

**MINUTES
HAZLETON CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 2021**

Council met for a WORK SESSION on Wednesday, April 14, 2021 in Council Chambers and via ZOOM Teleconferencing. The WORK SESSION began at 9 :42 p.m.

In attendance were City Council President James Perry, Vice-President Anthony Colombo, Allison Barletta, Lauren Sacco and Jack Mundie. City Officials present were Mayor Jeff Cusat, Atty. Sean Logsdon, and Dan Lynch. Also, Mary Malone, Hazleton Chamber of Commerce Director.

Atty. Logsdon said the City originally presented a longer, more comprehensive Parade Ordinance, may be four years ago. Mayor Cusat said there were Parade Ordinances in 2012, 2016 and got on the agenda in 2019. He said the City needs to start “spit balling” all new ideas, out there, and put everything together. He said it is not just parades, but needs to breakdown, everything. He stated he has a list and does not know if he could approve this by reviewing some of the other ordinances. He said they need to come up, with something, and do it soon.

Perry said he has found a Parade Ordinance from the City of Reading. He said they have a Special Events application permit. He said their special events include closing of public streets, sidewalks or alleys, blocking or restricting public property, blocking or restricting access to private property, using pyrotechnics, using special effects or use of an open flame. He said this is all separate. Perry stated residents need to submit a \$500.00 security deposit, a \$300.00 application fee and \$100.00 application fee with proof of non-profit status. He said they have aircraft information and block parties, or special type of community events needs to complete a block party application. He said if the event does not require any of the above, they need to complete a community site permit application. He said there is no fee.

Mayor Cusat said the City needs to break these down by parades, gathering or protests, fundraiser or where money is exchanged, and a sporting contest or leagues. He said they need, at least, four categories. Mayor Cusat said when getting to parades, a pedestrian lane and driving lanes need to be clarified. He said there are some many variances, and with the requests he receives, he does not know what to do with them. Perry said the City’s goal is not to shut them down. He stated the City needs to limit and put restrictions on these. Mayor Cusat said the time and distance needs to be limited. He said restrictions need to be put in place. He stated if they want to stay on the sidewalk to have a “walk”, they need nothing because they need to follow the pedestrian walkways. He said once they want to enter the driving lanes or run on the streets, they would need to be responsible for barricading every cross street. He said these events are, usually, on the weekends. Mayor Cusat said the DPW guys would need to come out and would pay them overtime. He said their average wage is \$25.00/hr., time and one half, \$40.00/hr., a minimum of four hours is \$160.00 with a two-man minimum. He said the cost to the City, to barricade, is \$320.00 minimum. He said to take them back down would cost \$320.00. Perry asked if the City charges for barricades. Mayor Cusat said they have to. He said, in 2020, someone wanted to do a run and he told them they needed to barricade, every street, and someone needs to monitor the event. He stated this is something that needs to be put in place. He said for a church parade wanting to walk two miles, on the City streets, it is going to be a lot of money. Perry stated the MPB parade goes, at least, two miles. Mayor Cusat asked where the City “draws the line” of where it will be. He said he tells the people that they cannot use the streets. He stated someone wanted to do a 5K run, by his house, and told them he would not approve a run “up Church Street”. He said they asked for the Run for the Cannoli. Mayor Cusat told them that was a prior administration, and things have changed.

Mary Malone (*inaudible*).

Mayor Cusat said the City needs to look at locations; private and City-owned properties. He stated he has a request for a block party, on 15th Street, with music and food trucks. He said there is nothing that lets him deny it, currently, except the Noise Ordinance. He said he received eight requests in one day. Mayor Cusat said he got three requests, from Krista Schneider, today. He said he does not know what to do with them. He said the City also needs to review parking at these events, off-street or private lots. Perry said the City of Reading has a Special Event permit with a list of all the events. Mayor Cusat said what list of properties would the City let people use. He said a lot of people want to use Memorial Park, for everything, which is Columbus Park. He said it is tough to park there. He said he is trying to push up, everything, to City View Park. Mayor Cusat said he measured the track and is 3,020 feet. He said they would need to do five laps for a 5K. He said there are two potential 5K's, this year, and is trying to get them to City View Park. Perry asked what the one is up here. Mayor Cusat said it is the "big one", Rails to Trails, 5K and 10K. Perry stated he always wanted to have a Broad Street mile, a run and a walk. He said there would be groups "going off". Lynch said a 5K fee could be charged to the people. He said the City would have to know what their cost is to charge to their cost. Mayor Cusat said they could start at City View Park, make one lap around, go along Poplar Street, and come back and "cross". Perry said the Sorrento Gardens run was a long one, going along the Hazleton Beltway, with the "cones" and lights. Mayor Cusat said the City needs to address noise with or without amplified sound. He stated just like the LCB. He said the LCB law, currently, is for someone standing on the property edge and hears it, then it is a violation. Mayor Cusat stated he does not want to get "that goofy" because we all know where that leads. He said they need to discuss this somehow. He said times, miles, distances, driven, walking, DPW costs, reimbursement costs, police and prep work needs to be looked at. He also said overnight events need to be looked at. Mayor Cusat said the Boy Scouts do an overnight event, every year, at City View Park. He said he has met, three times, with the Hazleton Area School District, to discuss having their prom at the City View Park. He said no one could host a prom their size. He said anything with fireworks, with bon fires for pep rallies, needs to be clarified. He said they used to be done many years ago. Mayor Cusat said anything that uses a driving lane, for a road, needs to have a "lead car" with flashing lights, a police, fire or tow truck, for parades. He said the police and fire cars are available for free but needs to pay the officer. He said if one of the fire chief's or fire fighters belongs to that church, they could use either the chief's car or utility truck to lead. He said there also needs to be a "tail", specifically an ambulance, and is mandatory. He said he almost got hit twice at the Our Lady of Grace Church parade, once on Vine and once on Alter Streets.

Malone (*inaudible*).

Perry said Reading has a Special Event permit application and one for a community-site application if it is a block party. He said there is a \$100.00 barricade fee. He stated for events or occasions that do not require any other city services or not classified, as a special event, then a recreation site application is completed. He said he has to look, in more detail, at this, but this covered everything. Mayor Cusat said, now, that the City is doing the ordinance, he wants to write a chapter, in the new codification, with "A-parade", and change the way they wrote them, and insert right into the code book. He said the same way the business license ordinance was done. He said they took 187 pages, of old ordinances, and got them down to translate it and easier for people to read. Mayor Cusat stated he is not sure where to start. He said the vendors need to be addressed. He said like a business license, they need a business license. If it is a non-profit, they need to fill it out, but they do not have to pay for it. He said profits pay \$100.00. He asked when residents have a food truck, on private property, what would they need to do. Mayor Cusat said if he has a private party, at his house, and call in "Rolling Dough", what would be the procedure. He said they would need a business license to set up. He asked what is considered a City-run function, i.e.- fireworks or Funfest. Perry said Funfest is totally different because this goes for days. Mayor Cusat said this is why it needs to be addressed. He said another group wants to "shut down" Wyoming Street to have an event. Perry said like a "block party". Mayor Cusat said yes. He said they had to let them do this two years ago. He asked what the maximum amount of space would be, a two-

block radius. He said MPB Church used two blocks, from Hayes Street to the alley behind the church. He stated St. Gabriel's Church uses two blocks. He said they need to set up boundaries without getting the City, in trouble, for letting them go. Perry asked about the CAN-DO space. Mayor Cusat said he got three applications, from the Hazleton Downtown Alliance Group, that want to use alcohol at their events.

Malone (*inaudible*).

Perry stated the Luzerne County Firemen's Parade had alcohol, but a fixed location had the alcohol. He said, also, the Rotary has a Beer & Wine Festival.

Malone (*inaudible*).

Mayor Cusat said these are the little things, to think about, and throw some ideas together. Perry said he will research other communities. He said they need to come up with some prices. He stated he "pulled" Hazle Township's fees, and these are online, and are extensive. He said they charge \$95.00 for a one-size pavilion, and \$40.00 "for this". He said he has four dance recitals booked for City View Park this year. He said they have an extensive schedule up there. Sacco asked if the City charges them for rent. Mayor Cusat stated he asks a deposit for cleaning. Perry said they then they need to give it back to them. Mayor Cusat said there is nothing in place that the City could ask for. He said if someone uses James Street playground and leaves their garbage there, it is the City's responsibility to take it. He said as long as they do not litter and is no cost to the City. Perry said it would only cost the City if it requires their services. Mayor Cusat agreed. Sacco asked if they left it a "wreck", the City would keep the \$200.00. Mayor Cusat said yes. Sacco asked if they need to give the City a certificate of insurance if they go up there. Mayor Cusat said there is no distinction between a playground and a park. Perry stated if someone went to Community Park, under the pavilions, they would not be charged. Mayor Cusat said they are charged. He said he is working with a national company to have their 2-day event with 1200 people attending in June. He said he will not charge them, but they will be doing a little to fix up City View Park. Perry said, hopefully, they support the City's businesses. Mayor Cusat, currently, where they are now, they have 400 hotel rooms reserved, but this other community does not want them there, and are pushing them out. He said the City needs something, in place, when someone calls to request an event. He said Funfest is on the street, and not on a property.

Malone (*inaudible*).

Mayor Cusat said there will be a big fundraiser, on July 3rd, 2021, the day of the fireworks, from morning until afternoon, due to "who is coming". He stated they are getting a \$2,000,000 insurance policy. He said the City has a big season, scheduled, at City View Park. He said they are putting sewers, bathrooms and received restaurant equipment donated from the school district. He stated the original plan, with the shed built there, is for a concession stand. He said he is stock piling stuff. He said he is hoping to have all of this for the prom. He said he made a \$3,000 donation for this. Mayor Cusat said Vito gave him two pieces of equipment and he found one.

Malone (*inaudible*).

Mayor Cusat said the City is not looking for revenue but wants to be a destination. He said American Eagle wants to have their company picnic at City View Park. Mayor Cusat said American Eagle and Cargill have been good to the City. He said the City is working with the Rotary to sponsor a playground. Perry said they make donations to improve the parks. Mayor Cusat said he is trying to get the hospital to redo the walkway to get it paved, because it is stoned. He said the entrance is not the City's due to the deed and does not have signage there because of this. He said the City's area is shaped like an "H". Mayor Cusat said he is trying to get land up by the airport. He said Pasco Schiavo always wanted a bigger sign.

Perry asked if this could be brought up at the next meeting. Mayor Cusat said this is all he wrote down. He said if there are any other ideas council has and will write them down. Perry said he will look at other

community procedures. Mayor Cusat asked what items council does not want and what is controversial. He said the City needs to watch the wording. He said the definition of church has changed. Perry said also placement of portable toilets, use of open flames, aircraft, music, sounds, voices, activities, walks, runs, cycling, parades, marches and all non-stationary events need to be looked at. Atty. Logsdon said people could think of “30 other things” like motorcycle rallies, live action role-playing games, with swords, as Game of Thrones, where people like to dress up, and Renaissance fairs. Mayor Cusat said, in 2020, the Black Lives matters came to the City for their protest. He said what if someone wants to come and gather. He said there needs to be restrictions. He said the City needs to have something in place where they cannot do this and start to walk down the middle of the street. He said the City needs something stating they violated the law and did not allow it.

Sacco asked Malone if she is still doing the normal Funfest this year.

Malone (*inaudible*).

Mayor Cusat said unions have not given the City a hard time, but there are different leaders.

Malone (*inaudible*).

Mayor Cusat said City View Park has no cost or no barricades. He said, downtown, blocking Wyoming Street, with 15 blocks total, would need 24 blocks to be blocked. He said at City View Park they could lock the gates and roam around.

Malone (*inaudible*).

Mayor Cusat said he is not trying to “break anyone” but just trying not to lose money. He said they want to outweigh the cost to the public perception they get. He stated if Funfest brings in 2,000 people, is it good publicity for the City. He said it is like the lost lead at a restaurant or a grocery store. He stated it is good to lose money only if they could bring people back.

Malone (*inaudible*).

Perry said council having a WORK SESSION meeting and publicizing would be helpful. He said it is challenging to try to meet everyone’s needs. He said the Trot N Brew had two barricades and would not be charged. Mayor Cusat said DPW drops off the barricades, on Friday’s, and picks them up on Monday’s. He stated it is easier to “wave the fee” then “charge the fee”. He said he cannot speak, on behalf of the union, and let them go. He said they need to call DPW out and make them stand there, for four hours, and usually let him drop the barricades. He said he is looking at 20 years in the future. He said just because he has a relationship, with these guys, now, it does not mean this will not change with a different chief and work ethic.

Mayor Cusat said they will work on this at the next meeting. He said he and Atty. Logsdon will need to leave the April 27th meeting early to attend the Luzerne County council meeting, at some point, for the Land Bank. Perry said the City Clerk will need to publicize the WORK SESSION meeting. Perry stated they need to give the public a chance to absorb it.

Perry made a motion to adjourn the WORK SESSION meeting. Meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m.