

**MINUTES  
HAZLETON CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2025**

**Call to Order:** Council met in a Regular Meeting session on Tuesday, September 23, 2025, in Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order at 6: 06 p.m.

**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-absent

**Minutes of Previous Meetings:** The minutes of September 9, 2025, Regular Meeting were approved unanimously.

**Presentations/Proclamations/Communications:** City Administrator Daniel Lynch announced the dollar amounts of the 2026 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for each of the three pensions plans, as follows:

- ***Police Pension Plan - \$2,165,901***
- ***Firemen Pension Plan - \$2,362,764***
- ***Non-Uniformed Pension Plan - \$29,311***

**Bid Opening:** None

**Courtesy of the Floor (ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY):** Dee Deakos, 43 West Mine Street, Hazleton, spoke of Ordinance 2025-10 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. She stated Park & Rides are, normally, placed by interstates. Deakos mentioned there is a parking garage near this property that could be utilized. Also, at Walnut and Church Streets there is an empty lot. She stated it is not fair the City is “forcing” a senior citizen out of their home.

Ourania Mentasas, 105 Chestnut Street, Hazleton, said she is the owner of the property the City is planning to “take” in the Eminent Domain ordinance. Mentasas said she is disabled. She stated “throwing her out, for a Park & Ride, is unnecessary”. She will get a lawyer and process suing. Mentasas said, “if it is for the greater good for the City of Hazleton, she does understand”. She wants the City to reconsider the Eminent Domain process.

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**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:**

**ORDINANCES:**

**(1<sup>ST</sup> READING)**

None

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**(2<sup>ND</sup> READINGS)**

**Ordinance 2025-10** 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 (**2<sup>nd</sup> READING**)

**MOTION TO REMOVE FROM TABLE:**

Presented by Nilles. Seconded by Colombo.

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

**MOTION TO REMOVE FROM TABLE PASSES 4-0**

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Presented by Nilles. Seconded by Bruno.

**On the Question:**

Atty. Logsdon stated City Council would just be authorizing the Eminent Domain action. He mentioned PENN DOT will not be coming out until they know the City is approving this action. This would take some time to be completed. The appraisers from PENN DOT would go to the property to figure out the fair-market value for the property. If the offer does not go anywhere, then a "Declaration of a Taking" would be filed at the courthouse. The landowner would have certain rights. A Board of Viewers would determine what the fair-market value would be.

Nilles asked how long this would take. Atty. Logsdon said it could take a short or long time. Mayor Cusat agreed. Atty. Logsdon stated the City tried to get in contact with the owner for several years via letter. The City's records show she has not been using any water. The City Permit Office shows there are no permits requested for this property.

Ourania Mentasas stated she did get a permit to fix her roof. Ondishin stated the City does not want Mentasas to be “thrown out of her home”. Mentasas said she was in the process of fixing the building, but she had a stroke last year. She will get a lawyer.

Ondishin asked if the City could ask her to leave her property if this ordinance was passed. Atty. Logsdon said yes. The City would be “taking” the property, as stated in the Eminent Domain code, but there would be a process.

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

**ORDINANCE PASSES 4-0**

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**Ordinance 2025-11**

**An Ordinance Authorizing the Erection of Stop Signs at  
the Intersection of West 11<sup>th</sup> Street and McKinley Street  
(2<sup>nd</sup> READING)**

Presented by Ondishin. Seconded by Nilles.

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

**ORDINANCE PASSES 4-0**

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**RESOLUTIONS:**

**Resolution 2025-52**

Honoring the Greater Hazleton Concert Series  
on its 90<sup>th</sup> Season

**MOTION TO TABLE:**

Presented by Nilles. Seconded by Bruno.

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

**RESOLUTION TABLED 4-0**

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**Resolution 2025-53** Honoring Robert Mandak, Sr.

Presented by Nilles. Seconded by Colombo.

**On the Question:**

Colombo presented Mr. Mandak with the City Proclamation.

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

**RESOLUTION PASSES 4-0**

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**Resolution 2025-54** Honoring 14<sup>th</sup> Ward Fire Company

**MOTION TO TABLE:**

Presented by Nilles. Seconded by Ondishin.

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

## RESOLUTION TABLED 4-0

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**New Business:** Atty. Logsdon mentioned the City would like to start a Pilot Program, with up to 20 cameras, that would allow City citizens and businesses to purchase, place on their property, and be linked to the City's Police Department camera system. The City would do all to protect their privacy and the data. Bruno asked how much the camera would cost the residents. Mayor Cusat the price would be \$2,200. Nilles stated if a City resident could afford the camera, this would help the City out.

Ondishin asked if any City businesses pay for their Flock System. Police Chief Schoonmaker said Lowe's pays for this system.

Ondishin asked Schoonmaker when the City Flock System upgrades would begin. Schoonmaker said the City has already started the process. He said he and Mayor Cusat are "mapping out" areas where the cameras will be placed. He mentioned the system will be in place in 120 days.

Nilles asked if the City's parking sticks are being tampered with. Schoonmaker stated the Municipal Parking Sticks and the Flock System is "merging together". The Flock System will be in place where the parking sticks were not able to be where there were many violations.

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**Old Business:** None

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**Comments from the Audience:** Dee Deakos, 43 West Mine Street, Hazleton, said "for shame" that City Council voted to have a disabled senior citizen forced out of their home. She mentioned the City Code Department did not do anything regarding no water. Nilles stated Atty. Logsdon did not say there was no water; there was no water usage. He said there is a lot more involved with this case. Deakos mentioned there are other options. Ondishin noted the City has tried to contact the owner for six years.

David Dominquez, 202 East Holly Street, Hazleton asked if there are any realtors or developers interested in the Eminent Domain property. Dominquez mentioned there is a lack of communication with the older and Latino residents.

Atty. Logsdon said the City could only send letters to the property owner's address. Atty. Logsdon stated Charlie Pedri, Zoning Director, said there was a notice of violation issued for this property at the last council meeting. He mentioned PENN DOT would provide the funding for the private and secured public lot. He stated City bus riders and third-party carriers could utilize this lot.

Dominquez commended the City on the upkeep of the City roads.

**Comments from Mayor:** None

**Comments from City Administrator:** Dan Lynch gave the City of Hazleton's 2026 MMO. The MMO for the City of Hazleton Police Department pension plan is \$2,165,901, the MMO for the City of Hazleton Fire

Department pension is \$2,362,764, and the City of Hazleton's non-uniform pension plan is \$29,311. The overall MMO for 2026 is going to decline about 26%.

Lynch mentioned the early evaluation for the 2025 MMO for police pension is 90% funded, the non-uniform is overfunded at 115%, and the fire department is about 78% funded.

**Comments from Council:** Nilles spoke of the Eminent Domain issue in the City. He said with the revitalization of downtown, the City has constructed new high-rise buildings for senior citizens. He said the City has just spent over \$10,000,000 to pave the roads on the Northside. He stated the problem is transversing the City with all the increased traffic.

Ondishin said what City Council approves is for the "betterment" in the City. He mentioned the City has dealt with two major fires.

Ondishin told Mentasas to fight the Eminent Domain if she does not like what the offer is.

**Adjournment:** Ondishin motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.