

**MINUTES
HAZLETON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2024**

Call to Order: Council met in a Regular Meeting session on Tuesday, May 14, 2024 in Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order at 6:16 p.m.

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

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

Minutes of Previous Meetings: The minutes of the April 9, 2024 Regular Meeting were approved unanimously.

Presentations/Proclamations/Communications: Ken Wollins, Municipal Parking Services (MPS) Intelligent Infrastructure representative, discussed their product-Safety Stick.

Mr. Wollins said the Safety Stick would improve public safety. He said the sticks are placed in front of crosswalks, intersections, fire hydrants, or anywhere a parked car would be a safety hazard.

Wollins stated MPS is partnering with Vision Zero, a multi-national road traffic safety project that aims to achieve a roadway system with no fatalities or serious injuries involving road traffic. This project was started in Sweden.

Wollins stated Wilkes-Barre is their closest customer.

Wollins said, on “day one, the Safety Stick would start “benchmarking” and collecting actual data, to see how well these devices are working. Wollins said it take 5-10 minutes to install, and MPS covers all the expenses, including installations. He said the device connects to the internet and detects when a vehicle moves into an illegal parking spot. He said this device is for City parking enforcement. He stated MPS’s only source of revenue comes from a 40% “cut” of each violation. He said MPS is looking to earn about \$150.00-\$160.00/month to cover their costs. Wollins said the City Parking Enforcement Officers would receive unique log in numbers to approve a parking violation. He said the ticket would be sent out, in the mail, to the violator. He said there is, also, a payment website to pay the parking violation.

Nilles asked what the average fee is for a parking violation in PA. Wollins said about \$50.00 per violation. He asked if there are any signs to notify residents. Wollins said some cities, using the Safety Sticks, have been posting signs. Colombo asked if the Safety Stick takes a picture, only, of the front of the car. Wollins said the Safety Stick takes pictures, also, of the rear plates of the cars.

Wollins said the Safety Stick has been used in a homicide case, arson, and a car theft “ring”.

Ondishin asked if the Safety Stick could be placed “remotely” to deter dumping of garbage. Wollins said yes, the Safety Stick could use overhead technology.

Wollins said Safety Sticks are portable and could be moved to another location in the City.

Wollins said Pottsville, Tamaqua, and Titusville are currently using Safety Sticks.

Wollins stated violators could pay the fine by phone, on site, or pay online with a URL code on the parking violation.

Colombo asked if there is a certain number of Safety Sticks the City would need to start with. Wollins said no, there is no "set" number of sticks to being with. He suggested 20 Safety Sticks to start.

Bid Opening: None

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

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

ORDINANCES:

(1ST READING)

Ordinance 2024-9

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE HAZLETON CITY ZONING ORDINANCE TO PROHIBIT TRUCK PARKING OF UP TO 15,000 POUNDS ON A STREET OR IN A FRONT YARD IN RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS (R-1, R-2 AND R-3) **(1ST READING)**

Presented by Nilles. Seconded by Colombo.

On the Question:

Nilles stated the City has had an "uptick" of tractors on City streets. He said cars and emergency vehicles are having a hard time getting around the streets. Nilles said the tractors need to stay in commercial areas.

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

ORDINANCE PASSES 3-0 ON 1ST READING

Ordinance 2024-11

An Ordinance Establishing a No Parking Zone on East Diamond Avenue

and Cleveland Street (**1st READING**)

Presented by Colombo. Seconded by Nilles.

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

ORDINANCE PASSES 3-0 ON 1st READING

Ordinance 2024-12

An Ordinance Establishing a Parking by Permit Only Zone on West 6th Street (**1st READING**)

Presented by Nilles. Seconded by Colombo.

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

ORDINANCE PASSES 3-0 ON 1st READING

(2ND READINGS)

None

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 2024- 22

A Resolution Requesting a Greenways Trails and Recreation Program Grant from the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be used for Pine Street Park Improvements

Presented by Colombo. Seconded by Nilles.

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

RESOLUTION PASSES 3-0

Resolution 2024-23

A Resolution Amending Resolution 2023-78 and approving the Amended Action Plan for Fiscal Year 2024

Presented by Nilles. Seconded by Colombo.

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

RESOLUTION PASSES 3-0

Resolution 2024-24

Requesting a Traffic Study be Completed by the City of Hazleton at the Intersection of West 17th Street and North Laurel Street to Determine if there is a Need for a Stop Sign at this Location

Presented by Nilles. Seconded by Ondishin.

On the Question:

Nilles said the area of 17th and Laurel Streets is a hazard area for many accidents. He said there is no stop sign coming up Laurel Street. Nilles said there have been many accidents here.

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

RESOLUTION PASSES 3-0

Resolution 2024-25

Resolution of the City of Hazleton Requesting a Local Match from Luzerne County Council for the Hazleton Public Transit State Section 1513 Operating Allocation

Presented by Colombo. Seconded by Nilles.

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

RESOLUTION PASSES 3-0

New Business: None.

Old Business: None.

Comments from the Audience: Ann Organist, 15 East 14th Street, Hazleton, said she lives directly across the street from Altmiller Playground. She said it was discussed at the City Council meeting about placing speed bumps in this area. She said, about 6-7 months ago, the residents were told they were on “back order”. Ondishin said he has been on this issue with City Administration. He said City Administration stated the speed bumps were on “back order”. Ondishin said administration, also, said there is a legal issue with putting down speed bumps. Atty. Logsdon said the City could use a non-traditional speed bump, but it is movable. He said the City is looking into PA State regulations. Atty. Logsdon said the City is looking into a traffic “calming” device. He stated the City is working on this. Nilles stated the City is looking into the best possible option. He said it could be a camera system or digital sign. Ondishin said he did not forget about this matter.

Manuel Nieves, 554 South Cedar Street, Hazleton, spoke of West Court Park Playground. He said he lives right in front of the park. Nieves said there is no parking in this area. He said it is very crowded. Nieves said there is a softball park there. Nilles stated the City, maybe, could do permit parking in this area. Atty. Logsdon said the City could do this, but it may be “tricky” because it is not an EMS zone.

John Longo, 172 Kiefer Ave., Hazleton, said Nieves spoke to Harrisburg Parks and Recreation. They told Nieves this area is “land-locked” and there needs to be parking provided. Nilles stated there are no lights in this park. He asked if the people would leave at night. Longo said yes. He stated he has contacted City officials, but the City is not doing anything to correct the problem. He suggested the City Dog Park be turned into a ballpark. Longo said there is plenty of space, at the City Dog Park, for parking. Ondishin stated they need to “get together” with Allie McKittrick, City of Hazleton Recreation Director. Atty. Logsdon stated they will bring this to the mayor’s attention.

Anka Vilov, 432 West 3rd Street, Hazleton, said she has lived in Hazleton for 32 years. She said a house on the corner, of Lafayette and 3rd Streets, has garbage cans that are never closed. She said the animals are coming into the garbage and making a mess. She said her sidewalk is sinking due to heavy trucks picking up televisions and furniture from her neighbor’s house. Vilov said she has contacted the City

Code Department due to a neighbor not picking up after their dog. Nilles told Vilov they will try to get something done for her.

Carmella Yenkevich, 523 West Diamond Ave., Hazleton, spoke of the City garbage fee increase that occurred in 2023. She asked when the garbage hauler is going to pick up the “stray” garbage. Ondishin said Hazleton City Authority is responsible for the City garbage. Ondishin asked Atty. Logsdon if the City could write a letter to the HCA regarding this matter. Atty. Logsdon said yes.

Comments from Mayor: None-absent

Comments from City Administrator: None- absent

Comments from Council: Colombo stated May 27, 2024 is Memorial Day. He said on May 20, 2024, they will be replacing flags, at the City cemeteries, at the veterans graves. He said on May 27, there will be a mass at Holy Annunciation Church and a ceremony at St. Gabriel’s cemetery.

Colombo thanked all for coming to the meeting.

Colombo thanked the DPW Department for getting “back up” the Hometown Heroes Banners. He said there will be American flags placed, on the downtown poles, for Memorial Day.

Nilles stated the DPW Department is patching potholes. He said if any resident notices any large potholes, they could contact the DPW Department.

Nilles wished everyone a Happy Memorial Day.

Ondishin wished everyone a Happy Memorial Day.

Comments from Junior Council: It was discussed that June 11, 2024 would be the meeting when Junior Council members will receive their diplomas for the 2023-2024 school year.

Adjournment: Ondishin motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m.