



Allentown

435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, Pa. 18101

Minutes - Final

City Council

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

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

Ms. Gwen Dietrich stated that she is here to talk about the eviction that was moved to September 29th. The eviction of the homeless encampment. She stated that she want to stress that this is a really good thing that it was moved a month later, but this isn't the end of this fight. A lot of what she heard in the previous meetings and the previous two that they were discussing was there was not enough time to do things. There wasn't enough time to get a Feasibility Study done. There wasn't enough time to find somewhere else to go and get resources together and get money together. She stated that this gives you enough time. She stated that you have a month now and she really just hope and pleading with all of you to use that wisely. She stated to use your power in the following 30 days that you have to make sure that you have that this doesn't happen. she stated that is the best scenarios and the best outcome that we don't evict these people and allow them to continue to stay where they are and that is what the people living there wants who their opinion is the most important on the subject, but that is what the people that are living there are asking that they get to stay and now you have an extra month and you have the time to figure these things out and she hopes they realize that time.

Dr. Jennifer Swann stated that she is here to talk about the future of the Human Relations Commission in Allentown. She stated that she is concerned because right now the city is out of compliance with its own ordinance. She stated that in that ordinance it was stated that the city should put the Commission together within 60 days and if there was no Commission, that the City Council would then appoint members to a Commission. She stated that the Commission was disbanded by the Solicitor on June 4th because the way that the ordinance was written. The

Mayor and the Solicitor have had 60 days to find people to put on the Commission and there have been at least six people who have applied since the Commission has been disbanded to be on the Commission and if we have include an application in May from Jean Hoffman then we have seven stating that they have seven people. Seven applications right now on the Mayor's desk that could be approved. She stated that the other way to think about it is that everybody that was on the Commission when it was disbanded, still had terms left and their applications were in within a year. There are ways to replace this Commission right now today. She stated that you guys are 10 days out of compliance with the ordinance. She stated that she knows there is a Motion way down in the list today to extend this time by 30 more days. She stated that she thinks that is problematic for a number of reasons. One is the city right now has a case that came to her, the day that the Commission was disbanded. She stated that she did not accept it. The city did. The city has been sitting on this case for 60 days. If this, if she understands the Rules for the way that the Council works, if that Motion is put in today, it is not approved until the next meeting of the Commission. She asked is that correct and stated that she knows she does not supposed to ask questions. She stated that this is her thing. She stated that gives them even more delays in addressing issues that come to the Human Relations Commission or to this city. She stated that the final thing that she wants to say about this is, using this to backstop not complying with an ordinance sets a dangerous precedent that they are seeing everyone where people are not following Rules that they established. You just can't come in and say oh, you know what, we will slap this one and then we don't have to do it. She stated that this is a bad way for them to set themselves up as a governance when a Rule is established, we need to adhere to it. If the Solicitor really wanted to put this 30 days in there, he had plenty of time in the past 60 days to put this amendment in. She stated that she is urging the City Council to go ahead with the applications they have. Thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Dr. Swann.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that's all the cards he has.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated ok. He stated that they will move on.

Contract Approvals

[15-7910](#)

R107

Authorization for Contract with USI Insurance Services, LLC in the amount of \$160,000.00 per contract year for the services related to the design, implementation, analysis, maintenance, improvement and communications of an employee and retiree benefits and wellness program. Five (5) proposals were received, contract shall be for three (3) years with two (2)

additional one (1) year renewals beyond the contract expiration period.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [R107 - USI](#)
[Resolution #31100.pdf](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thank Mike Hanlon and stated good evening.

Ms. Sarrah McNeil stated that this was done as RFP2025 - 15, for consulting broker services for employee and retiree benefits. it was advertised on Public Purchase on April 14, 2025. There was a public bid opening on May 12, 2025. The city received five proposals. The evaluation team consisting of four members conducted both technical and cost evaluation evaluations. The proposals were based on IB preference. The qualifications of entities and key of personnel purchasing delivering work scope services, innovations, creative approach to service delivery and cost. After evaluating the proposals, the evaluation committee decided to move forward to oral presentations with the top four scoring firms that was held on June 28th. The committee is recommending an award to USI Insurance Services, LLC.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Ms. McNeil. He asked if there are any questions or comments from his colleagues. He stated Mr. Zucal.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked isn't this something that could be done in HR.

Ms. Sarrah McNeil stated that they always gone with a broker to get our benefits. She stated that as far as she's known, it has never been done in house like that.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated ok, thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there were 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: 31100

[15-7911](#)

R108

Authorization for Contract with The F.A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company in the amount of \$105,710.00 to perform street tree planting, tree removal, and replacement planting services within the public right-of-way along Ridge Ave and 2nd Street. One (1) Bid was received. Contract shall be for one (1) year with two (2) additional one (1) year renewals beyond the contract expiration period.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [R108 F.A. Bartlett](#)
[Resolution #31101.pdf](#)

Ms. Sarrah McNeil stated that this was done as Bid #2025 - 28 contractual work for Second Street and Ridge Avenue. It was advertised on Public Purchase on June 12, 2025. The Public Opening was held on July 10, 2025. The city received one proposal. After the department reviewed the proposal, they were recommending an award to the sole bidder of F. A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Ms. McNeill and asked if there were any questions or comments from his colleagues. He stated Ms. Gerlach.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated oh, yes and asked does this project stem from the inventory that was done that they hired a consultant to see how many trees we have and their condition. She asked is this a product of that.

Ms. Sarrah McNeil stated that this is from federal funding.

Ms. Veronika Vostinak from the Parks and Recreation Department. This is related to the grant funding that the city received from the Urban Community Forestry Program. She stated ideally they wanted to do the tree inventory first, but they received some messages from the grantee which is where the sub-grantee from American Forest and they received some messages from American Forest that they need to spend the money as quickly as possible because there have been some other grants that have been terminated. She stated that theirs have not been terminated, but they want to start planting trees so the inventory will start in the next two to three weeks and this is locations that the tree inspector identified as priority locations.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that sometimes at least on Facebook she has seen people, regular people plant trees and take them. She asked why are we just having community groups do this. She asked why are we paying someone to do it.

Ms. Veronika Vostinak stated as part of the grant they have half of the money would be used to do community tree plantings and half of the money will be used for contractors. They will be doing community tree planters as well.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated the community people are not getting paid. They are doing free labor.

Ms. Veronika Vostinak stated that it will be a volunteer project, yes.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated why not to and stated she doesn't mean to belabor there \$100,000. She asked does it state within the grant that the contract must be with a certain type business. She stated could they not have contracted with a community group and paid them and their people.

Ms. Veronika Vostinak stated a homeowner can plant a tree themselves and the community tree planting gets permission from each of the homeowners. She stated that the homeowners are generally involved. If someone other than the homeowner is doing the tree planting, in the city ordinance there is certain requirements. They have to have certain certifications and certain licenses stating that is the type of contractor that they can use for the city. It is our own requirements.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated got it. Thank you.

Dr. Cynthia Mota stated that she is just glad that it is happening on Second and Ridge Avenue because the reality is it is a place where it is needed. She stated when you go to Ridge Avenue, there are not many trees. She stated that she is just glad that this is happening. Thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Dr. Mota and stated Ms. Affa.

Ms. Candida Affa asked if homeowners and businessowners are they asked if they want a tree in front of their establishment.

Ms. Veronika Vostinak stated that they would receive a notification in the mail prior to them going out and planting the trees. They are out of compliance with out existing ordinance by not having a tree.

Ms. Candida Affa asked are they responsible for trimming and taking care of the tree and if anything or a disease or someone should hit that tree, they are responsible for taking it down then.

Ms. Veronika Vostinak stated yes.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that was a problem for her. She thanked Ms. Vostinak.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated for a follow up to that is so they are being told that there is a tree. They are not being asked hey, you want a tree. You are saying that in order to maintain compliance with an ordinance stating that there must be a tree outside of a certain business and we are out of compliance and there is no longer a tree there and there is nothing that a business owner or homeowner maybe even could do to not have a tree.

Ms. Veronika Vostinak stated that if a homeowner contacts us after receiving the letter, they will discuss options with them within that point in time. If they reach out to us and the contractor respond to the letter and have a question about it, They will take it on by a case by case basis. She stated that they will take it on a case by case basis stating that she does not have enough information to say yes or no.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that is the problem. If you plant a tree in front of her steps, it had to be a certain (inaudible). You have to pay for it. She personally would have refused because it distracts from her business or could not see her business sign. There are homeowners that one day there could be a storm or something that happens. They are not going to be able to afford to take that tree down. It would cost thousands of dollars. She thinks that they should be asked if they wanted a tree. Not everybody wants a tree.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated and there is a tree that there is a group of vendors that they must choose from that the city has a list of.

Ms. Veronika Vostinak stated that they must have an ISA Certified Arborist on staff. She stated that she believes that the city has a list, but they had somebody that had the certification that is an eligible contractor.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated for the record, they can get someone that is not on the city's list.

Ms. Veronika Vostinak stated that the city requires that they have ISA certification.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that was not his question. He stated that they can get someone other than someone that is not on the city's list, if they are qualified.

Ms. Veronika Vostinak stated that she doesn't know how.

Ms. Mandy Tolino stated that there don't have to be an official list. You just have to be IC Certified Arborist and there are IC Certified Arborist in Parks. It is a skill, but it is a skill that you would want to use a chainsaw to half. It is really about safety and working on the street and close to cars and close to homes. There is not a lost per se. You just have to be a qualified vendor, meaning you have to have that certification. She stated just to kind of answer Councilperson Gerlach's question on why they are using some community members and some contractors. The community volunteers are going to be educated on how to plan and do some minor pruning with like hand tools, but the contractors, they are also removing hazardous trees.

That would be a bucket truck and a chainsaw and more technical work that would ever be done by a volunteer group stating if that is helpful.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that it is. Thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if anybody else.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that he would quickly add and does agree with concerns about the cost to maintain trees. He stated that they really have to look at the benefits of having them and studies show, they do improve the property values. The more trees you have in the neighborhood, the more property values go up. It also improves the health of the community. If you could imagine a block with no trees. That would not be good for that block. Also, from a sustainability standpoint trees and canopies with lower energy bills and help with combating that heat in effect. He stated that again, understand both sides and want to make sure that the other side was mentioned that there are many benefits to having a tree canopy in the city that does impact their residents in a positive way.

Dr. Cynthia Mota stated that she agrees, thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Napoli and Ms. Mota. He asked if there were any comments from the public.

Mr. Kyle Ropski, 528 N Berks Street and Chair of Allentown Environmental Advisory Council and also a member of the Shade Tree Commission. He stated that he is not going to be speaking on behalf of these groups today. He stated that he would like to reiterate that points that Vice President Cynthia Mota said and Councilman Napoli said that trees do add a lot of value to the community and definitely very excited to see this grant program progress to get the money out so sooner rather than later would be great. Also, the best time to plant a tree is yesterday. Thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Ropski.

Ms. Karen Ocasio, Southside Allentown, stated she just has a few questions and stated so since people are being forced to plant these trees, what happens if these trees cause damage to the business or to the homes. She asked if the city is responsible for paying those since people are being forced to take the trees. You are going to take it regarding of what. She asked what happens with that. She stated that she has seen there have been situations here where they have been planting trees and the roots have gotten in the foundation or whatever the case may be in the ground and it has ruined it. She stated that she knows it has been people who had to pay it. She stated that people can't afford it in Allentown. The

fact that they can't even have a say on whether they have a tree in front of their business. She gets all of the benefits of it. She stated that she loves trees and stated don't kill her. She doesn't know if there is an organization like PETA for a tree and stated so don't kill her. She likes trees and all of that, but she has a problem with that knowing that previously there have been situations where the city has planted trees and the roots have gotten into the ground and the foundation and things like that. She stated that it has caused damaged to someone's house and they had to pay it out of pocket. She asked are we really thinking about people in the community or throwing something out there because they received a grant or whatever the case may be. Thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Ms. Ocasio. He asked anybody else.

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

Enactment No: 31101

[15-7912](#)

R109

Authorization of Cooperative Contract(s) in an amount greater than \$40,000.00 to provide the City with various goods/services, for Witmer Public Safety

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [R109 - 8-20-2025](#)

[Resolution #31102.pdf](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Hanlon.

Ms. Sarrah McNeil stated that this is just being purchased through a Cooperative Contract.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked and asked if there were any questions or comments from his colleagues. He asked if there were 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: 31102

[15-7926](#)

R110

Authorization for a change order/amendment to add an additional maximum amount of \$100,000.00 annually and provide for an additional one (1) one-year renewal term with Pinebrook Family Answers, Inc. to provide professional services, Mental Health Liaison Program. The original contract was for a maximum amount of \$100,000.00 annually, the addition would bring the contract to a new total of a maximum amount of

\$200,000.00 annually. This is due to the City receiving grant funds for a two-year period.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [R110 - Contract Increase Pinebrook Family Answers.docx](#)
[Resolution #31103.pdf](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there were any questions or comments from his colleagues. He asked if there were 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: 31103

Minutes of Previous Meeting

[15-7930](#) July 23, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [July 23, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes.pdf](#)

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

[15-7904](#) August 6, 2025 Bill 47 Public Hearing Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [August 6, 2025 Bill 47 Public Hearing Meeting Minutes.pdf](#)

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

Communications

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

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that he has an announcement that City Council held an Executive Session this evening at 5:15 on Personnel Matters.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated regarding parking for our visitors of City Council, please use the Government Deck next door and see our City Clerk, Mr. Hanlon for a voucher to pay for your parking. Thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Napoli.

Old Business

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she just has a quick question and just wondering if anyone from the administration has any updates in terms of the Motion that was made at the last meeting to acquire a piece of land and stated that you never know and stated that she doesn't know if there are any updates.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that she doesn't have anything today for you. She stated that she doesn't.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated ok, thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated ok, Old Business and asked Mr. Hanlon if he wants to read that.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that there was a minor mistake on a Resolution that was passed on June 20th. The Resolution referred to the appropriate offer executing the document and it should have been inserted in there. The Mayor and Ms. Patel, the Finance Director for the appropriate officials stating scriptors error.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked what was the document.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated pardon.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated what was the document.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that it was a Resolution. He stated that they would give you a template and so they should have put the Mayor and Bina on there as officials.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that he got him. Thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated ok and stated that they will move on to Reports.

REPORTS**Budget and Finance: Chair Napoli, Santos, Gerlach**

The Committee has not met since the last council meeting; the next meeting is scheduled for September 3rd at 5:45 PM to review the latest financial reports.

Community and Economic Development, Chair Mota, Hendricks, Napoli

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

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

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

Parks and Recreation: Chair Gerlach, Santos, Affa

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

Public Safety: Chair Affa, Zucal, Mota

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

Public Works: Chair Zucal, Gerlach, Affa

The Committee met this evening; there is one item on the Agenda; the next meeting is scheduled for September 3 at 6 PM.

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

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

Controller's Report:

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that the Controller is on vacation and there will be no Report from him tonight. He stated that the Mayor has not submitted anything for the Agenda.

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE (To be Voted On):

[15-7883](#)

Bill 71

Amending the 2025 Solid Waste Fund Budget to provide for a supplemental appropriation of One Hundred Fifty-Three Thousand Dollars (\$153,000.00) from the unappropriated cash balance to purchase a new cardboard baler for the Recycling Drop Off Center. The City was awarded \$200,000 through the 902 Municipal Recycling Program Development and

Implementation Grant for this purchase and will be fully reimbursed once the cardboard baler is purchased and installed.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 71 Solid Waste Fund Transfer](#)
[Ordinance #16162.pdf](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Hanlon and stated that this was in your committee, Mr. Zucal.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated yes, sir and it was sent favorably.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Zucal. He asked if there were any questions or comments from his colleagues. He asked if there were 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: 16162

[15-7892](#)

Bill 72 Special Committee Meeting, forwarded favorably Authorizing and securing the issuance of one or more series of general obligation bonds, in the maximum aggregate principal amount of \$134,040,000, pursuant to the Pennsylvania Local Government Unit Debt Act, to finance various capital projects of the city and to pay the costs of issuing the bonds; accepting a bond purchase agreement; setting forth the parameters, substantial form of and conditions for issuing the bonds; pledging the full faith, credit and taxing power of this city to secure the bonds; creating a sinking fund and appointing a paying agent and sinking fund depository; and authorizing related action.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 72 ALLENTOWN CITY 2025 GO BONDS PARAMETERS NEW MONEY\(122703575\).docx](#)
[COA Plan of Finance Presentation 8.7.25.pdf](#)
[COA Capital Project Detail.2025.pdf](#)
[Ordinance #16163.pdf](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Hanlon and stated that this was in the Committee of the Whole and this was forwarded favorably to the full Council. He asked if there were any comments or questions from my colleagues.

Mr. Ed Zucal thanked Mr. Hendricks and stated that he has some questions for Ms. Patel. He stated that they are headed towards the budget season in the next couple of months or so and asked currently how many if he can tell him how many outstanding bonds do we currently have.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that is provided in our Budget, and does have that included as part of the presentation. The total amount that is outstanding if that is what you are looking for.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that in other words we have two, three.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that they have and the first one is 2007 and then they have a new issue in 2019, 2020, and there is 2015 outstanding as well. She stated that all of them are listed in their budget for 2025.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated roughly how much money would you say, if you had to guess. He asked do we still owe.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that the 2007 has accretion, but she would say about \$1 million is outstanding, total.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked is it \$90 million.

Ms. Bina Patel stated yep.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated obviously, they don't have anymore ARPA money to cover revenue that has been used in the past.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that ARPA money was never was to be used for our outstanding debt.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated correct, but we don't have anymore coming in.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that is correct. They have no more ARPA funds.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated and part of that money if he recalls was used to pay or to create positions within the city.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that she would not say create positions, but they funded some positions with monies that were received from the federal government.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated to start the 2026, we are going to have to at least come up with the money to cover that. He asked fair enough.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that you are correct.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that was roughly \$1.5 million and the also hired he believes it was 12 firefighters from a grant. He believes that grant expires

in 2026 and now they have to add their part to it.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that it runs through 2026. It is a safer grant. It funds 12 firefighters and the grant was for three years.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that was roughly 1.3 million, right. He stated to Ms. Patel you said that we were good to '27 for that, right. He asked what would she say the city's current deficit is going into this budget.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that she is not ready to discuss that because she is still working on the budget.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that you are asking us to vote on \$134 million tonight.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that it is a perimeters ordinance that Mike Hanlon, the City Clerk read is what it does is allows them to or gives them permission and if they need to, it allows the city to issue bonds. She stated that is the maximum amount.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that he is familiar with all of that, but his question was you don't have an answer for him for the debt then.

Ms. Bina Patel asked debt for.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated the deficit, not debt.

Ms. Bina Patel stated for the 2026 budget. She stated that she is not sure if they have a deficit because she is still working on the budget. She stated that it is not to be proposed until October 15th. She stated that she is not ready to discuss the 2026 budget as she is still working on it.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked has there been any talks in terms of a task increase of any.

Ms. Bina Patel stated again, she is not ready to discuss because she still working with departments and to finalize the budget is not due until October 15th.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated it is two months away, you don't have a rough idea.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that she doesn't. It is premature for our size of the city is premature for her to speak to speculate without having the full picture of the budget.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that last week the gentleman did a nice job and handed

out this pamphlet and there were two sets of funds on there for money to ask for bonds. He stated that one was a projected amount and the other was a maximum perimeters. He stated that they are being asked tonight to vote on the maximum perimeters amount and would pass out is a amortization chart with that amount of money and basically the 30 years that it is going to take to pay this off. He stated that it is no different than getting a mortgage for your house in a roundabout way. He asked does everyone have one. He stated to Mike, if he could give one to Ms. Patel. He stated obviously like anything, when you take out a homeowners loan or whatever the first couple of years, it is really no principal paid because it is mostly the interest. He stated if you look at the bottom of the amortization and stated that he will give her one and you will see that the amount that they are asking for is \$134,030,000. The interest on that is going to cost \$218,650,000 and some change, totaling \$352,690,000. He stated now he wants to focus the attention on because he put it on his pamphlet here. Put the year '47. Put the years '46 and '47. He stated that if you notice, the city has to come up with their debt service that will include the interest and some of the principal with \$14 million for two years in a row. That automatically sets the city back \$14 million and stated by the way it is January 31st of that year. He stated that he doesn't know if they remember Scranton, but years ago Scranton ended up making some bad financial moves and they ended up in what is known as Act 47 which is basically cities that aren't that financially stable or do not practice financial procedures. He stated that he doesn't know about you folks, but here is his other problem. This all started with the Fire Department and the Police Department. Now, all of a sudden, we have the Parks Department and the Public Works Department in here. He stated that he is going to make a motion later that we rethink about this and change some things. He stated \$14 million and stated he doesn't know about you, but that is a lot of money and the average that they are going to pay starting December 31, 2026 is \$8.3 million, then it is 9.5689 and stated that there is no year, except for the very first year and then you are not paying any principal is \$8 million and that doesn't include any possible taxes increases. He stated that if they vote on this, they are going to kill the people stating we are literally going to kill the city.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated stop with the comments in the back.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that if this is the kind of thing that becomes Act 47 and stated that don't get him wrong is no one up here that doesn't want a new Public Safety building, doesn't want a new Police Department. He stated that this can't be the answer. He stated now the mayor was on the TV at 5:00 talking about how bad Central Fire Station is and they want to put a new roof on. He stated that is great, but first of all, if it is that bad, why do we have firefighters in there. If we are going to build a new fire station, then

why are we spending \$400,000 for a roof. Get them out somewhere, get the place built and get them in there. He stated that this was meant for Public Safety to start with and now we got all these projects. He stated that we got a project from the parks department for Mack Pool. He stated you are the chairman of the Mack Pook, have you heard about this before. That project.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she knows that there is a Comprehensive Strategic Plan going on.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated ok and asked was that amount of money ever mentioned in any of the meetings.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated not that she can recall.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated again, there is an amortization chart and knows that the gentleman there means well when he put this together. He stated that he is supported and elected by the citizens of Allentown and it is part of his responsibility to make sure that the city does not get themselves into a situation that they can't get out of. He stated that his colleagues can vote how they want, but he got to tell them he will not put himself out there and create this type of situation. He stated like he said maybe it won't be a tax increase next year, but maybe in 2037, there might be a 12 percent tax increase on top of this and stated he doesn't know about them, but he is not interested in paying that kind of tax increase, plus this debt and stated that is all he has. Thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Zucal and asked if there were any other comments or questions from his colleagues and stated Ms. Gerlach.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she just wanted to once again get it re-interacted that the itemized list of capital projects and not set in stone. She stated so if, someone on Council and she guesses four other folks or three other folks on Council at some point wanted to maybe during the budget process put forth a capital project that was she doesn't know maybe helping the unsheltered community. She stated that how would one do that. She asked if this passes and stated that she doesn't know how this is going to go and stated if this were to pass and there is a \$121,740 that is accounted for by these itemized capital projects, but there is \$12,300 that is not accounted for. She stated so if someone said, hey let's help the unsheltered in some capacity and let's take out a bond. She stated that the city is taking out a bond for everything else. She asked how would one do that.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated Mr. Napoli.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that the first question is for Mr. Beckett, and stated that you live in this world of financing and another city was brought up by Mr. Zucal. He asked are there comparisons to be made or lessons learned or there differences and asked do you have any information on that.

Ms. Bina Patel stated so thank you and said it was an excellent question. The difference between the project cost and the \$134 million is that baked in the cost of between the inception of the project and the completion of the project, there might be an increase in cost. She stated that sometime the scope of the project changes. She stated that is what is baked in. It does not mean they issue bonds for \$134 million. It is projecting just in case if this happens they have that clause baked into this. She stated to answer your second question, they did discuss this during a committee meeting that this is place holder projects. She stated that they can't go to the IRS and file and saying that they are issuing bonds for operating expenditures. She stated that they have to state that they are borrowing money for capital projects in which they listed where they very carefully the life of the project. She stated that this is all defined by the IRS. The IRS states that the life of the capital project for example, a building has a life of 99 years. She stated that when they issue bonds, they have to issue bonds for capital projects and they listed a project that the city in the past has not been able to work on for many, many years. She stated that they were not financially not healthy or they could not support them and to answer to your question, they had to fix a roof in a hurry because they still have firefighters working out of that building. She stated that they could not afford to create a new building for them in the past and they cannot create a building. It is a process. It takes years to create them. She stated to remedy that, immediately they had to fix the roof. As Councilperson Gerlach suggested, there is a city asset evaluation that is going to be assessment or evaluation that is going to be completed and then they will complete the project based on the assessment that comes back. She stated that this will just answer your question. She stated that this is paid forward projects. Not the Public Safety, but the other projects. She stated some of them, they were not able to work on. They will be working on them, but they can always change the process and Council has the authority to change the process.

Mr. Tom Beckett stated are you asking me to disparage Scranton and stated that he can't do that.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated not disparage, but talk about what caused them to end up in.

Mr. Tom Beckett stated that he will give a story from early in his career about Scranton. He stated that he went to Scranton to do a Bond Issue in

1991 and when he got there to do the financial due diligence that they have to do looking at their books, looking at their budgets, and everything else, the then Treasurer gave him a stack of 3 x 5 cards and he had at that time a \$29 million budget. He stated that Scranton has been in Act 42 for as long as he has been in his career and that is going 40 plus years. He stated that Allentown is not Scranton. He stated that Scranton has positives and negatives. He stated that as Councilman Zucal pointed out, they have done a lot of things like fund operating deficits with Capital Funds. He stated that they are not looking at doing it this year at all. He stated when they look at the cost to carry this debt, they look at it as not \$14 million, obviously \$14 million is \$14 million. He stated that he wishes they had that, but they look at it as a percentage of the General Fund Budget and that is the way the Credit Rating Agencies look at it as a percentage of your budget. He stated that is the way people look at giving you a home mortgage. They look at it as a percentage of your budget. He stated that typical home mortgages, you will be looking at 25 - 34 percent of your budget is your debt service on your mortgage. He stated that they are talking about less than 10 percent here. He stated \$14 million is the budget is about \$150 - \$160 million at this point. It is less than 10 percent which is not throwing any red flags off in terms of fiscal stress at this point.

Mr. Santo Napoli thanked Mr. Beckett and stated that he just wants to add a couple of folks have mentioned on this and it is a lot. There is no doubt about it. He stated that when we talk about fixed assets, these are buildings, these are projects that are going to be around for the next 50 years. He stated that we have to look at how we impact future generations. He stated when we look at the fire station, that Central Fire Station is a huge impact for Center City residents. He stated that they have to start investing and the fact that we haven't is why they are having this conversation now. That Fire Station should have been replaced 10 years ago. It would have been much less, pre Covid of course with cost, but he stated that he just did a quick calculation and if they let interest get in the way of making the decision, if you want to buy a \$200,000 house anywhere. A 30 year mortgage, you are going to end up paying \$223,00 in interest. Does that stop anyone from buying a home? He stated that is what we do because we don't have the money to buy it so we have to get a mortgage. A \$60 million Fire Station, we don't have money in our operating budget to pay for a Fire Station and that is why you bond it out. And, yes, the numbers are and there are no disputing it. It is a concern, but when they look at how it relates to our overall budget, and stated that he does chair the Budget and Finance committee and see a lot of these numbers are attainable based on our position and what this administration has done over the years and fiscally getting ourselves in the position. He stated that he believes 10 years ago or maybe even shortly than that they would not have been able to do this. They were not fiscally sound and able to do it.

The interest is staggering and he stated that he gets it. Again, personally, he is still going to buy that house because that is what we do. When you want to buy a house, that is what you have to do and the interest is part of the deal. He stated that is something that he wanted to mention and lastly, again, what are the alternatives. If anyone comes up to him and says you can't do this, ok, what is the alternative. How are we building a Fire Station? How are they improving the Public Safety Building for our officers? He stated that there are no other answers. He stated that it is about making an impact for future generations. It is about especially our Center City residents. He stated again, the Central Fire Station is pivotal to serving our Center City residents and that needs to be done yesterday. He stated that this is the first step. He stated as Ms. Patel said all they are doing tonight is voting on the parameters. He stated that they will have these conversations as Ms. Gerlach mentioned on individual projects. Whether they are merited or whether they change their minds on some things, but tonight is the first step in getting to the next step. Again, if you are looking at a \$200,000 home and you are only pre-approved for \$100,000, why look at a \$200,000 home. He stated that you want to understand where we are at so we can start the next conversation and making these investments in assets that are going to be around for 50 plus years.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Napoli.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that she agrees with Mr. Napoli. She stated that she is afraid that if they don't do this and they do need a new Fire Station and need a Police Station. She stated that beautiful Health Department and Health Project they are going to put up there and stated if they don't do this now, she is afraid that they are going to piecemeal it year by year. She stated that they need \$2 million for a new roof and \$3 million for something with the plumbing. She stated that these buildings are so old that they are going to be spending millions of dollars every year and every year, they are going to be asking for more money because they are falling apart. They both brought up good points and it is scary to think about interest, but like Mr. Napoli said we know our budget and know what we can afford and know what we can do and know what we have to do. She stated like she said, she is afraid if they don't do this and spend the money on these projects, they are going to be every year. It is going to be millions of dollars for this, that and the other thing. She stated that she would approve this.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Ms. Affa and stated Ms. Mota.

Dr. Cynthia Mota asked how old is the fire station. When was it built?

? stated that it is in the Study. It was a car dealership, not a fire station. He

stated that they turned it into a fire station. He stated that their guys aren't complaining every day about the station. He stated that the problem is there is no path to make it better. It is just a matter of time until like Councilman Zucal said, if it falls apart, they are in a real bad spot. It is scary to put a \$400,000 roof on a building that you don't know what the future holds for it. He stated that the alternative is if they wait three to five years to build a new one and the wall falls off in Hall street, now they are in a crisis state that they, EMS, and there are a lot of vehicles and a lot of people that work out of there every day and there is not a covered building that they can store all of that stuff in. He stated going back to the cost of repairs, they are building fire trucks specifically to fit in a car dealership. He stated like put the concept in your head. It has to be less than 10 feet. He stated that they have specialty doors that is less than 10 feet. He stated that these doors break once a month because they are specialty doors. It is like an endless pit of money at this point with bandaids, bandaids and bandaids. There are more bandaids then buildings. He stated that he doesn't know what to tell them, but the building been there forever. They probably were there and he doesn't know why in the 1960s for the wrong purpose because there was no other place to go.

Dr. Cynthia Mota stated and the reality is that we haven't spent a lot of money in our infrastructure. She stated that things are almost ready to collapse and that is also her concern, but at the same time she does understand what they are saying about the taxes. She stated are they going to be and how much taxes are they planning to tell people and they have to pay. She asked what is going to happen with our taxpayers, but again, she really believes that they do need this. She stated that it is a difficult decision, but at the end of the day, they really need this.

? stated thank you. He truly thinks they need and if they need any questions more than answered, but if you look around, EMS has grown so much. The Fire Department is boxed into nine vehicles and they don't have room to grow. If we had more vehicles, they would be parked outside. The Academy building is full with vehicles because they don't have any other place to go. He stated Chief Mehmet has to park his vehicle at the city garage because they don't have a place to go. He stated that it is not a good path to go on. They just have to figure out a solution that's all. He stated that he thinks this is a good way to do it.

Dr. Cynthia Mota stated if they say yes, what would be the first thing that and what will be the priority here.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that they have to see the Project where there progress and the project is currently based on Police Headquarters progress because that Project has already began. She stated that they

have some of the ARPA Funds that was awarded to them that they allocated to Police Headquarters that you Councilpersons have allocated \$9 million and still have those funds set up and they are working through. She stated that it seems highly likely mid 2026 is when they possibly will be doing a bond issue.

Dr. Cynthia Mota stated ok, thank you.

Mr. Bina Patel stated that they have to continuously where our projects and where they are at with our projects and that is why there are parameters gives us the window based on how our projects are moving and then they will come back to Council and say Phase I since the project is moving along in our timeline. Now is the time to issue the Bonds. Council will still have the authority to approve the next level of projects.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Ms. Mota and stated Mr. Zucal.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that he will have a Motion once everyone else is done.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated ok and stated that he too want to speak to the fact that he cannot in good interest turn his back on Center City where they have the largest number of people, the most congestion, and probably the most fire station in the entire city. The Fire Station is a must, a new community Health Bureau along with the Fire Station at the proposed site along with the expansion of the Police Department is necessary and 50 years from now, the city is going to be bigger and stated that we are drawing more people all the time and this city is well known and documented as the third largest city in the state of Pennsylvania. As far as the other items within that, he is not so sure they are necessary and he thinks that time is when Council needs to decide whether they fund them, but for now, all they are doing is stating for state purposes and being in compliance with the law, the amount of Bonds that they wish to put out there that they may use. There is no guarantee that we have to use them or fund any of the other items and again, except for the Fire and the Police that is his biggest concern and he will support this Bill for this reason.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that this is her second time. She stated ultimately, she has seen other municipalities and what they will do is find a reoccurring source of revenue. She stated for them, that may be the Deed Transfer Tax if they were to tackle that in terms of increasing it. At the same time, they were not always coherent, but they also take out a Bond for affordable housing. Not that they would be voting it, but they would have the money for a nonprofit and her only inclination is to vote for this is by the potential that in the future this Council, a new Council in 2026 at some point with then have some borrowed and then will have the ability to use some of

the money for affordable housing, if that Council shall chose to. She stated for her that is because affordable housing will decrease crime. Affordable housing will decrease the number of fires because it is quality housing. It is not put together with tape so to address these other Public Safety issues, the key is housing and they have to take a Bond out to do that. She stated for her, if they are going to take out a Bond, she would want it to be more expansive than just the Fire Station and the Health Bureau and the Police. She would want the ability to do more than just that. She stated that is where she is at.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Ms. Gerlach. He asked is there any comments from the public.

Mr. Lamet Zoocky, EMS, (sp) stated that he just want to reiterate

Mr. Mehmet Barzev, EMS, (sp) stated that he just want to reiterate just a couple of points and stated that he is inclined to believe that they are still in the building of Central Fire Station out of necessity. It is certainly not of desire. Not only are they building equipment specifically to fit in a building not designed to hold it, but they are spending extra money to make things smaller, if you could imagine that. When you go to the Fire Truck store and you know standard size fire trucks are a lot bigger than they can fit in the doors of the Central Fire Station. He stated that they are spending money on getting small ones. He stated that they are on the same boat as the ambulance. One of the first things they do when they look at ambulances is get out a tape measure stating you know, can it fit. The other thing that we run into is need. It is no secret that their busiest district is our Central EMS District, but when we add extra crews, we can't put them there because if we put another crew up, we have an option. The option is to house the unit and quarter the crew or to park the ambulance outside and let it idle around the clock and just have them sit somewhere. Now, that's what some agencies do, but it is going to kill our equipment. It is just bad all around and kill the equipment. It is just bad all around. It is bad on the equipment and bad on the staff and of course, bad on the environment to waste resources and idle a vehicle around the clock because it is parked. When they look at short-term solutions, what happens if the roof blows off in a hurricane. He stated that we don't have a solution. The answer is, we don't know what we are going to do. They are trying to address this now and they are at what they hope is the last few years of the lifespan of this building stating now, again, it was never designed to be a fire station. He stated that he hopes that they can convince City Council to invest in the Fire and EMS building. He stated that he realized that the cost is great knowing that everybody works on a tight budget. He stated that he believes that their Finance Department and their experts that laid out the Plans have our best interest in mind and would hope that you guys would consider this just

to bring some life back to Center City and give both the Fire and Paramedic Departments the ability to expand our services and betting coverage of the Center City area. Thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated thank you and asked if there were any comments from the public.

Ms. Barbara Redmond, Improving Lives, stated first of all she would like to know it seems as they are robbing Peter to pay Paul. You don't even know how many funds are out there right now. She stated that to her is poor management. If you cannot say how many bonds you have, that's a problem to her. The taxpayers are going to have to pay more money. They are going to be the ones responsible for paying these debts. If you can't pay the debts, that's going to bring down Allentown's average when you want to invest more money. You are not going to be able to invest because it is going to bring down the quality of life in Allentown Pennsylvania. She stated that she thinks that they should rethink this and really consider what you are going to do about the \$90 million that is already owed. She stated that you have that to pay and then you are going to have \$134 million. She thinks that they should rethink it and just think about what you are doing before you make a decision. She stated how can the taxpayer keep paying more money every year after year after year. She stated that the interest rates are going up and everything else in this country and taxpayers don't have that kind of money to be paying and she is afraid if they renege on this Bond, it is going to put the city of Allentown in a bad position and the Allentown rate will go down as far as the debt rate. She stated that they need to think about what they are doing before you make this decision.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Ms. Redmond.

Ms. Karen Ocasio, Southside Allentown, stated that she is asking that maybe they should hold off on that. She stated that Bina just said if she knew exactly what deficit that they were in and if we were in a deficit. She stated why don't we wait for those numbers. She stated that she knows that this is very important and has been at the Fire Station before and knows it is very important, but it has been deteriorating for a while. She asked why wasn't this thought about when they did the Academy for the Fire and instead of using the funds for that or use it to fix the ones that needed to be fixed before we approve the contract J P Mascaro, we could have taken some of that money and every year it is going to go up and put the city more in debt. She stated that it is a great idea what Councilperson Gerlach said about using it for housing, but you and I both know that is not going to happen because nothing happens for the homeless and nothing happens for the needy and there is a lot of ways that money can be put together and there are a lot of investors. There are a lot of people who

supposedly care about the city of Allentown that has a lot of money. Why not put them together and help the Fire Station and bring in money and do something to not have to put them more as a deficit because right now this Bond, loan or whatever you want to call it is during this administration. She stated let's say Tuerk goes back in, the interest would be whatever or lowered in the next four years. Once he leaves, we are going to be stuck with that debt and it is going to go up and up and up and she doesn't think that they are really thinking about the long term effect that it is going to have on us. She stated that they are already in a horrible place. She stated that they should really think about it before you guys decide to vote on this. According to someone in the mayor's office, the Finance Department already got four votes secured so she is wondering who those four are. Thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Ms. Ocasio. He asked anybody else from the public. He stated seeing none, Mr. Zucal.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated would you like my Motion. He asked for the city to recalculate four of those and then get back to us.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated ok, there is a Motion on the floor to only include the Police Station, Community Health Station.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated EMS. He stated Fire, EMS, yeah.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated and the Police Station.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that the Motion was that the city calculate the cost of it and come back to us at a future date. He asked is that what you are talking about and stated that would basically postpone this Bill, correct.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated yes.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach asked do they have to calculate. It is \$30 million for the Police Headquarters, \$65 million for the Life, Safety and Wellness Program and stated to just add that up, right.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated we can do that.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach asked is that right, Ms. Patel.

Ms. Bina Patel stated yes, the potential cost are listed there. As of the date that was provided again. Don't forget during the Project's life sometimes the cost fluctuates. she stated so we have to bring that in and if you do that just keep that in mind that you are stating whether capital projects just like any other departments that will be able to work

That at this time as far as putting money out for a Bond that it is only a Bond to include the Police Station and the Fire House Station.

Enactment No: 16163

CONSENT AGENDA

RESOLUTIONS FOR FINAL PASSAGE (To be Voted On):

[15-7917](#)

R111

Approves the submission of an application to obtain a HUD 108 Loan for This Life Forever, Inc. in the amount of \$1,015,000.00

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [R111 Mishka HUD 108 Loan Resolution #31104.pdf](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there were any comments or questions from his colleagues.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach asked what is this.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked would someone from the administration explain.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated just Google this.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated what this life forever is.

Ms. Bina Patel stated that she can provide and this is just applying. This is HUD Loan that the city is applying for the Small Business - This Life Forever. She stated that this is not our loan it is a Pass Through.

Dr. Cynthia Mota stated that it is a Pass Through.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated ok. She stated that it is the vodka company. She stated alright, yeah. Gotcha ya.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked any other questions or comments. He asked 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: 31104

[15-7914](#)

R112

Authorizes the submission of a Formal Application for funding for the PennDOT Transportation Alternative Set Aside Program (TASA) Grant Opportunity in the amount of approximately One Million Dollars

(\$1,000,000) to update up to 10 outdated pedestrian signals within the City of Allentown.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [R112 - TASA Grant Application](#)
[Resolution #31105.pdf](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Hanlon. He stated that is pretty self explanatory. He asked if there were any questions or comments from his colleagues. He asked if there were 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: 31105

ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION (To be referred to Committee with public comment prior to referral) : The request is to vote on these this evening.

There is a request to vote on both these bills this evening. Both bills contain this provision that is from the Charter and your rules as a Section: Pursuant to Section 218 of the Home Rule Charter and by the affirmative vote of six of its seven members the fourteen-day period between introduction and passage this ordinance is hereby eliminated.

15-7915

Bill 73

Amending the 2025 Equipment Fund Budget to provide for an increase of Three Hundred Eighty-Two Thousand Five Hundred Forty-Eight Dollars (\$382,548.00) for the purchase of 7 electric passenger vehicles and purchase and installation of 7 EV chargers to conduct an EV fleet pilot. The City was awarded \$120,070 from the US Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program and \$120,000 funded through two \$60,000 awards from the Pennsylvania Alternative Fuels Incentive Grant (AFIG) program. A total of \$240,070 of these grants are fully reimbursable and once the equipment has been purchased and/or installed, the City will be reimbursed.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 73 EV Pilot Equipment Transfer](#)
[Ordinance #16164.pdf](#)
[Ordinance #16164.pdf](#)

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that the administration is asking for you to vote on it this evening. In order to pass the ordinance, you need six or seven Councilpersons to approve it to eliminate that fourteen - day period between introduction and passage.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked do we need a Motion to move this.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that you don't need a Motion. You just need to vote on it. You need six or seven.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that he would like to comment on this. He stated that he just happened to be reading his latest issue of Consumer Reports and the type of vehicle they are requiring to purchase is the Chevy Equinox. They were listed as one of the most satisfying electric vehicles that has been built so far. He stated that it is well worth it. They are obviously quality vehicles and there is a time for them to be using electric vehicles, especially if they can get the majority of the cost of them paid for. He stated that he will also open it up to anybody on the dais to speak and stated Mr. Zucal.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that it is a PILOT Program, right. He stated so if the PILOT Program doesn't work then what do we do with the vehicles.

Mr. Mark Shahda stated that the vehicles will just remain in the fleet and will be repurposed, that's all.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that they wouldn't go out and start buying because it is a PILOT Program.

Mr. Mark Shahda stated it is just a PILOT Program.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated ok.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Zucal. He asked if there were any comments from the public.

Ms. Tinku Khanwalkar stated that she is a resident of Allentown at 208 N. Marshall Street. She stated that she is also co-chair of the Environmental Advisory Council for the city of Allentown and the Energy Lead on the Allentown EAC. She stated that she is expressing strong support for proceeding with that EV PILOT Program. She stated that last year, City Council passed a Resolution that a systematic examination should be conducted by a consultant and the costs and benefits of a change over from a gas fleet to an EV fleet should be presented to City Council before the city proceeds with the full transitioning to EV and this PILOT Program is going to help us there with a needed date. The Allentown EAC did work closely with the city's Sustainability Coordinator and an Energy Manager provided by Pennsylvania DEP, Wilson Engineering to develop the scope of this EV Pilot Program which is going to provide the needed data and just wanted everyone to know that in its initial examination, Wilson Engineering estimated that the city would save \$19,755 for the seven EVs that are part

of this scope and with the fleet of 600 vehicles, the city would save almost \$1.69 million every year by switching over to EVs. She stated that is money that could be used to address so many demands that the city is talking about right now from affordable housing to payments for Capital Projects at \$1.69 million every year. She stated that she is very pleased that they are proceeding with this PILOT Program and hope that they will quickly be able to transition our fleet to begin to make those savings. Thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Ms. Khanwalkar. He asked if there were any other comments from the public.

Mr. Kyle Ropski, 528 N. Berks Street, stated thank you all for having him and allowing him to speak tonight. He stated that he really wants to hammer home on the point of fiscal responsibility that coming with EV PILOT Program. With the EV PILOT Program so when it comes to electric vehicles, they do not run on gas. Most of our fleet mostly run on gas. Gas and fossil fuels are like they would refer to inelastic good. Elasticity is a term that they use to measure the demand of someone who would be going to have depending on the price of a good. A couple of coffees, \$2.00 should be probably going to be \$10, maybe not so much. He stated that is an elastic good. He asked does the price really matters when it comes to gas inelastic. He stated no matter what the price is we have to pay for it and that is critically important from a municipal perspective. He stated our Fire, our EMS, our Police, they need to get to emergency services. Our streets need to be plowed, as much as he hates it we need fossil fuels to operate the municipal government properly. Now, when it comes to sort of proceeding with this, the PILOT Program is the right way to do it. He stated that they are collecting the data and they are doing a Report and what they are trying to see if this is the fiscally responsible option to do. He stated as Councilman Zucal said if it doesn't work out, it doesn't work out, but we are collecting the data. He stated that they are doing it the right way. They are doing it on grant funding. They are doing it in a way that is not just doing a complete transition into EVs and also want to note on the environmental benefits of it. He stated that they are the capital of the United States two years in a row. Cars emit cancerous, toxic chemicals and EVs are a little bit better. It is not the best thing in the world, but it is going to make a step in the right direction. He stated with that, thank you and encouraged you to support this and vote on it favorably. Thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Ropski. He asked anybody else, Ms. Gerlach.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she doesn't always need to be a negative Nellie, but wonders does anyone know what the Chevy Equinox and stated

that she knows some electric vehicles have like and they come with companies that have made statements concerning the source of the Cobalt and the effect internationally that is having in the Congo. She asked if they know this company has said anything. She asked if they know where they sourced their Cobalt from. She stated that she is just wondering. She stated that she is going to vote for it and trust it to know.

Ms. Natalie Santos stated that she did a quick Google search here and it says, they use General Motors Ultanium Battery Technology and they do use Cobalt source the Congo.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she thinks it is important that yes, obviously electric vehicles are better for the environment, but there is always we are in an interconnected world that as we benefit, they are also contributing to the suffering of others. She thanked Ms. Santos.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there was anybody else.

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

Enactment No: 16164

[15-7920](#)

Bill 74

An Ordinance amending the HRC code by stating the Mayor shall have 30 days after the effective date of this ordinance to submit members of the initial board to Allentown City Council for approval. The terms of the appointments shall be staggered terms based on the initial appointments.

Sponsors: Gerlach, Napoli, Santos and Mr. Zucal

Attachments: [Bill 74 HR Amendment.docx](#)

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that Ms. Gerlach is asking for you guys to vote on this tonight and you would need six or seven Council people for that.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there are any comments or questions from his colleagues. He asked if there were any comments from the public.

Dr. Jennifer Swann, 1824 W. Congress Street, stated that she just wants to reiterate, they have right now applications that were sufficient for this Council that could be voted on tonight. They also have all the people that were on the Council before that were let go just because of the change in the ordinance. She doesn't understand why an extra 30 days are needed and as she said before, the city has a case that it is not addressing. She stated that she thinks it is a stalling tactic and if after the seven people that are currently available or are appointed. The Commission is 13 people at large. There is nothing stopping the mayor and the solicitor for adding people to the Commission after you approve the people that are currently

waiting to be approved. She stated that she is not understanding why 30 days is needed since they had 60. She stated that is all. Thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Dr. Swann and asked anybody else.

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

Enactment No: 16165

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

[15-7913](#)

R113

Resolution Adopting the Updates to the Regional Act 537 Plan, Lehigh County, which includes the City of Allentown, and its Submission to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [R113 - Act 537 Plan Update](#)[1- KISS Regional Act 537 Plan 04-16-25 PC](#)[Submission_TextOnly.pdf](#)[2-537 Submission Process.pdf](#)[3-CHECKLIST-Page-Numbers-04-16-25.pdf](#)[Appendix 01 KISS Planning Area.pdf](#)[Appendix 02 Redacted.pdf](#)[Appendix 03 TopographicMap.pdf](#)[Appendix 04 HydricSoils.pdf](#)[Appendix 05 FloodPlainMap.pdf](#)[Appendix 06 FAA memo.pdf](#)[Appendix 07 Source Reduction Plans Redacted.pdf](#)[Appendix 09 SRP Baseline Flow Study.pdf](#)[Appendix 10 Redacted.pdf](#)[Appendix 11 - Not Used.pdf](#)[Appendix 12 SBM-memo.pdf](#)[Appendix 13 Sewer IMA TermSheet.pdf](#)[Appendix 14 Arcadis FCS.pdf](#)[Appendix 15 Kleinfelder 132MGD WetWeatherTreatment Memo.pdf](#)[Appendix 16 - Not Used.pdf](#)[Appendix 17 Raftelis Financial Model Cost Alloc Model.pdf](#)[Appendix 18 FlowProjections.pdf](#)[Appendix 19 PPSFM InspectionReport Redacted.pdf](#)[Appendix 20 - Not used.pdf](#)[Appendix 21-Planning-Commission-Comments.pdf](#)[Appendix 22 Proof-of-Publication.pdf](#)[Appendix 23 Public-Comments.pdf](#)[Appendix 24 Arcadis 100MGD.pdf](#)[KISS Act 537 Plan Contents.pdf](#)[Resolution #31113.pdf](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there were any comments on that.

REFERRED TO THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Enactment No: 31113

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

GOOD AND WELFARE: NONE

ADJOURNED: 7:56 pm

[15-6577](#)

Reference Materials:
Council Rules
Procurement Code
Ethics Code

Attachments: [Procurement Code](#)

[Ethics Code](#)

[Rules](#)

[15-7892](#)

Bill 72 Special Committee Meeting, forwarded favorably Authorizing and securing the issuance of one or more series of general obligation bonds, in the maximum aggregate principal amount of \$134,040,000, pursuant to the Pennsylvania Local Government Unit Debt Act, to finance various capital projects of the city and to pay the costs of issuing the bonds; accepting a bond purchase agreement; setting forth the parameters, substantial form of and conditions for issuing the bonds; pledging the full faith, credit and taxing power of this city to secure the bonds; creating a sinking fund and appointing a paying agent and sinking fund depository; and authorizing related action.

Sponsors: Administration

Attachments: [Bill 72 ALLENTOWN CITY 2025 GO BONDS PARAMETERS NEW](#)

[MONEY\(122703575\).docx](#)

[COA Plan of Finance Presentation 8.7.25.pdf](#)

[COA Capital Project Detail.2025.pdf](#)

[Ordinance #16163.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Daryl Hendricks that this Ordinance 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: 16163