twenty-Seven Cents (\$51,191.27) from the Gordon Street Bridge capital account to the Bridge Repairs capital account. This will transfer the unused funds from the completed Gordon Street project to the general Bridge Repairs capital account.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 35 Bridge Repairs Transfer](#)
[Ordinance #16009](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or the public.

REFERRED TO THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Enactment No: 16009

[15-6801](#)

Bill 36

Amending the 2024 General Fund budget to accommodate the reorganization of positions in the Department of Public Works: upgrade one (1) Engineering Aid 3 (currently M13) to an Associate Engineer 1 at a proposed S12 paygrade; upgrade one (1) Associate Utility Engineer (currently S14) to an Associate Engineer 2 (title change only); and upgrade one (1) Public Works Administrative Manager (currently S14) to a proposed S16 paygrade.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 36 Public Works Reorg](#)
[Ordinance #16010](#)

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that he has a question and wanted to know if he could ask the administration this. He asked did he hear that they only have one engineer on staff through the whole city.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that he would ask Mr. Shahda to go into a little bit more detail on why this is appearing before you now and not during the Budget process.

Mr. Mark Shahda stated good evening and thank you for giving him an opportunity to elaborate on the importance of this reorganization here. To answer Mr. Napoli's question, yes, the city engineer's position has been vacant for about three years now. They have been struggling to fill it for multiple reasons. This reorganization is intended to provide relief to the Deputy Director that is currently working two jobs right now. He is the Deputy Director of Public Works and also filling in as a City Engineer. The Engineering Bureau is in desperate need of help. They are falling behind in land development. Currently, they have 22 land development reviews within our queue and our city engineer can only do so much and he needs help. part of this restructuring here is two-fold. There is the cost savings that is associated with this reorganization and it is also intended to eliminate single points of failure that they currently have. God, forbid if it was a catastrophe event or our city engineer just decided that he had enough. He stated that they will be in a bad position here where they have to spend more money on outside consultants. That is why this reorganization is being brought forward this evening and they are not waiting until budget time.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated to Mr. Napoli that both this request and any other request that they make with regards to personnel outside of the budget process is not intended to subvert the budget process. It is intended to maximize efficiency by the city of Allentown. He stated that Mark has been articulate in his needs to improve engineering services through the city of Allentown. The previous bill would have actually saved the city about

\$15,000 a year and in an IT reorg. Unfortunately, you chose not to listen to any conversation around that. He stated that he hopes they would consider this bill and refer it to committee and let that be borne out through a discussion in committee. It is something that is holding back their ability to meet the needs of our residents and investors in Allentown.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any other comments from the dais or the public.

Mr. Santo Napoli asked Mayor Tuerk if he had a reorg that he thought about. Is it any cost they are adding for this budget year.

Mr. Mark Shahda stated no addition cost. They found the revenue within their operated budget to offset this cost.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked what does that mean, you are not going to come back and ask Council for money.

Mr. Mark Shahda stated that he will not come back and ask Council for additional funding. In fact, this reorganization is going to save them funding next year. They currently have \$100,000 budgeted in the 46 account for engineering services. If this reorg passes, hopefully, with Council's approval they would be able to reduce that line item by at least \$50,000 next year. There is a big cost savings here that is associated with this come next year. He stated that he is a man of his word and they can hold him to his word here this evening. There is a cost saving associated with this.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that they are always happy to walk City Council through the associated savings if they are given the opportunity to speak.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Mayor Tuerk and asked if there were any comments from the public.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she has a question on procedural. If they were to because she is anticipating to see a motion to table tonight. If they were not table tonight and then send this through to committee, if it were to determine then, you are on that committee and said I am on that committee, they can table at that committee.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated to Ms. Gerlach if that is the intention, he would also request if possible to check with Mr. Smith if it is possible to reverse the motion of the tabling the IT positions as well and treat it in the same way.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated no, that table remains.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that it is in your discretion if you want to go back and entertain it.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated no. That's tabled.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that he thinks Council should hear them out.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated it is non debatable when it is tabled.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that she wants to hear from Council's lawyer.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that someone could technically take it off the table. What happened to Bill 34 is that it got tabled. It is off the table until someone puts it back on the table.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that it has to be the person that tabled it. He stated double check Robert's Rules of Order on that.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that it could be reconsidered at the next regular meeting.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that anybody that voted to table can remove it. It doesn't have to be the person who sponsored it.

Attorney Charles Smith stated didn't it pass 7 - 0.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that he is just going to speak out on why he is thinking about this. In his world, when employees come to him any time of the year, it always the season to listen to his staff. When they want to bring ideas and want to bring thoughts, he thinks they should have an opportunity to at least hear them out and if they don't like what they have to say then they can take appropriate action. He thinks to not even listen and he knows and understands the thought process of some of his colleagues. He is not being disrespectful. He knows there is a budget season. He gets that. He has a budget season in his world too. Things change throughout the year and you can't make decisions one time a year and expect those decisions to hold firm. It doesn't work in his world and he doesn't think it works here. He thinks when the valued employees come to them with ideas to be better and to be more efficient and serve our residents better, he thinks they should at least hear them out. That is at least one of the reasons he wanted to have the discussions with them. He stated that he is sorry he didn't catch it in time for Mr. Anthony. He stated that he thinks they should hear them both out in committee.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that it is tabled.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that anybody who voted can untable.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated excuse me stating he doesn't believe that.

Ms. Cynthia Mota suggested that they leave it the way it is and then they can bring it back. That would be fair. Seven people voted against it. Let's move on. If they need to bring this again, because she really would like to hear to. She really would like to hear more about this. This would be a best practice. She stated that she agrees with Mr. Napoli, but again, it was six people. Let's continue.

REFERRED TO THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Enactment No: 16010

RESOLUTIONS FOR INTRODUCTION (Can be voted on or Referred to Committee):

[15-6793](#)

R57

Approves the Submission of an amendment to the 2021 Action Plan to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [R57 HUD Action Plan Amendment](#)

[Resolution #30836](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or the public.

REFERRED TO THE COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Enactment No: 30836

[15-6778](#)

R58

Denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness – 1515 Linden Street

Attachments: [R58 March HARB Denied Resolution - 1515 Linden](#)

[1515 Linden St \(Doors\) DENIED Final Review](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or the public.

REFERRED TO THE COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

[15-6799](#)

R59

A resolution of the City Council of the City of Allentown, Lehigh County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, adopting the South Whitehall Township Act 537 sewage facilities plan (Public-to-Public System Transfer)

Attachments: [R59 South Whitehall Act 537 Plan Sewage Facilities Act](#)

[ACPC action SouthWhitehallSPM 04.09.24](#)

[Resolution #30837](#)

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any comments from the dais or the public.

REFERRED TO THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Enactment No: 30837

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

GOOD AND WELFARE: NONE

ADJOURNED: 9:04 PM

[15-6577](#)

Reference Materials:

Council Rules

Procurement Code

Ethics Code

Attachments: [Procurement Code](#)

[Ethics Code](#)

[Rules](#)