

Allentown

435 Hamilton Street Allentown, Pa. 18101

Minutes - Final

City Council

Wednesday, March 2, 2022

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

Invocation: Moment of Silence

Pledge to the Flag

Roll Call

Present: 7 - Candida Affa, Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Joshua

Siegel, and Natalie Santos

Courtesy of the Floor Courtesy and Privilege of the Floor Rules

Ms. Erika Davis, 2138 S. 9th Street, stated that she spoke briefly to Council. She is from Allentown and graduate from Allentown School District starting at Lincoln and Central Elementary School and ending at Dieruff. She works for the Boys and Girls Club of Allentown as a Community School Coordinator at Cleveland Elementary. She works as a Site Supervisor at LCCC Allentown Campus before returning to grad school getting her Master's in Latin American Studies. She studied in Florida for her Ph.D. in Curriculum Instruction and returned to Allentown shortly after the pandemic to continue school remotely. Now, she is finally at her dissertation stage which is why she is here today. She is doing her dissertation here in Allentown conducting participant observation in interview research to better under how Latinos in Allentown are advocating for educational resources at the city level. She is attending City Council meetings and School Board meetings as well as community events and also interested in how city politics and development impact education in Allentown as well. She stated that she is here to learn and advocate and looks forward to continuing spending her Wednesday evenings with them. She is opening to suggestions and questions.

Mr. Ed White, 1922 W. Highland Street - Director of Business Relations for the new professional basketball team here in Allentown, welcomed them and asked for Council to attend the opening game which is at 3:00 PM at William Allen High School. It is exciting pro basketball and developmental and they will be giving back to the city of Allentown and encouraged all city residents to support your new professional basketball team.

Mr. Alan Jennings, 2128 Pennsylvania Street, stated that he has been living

here since graduating from college back in 1980 or so. He worked for Community Action Committee for Lehigh Valley for 41 years. He retired because of his health in May. He is not going to leave Council alone because he lives here. There are lots of things we can do for the city. He talked about affordable housing. He stated that this is a conversation that they had on a weird bunch of ways. People are talking about it here and there in different places. At times, other people are involved. The city needs to have a serious conversation about its affordable housing problem. We need help people understand the issue better than they do. Logos and mottos that don't solve the problem. There are three primary issues we have to deal with in the city: homeownership rate, make the city a hostile place for irresponsible behavior, a huge amount of housing stock that is in terrible condition and it attracts people that no one wants to live next to. We need to get people to clean up their behavior. The dirt bikes on the streets are irresponsible. There is irresponsible behavior by landlords. The two irresponsible landlords and irresponsible tenants are patronizing each other. They are making it difficult for us to attract the kinds of people that can pay taxes and responsible citizens, pay attention to kids in school and vote. That is not a commentary on race or on class. It is a commentary on responsible behavior. No one wants to live next to irresponsible people. We need to improve the condition of the housing stock as most important in order to deal with these issues. There are a couple hundred or more units that should just be torn down and create surface lots to improve parking conditions. More green space that is almost none down here and replace some of the housing stock when we can. He handed out some proposals. We have a huge amount of money available to us because of the federal government and our President doing the right thing last year. He would argue that ever nickel of that money that we can should be spent in improving the housing stock. That is the number is in the city of Allentown. If we don't deal with the housing stock we are going to continue to have problems that are insurmountable. We are not doing enough to create a hostile environment for irresponsible behavior. The department licensing program never got funded the way it should have been. That was Mayor Pawlowski's doing and it needs to be corrected. Community Action made a proposal called Priority Blocks. You will see that in here. Priority Blocks are essentially putting a whole lot of investment one block at a time and try to make an easier way to invest in the properties between that priority block and the NIZ. he argued that the top priority should be two blocks around the NIZ. We can do 20 to 30 blocks that makes it an attractive place to invest, buy a house and improve the condition of housing stock. There is an old saying that nobody washes a rental car. It is the same thing when it comes to buying a house and taking care of their house. It is easier for people to take care their house when they own it. That is something that we are not doing enough of. He stated that he has proposals in here to do that. A few years ago we had a

Homeownership Counseling Program. There were 55 people in that seminar in Allentown and he asked them, how many of you intend to buy a house in the city of Allentown. Not one raised their hand out of 55 people. Zero raised their hand say8ing they are going to buy a house in the city. That is a pretty scary situation. He stated that as far as he is concerned if they do not do something about the housing stock that is not going to change. If anything, we are going to continue to have people disinvested by moving out and we cannot allow that any further. If we can get on some of these proposals, put some of the resources into them that we need then we can tackle these problems in the way that has frustration us all this time. He thanked Council for the opportunity to be in Chambers and stated that he wants to continue to fight these battles. If he could be helpful to them, he wants to be. He will certainly bug Council if they are not going in the right direction.

Ms. Alexandra Sierra stated that some of Council may know her as Alex. She is here with Diane Cordian, Deputy Chief of Elections. She is the Alternate Language Coordinator for Voter Registration in the Lehigh County. We are here on behalf of the Voter Registration office. They are here to talk about an event that they are hosting. They were here in January for the January 25 recruiter for Poll Worker Day. It was a successful event. They decided to come back out and share with Council what they are hosting. On Tuesday, April 5, they are going to have Spanish Interpreter Recruitment Day. They are looking for is about 150 Spanish speaking bi-lingual interpreters. We are in need of them in every district. There are about 161 districts in total. There is a shortage and asked if Council had any ideas or could spread the word.

Ms. Diane Cordian stated that they have the flyer that they created the their event which would be at the Government Center. It is at 17 S. Seventh Street. It will be on April 5th from 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM. If you know anyone or you want to share on Facebook, you can contact us. You can call the Voter Registration Office. You can ask for her or any of us will have information on it.

Ms. Alexandra Sierra stated for those that will not be able to make it in person, it will be on Zoom Live as well. All the information is on LehighValley.Org website and also on the website as well. She also wanted to mention that the 2020 Census actually raised their need for a Spanish interpreter. Previously, it was only 96 of the 161 precincts. Now, it is actually 146 of them. Almost all of the precincts needs a Spanish speaking interpreter. To be on the safe side, they are trying to get 150 - 155 because the last minute people drop out or get sick. She stated that she has the flyers and the poll worker applications here.

Mr. Irv Miece (sp), 1829 W. Congress Street, stated that he is a livelong resident of Allentown. He gave kudos to the Allentown Streets Department for their quick response to a problem and following up on communications to close the loop. This pertains to Monday night as he was leaving downtown going to his car. There was a broken manhole cover on the 700 Block of Walnut Street. He went home and looked up the email addresses on the website. The Streets Department sent an email at 6:00. Before 6:00 AM he had a response. By the time he came to work at 8:00 AM, the crew was already out there and pulled the manhole cover. Excellent communications. Excellent response to the resolution. Their service was outstanding. He knows that a lot of people complains about Streets when it snows and whenever else. These folks were fantastic. He asked everybody to utilize their network connections to get the word of for Diane and Alexandra. We need people to turn out to vote, but we also need poll workers and translators. Without poll workers, we can't have elections.

15-4955 Alan Jennings Handout to Council

Proposed Use of Federal Covid Resources In Allentown - Plan B

<u>Attachments:</u> Proposed Use of Federal Covid Resources In Allentown - Plan B

Contract Approvals: NONE

Minutes

15-4946 January 19, 2022 City Council Meeting Minutes

Attachments: January 19, 2022 City Council Meeting Minutes

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

Communications

Chief Roca: Presentation to Officer Beidelman

Proclamation for Adrian Shanker

Proclamation for Order of DeMolay (Ed White)

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that City Council met this evening. They had an Executive Session on litigation that is pending.

Mr. Ed White thanked Mr. Siegel and members of Council. He introduced the Master Counselor and presiding Officer of our body, Justin Ortiz, who is a graduate of Emmaus High School and a longtime member of Order of DeMolay. He joined when he was 12 years old and earned various merit that you can see on his chest. He is a representative DeMolay. The founder of DeMolay Frank Land once said that every DeMolay should become a Representative DeMolay and the Representative DeMolay award is a self achievement award that requires reflection and completion of various exercises and Justin is an example of the great young men that

have come through the Allentown Chapter of the Order of DeMolay to become leaders in our community. He is accompanied by his mom, Laura this evening. He stated that he is the chair of the Advisory of Council with great humility that we accept this Proclamation.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated congratulations. If his parents are there, why don't they come up and take a picture with him. She stated that she loves when there are positive things going on at City Council. It is not always conflict.

Old Business: NONE

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that back last year some time in July, August and then December, we had a discussion about the city garage. He is proud to say tonight that Mr. O'Neil and Ms. Baraket from the Finance Department have gotten the RFP together. It is going to go out very shortly to get a consultant that we discussed that we were going to do to help to get the situation under control. He thanked Mr. O'Neil and Ms. Baraket for their excellent performance there.

Ms. Candida Affa asked if someone could open the door. It is very stuffy and warm in here.

REPORTS

Budget and Finance: Chair Siegel, Hendricks, Santos

The Committee met last week and forwarded one items on this evening's agenda.

The next meeting is not yet scheduled.

Community and Economic Development: Chair Gerlach, Siegel, Mota The Committee has not met since the last council meeting; the next meeting is not yet scheduled.

Human Resources, Administration and Appointments: Chair Santos, Hendricks, Siegel

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

Parks and Recreation: Chair Affa, Gerlach, Santos

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

Public Safety: Chair Hendricks, Zucal, Affa

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

Public Works: Chair Zucal, Affa, Hendricks

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

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

The Committee has not met since the last Council meeting; the next meeting is scheduled for March 16th to hear reports from the Council of Youth and Environmental Advisory Board and to consider legislation introduced this evening.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that before the Controller gives his report, she would like to acknowledge that we have here Judge D'Amore.

Controller's Report (3 minutes)

Mr. Jeffrey Glazier stated that they released a Lights in the Parkway Sponsorship

and Business Partnership Agreement Review on the 28th of February. He touched on two points: The Controller's noticed signs throughout city hall touting all the sponsorships for Lights in the Parkway. They decided to take a look at those sponsorships and noticed that Agreements supposed to come to the Controller's office to be filed and put on public display. We had not gotten them until we asked for them. Then we reviewed the agreements for completeness and thoroughness. Quite honestly of this 17 agreements, most of them were not signed and really didn't offer an protection to the city. The administration responded that in the past it had not been a policy that these agreements would be forwarded to the Controller and would really undergo any sort of scrutiny. He is very happy to tell Council that the administration was thinking on the same lines because they had started that process, not just for Lights in the Parkway, but for all city sponsored events. The other part of Lights in the Parkway is that the city sold ornaments and what we need to do and it is the Controller's opinion and if you look at the state sales tax regulations and he believes that the Solicitor would also agree with this. We need to remit sales tax on these items. The tickets for the events, like Lights in the Parkway are tax exempt. There is no need to remit taxes there, but what we do need and it is the Controller's opinion and backed up by the state tax guidelines and the Solicitor would agree that we do need to remit sales taxes on those items that we sold. He hopes that the administration will confer with the Solicitor and assuming that he would agree make all arrangements to submit all sales taxes due to the state.

Mayor's Report (3 minutes)

Mr. Leonard Lightner stated that on behalf of Mayor Tuerk from a personnel standpoint they are sad and happy the Craig Messinger announced his retirement after 33 years of service with the city of Allentown. He will be missed and cannot be replaced. He leaves an amazing team that is more than capable of keeping up with the standard of excellence. While we conduct a search for a new permanent Director, as you know, Mark Shahda will serve as Interim Director. He stated that we wish Craig the best and he is able to spend more time with his family, including his granddaughter Myla. The Department of Economic Development lost the Deputy Director, Mr. Tom Williams. He went to a National Commercial Real Estate Company. Tom's last day was Friday, February 25. The city will be in search for a new Deputy Director for CED. From the city hall perspective, as of Monday, February 28th, masks are no longer going to be required in city hall. After consulting with our department heads and especially with our Health Bureau, we determined that we can safely operate with masks optional. The city will keep other safety measures in place, including plexiglass, barriers, don't will not require employees or visitors to wear a mask. They will not tolerate harassments of anyone who continues to use a mask. They will revisit the policy should conditions change as time goes on. From Hamilton Street, they probably saw on Wednesday, February 23rd, they held a Press Conference to announce our friends that the downtown Allentown Community Development Initiative pledged \$400,000 in funds to support for a façade

revitalization program to storefronts and beautification of key blocks on Hamilton Street. This entire private sector investment would be manage by CACLV. It will result in further revitalization of Lehigh Valley's most important and commercial corridor. From a crime perspective, we want to commend our Allentown Police Department for swiftly responding to the acts of violence against our community. The unacceptable action of some of these individuals in the past two weeks were met with immediate investigation and subsequent apprehension of the suspects in each case. This is a testament of our professionalism of our Allentown Police Department, the team, it's commitment to patrols, investigation and community outreach. These acts of violence are a function of a host of factors that we must address as a comprehensive fashion to include our own internal teams through collaboration and community partners.

<u>15-4952</u> City Controller Reports

Attachments: PCards

Lights Parkway CC

<u>15-4954</u> Mayor Matt Tuerk's Report to Council

<u>Attachments:</u> Mayor Matt Tuerk's Report to Council

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE (To be Voted On):

<u>15-4909</u> Bill 12 Budget and Finance, forwarded favorably

Amending the 2022 General Fund, the 2022 Risk Fund, the 2022 Equipment Fund, the 2022 Liquid Fuels Fund, the 2022 Trexler Fund, the 2022 Golf Fund, and the 2022 Stormwater Fund by appropriating funds from the un-appropriated balances for the rollover of encumbrances for the

prior year commitments.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: Bill 12 PO Rollover 2021 to 2022

Ordinance #15795

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that was under Budget and Finance.

Mr. Joshua Siegel stated that the Bill was forwarded favorably to Council, 3 - 0.

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

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

Enactment No: 15795

15-4942

Bill 15 Request to vote on this tonight to help expedite Valania Park **Project**

Amending the 2022 Capital Fund Budget to provide for a transfer of Eight Hundred Thousand (\$800,000) Dollars as a transfer of funds from Capital Project 2201 – Pool and Spray Parks, Capital Project 2208 – Auburn Cross Trails and 2022 Trexler Fund Capital Contribution to Capital Project 2213 – Valania Park to complete renovations.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: Bill 15 Capital Project Transfer

Valania Low Bid Cost Proposal

VP - Doc

Ordinance #15796

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that Bill 15 is actually an ordinance for introduction and the request is for you to pass it this evening. You will need 6 of 7 votes. The reason being is to keep Valania Park Project up and running.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if Ms. Karen El-Chaar or Mr. Lightner is going to speak.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked how many change orders now has this been for this project.

Mr. Leonard Lightner stated that he does not see any change orders. What he does see are the additional funding request coming in to make sure that they can actually fund the project. As you know, with Covid everything has changed and the cost started going up. There wasn't enough funding so they reached out to get additional funding in order to make this project happen. Not change orders, but increase in costs.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked is this the last time we are going to be dealing with this. Is this part is going to be done at some point.

Mr. Leonard Lightner stated that is their plan and intention. He stated that he will tell them from the Mayor's office and they will be working very closely with parks and the community to make sure that this project happens this year.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that it has to. It has been going on too long.

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

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

Enactment No: 15796

CONSENT AGENDA

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

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

15-4939 R30

Brandon Jones, Arts Commission, Term Expiration: 01/2/2027 (replacing

Daniel Diaz)

Sponsors: Administration

<u>Attachments:</u> R30 Appointment Arts Commission - Brandon Jones

Brandon Jones - Arts Commission

Resolution #30388

Enactment No: 30388

15-4938 R31

Michaela Boyer, Arts Commission, Term Expiration: 01/6/2024 (replacing

Latoya Mitchell)

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: R31 Appointment Arts Commission - Michaela Boyer

Michaela Boyer - Arts Commission

Resolution #30389

Enactment No: 30389

15-4930 R32

Sewage Planning Module for the A. Duie Pyle, Inc. Warehouse - City is not

required to use any of its capacity on the project.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: R32 R A. Duie Pyle, Inc. Warehouse Sewage Planning Module

RESOLUTION FOR PLAN REVISION FOR NEW LAND

DEVELOPMENT

Sewer Planning Module - A Duie Pyle, Inc. Warehouse

Resolution #30390

Enactment No: 30390

15-4945 R33

Certificates of Appropriateness for work in the Historic Districts: 304 N. 15th Street, 1011 W. Linden Street, 1502 Chew Street, 106 N. 17th Street,

942 W. Liberty Street, and 405 N. 8th Street

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: R33 COA

HARB Final Reviews 6 Projects - Feb 2022

Resolution #30391

Enactment No: 30391

RESOLUTIONS FOR FINAL PASSAGE (To be Voted On):

15-4940 R34

Authorizes the Submission of the City's Application to the Commonwealth Finance Authority of Pennsylvania Statewide Local Share Account for a Grant in the amount of Seven Hundred Seventy-Nine Thousand Two Hundred Twenty-Eight (\$779,228) Dollars to Support the Purchase of a

Pumper Fire Truck

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: R34 LSA GRANT - FIRE TRUCK

Resolution #30392

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

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that this is funded through a grant. Is there a total cost of the truck?

Mr. Leonard Lightner stated that right now that is the estimated amount for the truck. You know we have to respond quickly because prices do go up. That is the current price.

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

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

Enactment No: 30392

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

<u>15-4923</u> Bill 13 Refer to City and Lehigh Valley Planning Commissions

The Zoning Map is hereby amended to change the land area shown on the map entitled "Exhibit A", having Tax Parcel I.D. Nos. 640636238192, 640636345357, 640636348459, 640636444722, 640636447004,

640636432866, 640636431821, 640636339796, 640636338629, 640636625261, 640636415274, 640636115157, 640636108387, 64063529480, and 640635181690, to be within the R-MH Medium High Density Residential District.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: Bill 13 Amending the Zoning Map from RM to RMH - 42U9602

42V3129-Exhibit A to Ordinance

S. 6th Street and West Cumberland Street Rezoning Request Petition

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

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach asked at the Zoning Hearing Board, did any residents show up and have any concerns.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that this will be us referring it to them.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked how many residential units to be built in this location.

Attorney Joe Fitzpatrick stated that he is the attorney and counsel for it. The Kahn Family Trust which is the equitable owner of the property here in the city at 645 Hamilton Street. As was mentioned this was the former Montex Textile Mill with 15 parcels. Most of it is zoned RM medium. A little confusion on the map. It could have been made already the RMH medium high density residential. He stated that they have not submitted a plan yet and they have to comply with RMH zoning in terms of numbers. Just to be candid, the preliminary numbers that they are looking at and it is almost six acres. There are 138 units on the consolidated 15 parcels. All we are asking tonight is to refer this request to your cities Planning Commission and to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission so we can get into some detail with the property now. Most of you are well familiar is the site of the Mill. It was a bad fire in 2005. It is covered in brush. It is vacant. It has become a dumping ground. Dr. Kahn and his team with Ms. Feinberg here are working to come up with a feasible development plan. They are looking at probably four structures in total. We can't even proceed with a site plan.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if he had an approximate idea.

Attorney Joe Fitzpatrick stated that is the approximate number right now. If you want any other information, he can provide it.

REFERRED TO THE CITY AND LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSIONS

<u>15-4941</u> Bill 14

Amends Chapter 19, Civil Service Board, of the Codified Ordinances. The Ordinance incorporates Internal Operating Rules of the City of Allentown

Civil Service Board

Sponsors: Administration

<u>Attachments:</u> Bill 14 Civil Service Board Operational Rules

Amended Bill 14
Civil Service Rules
Ordinance #15797

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

REFERRED TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES, ADMINISTRATION AND APPOINTMENTS.

Enactment No: 15797

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

15-4944 R35 Refer to Rules, Chambers, Intergovernmental Relations and

Strategy

Amends Council Rule VIII, Voting by requiring a councilperson to submit to council a request in writing for abstaining on a vote prior to the meeting, stating the reason for the abstention pursuant to the local, state and federal statutes and in absent of council approval of such request, the vote shall be recorded in the affirmative.

Sponsors: Gerlach, Affa and Mr. Zucal

Attachments: R35 Council Rules

Abstention The Unexpected Power of Withholding Your Vote

Roberts-Rules-Cheat-Sheet

Rules

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

Ms. Candida Affa asked if Council can vote or refer to committee.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that the Rules states that it has to go to committee. That is one of your Rules.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if there were any other questions from the dais. She stated that she is glad that it is going to committee. She does have a lot of questions when it comes to R35. It is important to make sure that we

have clear language on this. She asked if there were any questions from the public.

REFERRED TO THE RULES, CHAMBERS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

GOOD AND WELFARE

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that on Saturday, on the 26th of February, the city has the Dominican Flag Raising. It was really amazing. She thanked Councilmembers Hendricks, Siegel, and Affa for showing up. She knows the others wanted to show up, but they had other prior engagement. She stated that Mr. Hendricks was standing right next to her. She thanked Chief Roca who brought his Dominican Officers that she was not aware that the city has so many officers from the Dominican Republic. They were there and were very happy. They were genuine. They took their time to be there. It was such a positive atmosphere. It was extremely cold. Very cold, but boy our hearts wee melting because we had a lot of people there. It was beautiful. She stated thank you. She asked if there was anything else for good and welfare. She stated that they also had on the 26th the Black History Month Celebration here and it was beautiful. A lot of people were here. City Council Chambers was full of wonderful people. A lot of pastors and a lot of great leaders from the community were here. They had lots of models. It was really nice to see the African dresses. It was just beautiful. Lots of culture and lots of color. Lots of laughter and happiness here in Council Chambers.

ADJOURNED: 7:24 PM