

MINUTES

HAZLETON CITY COUNCIL

WORK SESSION

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 2018

Council met for a work session on Wednesday, April 4, 2018 in Council Chambers. The work session began at 7:30 p.m.

In attendance were Council President Bob Gavio, Vice-President Allison Barletta and Jean Mope.

Mayor Cusat said he is looking into eliminating the AccuFund financial system. He said the cost is \$9,000/yr for AccuFund. He stated he is looking into QuickBooks. He said Joe Niemenic, interim city administrator, teaches QuickBooks classes. The new city administrator, Daniel Lynch, stated QuickBooks would be a cheaper alternative. Mayor Cusat said the only problem is the billing system, for all city departments, is built into the AccuFund system. Police Chief Speziale asked if the information can be imported, from the Accufund system, to Quickbooks. Mayor Cusat said the data can be exported from AccuFund into Excel. He stated he needs to make sure it is all matched up.

Mayor Cusat said he wants to review the moving permit ordinance, handicapped parking sign fee ordinance, satellite dishes, and false alarm ordinance. Mayor Cusat said for the handicapped sign, he wants to set the fee at \$20.00, being increased from the current fee of \$5.00. Gavio said the fee will be to cover the city's cost. He said most residents do not pay the first offense. Mope asked if there can be a reminder phone call, made to residents, when their handicapped sign permit is due. Mayor Cusat said everything is a reminder. Mope stated she noticed residents open their car doors and empty the contents of their car right on the street. Mayor Cusat said he knows this is a problem.

Mayor Cusat said he wants to look at property owners renting commercial property to allow new businesses, but do not have a business license. He stated opening up the business license ordinance and indicate a commercial building, renting to a business, requires a business license. He said Atty. Karpowich will be updating this ordinance. Mayor Cusat said the building owner should be fined if he is renting his commercial building. Mayor Cusat said some renters are throwing parties in these buildings.

Mayor Cusat said there needs to be a non-owner occupied dwelling ordinance. He said these still need to be registered. He is currently working on this ordinance with Nanticoke, Pittston and Wilkes-Barre. He said the property will be registered. He also wants to register commercial properties. He stated the commercial property owner needs to register his property for 50 occupants or more. Gavio asked what would happen if they do not register. Mayor Cusat said there will be a fine. Mayor Cusat stated there are 7,000 residential buildings and 3,000 commercial buildings currently in the city (total of 10,000 properties). Mope asked if this will be

a deterrent for businesses to enter the city. Mayor Cusat said no. He stated it is cheaper to register. Mope asked about people who own city property who live out-of-town. Mayor Cusat said the information is collected from the tax bills. He said there are four classifications of properties in the city: 1. rental. 2. non-owner occupied. 3. commercial. 4. vacant. Mayor Cusat said some residents are taking the tax benefits from this. Speziale said the residents would pay for each classification. Mayor Cusat said each fee is \$25.00.

Mayor Cusat said to benefit the citizens, the vacant property registration fee should be \$500.00 and also change the exemption rule for sewer and garbage. Mayor Cusat said this will save the residents \$720.00.

Barletta asked about the street sweeping agreement with PA Department of Transportation. Mayor Cusat said this is done every year. He said the state pays the city to sweep certain streets. He said, in 2018, the Department of Transportation wanted Mayor Cusat to sign/attest as an affidavit. Mope said the mayor cannot sign the documents as the governing body. Mope said Poplar Street is a "mess". Mope said she reviewed the documents and noted it states, "maintenance and pothole repair". Mayor Cusat disagreed.

Mayor Cusat spoke of the mobile food truck service ordinance. He stated there are 10 First Fridays and farmer's markets a year. He said he does not want to charge for multiple permits. Mayor Cusat said the \$250.00 fee needs to be implemented. Gavio said these food trucks are attracting a lot of business in the downtown. Mayor Cusat said some food trucks block some city streets. Barletta stated it needs to be separate for a one-day business license. Mayor Cusat said the one-day business, transient license is cheap.

Barletta asked what is considered a commercial or residential property. Mayor Cusat said Atty. Karpowich is currently updating the city zoning map. Barletta said certain exemptions, in Ordinance 2018-13- Regulating Mobile Food Service Establishments, needs rewording. Mayor Cusat said it should read, "any official city sanctioned event".

Mayor Cusat said he also wants an ordinance for garage and yard sales (second-hand sales). He said this is considered a business. He said this needs to be completed by the summer. Mope asked Mayor Cusat if there is a current yard sale ordinance. He said the ordinance failed.

Mayor Cusat said a storm water fee and authority needs to be created. Atty. Logsdon said he is currently working on this which is, currently, a major priority.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.