

**MINUTES
HAZLETON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2023**

Call to Order: Council met in a Regular Meeting session on Tuesday, January 24, 2023 in Council Chambers and via ZOOM Teleconferencing. The meeting was called to order at 6:12 p.m.

Silent Meditation and Pledge of Allegiance: A silent moment was taken followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Barletta- present; Colombo-present; Mundie-present; Ondishin-present; Perry-present

Minutes of Previous Meetings: The minutes of the December 20, 2022 Regular Meeting were approved unanimously.

Presentations/Proclamations/Communications: – Oath of Office for Incoming Junior Council Members.

Perry read the Oath of Office to two incoming Junior Council Members.

Bid Opening: None

Courtesy of the Floor (ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY): Dee Deakos, 43 West Mine Street, spoke of **Resolution 2023-4** A Resolution of the City of the City Council of the City of Hazleton, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, Authorizing the Filing of a Formal Application and Business Plan for a Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program Grant in the Amount of Two Million Dollars (2,000,000.00) on Behalf of Hazleton Creek Commerce Center Holdings, LLC for a Project to Develop Approximately 5,500,000 Square Feet of Commercial, Warehouse, Industrial and Manufacturing Space In the City of Hazleton, Luzerne County. Deakos said the City proved this land and was remediated completely. She said the City does not have to worry about the contamination there. Deakos stated she is worried about liability to the City. Atty. Logsdon said these issues with remediation will be dealt with through DEP and the state.

Ricky DeLucca, Hazleton, spoke of Ordinance 2022-20- . An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution and Filing of a Declaration of Taking and Proceeding in Accordance with the Applicable Provision of the Eminent Domain Code. He asked if John Matusick was served any paperwork on this building. Atty. Logsdon (*inaudible*). DeLucca asked if city council is voting on this tonight. Perry said city council will be making a decision tonight.

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ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

ORDINANCES:

(1ST READING)

None

(2ND AND 3RD READINGS)

Ordinance 2022-20

An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution and Filing of a Declaration of Taking and Proceeding in Accordance with the Applicable Provision of the Eminent Domain Code **(1st READING)**

MOTION TO TABLE:

Presented by Mundie. Seconded by Colombo.

Roll Call: Barletta- yes; Colombo-yes; Mundie-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes.

ORDINANCE TABLED

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 2023-1

Appointment to the Hazleton City Water Authority

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Ondishin.

On the Question:

Colombo nominated Pat Fay.

Roll Call: Barletta-abstain; Colombo-yes; Mundie-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES 4-0

Resolution 2023-2

Appointment to the Sewer Authority

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Barletta.

On the Question:

Perry nominated John Zola.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mundie-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2023-3 A Resolution Honoring Fellin’s Jewelers on its 100th Year in Business

Presented by Colombo. Seconded by Ondishin.

On the Question:

Perry read the resolution. Fellin’s representative said they could not do their business without the City of Hazleton.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mundie-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2023-4 A Resolution of the City of the City Council of the City of Hazleton, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, Authorizing the Filing of a Formal Application and Business Plan for a Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program Grant in the Amount of Two Million Dollars (2,000,000.00) on Behalf of Hazleton Creek Commerce Center Holdings, LLC for a Project to Develop Approximately 5,500,000 Square Feet of Commercial, Warehouse, Industrial and Manufacturing Space In the City of Hazleton, Luzerne County

Presented by Colombo. Seconded by Ondishin.

On the Question:

Perry said this is money the state is giving to them, and needs to come through the City as a conduit. Atty. Logsdon said yes. Barletta asked if there is anything holding the City liable. Atty. Logsdon stated, “absolutely not”.

Roll Call: Barletta- yes; Colombo-yes; Mundie-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

New Business: None.

Old Business: None.

Comments from the Audience: Dee Deakos, 43 West Mine Street, Hazleton, said she read in the newspaper that the Hazleton Water Authority got bids close to \$50.00 a month for garbage. She suggested HCA put it out for bid again. Perry stated this is not the City's decision.

Deakos stated the streetlights on Laurel, Chestnut and Wyoming Streets are still out for over one year. Also, 14th Street, Church Street, a few blocks from City Hall, and the corner of Broad and Church Streets. She asked why these lights are not being replaced. Deakos said the police officers could tell DPW about the lights.

Deakos said the City bought a machine that warms up asphalt. She asked why the City is not using this.

Cindy DeLucca, Hazleton, spoke of the City check registers she obtained through Right-to-Know. She asked about several checks.

Brendon Marrero, 133 North Wyoming Street, spoke of Resolution 2023-4. Perry stated Hazleton Creek Commerce Center applied to the state and the state gave them the money. He said it is a Cooperation Agreement. Atty. Logsdon stated the subgrantee is Hazleton Creek Properties. He said the City acts as a conduit. The state oversees the funds.

Ricky DeLucca, Hazleton, spoke of Resolution 2023-4. He asked if the City could use the money, instead, to fix the City streets. Perry said the \$2,000,000 is not the City's money. He said the City has paved more streets than in the history of Hazleton.

Robert Nemeth, 63 Center Hill Road, Sugarloaf, asked who hires people for the City. Mayor Cusat said if it is a civil service position, they go through the civil service testing process. Nemeth asked if it comes "down" to city council for the fire department. Mayor Cusat said the fire department is through the civil service. Nemeth asked about the Street Department hirings. Mayor Cusat said he would make the decision. Nemeth asked who pays the City bills. Lynch stated there is an Accounts Payable clerk. Nemeth asked who this person was. Lynch said Lisa Shema. Nemeth asked who controls miscellaneous spending. Mayor Cusat said city council controls the budget.

Comments from Mayor: Mayor Cusat said the black decorative streetlights are individually made and cast. He said they cost about \$20,000/each. He stated the City gets reimbursed for them from the insurance company.

Comments from City Administrator: Lynch spoke of the paving and fixing of City roads. He said the City budgeted about \$240,000, for repairing City roads, in the past. He said city council added \$400,000, in funding, in the General Fund budget, for road work.

Comments from Council: Barletta asked about the City purchasing a building, in the amount of \$17,500, from Gottstein Corporation. She asked if it would be the new police station.

Colombo asked if Frank Vito is aware of the streetlights that are out. Mayor Cusat said PP&L is aware and there are a few issues with underground wires. He said it has been a while, but PP&L is to work on this.

Colombo congratulated Fellin's Jewelers on their 100th anniversary in the City.

Perry said he likes the speed sign on Poplar Street. He said UGI is, also, digging up City streets.

Comments from Junior Council: None

Adjournment: Perry motioned to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.