

# **Minutes of the Council of the City of Easton, Pa.**

**June 24, 2015**

Easton, Pa  
Wednesday  
June 24, 2015  
6:00 p.m.

City Council met in stated session at the above date and time, in Council Chambers, located on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall, One South Third Street, Easton Pa. to consider any business that may lawfully be brought before the body.

The invocation was given by Mayor Panto followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **ROLL CALL**

Present: Brown, Edinger, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Panto (6)

Absent: Mauro (1)

Also in attendance were Thomas A. Hess, City Clerk, William Murphy, City Solicitor, Joel Scheer, Assistant Solicitor and Glenn Steckman, City Administrator. There were fifteen other persons present.

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

On motion of Dr. Warner and Mrs. Vulcano the Agenda was amended by removing item f from new business by the following vote:

Yeas: Panto, Warner, Vulcano, Ruggles, Edinger, Brown (6)

Nays: None (0)

On motion of Mr. Brown and Dr. Ruggles the amended Agenda was approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Brown, Edinger, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Panto (6)

Nays: None (0)

## **ACTION ON MINUTES**

On motion of Dr. Ruggles and Dr. Warner the June 10, 2015 Council Meeting minutes, as submitted, were approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Edinger, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Panto, Brown (6)

Nays: None (0)

## **PUBLIC COMMENT** **Agenda Items Only**

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Joseph Cuvo, President, 1107 Ferry Street and James Mineo, Treasurer, 37 Kendon Drive, Palmer Township, of the Veterans Memorial Day Council of Easton Area, Inc., spoke to Council regarding a request from the Council for a donation of \$2,080 to cover the costs and to show support for the 2015 Memorial Day Parade.

There was a discussion between Council members and Mr. Cuvo and Mr. Mineo regarding their request. Mayor Panto explained what the City did for the parade, i.e. Police coverage, street closure, use of park's employees, etc. He said that the City could offer \$1,050 to the Council for the parade, to cover the costs for the marching bands, for the PA Water Rescue Services, the launching of the Memorial Float, the fly over of the aircraft, the drivers of parade vehicles and the wreath, plants and flowers and offered to allow the Council to meet in City Hall which would save the Council the money that has to be spent to meet at different locations, and also offered to assist the Council with the printing of the programs. He also said that whatever funds that the Mayor's Office of Special Events could not raise he would personally go out and solicit.

Mr. Cuvo and Mr. Mineo said that they would accept the \$1,050 donation to be used towards the costs of the parade.

Diane Bower, 5 A N. Bank Street, Chairman of the Easton Area Heritage Day Committee, spoke to Council regarding a request for \$5,000 to be used toward the 2015 Heritage Day celebration, explained that the Celebration would only be a one day event this year and not a two day event, and explained why and what the funds were needed for.

Dr. Warner asked for the Committee's Heritage Day's budget.

Ms. Bower said that she did not have it with her but would forward it to Council.

Mayor Panto said that the City's contribution to Heritage has always been in kind, i.e. street closings, traffic control, and public service and police employees throughout the day which cost the City for overtime, spoke regarding the work for 2 festivals in one day as compared to a 2 day festival. He said that he eliminated the Special Events line item in the 2015 City budget, because of what the City expends on in kind services. He said that the risk exposure is very high during special events and the cost of insurance coverage is very high. He said that to approve the \$5,000 grant is virtually impossible because of the City budget, and said that he could not give her a definite answer one way or the other at this meeting.

Ms. Bower spoke more on the request and the need for the funds.

Dr. Warner asked her to forward the Committee's budget to Council so that it could be reviewed before granting or not granting their request.

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Barbara Kowitz, Executive Director of the Northampton County Historical and Genealogical Society spoke to Council regarding the proposed Resolution that would authorize the City Administrator to work with her organization for the preservation of City records that the City was not obligated to preserve.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

On motion of Dr. Warner and Mr. Brown the following items were adopted by the following vote:

Bill 17, (Ordinance 5497), Approving the transfer of funds contained in the 2015 General Fund Budget, which approves the transfer of \$129,139.53 to account no. 101-5052-4383, City Rents of Bldg., from different expenditure funds contained in the 2015 General Fund Budget.

Bill 18, (Ordinance 5498), Amending the 2015 Alpha Building Fund Budget, which amends the 2015 Alpha Building Fund Budget by increasing Revenues and Expenditures by \$4,063,356.42.

Bill 19, (Ordinance 5499) Amending the 2015 New City Hall Fund Budget which amends the 2015 New City Hall Fund Budget by increasing Revenues and Expenditures by \$66,300.00.

Resolutions 108-113 which approved Certificates of Appropriateness for 114 N. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6 S. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 117-119 N. 4<sup>th</sup>, 31 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Streets, 5 Centre Square and 428 Northampton Street.

Yeas: Panto, Brown, Edinger, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner (6)

Nays: None (0)

**REPORTS RECEIVED BY COUNCIL**

There were no reports received by Council:

**REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

Mr. Brown, Chairman of the Finance Committee, reported that a Finance Committee was held on Tuesday, June 23, 2015, and told what was discussed, and reported that another meeting would be held on July 7, 2015.

Mrs. Vulcano, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee, spoke regarding legislation which she would have for later in the meeting regarding approving an application for a Commonwealth of Financing Authority grant to be used to design and construct a pedestrian bridge over the Bushkill Creek between the Karl Stirner Arts Trail and the Silk Development Project.

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Dr. Warner, Chairman of the Planning Committee reported that a Planning Committee would be held on July 7, 2017 and spoke regarding legislation which she would have for later in the meeting, regarding approving a job description for a Field Inspection Supervisor position.

Ms. Mauro, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, was absent.

Dr. Ruggles, Chairman of the Public Works Committee had no report.

Mr. Edinger, Chairman of the Administration Committee spoke regarding legislation which he would have for later in the meeting regarding approving a fully insured Post 65 Retiree Medical and Prescription Plan, amending the Parking Meter times in City parking facilities, and for authorizing the City Administrator to work with the Northampton County Historical and Genealogical Society in preserving those documents that the City was not required to preserve

Mr. Murphy, City Solicitor reported that before the meeting Council had met in Executive Session and had discussed personnel, potential litigation and a Federal Lawsuit regarding Abe Atiyeh versus the City of Easton.

Mr. Scheer, Assistant City Solicitor reported that he had received a revise Parklet program draft from Mr. Hopkins and responded with comments in an e-mail that he forwarded to council.

Mayor Panto spoke regarding a Bill addressing Pension Reform in the State Senate and the House of Representatives and regarding the pension problems that municipalities in Pennsylvania are experiencing, and also spoke regarding the Pennsylvania Municipal Leagues annual convention which was being held in Allentown.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no Correspondence received by Council.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Bill 20, Amending Section 560-72, Meters, of the Code of the City of Easton, Pa., was introduced by Mr. Edinger and ordered processed for adoption.

This bill would amend the parking meter times for meters in City parking facilities.

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A June 2, 2015 letter regarding City of Easton government Ledgers and Scrapbooks was received from Barbara Kowitz, Executive Director of the Northampton County Historical & Genealogical Society.

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would authorize the City Administrator to work with the Northampton County Historical and Genealogical Society in preserving those documents that the City was not required to preserve.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mr. Edinger:

114-2015

The above Resolution was adopted on motion of Mr. Edinger and Dr. Warner by the following vote:

Yeas: Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Panto, Brown, Edinger (6)

Nays: None (0)

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would authorize an application to the Commonwealth Financing Authority for a grant to be used to design and construct a pedestrian bridge over the Bushkill Creek between the Karl Stirner Arts Trail and the Silk Development project.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mrs. Vulcano:

115-2015

The above Resolution was adopted on motion of Mrs. Vulcano and Mr. Brown by the following vote:

Yeas: Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Panto, Brown, Edinger (6)

Nays: None (0)

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would approve an Agreement with Highmark Blue Shield for a fully insured Post 65 Retiree Medical and Prescription Plan.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mr. Edinger:

116-2015

The above Resolution was adopted on motion of Mr. Edinger and Dr. Ruggles by the following vote:

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Yeas: Vulcano, Warner, Panto, Brown, Edinger, Ruggles (6)  
Nays: None (0)

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would approve a Job Description for a Field Inspection Supervisor and the establishment of the position.

The following Resolution was introduced by Dr. Warner:

117-2015

Dr. Warner said that this was a new position which replaces an existing position.

Stephen Nowroski, Director of Codes and Inspections, said that this position was needed to fill a crucial role for the person between the Director of Codes and the department personnel for the enforcement of the Uniform Construction Code.

Dr. Ruggles asked for an Organizational Chart for the Codes Department as he saw the department once all positions were filled.

Mr. Steckman said that he would provide Dr. Ruggles the concept that they were working on.

The above Resolution was adopted on motion of Dr. Warner and Mrs. Vulcano by the following vote:

Yeas: Warner, Panto, Brown, Edinger, Ruggles, Vulcano (6)  
Nays: None (0)

**PUBLIC COMMENT**  
**(On any item)**

Kurt Ehly, 305 W. Monroe Street spoke to Council regarding the West Ward Neighborhood Partnership organization and informed them that the fund for the program would run out at the end of September, and hoped that funding could be found to keep the program going.

He thanked Mrs. Vulcano for her dedication and work with the partnership and with the Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley Board.

Mayor Panto spoke regarding the solicitation of funds from different business entities to help to keep the partnership going.

Mrs. Vulcano said that Council would like to move forward regarding the Ad Hoc Committee to review the Code Ordinances and the Rental Housing Program, asked if the time was up for interested persons to apply, and wanted to know when this would move forward.

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Mayor Panto said that there was no cutoff date for interested persons to apply.

Dr. Warner said that Council approved the formation of the Committee.

It was decided that Council would discuss this at the July 7, 2015 Council Committee meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p. m. on motion of Dr. Ruggles and Mr. Brown by the following vote:

Yeas: Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Panto, Brown, Edinger (6)

Nays: None (0)

Thomas A. Hess  
City Clerk