

**MINUTES
HAZLETON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2026**

Call to Order: Council met at a Regular Meeting session on Tuesday, January 27, 2026, in Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order.

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

Roll Call: Bruno-present; Colombo-present; Nilles-present; Ondishin-present; Perry-present

Minutes of Previous Meetings: The minutes of January 5, 2026, Inauguration Ceremony Meeting were approved unanimously.

Presentations/Proclamations/Communications:

1. Barbara Conway -Discussion on City stray cats and solutions to this issue.

Dr. Barbara Conway, 727 Boundary Street, Hazleton, thanked City Council for having her at the meeting tonight. She was here at the second meeting in November to discuss the feral cat situation in the City, and discussed the options municipalities are instituting. She gathered more information on this issue. She mentioned the borough of Freeland has started a "TNR" program, which stands for, Trap, Neuter, and Return.

Conway stated there is a company named "No Nonsense Neutering", based in Plains, with offices in Berks County and in Allentown. She, recently, spoke to the owner of "No Nonsense Neutering". Their regular fee is \$40.00 for a feral or stray cat. "No Nonsense Neutering" is willing to give a grant, and charge \$15.00 per animal. The animal will be neutered or spayed, receive a tattoo, an ear clip, a distemper shot, and de-wormed. The City does not have to have "up-front" money. The program is for 50 feral cats for \$750.00. She has been in touch with "trappers", and they are willing to trap the cats. Conway said she would donate \$150.00 towards the program. Ondishin offered to donate \$600.00 towards the program. Conway said the City needs to address the issue and pay the funds.

Conway stated there were about 100 stray animals staying in the old American Legion building. There were volunteers who raised \$1,500 to have them neutered, placed in some facilities, and found some homes for the rest of the animals.

Perry asked if West Hazleton is on the "list". Conway said yes. Perry asked if Hazle Township is on the "list". Conway said they are very interested.

Perry asked Atty. Logsdon if this needed to be passed by an ordinance. Atty. Logsdon stated this issue would need to be passed by resolution.

Bruno asked if the City could have a program that people could make donations. Conway said yes. She mentioned she has something "in the works".

2. Tony Ryba-Government Consulting Strategies G.C.S. LLC.

Mr. Tony Ryba said he is working with municipalities, counties and school districts. He said he wants to save the City money. Ryba mentioned he has no fee. He said there are five items- “two on the revenue side, and three on the expense side”.

Ryba said his company is “hooked up” with an electricity provider to save the City money. He said there are no brokerage fees. For natural gas, he could act as the City “agent”. Ryba said he could review the City’s auto, property and workers compensation plans. His company goes “direct” to the company to get the cheapest rates.

Ryba discussed fire suppression and back-flow prevention programs. He said the City could save “Millions of dollars”. Ryba stated there would be a three-year agreement.

Atty. Logsdon said the City wanted to get a “refresher” on the presentation and services provided by him from last year.

Ryba said then he would sit down with Mayor Cusat, Atty. Logsdon and City Council members to discuss the finer details.

Perry asked if Atty. Logsdon could get a resolution on the next City Council agenda. Atty. Logsdon said yes. He said he could set up a Teams call to discuss these services.

Perry stated City Council members and City administration had an Executive Session to discuss City staffing issues.

Bid Opening: City of Hazleton 2026 Anti-Skid AS2 Procurement BID.

Atty. Logsdon said in July, 2025, the City material bids were put out. He mentioned one was for anti-skid material, and there were no bids received. The City Engineering department re-bid this in December, 2025. There were two bids received. The low bid was from M & J Excavation, Inc. at the base bid of \$29,700.00.

Colombo asked how big the tonnage of the supply would be. Atty. Logsdon said there was only the bid amounts sent to him.

Nilles asked if this contract would last all of 2026. Atty. Logsdon said the contract would last until June or July, 2026. Colombo asked if the City has enough anti-skid material, especially after the major snowstorm in the City. Mayor Cusat said the City is still under the old contract.

Courtesy of the Floor (ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY): None

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

ORDINANCES:

(1ST READING)

Ordinance 2026-1 An Ordinance of the City of Hazleton Terminating a Right-of-Way Easement
Along South Conahan **Drive (1st READING)**

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Ondishin.

On the Question:

Atty. Logsdon said the City owns a portion of the land, on 424, on Arthur Gardner Parkway. There is an easement there, and the City does not need access to the area. Ondishin asked who is requesting the City to give up the easement rights. Atty. Logsdon stated the developer, Northpoint. Bruno said the way the ordinance is worded, South Conahan Drive was never made a street.

Mayor Cusat said the City has an easement onto the property of Butler Enterprises. Currently, Butler Enterprises wants the easement back.

Roll Call: Bruno-yes; Colombo-yes; Nilles-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY ON 1ST READING

(2ND READINGS)

None

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 2026 -4

A Resolution Authorizing the City of Hazleton to Award Bids for the City of Hazleton, City Hall Interior Water Damage Repair in Council Chambers and use remaining funds for the same purpose in the Auditorium

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Colombo.

Roll Call: Bruno-yes; Colombo-yes; Nilles-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2026-5

A Resolution Approving the Name of a New Private Roadway Within the Diplomat Investment Partners Company, LLC's Land Development Project

Presented by Nilles. Seconded by Ondishin.

Roll Call: Bruno-yes; Colombo-yes; Nilles-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2026-6

Sale and Removal of Used City Vehicles

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Colombo.

On the Question:

Mayor Cusat stated there are a few old 550's and pick-up trucks that have deteriorated. The City received no bids for these vehicles.

Roll Call: Bruno-yes; Colombo-yes; Nilles-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2026-7

Award of Contract- 2026 ANTI-SKID AS2 PROCUREMENT

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Nilles.

Roll Call: Bruno-yes; Colombo-yes; Nilles-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

New Business: None

Old Business: None

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Comments from the Audience: Sean McArdle, 11 Elie Street, Tamaqua, President Local 507 Firefighters Union, said he is here for the City residents and their public safety. McArdle said there is

currently a staffing issue. Hazleton currently operates with three firefighters on each shift. He mentioned the least the department should be operating with is four firefighters. He said this low number risks life-saving procedures. He said the firefighters work longer and harder due to staffing issues. McArdle said finding solutions is the job of City administration and City Council. He is asking the City to add to this budget for the City citizens' safety.

Comments from Mayor: None

Comments from City Administrator: None- absent.

Comments from Junior Council: None

Comments from Council: Colombo said he has been getting numerous calls about blasting in the City. Donald Leshko, City Fire Chief, stated it was thought it was the Hazle Creek property. The project is in the area of the Hazleton Beltway, closer to Hazle Township. He referred the City resident's to call DEP with any concerns.

Colombo thanked DPW for clearing all the roads in the recent snowstorm. He also thanked the police and code departments. He said they are ticketing vehicles.

Colombo reminded all to check on their neighbors in the cold weather.

Colombo said City Council members and City administration have accomplished a lot in their Executive Session tonight.

Perry said all City departments are understaffed.

Perry thanked Police Chief Schoonmaker for all the "numbers" for noise and parking complaints.

Adjournment: Perry motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.