

**MINUTES
HAZLETON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 2021**

Call to Order: Council met in regular session on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 via ZOOM Teleconferencing. The meeting was called to order at 7:23 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; Sacco-present; Perry-present

Minutes of Previous Meetings: The minutes of the February 23, 2021 Regular Meeting were approved unanimously.

Presentations/Proclamations/Communications: – PUBLIC HEARING- Authorizing the Execution and Filing of a Declaration of Taking and Proceeding in Accordance with the Applicable Provision of the Eminent Domain Code of Pennsylvania.

Atty. Logsdon stated this was advertised in the Standard Speaker for Eminent Domain action. He said, at this time, city council will open it up to public comment.

Perry asked if anyone has a comment on the Eminent Domain that the City will be proceeding with.

No comments were given.

Atty. Logsdon said council will close the hearing. Perry stated the hearing is closed if there are no comments.

Perry stated Sonny Patel is not able to be here tonight to discuss small business concerns. He said this will be put off for another day.

Perry said city council had several changes to the agenda. He said this is why there was a delay at the beginning of the meeting. He said council will be having their final reading on Ordinance 2021-2- 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 of Pennsylvania. He said this was not in everyone's packet and should have been in there for them.

Perry also stated council will be adding two resolutions and this has to do with the Sewage Facilities Plan at the Hazleton Logistics Park. He said they will need to rescind the old one and add a new one. Perry said they just got approval, from the sewer authority, and wants city council to act on this now so they could get going on the construction now, otherwise, they would not be able to do this until the end of the month. Perry said there will be two resolutions: Resolution 2021-22- Rescinding Resolution 2020-108- Plan Revision for New Land Development and Resolution 2021-23-Resolution for Plan Revision for New Land Development.

Perry asked if anyone has any comments, including on the agenda, and any on the ordinance or the two resolutions. No comments were received.

Bid Opening: None

Courtesy of the Floor (ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY): No Comments.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

ORDINANCES:

(1ST READING)

Ordinance 2021-8

An Ordinance Amending Ordinance Nos. 10-108, 94-12, 95-18, 95-26, 2003-07, 2005-8, 2006-34, 2007-9, 2007-29, 2009-17, 2010-2, 2011-8, 2012-9, 2015-25, & 2013-5, 2016-31 and Chapters 24, 140, & 203 of the Hazleton City Code for the Setting of Licenses, Fees and Inspections (**1st READING**)

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Sacco.

On the Question:

Atty. Logsdon stated he received feedback from the Zoning and Planning Department that the City's planning fees are, currently, "woefully" low. He stated these fees were the suggested amounts for \$500.00 for a residential subdivision, \$500.00 for commercial subdivision & \$750.00 and \$1,000 for industrial subdivision. He said the City's current subdivision fees were \$250.00. Mayor Cusat said they were lower than \$250.00.

Mundie asked Atty. Logsdon how these fees compare to other communities nearby. Atty. Logsdon said these fees look like they are "right in line" with what most municipalities would charge for a subdivision plan. Perry said, then, actually, the City is being underpaid all this time. Atty. Logsdon said yes; the City has been low for way too long. Mayor Cusat said the City changed the zoning, a few years ago, and left out the planning part of it. He said this is the planning section and will bring the City to where they should have been when they moved the zoning. Perry asked if these are the numbers that came from planning. Mayor Cusat said this ordinance is part of the Planning Commission. Mundie asked Atty. Logsdon if these are only the planning fees. Atty. Logsdon stated, "that is correct".

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

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY ON 1ST READING

(2ND AND 3RD READINGS)

ORDINANCE 2021-2

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 of Pennsylvania (**2nd READING**)

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Sacco.

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

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY ON 2nd READING

ORDINANCE 2021-2

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 of Pennsylvania (**3rd READING**)

Presented by Colombo. Seconded by Sacco.

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

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Ordinance 2021-6

An Ordinance Requiring that the Providing of Cable Television Service be Authorized by Franchise; Granting a Franchise to Service Electric Cablevision, Inc, a Pennsylvania Corporation and the Successor in Interest to Service Electric Cable T.V., Inc., Its Successors and Assigns, to Install, Operate and Maintain a Cable Television System; Prescribing Terms and Conditions; Also Providing Regulations for Use of the System; and Other Legal Requirements (**2nd READING**)

Presented by Sacco. Seconded by Colombo.

On the Question:

Mundie said he knows that the City received cable for all the City's buildings, but asked Mayor Cusat asked about any future City buildings that they inhabit or open. He asked if this would be part of the agreement. Mayor Cusat said no. He said they were willing to give the City free cable for anything that did not have to be installed. He said if they would have to send out their crews to install the cable, the City could not receive it at the discounted rate. Mundie said if the cable is already there, then the City gets the discount. Mayor Cusat said yes. He stated if the cables are already, in the building, then the City is good. He said if it has to be installed, then the City would have to pay for the installation. Mundie asked if the City still gets the monthly free if they add another building. Atty. Logsdon said this is not part of the agreement. He said existing places that have existing service would be free. He said if the City is buying a building and installing cable, then, it does not apply. Mundie asked Mayor Cusat if this is the best deal he could get. Mayor Cusat said yes, unfortunately. He said they are limited, by statute, of what they could get. He said he was able to get the service added on to it.

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

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY ON 2nd READING

Ordinance 2021-6

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Presented by Sacco. Seconded by Colombo.

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

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Ordinance 2021-7

City of Hazleton Business License Ordinance (**2nd READING**)

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Sacco.

On the Question:

Mundie stated he had a few people called him, but not a “crazy amount”. He said a lot of people are worried about the LLC’s. He asked Mayor Cusat if someone has 20 LLC’s, in different names, and although they are owned by the same person or is a partner in them, if they need 20 licenses. Mayor Cusat said correct. He stated each EIN number would need their own business license number.

Mundie asked Mayor Cusat if a parent transfers a home, to their children, and says it is a rental, would they have to get a license. Mayor Cusat said if it is not owner occupied, it is considered a rental. Mundie said Mayor Cusat stated, in the newspaper, if someone has a rental, they could deduct all their expenses: light, heat, and mortgage. Mundie said this is totally wrong. He stated a person who has a rental, in order to rent it out and count it as a business, they need to have rent coming in. He stated they cannot have a rental, not collect rent, and deduct all the deductions. He said the IRS does not consider this a business and cannot do this. Mayor Cusat said someone could lose money on one of their properties. Mundie agreed. He said Mayor Cusat stated, in the newspaper, if a parent sells their house, to their children, that this is considered a rental and could charge them a license. Mundie said he does not agree with this, is not a good idea, and this is why he has a problem with this ordinance. He said there are a lot of parents transferring the homes to their kids to save it from the nursing home. Mayor Cusat said there is also an inheritance tax. Mundie agreed. He said it is definitely not a business, according to the IRS statutes, if a parent sells the house, to the children, and they do not pay rent. He said they cannot deduct anything, except property taxes, interest, but utilities, no. He said they cannot put it down as a business unless they get rent paid, and could be reduced rent, if it is a mother or someone they know and are comfortable, but needs to charge rent in order to be Schedule Form E for the IRS and for their taxes. He said this is why he has a problem with this, the LLC’s and rentals. Mayor Cusat said if a LLC owns a property, it is a business. Mundie said he is speaking about parents transferring homes to their children and Mayor Cusat is saying it is a business and needs to get a business license, from them, he totally disagrees. He said a lot of people will be “squawking” about this. He said if someone has “the guts” to challenge this, they would win. Mayor Cusat said Mundie could make this amendment: a deed to transfer from parent to child that they would be exempt, if this is the only thing that is holding him up. Perry asked where this is stated in the ordinance. Atty. Logsdon said it would be one of the exceptions, license requirement. Perry said it states, “every person who is engaged in a business who rents a dwelling, a separate license shall be required for each place of business and for each separate business operated out of one place”. Atty. Logsdon said council needs to consider if they are opening up the door where it is not owner occupied but rent is not being charged. He said it does not have to be parent to child, but could be doing an asset protection in estate planning and wants to transfer the home to someone else or to their children and live their rent free. Perry asked how the City would know if someone did this. Atty. Logsdon said the City would need an exemption form where they would need to come to the City for this arrangement. Mundie said if it was a true rental, this would be filed with their taxes and it also be filed with the federal, state, and with Berkheimer Tax. He stated the City charges rentals mercantile taxes. He said this is where you would find the true rentals that are paying rent. He said there are some nephews, nieces, cousins and best friends with friends who have a house and let them live there. He said if the IRS does not get any rent, they cannot deduct those expenses, on a return, without rent coming in.

Mayor Cusat said, currently, there are 9,539 taxable properties in the City. He said only 4,222 are qualified for the Homestead Exemption. He stated there are 5,317 properties, in the City, that are not owner occupied, either vacant, commercial or are rental units. He said the City should be seeing some income from the 5,300 properties, either mercantile tax coming in or a business license. He said the City is nowhere near this. He said they could work on some of the exemptions. Mundie said he knows they are not all parent and child, and some people who pay rent and do not pay rent. Perry and Mayor Cusat agreed. Sacco asked Mundie what his suggestion is to make it better. Mundie said he is against charging parents or their children fees when it is not a business. Mayor Cusat said if it is a deed with a line of succession, to family, they could make an exemption. Mundie said he feels this should be in the ordinance. Mayor Cusat and Perry agreed. Perry stated his mother-in-law gave the house to their kids and is living there. Mayor Cusat said if it is occupied by the successor of the family. He stated if his parents gave him a house and rent it out, it does not exist. He said it needs to be a deed with a line of succession occupied by the original deed owner. Mundie said Luzerne County does it with a "life lease". He said a parent could be living there. Atty. Logsdon agreed. Sacco asked if these people have "X amount of time" to provide the information, to the City, in 60 days. Mayor Cusat said if someone got one, and proves they are a line of succession, then would get their exemption. Perry said the City is making the person responsible and be able to inspect them. He said the City is counting them as a business. Mayor Cusat said it is easier for the Code Department to maintain a business then for a rental dwelling. He said if someone is making money off of it, it is considered a business. Mundie said he agrees, with charging rent and making money, but if a parent sells a house and lives there and is not paying rent, then they should not have to pay this. Mayor Cusat said he agrees with him, has this case himself, and understands what he is saying. He said, in 2022, he wants to bring up a Homestead Exemption for the City. He said he is trying to keep the residents, in the City, and do what is best for the residents willing to stay in Hazleton. He said this is a good amendment and would put this in there. Barletta asked if it goes the "other way" when the children bought the house, and the parents are staying in it. Mayor Cusat said it would be considered a line of succession within the family. Perry said parent to child or child to parent is okay. Mayor Cusat stated as long as it is a family line of succession. Barletta said a few residents were worried when they got a bill, this week, for \$75.00 and called the Code Department. Mayor Cusat said what they probably received a letter, from an audit, done in 2020, of any property that was not owned by the taxpayer. He said the letter stated they were in a rental unit and needs to be registered. He said he is not sure if it was 2019 or 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He said there was an audit done, in 2020, of comparing the tax rolls. He stated everyone got the letter if the property bill was sent to a different address or the names did not line up. He said the residents were able to come in and state, "this is my house". Mayor Cusat said the other was if the resident owns two homes, one is a residence and one was not, and these people got the same letter. He said this audit was for the rental registrations. Perry said this would not go into effect until 2022. Mayor Cusat said the other amendment was to ask council to make it effective for fiscal year 2022. He stated the 2021 business licenses are out already and the 2021 rental registrations are out. He said they could start locating some of the properties that have not been registered for mercantile tax or rental registrations. Mayor Cusat said there are 5,300 properties, out there, that do not qualify for the Homestead Exemption. Perry said he wants to make sure any resident who has a rental property could get this ahead of time, read it, and make sure they understand it if they have any questions. He said they could make the amendments and table it, but this is up to council. Sacco said yes; for further discussion. Mayor Cusat said they could table this because they have time and that is why it was put this forward. Perry asked if they should make these amendments first. Mayor Cusat stated they could make the amendments, present it next time, and present as amended. Mayor Cusat said they could put five

amendments into it and present as amended. Perry said some landlords may want to look at this and may have questions and bring them to the next meeting. He stated they all have situations where someone is renting from someone. Mayor Cusat stated it is a problem all over the country. Perry agreed. Mayor Cusat said they want to get it out now, so the City gets it right. He said the rental registration was a disaster, not just in Hazleton, but everywhere else. Mayor Cusat said they want to make an ordinance that is "looked upon" by other municipalities. Perry said the City would want to enforce this, with no one coming to inspect them, and make sure they are doing what they say they will be doing. He said if they are doing everything right, then they will come to inspect. Perry said he would like to see a list of what residents would need in their apartments, ahead of time; a basic list, so they are prepared before the inspection occurs, either electrical or for a fire extinguisher. He said it could be the UCC codes. Mayor Cusat said the Code Department has a check list. Perry said these rules should be sent out with the registration notices that are mailed, either to existing properties or new ones. He said this is starting from the "ground up". He stated this would make it better for everybody who lives here, to be more accountable, and save the chief a lot of work. Mundie said he agrees with Mayor Cusat. He said there are a lot of houses, out there, that are not Homestead, but should be and does not know about it. Mayor Cusat said he received all the information, from Luzerne County, in February and are looking over the list. He said he would like to help people do this. He plans on introducing a Homestead Exemption for 2022. He said, in 2021, there was not enough room in the budget. Mundie stated a Homestead Exemption is a great idea.

Mayor Cusat said council should just table this. Perry agreed.

Mundie said the big problem, in the City, are the out-of-town landlords who are not keeping their properties up, do not have manager, and do not care about the properties. He said they put someone in there without a background check. He said most landlords, who live next to the properties, take care of their properties, watch them, and make sure there are good tenants in there. Mundie said the problem are the out-of-town landlords who are causing, a problem, for the City.

Motion to Table:

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Sacco.

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

ORDINANCE TABLED

Ordinance 2021-7

City of Hazleton Business License Ordinance (3rd READING)

ORDINANCE TABLED

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 2021-17 Appointing UCC Building Code Official

Presented by Colombo. Seconded by Sacco.

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

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2021-18 A Resolution Approving the Action Plan for Fiscal Year 2021

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Colombo.

On the Question:

Barletta asked if this is amending and adding \$23,000 to administration and street improvements. Zeller said this is correct. Barletta asked for administration, what does this cover. Zeller said office expenses, salaries, healthcare, pension contributions, rent, etc. Barletta asked how much is going into street improvements and administration with the overall total of each one. Zeller stated the overall total, for streets, is \$294,481. Barletta stated she meant to ask how much the City is adding. Zeller said it is an additional \$23,000 total with 20% of the total allocation going to administration costs and the rest would be going to streets.

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2021-19 A Resolution Approving the Sewage Facilities Planning Module for the Hazleton Industrial Center

Presented by Sacco. Seconded by Perry.

On the Question:

Perry asked is the Hazleton Creek Property. Atty. Logsdon said yes. He said this is a PENN DOT form and the language is taken from the form. Perry said EUD's units are small but covers a lot of people and numbers.

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

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2021-20

Appointment to the Planning Commission
John Lenchak

Presented by Colombo. Seconded by Perry.

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

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2021-21

Appointment to the Planning Commission
Stephanie Pcolinsky

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Sacco.

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

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2021-22

Rescinding Resolution 2020-108 Plan Revision for New Land
Development

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Colombo.

On the Question:

Perry said this is the Hazleton Logistics Park, up the street from Hazleton Creek, up 309 and further south. Atty. Logsdon said council may remember, the resolution they are rescinding, that he received word, from the developer's engineer, that this resolution needs to be rescinded and pass a new one. He said there was a change that required council to rescind that one and make another one. He said they need to follow PENN DOT procedures. He said they are similar, if not identical.

Colombo asked with this passing, are they going to start progressing. Atty. Logsdon stated yes, does not know how far, but they are moving in the right direction. Perry said he just signed a lot of documents that will be going to DEP.

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

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2021-23

Resolution for Plan Revision for New Land Development

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Colombo.

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

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

New Business: None.

Old Business: None.

Comments from the Audience: Joseph Garcia, 756 Church Street, Hazleton, said he has two concerns. He said he is ignorant for not knowing this, but nobody clarified it for him. He asked why he has to pay a resident tax. Garcia stated he got a bill, today, from Berkheimer, for \$14.70, for residential taxes. Mayor Cusat said that is the per capita tax, one is for \$10.00 and one is \$5.00. Garcia asked why this is. Mayor Cusat said there was an ordinance, set forth, many years ago, for residents, of the City, to pay. Perry said this has existed forever but would love to get rid of them. Mayor Cusat said he is working to get rid of them in 2022. He said every resident between the ages of 18 and 65 pays one, and everyone who works pays the other.

Garcia said a few months ago, the escrow, on his house, increased, and his payment went up. He said he questioned his bank and was told to call the tax department for clarification. He said he is paying a higher mortgage and his taxes went up. He said the tax department told him taxes went up but asked how when the children were doing virtual learning and were not attending in-person school.

Mayor Cusat said the City is not the school district. Perry said he will get a tax bill from the county, school, and City. Mayor Cusat stated he could only speak on the taxes for the City of Hazleton. He said the county and school taxes he cannot comment on or answer any questions. He said they could answer any questions on the City taxes, but school taxes would need to be referred with the school board. Mundie said City taxes went up 10% but the school and county also had an increase. Mayor Cusat said he does not know the rates for either.

Garcia asked for any plan in repairing the City potholes. Mayor Cusat stated the DPW employees have been out, this week, starting to fill potholes. He said they are planning to pave additional roads when the asphalt plant opens. He said if Garcia is talking about "Church Street, itself", this is a state road that

would be controlled by PENN DOT. Garcia said he lives between 12th & 13th Streets. He said the sidewalks are not good, either. Mayor Cusat stated the sidewalks are the responsibility of the property owner, not the City's. Colombo stated Route 309 is being addressed, but it has been a rough winter.

Comments from Mayor: Mayor Cusat said there will be an Easter Bunny Event, Sunday, March 28th @ 2:00 p.m. at City View Park. He said this will be ran as they did the "Trunk or Treat" event. He said he hopes the weather will be better. Mayor Cusat said the Easter Bunny and other organizations will be handing out candy and treats to all children. He stated this will be a drive thru. He said any individual person or business who wants to participate could call Gary Perna, at his office, to reserve a space. Perry asked Sacco if "We Are Hazleton" will be participating in this event. Sacco said yes; whoever is available.

Comments from City Administrator: Lynch said he had a long meeting, with the auditor, today, and the last "touchy" piece of things they are working on. He said it refers to the things that were discussed at the weekly PEL meetings. Lynch stated this is moving forward and should have their drafts next week. He said he spoke with Ryan Hottenstein and is going forward with the underwriters on the bond with the understanding the City does not sign "on the dotted line" until the 2018 audit is done and the 2019 is underway. Lynch said the City is looking to "pop" right into the 2019 audit and work very aggressively to "wrap it up". He said the 2020 audit will be their last audit. He said he stressed, to them, to get through the 2019 audit, in a timely manner, get the 2020 audit done, and get caught up. He said, right now, the City is behind, but they are tracking.

Comments from Council: Mundie asked Mayor Cusat how the City is doing with the audit. He said the City needs to do the refinancing and they do not want to get caught with the interest rates going up. He stated it would not be good for the City. Atty. Logsdon said they are dealing with this every day. He said he spoke with the auditor today. Atty. Logsdon said there are a couple of things, the auditor needs, that the City needs to put data together. He said he talks to the auditors every other day. He stated they are on the right track. Mundie said the reason he is asking is because of the refinancing the City needs to do. He said this could be costly if interest rates jump. Mayor Cusat said he is trying to take an aggressive approach with the auditors to get it done. He said they have not been having much success. Sacco asked when the City will be "opening up" for a new one. Mayor Cusat said this is on the list of things to do in the next month or so. He stated the audit is a function of city council and is on his list to present to council and will be reminding council to put out the RFQ.

Barletta asked how everyone feels about the tolls on the interstate. She said this issue was brought up at the Luzerne County meeting last night. She mentioned may be the City could write a letter, if the City is against it, and this would have more of a "standing" instead of verbally telling them. Perry said no one wants these tolls. He stated no one could "escape" west or east without going over a bridge unless going through the back roads of White Haven or down the valley. Perry said they could do this for the next meeting. Sean said he will prepare a draft for city council. Barletta said the letter needs to be addressed to PENN DOT.

Colombo said the DPW Department is starting to do some street sweeping and are always on top "of their game". He stated the police and fire departments are outstanding, as usual.

He said on March 31st, they are arranging an Easter Dinner, but no seating due to the COVID-19 virus. He said this dinner will be delivered to the resident's door. He said the residents could watch out for the information in the newspaper for a phone number to reserve the meal.

Colombo said he received several calls asking if the residents could come to City Hall to pay their taxes. He said they want to know why they cannot come to City Hall to pay their taxes. He said their check is their receipt but would like to get it stamped for their receipt.

Mayor Cusat said Berkheimer Tax Office is not City-owned and rents space to them. He stated they did not come back after the COVID-19 pandemic to interact with the public. He said there is someone, in the office, but does not have face-to-face exchanges. He stated there is nothing he could do about this. Mayor Cusat said this is one of the things he wants to address shortly and RFP the tax collection with the requirement they need to have face-to-face interactions. He also stated someone needs to be here after December 15th right up to New Year's Eve. He said Berkheimer takes the entire holiday off and no one is here to collect resident taxes on the last day of the year. He said he would like to put these stipulations in the next RFP agreement and contract. Perry said Berkheimer invoices states they cannot pay this in person. Colombo said Luzerne County allows the residents to send a self-addressed stamped envelope to send a receipt to them. He said the residents were asking if they could send this to Berkheimer so they could get a receipt in the mail. Mayor Cusat said it is, unfortunately, not part of the contract. The City Clerk stated she receives about 3-4 calls, a day, mostly from the elderly population, asking why they cannot come to City Hall to pay their taxes. She stated most of the people want the receipt in their hands. She said this is a big problem with our population. Mundie agreed. He said he received calls from residents. He stated Theresa did a great job at Berkheimer, and also Sherry. He said either he or Mayor Cusat could call Jim Hunt at Berkheimer Tax Office to explain to him to have an employee here to get a stamped receipt. He said they could be careful and be behind plexiglass. Mayor Cusat said there is a employee, in the building, but has the shade closed at all times. He said this will be addressed at the next agreement. He said he knows one of the girls has retired and has not seen another employee. Mundie asked when their contract expires. Mayor Cusat said it is on "automatic renewal". He said, in 2021, he wants to refocus on putting these agreements back out with a list of topics to either RFP or RFQ. He said Elite Revenue Tax Office is here, every day, from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m., on the second floor, for delinquent tax collection. He said he put them here for people to have a central location and "hand-to-hand" exchange. He said he went out of his way to get the delinquent taxes here, at City Hall, but residents are unable to pay their regular taxes at City Hall. Mundie asked if the Elite Tax Office collects just delinquent taxes. Mayor Cusat said yes. He said Elite is delinquent taxes and Berkheimer is current.

Garcia said he pays the per capita taxes, online, and gets a receipt and the City taxes could be paid by a personal check and it will come out on the bank statement. Mayor Cusat said he always writes out bank checks.

Colombo thanked Mayor Cusat for starting the Easter Bunny project. He said Sacco is always involved in the project along with Perry, Barletta and Mundie.

He also wished condolences to Sacco and family on the passing of her father-in-law. He said Sacco is in all their prayers. Barletta said, "thoughts and prayers to you and your family". Mundie concurred.

Perry also wished condolences to her family with thoughts and prayers. He said they are great people. Perry thanked DPW, fire and police departments. He said they always work "above and beyond" their expectations and always expect them to be there.

Perry asked if the new Vector truck is out in town. Mayor Cusat said the little Vector truck is out today. He said the fire department will start washing streets and they will send the little Vector, with it, to suck up some stuff. Perry concurred. He said with the melting snow, there will be a lot of garbage. Barletta asked what department will be operating the truck. Mayor Cusat said the DPW Department will operate it.

Perry said the City has this cooperation with the HCA and this is something that grew out of this. He said they have a great relationship.

Perry said at the weekly PEL meetings, on Monday's, the City has received an excess of \$300,000 over the years that PEL and DCED has been involved with no matching funds. He stated this is amazing. He said there were studies done: Cost Allocation Plan, parking study, and a Comprehensive Plan. He said the City could have never been able to do this without their help. He said, because of this, things will be looking up. He said they are looking at a proposed user fee so the City would not be "short-changed" on what the City is charging people for permits, etc. Perry said Mayor Cusat is "in talks" with Park Mobile. Mayor Cusat said he had a video conference, today, with Park Mobile. Perry stated this process is moving along to upgrade the City. He said this is due to the Parking Study. He said this will modernize the City. He said the City received \$35,000 for a Comprehensive Plan. He said DCED stated the City could apply for an additional \$75,000 in addition to the \$35,000 that is, already, in the grant. He said the City has not had one done in 20 years. He stated whatever was done, 20 years ago, is obsolete and needs a new modernized version. He stated the City would never had had this opportunity to move forward. He said some amazing things are going on.

Mayor Cusat said the City is in the middle of the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan funded by grants. Perry said this is the benefit working with PEL and the guidance of DCED. He said the City needs to take this forward and get out of ACT 47. He stated the City is growing and needs to modernize. He said there are different businesses coming to Route 309. He said in the next 5 to 10 years, there will be real growth and the City needs the infrastructure.

Colombo advised any private organization to contact him, Rotary, Unico, Lions club etc., or Sacco, if they are interested in joining the Greater Hazleton Clean-up project. He said they will start going out on the streets, like last year, on Wyoming Street, Alter Street and downtown. He is looking for these clubs to reach-out to help.

Perry asked Sacco when the banners for the Hometown Banners project will be ready. Sacco said she and Barletta are working on them and should be finished within one week. She said it is about a 4-5 week turn around. She said there was a great turnout with about 60 banners. Colombo thanked Sacco and Barletta for this.

Comments from Junior Council: None.

Adjournment: Perry motioned to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.