



# Allentown

435 Hamilton Street  
Allentown, Pa. 18101

## Minutes - Final

### City Council

---

Thursday, June 15, 2023

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

---

#### Special Committee Meeting

#### Roll Call

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

**Excused:** 1 - Santo Napoli

**Council President :**

This is a Special Council meeting to act on the initiative ordinance. To begin, we are going to follow the same format as the last meeting. The speakers can take no more than 45 minutes to provide testimony, we suggest they follow the same style and format the petitioners followed in their presentation. We thank them again for their presentation.

The initiative ordinance is before us this evening for final action – Council has until June 19th to act. We plan to have a vote on the initiative ordinance. If a majority of council – four or more - votes for the proposal, it is approved, it is not subject to a mayor's veto. If the bill fails, the Clerk will forward the bill to the County to be placed on the November ballot to be decided by the voters.

Accordingly, we will follow the same procedures pursuant to the charter and our rules prior to the vote. After the initial testimony is complete, we will take public comment. Please come to the podium, state your name and address, and address your comments to city council. We will place reasonable time limits on the comments.

After Public Comment, City Council can make comments pursuant to Council Rules.

The Clerk will then take the vote.

**Testimony**

**A/C James Gress**

**Sgt. Iobst**

**APD CNT Assistant Commander Thomas Cunningham**

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated good evening. He spoke about a number of issues that you are going to hear tonight. He has a major issue that he is going to raise regarding Bill 47. He stated that Council will hear from speakers tonight from his administration, members of the public and members of the Public Safety and Law Enforcement Community to talk about the Petition. They will mention the way that the Petitioners represented the details of the Ordinance and point out problems with that. There are other speakers that will point out the problems with enforcement, the problems with the costs. He talked about having a strong mayor form of government and prepare an annual budget. This takes \$4 million off the top. We know with experience that programs that are successful you need buy-in and work with the Police Department, Health, Fire and EMS. He talked about speaking with the Center of Policing Equity. They are in

support of this type of Ordinance. Their recommendation of the mayor of this city is to pursue but do it collaboratively. We do things through the budget process and establish our common priorities. He urged Council to reject the Ordinance as presented and the voters in the city of Allentown should reject the Ordinance when it is placed on the ballot. He thinks they should collaborate and seek the appropriate response.

Assistant Chief James Gress talked about his roles and responsibilities are as Assistant Chief of Support Services. He stated that he graduated from the Allentown Police Academy in 1987. He was a policeman at 19 years old with a nearby agency. He worked for a smaller department for a number of years and for the last 22 - 23 years he has been here with the city of Allentown Police. He oversees all the professional standards, accreditation programs (both state and national), oversee training of every officer that comes into this department, and the Police Academy and what they teach, and how they teach it according to state standards, oversee the Police budget, as well as the hiring process, any development of new technology that needs to be implemented in the city. He touched on the Mission Statement of the Allentown Police Department in reducing crime, contribute to the safety for those sworn to protect through collaboration with our diverse community. Mr. Spang talked about retuning police to the old form 2001 Community Policing. We embraced in 2000 the 21st Century community policing through geographic police, smart policing, and organizational transformation and through the CompStat process. He introduced Sergeant Benjamin Lobst to talk about some of our successful programs that we have partnered with.

Sergeant Benjamin Lobst stated that they have a mixture of programs to help with Mental health issues (CIT - Crisis Intervention Teams: Fire, EMS, Police, Social Workers, and the Health Network) as well as the county. He talked about the CAHOOTs Model stating that it is not a 911 Diversion Program. It uses a non-emergency phone number. Eugene, Oregon has higher crime rates and the suicide rate is 21.2 people per 100,000. Here in Allentown, 12.5 per 100,000. The Crisis Intervention Team Model, all of the Police Officers in the city of Allentown received 36 hours of de-escalation training in the Police Academy. The Police has a Crisis Negotiation Team. He talked about the need of a Mobile Crisis Team. Lehigh County already has that. The county last year did 5,279 phone follow, and 1,485 mobile visits. They only arrested 33 people last year for mental health related issues and they were diverted to mental health treatment through the District Attorney's Team MISA (Mental Illness Substance Abuse). For substance use, all of the officers received Narcan and are trained to use it. In 2020, officers reversed 146 overdoses; 2021, 174 overdoses; 2022 143 overdoses. Officers partner up with Treatment Trends to conduct the Blue Guardian Program. They have a lot of

community partnerships with the Club House of the Lehigh Valley, the Conference of Churches, Treatment Trends, and working with Lehigh Valley Health Network and St. Luke's Health Network to come up with the best approaches for our people that have mental health issues. The stats that were given at the last meeting were completely wrong. Last year, the Police Department had 1,268 serious mental health incidents that were called into police. The police doesn't decide what they are labeled as. The public decides what they are labeled as. Out of those, officers made 906 referrals to mental health services. There were 22 active (in the act of committing suicide incidents were stopped by Allentown Police officers. Twenty - two lives saved. There were zero people killed by the Allentown Police for mental health issues.

Ms. Vicky Conte, Director of Community Based Mental Health Program - Pinebrook Family Answers stated that she has been a part of this program since its inception in April 2017. They have two community Intervention Specialist, Trauma informed and trained in de-escalation. CIS receives referrals from police officers who encounter individuals that appears to have mental health issues. CIS rides along with police officers when their schedules allow. With increased funding and a fraction of the \$4 million proposed they can have a staff for 20 percent of that and staff 10 more Community Intervention Specialists to do the same job and have outreach in the community. APD Community Intervention Specialist serves an average caseload of 100 clients per month. During the fiscal year, they served 430 individuals. Only 11 individuals were subsequently incarcerated. In addressing Bill 47, she believes that Pinebrook Family Answers is already accomplishing many of the goals that this initiative focuses on. She stated that \$4 million can go a long way in creating more affordable housing, and increasing funding to supports that are already currently in place.

Ms. Candice Girandola, Community Intervention Specialist - CIS Program, stated that Ms. Flores is in the audience, but will not be participating. She talked about her experience with individuals and the CIS officers. She receives referrals that varies from individuals needing help with government assistance program, to families that want to get their children mental health treatment. The most common words from the individuals are thank you for caring. They listen to their unique stories and assist them in completing and acquiring documentation for eligibility of services that would help meet their needs. They have assisted in transporting clients to intake appointments as well as accompanying them to these appointments. Her experience working with CIT trained officers has been nothing but positive. The majority of officers that she worked with have been in fact been CIT trained officers. Unfortunately, there have been several instances where social workers that have been seriously injured and even killed by the

individuals that they were trying to help in the community. On May 20, 2020, Sylvia Bracamonte was stabbed to death by a teenager in a group home that she was dropping food off and supplies. There was no staff at the home and it was during COVID. July 2, 2021, a social worker in Massachusetts was stabbed in the upper torso by his client after the client jumped in the back of the workers car and asked if he was ready to die today. Fortunately, the social worker did survive. July 21, 2022, Palm Beach County, Florida, a social worker was held captive for 15 hours and repeatedly raped by the individual. She was providing services in his home. In 2021, she was asked to go to the home of a family who was looking for help with their adult son who was struggling with addiction. He was transmitted to the ER because he had made threats to his own life and the life of his family. The officers asked if she would be willing to go to the home to connect with the family and hopefully provide resources. She told the officer that she was available to meet with the family, got into her car and was driving to the home. She was a block from the home when her phone rang, the officer on the other line asked where she was. She stated that she was about a block from the home and he instructed her to stop her car and wait for officers to respond. He informed that the son had eloped from the hospital and was back at the home. The family had called police because they were fearful of their safety. Officers responded and transferred that individual to a different hospital. She was then contacted when he was secured at the hospital. She was then able to enter the home safely and provide support to the family. This individual successfully completed treatment and the last update she did receive was that he was doing very well.

Mr. Jason Knight, Lehigh Valley Health Network, worked in Monroe County and stated that he is still a per diem paramedic for the City of Allentown. He has worked with many police officers in the busiest 911 trucks, and they handle a lot of mental illness and mental crisis. Went through the bath salt era and worked well with law enforcement. They worked together. Hand and hand, it is a safety issue to have police there with them. His crew does not go into a mental health crisis for dispatch. They wait for the state police to come which takes a good 40 minutes. They did not do a good job with mental crisis because they did not have much in place and worked with Ben to bring what they have in Allentown to Monroe County. They started in 2022, bringing the same program that they already had and started to work this program up there. They were able to reach out to two EMS providers that were in mental crisis and get them the help they needed. They are both doing well in their recovery. They have been working with the District Attorney's Office doing roundtables and table talks. They have the backing of LVHN senior leadership.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if Thomas Cunningham here tonight.

An audience member stated that he is not available tonight.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if Jeff Yanochko.

An audience member stated that he is not here yet.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked for Officer Bill Williams.

Officer Bill Williams, vice president of the FOP and an Allentown Police Officer for 18 years, stated that the problems of this Bill are immense. He summarized the problems. The Bill claims that there are situations that cannot be adequately addressed by police, that they exacerbate feelings of distress and all the police can do is arrest, restrain, or incarcerate. Yet the data compiled at Cedar Crest College from the Center for Police Innovation and Community Engagement. He stated that a statement was made that one of the officers restrained someone just like George Floyd. Yet all one must do is look at both videos to see the differences are starkly apparent. He stated that Ms. Wirth spoke of three years of research and asked where is it? It was said that many conversations happened with various forms of government. He has spoken with the Chief, EMS, the Health Bureau, County Communications and our partners at Cedar Crest. No one has had any communication regarding the Bill. All these issues have not touched on the funding. He suggested them to write the grants and get the funds. The best argument against this Bill is good old common sense. He talked about good data and funding sources, a framework of preparation, a systematic plan of implementation, and a mechanism of feedback and improvement. Yet if what you have seen now is how the proponents supposedly accomplished these ends, then only disaster looms in its implementation.

Mr. David Benner, president of the FOP - Lodge 10, stated that unlike the speakers here, his job is to represent the men and bring more realistic approach to this Bill. The Bill proposes workers to respond to mental health crisis and substance use and quality of life such as family and neighbor disputes. These are serious calls. These are not calls like a cat in the tree or something simple. Not everyone is going to cooperate on these calls. These are people that need to be handled by the police until the situation is stable, then you can bring in someone else that can possibly help. He talked about a WFMZ article and one of the advocates of the Bill stated never should the police be the go-to when addressing social, especially those that are public health issues when there are more qualified health professionals that could address these calls and be more effective. He asked if the police should not handle assault victims, or people with communicable diseases and that are high on drugs and sometimes need

to be physically restrained to get them under control. Every time somebody calls 911, that call can result in a public health issue. Are these social workers are going to put themselves at risk, like the police do? He talked about in the Bill stating that no one with prior law enforcement can be hired. What if the Police Department said there could be no social workers to be hired in the Police Department. He did some research and the only organization that this Bill were where people with prior law enforcement could not join is a Motorcycle Gange. He talked about the Bill not running background checks. He gave examples of if a social worker goes to a home with a domestic violence scenario. He stated to Mayor Tuerk that he hopes that the city has a good insurance policy. God, forbid someone gets hurt or injured.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that next we have Vicky Kistler, Community and Economic Development Director.

Ms. Vicky Kistler stated that she is not here to dispute the merits of a program such as this. She talked about the process. We all know how powerful words can be, but in this case it is what is not said that she has the biggest problems with. She was in the Franklin Park Neighborhood meeting when this issue was addressed. Unfortunately, she was there for three or four days after being out for a period of time. When she heard a program for the Allentown Health Department with the Allentown Police was in the process, she thought, heaven, something big happened while she was gone. Only later, to come back and learn although it was presented an APD department program. No one knew that the program was in the works. She saw people sign the petition after about one minutes of description. She knows people who have signed the Petition who now came to her and said they had no idea of what they were signing. She believes that many people who had signed that document did not read or know the whole thing and that was by intent. They quoted the woman who worked in this program, the Bethlehem's Health Bureau. They did not state that she does not work there anymore, and they did not ask her why. They quote how many people that were not killed, but did they quote how many people were injured or threatened or harmed or how long they stayed in this work. Prior to her 30 years of working in the city, she was a social worker and has a master's degree in Community Counseling at Lehigh University. She does not see a line of social workers saying that this is a great program. She does not see evidence coming from Lehigh County Children and Youth or any other program in our county hat employee a lot of social workers, but also has a huge number of openings with vacancies they cannot fill and caseloads they cannot manage. If you ask them why, it is the risk of the job in home visits in particular. To launch a program like this is irresponsible, unless they hear what was not said, along with what was and bring it to the table and come up with a viable solution.

Mr. Mehmet Barzev, Chief of EMS under the direction of Fire Administration, stated he is responsible for the bureau with 43 full-time employees, 15 vehicles and \$6.2 million budget. With that money, they are projected answer approximately 19,000 EMS calls this year. Very few are related to mental health. If they look at neighboring agencies, they are the exception and not the rule. They have a fundamentally good process in the city of Allentown. He comes from a very small county, rural where EMS was the catchall for disruptive or any type of calls, including mental health where they would be sent for someone threatening suicides and somebody that is out of control and wait for the state police to arrive and take care the patient and transfer them to the hospital. All of this with very minimal training in social work, mental health, conflict resolution and zero de-escalation training. It is not what EMS does. Emergency Medical Services is there for emergency medical services and don't emphasize mental health, but for some reason EMS is mentioned in this Bill. He found out about the Bill in the spring and as he started to digest it and unpack they content of the Bill, this one thing kept ringing in his head. The devil is in the details. Where we looking at what supposed to be a collaboration, EMS was not asked any input. Having worked in Allentown since 2010, and having been himself injured on calls by out of control individuals. Having co-worker have career ending injuries while dealing with calls mentioned on this Bill. He questioned why here, why now and how do we pull this off without further injuring people. Impairment overdose calls come in many different ways. When they get an unknown problem, it is a roll of the dice. If it is an unconscious overdose, why would we delay the appropriate resources. If for some reason, a person does not receive proper care quickly, who is responsible. Who has to foot the Bill of the lawsuit when it is a delay in care. He did provide a letter to Mike Hanlon for distribution amongst Councilpersons and provided 500 pages of research.

Mr. David Synnamon, Director of Health, stated that this was never brought to the Allentown Health Bureau. It was never discussed with his staff. They knew nothing about this. If it would have been brought to them, he would have said crisis intervention is not the work of public health. First response is not the work of public health. He knows that the Petitioner said on Tuesday that Bethlehem Health Bureau had something similar to this. They do not. He just spoke to their Health Director several hours ago. They do have social workers on staff. He asked how often do your social workers respond by themselves. They don't. He asked how long do your social workers respond in conjunction with your police department. Less than 15 percent of the time. The majority of their program is after incident referrals the next day, the next week, the next month.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated that he thinks that he failed to do in his opening is



to demonstrate profound appreciation for Public Health and Public Safety employees. As you saw tonight and heard from a number of committed and caring public health and public safety professionals that take their job and their work of serving the city's residents incredibly seriously. They gave you not the whole story, but a more complete story that has been presented in the past. He stated that they need more of the story to do the work. When he did talk to the Center of Policing Equity, another recommendation that they made was working together, but building solutions based on the data that is present in the community here. You previously received and there is data in the ordinance that refers to trends that are happening nationally. They really need to build legislation and build rules and policies around what we experience on the ground in the city of Allentown. What is in front of Council now is a solution, looking for a problem. It does not fit for the city and it does not respect the work that these tremendous men and women do.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked Mr. Hanlon if he has something to read into the record.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that he assumed Mr. Hendricks would read his memo into the record.

Assistant Chief James Gress stated that he has a letter from Mr. Richard D. Molchany and Chief Roca. He stated that Chief Roca is out of the country and apologized that he could not be here. He read Chief Roca's letter that the proposal was done in the dark without any collaboration from any stakeholders. The proposal is fundamentally aligning with Police Abolitionist goals and objectives as well as Defund the Police Rhetoric. He read Mr. Molchany's email and stated that it would have been most beneficial if it was read to City Council by A C Gress stating that he fully supports the need to have mental illness and drug and alcohol and social services available to police and emergency responders in the city of Allentown. He does not support the dispatch in lieu of police and emergency responders and will support the city as they continue to provide additional Crisis and Intervention Specialists along with one that already paid for by the county with at least one or even two for each platoon. The goal is to prevent future 911 contacts and the police dispatch by having this CIS continued supporting at need residents to achieve their individual goals. Mr. Gress stated that on Tuesday evening, that this program or other similar program is in effect in other places throughout the country and that no one had ever gotten hurt. We heard a little differently tonight from some other people. It is our responsibility to make sure that nobody ever gets hurt. He stated that the police department has the 8 Can't Wait in their policies and procedures long before the George Floyd incident. Someone mentioned that Sergeant Leonard stated that the most common call that

Allentown has is stolen vehicles and by enacting this program will free up a lot of police time to investigate those calls. That is not accurate. He thinks it was misinterpreted. The most common calls are theft from motor vehicles. He stated that he talked to the Assistant Chief in Bethlehem about this program, having five CIS workers with a couple being part-time. They all have other full-time jobs. He got a call from Jordan Westerman stating that after reading Bill 47, she was not in support of this and feels that she was misquoted. He talked to his friend that is an Assistant Chief Jason Lando in Frederick, Maryland and taught many continuous courses that require police training. They have a program with a police officer in soft clothes, a paramedic and a social worker together in a vehicle responding to assist the police on mental health calls. It is a very successful with a team approach and collaboration.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that he has a letter prepared by himself and vice president Mota that he wishes to read: We thought it appropriate to commit some observations to writing on the initiative being considered. City Council and the Mayor share mutual goals noted in the bill introduced under the initiative provisions of the charter - a community response model that serves residents and achieves better outcomes that is also an efficient use of taxpayer dollars. We are all there. The Police Department has been incrementally working on a crisis intervention model with Pinebrook Family Services. They are in the process of evaluating the program with the help of Cedar Crest College. The Public Safety Committee is committed to looking at city data to see where armed responses are not needed and to work with appropriate staff and agencies to develop an appropriate model that works for Allentown. The Community and Economic Development Department is always looking at public health and strategies to deal with such issues. We look forward to moving forward and exploring options on the issue. However, we see this an inappropriate vehicle for getting to our goals. He gave some background.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that he has a letter from the District Attorney Jim Martin stating that he is unable to attend the City Council meeting. He wrote about his concern about the proposed Ordinance stating that in his opinion, the proposed Ordinance is potentially a very dangerous proposition and should not be enacted. He urged City Council to reject the proposal.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Hanlon and opened the meeting up from public comment.

Mr. Nicholas Butterfield, 223 S. 13th Street, stated that he has been a social workers and worked in a lot of emergency services. Social Services in the daytime, a lot of support. When you get to 5:00 or 4:30, you are on your own. You don't have the support. They could actually move somebody

or make somebody move and go to a hospital and get the right treatment. He is very much in favor of police and services interaction. Lehigh County runs and owns 911, and we do not. It is out of our control. If he was a 911 dispatcher, he would not know from a cell phone call if it is a resident or somebody from the other part of the county. Who gets the service and who doesn't. He does not see any pot of gold. He doesn't think the city has a surplus of services. The proposal is a good intention, but it has not been worked out.

Ms. Rachel Osborn, 223 S. 13th Street, stated that she wrote these remarks and timed them. She has been a taxpayer and resident in the city of Allentown for 37 years. She is a homeowner, residing at 223 S. 13th Street. This is one of the most frightening proposals she has seen in those 37 years. It may be well intentioned, but believes the effects could be disastrous. It puts her, her husband and many others living and working in this city at terrible risks. When she calls 911, all she wants to know they will dispatch somebody in a qualified team to help with that situation immediately. Who does it put at risk? Every employee in 911. She asked Council to please vote no.

Ms. Sharon Finnegan, 299 Schantz Road, stated that it would help to clarify and put to rest the misconception about the proposed program. They heard charges that the alternative 911 model itself was anti-police, Police Abolitionist and part of defund the police. When there are many programs that get their funding from the department of Health and Human Services across the country. The funding does not have to come from the Police budget at all. The programs across the country have cut down the emergency room visits. She talked about the referendum process itself. There is an unmet need. Social Workers are amazing and should be applauded and there should be more heavily funded, but that does not mean this isn't a valid program. This is the first response and first contact.

Mr. Jon Irons, 1204 W. Market Street - Bethlehem, stated that he is a volunteer canvasser who collected signatures and supports Bill 47 because he has seen the impact of using police as mental health responders. As a case manager for Communities and Schools, he encounters students struggling with mental illness who told him stories about police called to their homes because of they or their parents were in crisis. The impact was traumatization, distrust of law enforcement and a lack of wraparound services to support the ongoing treatment and management of mental illness. To him the need is clear for why we need alternative responses.

Mr. John Favini, 211 E. North Street - Bethlehem, stated that he has family members in Allentown and in law enforcement throughout the Lehigh Valley. He was one of the folks that helped collect signatures for this

Ordinance. His fellow canvassers and he hit the streets going to church services, school board meetings, parades, and flag raisings enduring rainy afternoons. Besides, reaching people in public spaces, they knocked on thousands of doors and meeting the people in Allentown in their own homes. They were not hiding or hiding their advocacy in private, behind closed doors. He stated that this is what the people of Allentown wants.

Mr. Ronald Johnson, 1537 Washington Street - Easton, stated that this evening they heard many misrepresentations from both law and fact coming from some of our commentators. Even worse, coming from the Mayor of Allentown and Council President. He explained that a Charter Initiative granting residents the Right to Grant Public Health and Safety Ordinances. For over two decades, the people will have the power to and the Pennsylvania courts have reaffirmed that the Charter Initiative is the proper mechanism for enhancing citizen participation in municipal government. He read what is in the law for the Charter itself. He stated that the recognize the workload of police officers and chiefs across the country and are advocating for reforms like this because they are asked to do too much. If passed, the Bill will open and offer 24/7 response which is crucial. They would be able to be deployed and trained teams.

Mr. William Carver, 2535 Jeannette - Easton, Chief Officer for 32BJ representing the paramedics, stated that there was some misinformation that was presented earlier that nobody has been hurt responding to mental health issues. He lost two of his colleagues since he started working in 2018 from injuries sustained while responding to mental health crisis where they were no longer able to provide the job responsibilities. Last week, he was assaulted in the middle of Lehigh Street while responding to a call for substance abuse. It happens and it happens regularly. He does not believe this model provides good protection for EMS providers. From a 32BJ standpoint, this is a unsafe working condition for the EMT's that will be represented.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated on behalf of himself and his colleagues want to commend our emergency services. He knows that they have been taking a lot of heat over the last couple of days. Too often you are under appreciated. It goes for police, fire and EMS. All the emergency services. He asked if there were comments from his colleagues.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that perhaps the people that signed this Bill, had the same opportunity as you all here and the way and the opportunity that Council had to hear the testimony and the data. They did not have the opportunity. Maybe had they heard it or had the opportunity to hear it, they could make an objective opinion. They did not hear what we are hearing tonight. It was amazing what she as a Councilperson, living in Allentown for

over 50 years did not realize how well our city is handling these things. Our mayor brought up a very good point. There was no collaboration. We don't do that here. We like to collaborate. She said let's get to the \$4 million. Your taxpayers' money. Personally, she would prefer this to go to Public Safety. She would love to shore up the police department, the paramedics, our fire department. They are doing a good job. We have CIS and Pinebrook. The city is doing due diligence with mental care. She is not voting on this Bill in any shape or form.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that we heard from the good side, the bad side and those in the middle. However, as Council we have an obligation to the city, to the voters, to pass legislation that is both good for the residents as well as for those who visits this city. He is asking the Solicitor since that is who we pay to guide us and give us his opinion.

Attorney Charles Smith stated that he is happy to go over some of the legal issues that he sees in the proposed Ordinance/Initiative. A lot of them have been accurately stated by people who have spoken already. Some of the issues that he sees or violates the Home Rule Charter budget process. It is the responsibility of the mayor to propose a budget. It is the responsibility of the Council to make any amendments prior to adoption. It is the responsibility of the of Council and the administration to adopt a budget by December 31. By the end of the calendar year. This proposed ordinance in the form of an initiative authorizes the expenditure of \$4 million in violation of the Home Rule Charter. Second, he thinks the proposed legislation is beyond the scope of authority and power of the Allentown City Council to enact. The legal term is ultra vires. If you try to put it in practical terms, the city and Council could not initiate an ordinance that would direct county 911 Emergency Communications Operations. That is the county. In 2015, there was legislation enacted on a state level. The 911 Communication Emergency Services Act and as a result of that, the Lehigh County took over the city's 911 operations. The city does not have a 911 Center and the 911 Dispatch for the city is handled by the Lehigh County. Furthe

**CIS Workers**

Vicki Conte

Ellie Flores

Candice Girandola

**St. Lukes & LVHN Public Safety Liaisons**

Jason Knight

Jeff Yanochko

**Bill Williams and David Benner****Mehmet Barzev, EMS Manager****Public Comment****Vote on the Bill 47****Initiative**[15-5995](#)

Letter from DA Martin

Memo from Council President and Vice President

**Attachments:** [DH CM PHPP](#)[Letter from DA Martin 06-14-23](#)[15-5854](#)

Bill 47

An ordinance introduced as an initiative pursuant to the Home Rule Charter of the City of Allentown approving the creation of a public health pilot program providing alternative first response to calls for service involving mental and behavioral health, substance use, welfare checks, and "quality of life" complaints such as family and neighbor disputes, issues related to unhoused persons, and calls about suspicious persons; authorizing the expenditure of four million, eighty two thousand dollars (\$4,082,000.00) and calling for a Request for Proposals to be issued.

**Attachments:** [Bill 47 Public Health Pilot Program](#)[Bill Public Health Pilot Program](#)[Citizens' Rights and Participation \(3\)](#)[Sufficient Signatures for Petition](#)**Yes:** 2 - Ce-Ce Gerlach, and Natalie Santos**No:** 4 - Candida Affa, Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, and Ed Zucal**Absent:** 1 - Santo Napoli

**ADJOURNED: 8:23 PM**