

**MINUTES
HAZLETON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2022**

Call to Order: Council met in a Regular Meeting session on Tuesday, June 7, 2022 in Council Chamber and via ZOOM Teleconferencing. The meeting was called to order at 6:11 p.m.

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

Roll Call: Colombo-present; Mundie-present; Ondishin-present; Sacco-present; Perry-present

Minutes of Previous Meetings: The minutes of the May 24, 2022 Regular Meeting were approved unanimously.

Presentations/Proclamations/Communications: None

Bid Opening: None

Courtesy of the Floor (ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY): Robert Yevak, 1011 North Locust Street, Hazleton, said he read his newspaper today and noticed the article on increasing the compensation of the Hazleton City Sewer Authority board members. Yevak stated he worked at the Hazleton Water Authority, for 15 years and was the union president. He said he knows that system more than anyone of those members. He said he would go on the board, with all his knowledge, and work for nothing.

Mark Rabo, 1st Street, Hazleton, spoke of Resolution 2022-36- Authorizing the Filing of a Proposal for Funds with the Department of Community and Economic Development, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, for the Willow Foundation- Hazleton Day Center. Rabo asked who the director and the board members are for the Willow Foundation. He asked if this is a newly formed foundation.

Rabo, also, spoke of Resolution 2022-38- Authorizing an Increase in Board Member compensation for Members of the Greater Hazleton Joint Sewer Authority. He said he is a board member on the Luzerne County Redevelopment board and they receive no money. He said most board members, in Luzerne County do not get paid. Rabo said the only board members that receive any pay is the Tax Assessment Appeals Board. He said this should be taken into consideration when making this decision.

Rabo, also, spoke of Resolution 2022-40- A Resolution Certifying the Local Match for State Operating Financial Assistance for Fiscal Year 2022/2023. He stated a few Luzerne County Council members were a little "puzzled" as to why Hazleton City Council did not approve this first. He said this is a little "backwards".

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

ORDINANCES:

(1ST READING)

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None

(2ND AND 3RD READINGS)

None

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 2022-36

Authorizing the Filing of a Proposal for Funds with the Department of Community and Economic Development, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, for the Willow Foundation- Hazleton Day Center

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Sacco.

On the Question:

Perry asked if Atty. Logsdon has any information on this group. Atty. Logsdon said he does not have any information but could “circle-back” on this. He said they may have changed the name of the organization, and this is where the confusion may be. He said the City adopted the PENN DOT version of this resolution.

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

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2022-37

A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Hazleton, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, Supporting the People of Ukraine

Presented by Colombo. Seconded by Mundie.

On the Question:

Atty. Logsdon said the City of Hazleton “put together” a resolution to show support for the people of Ukraine. He said this shows the City of Hazleton and council supports Ukraine and are willing to help. He said it is a strong symbol.

Colombo said this completes what has been done, so far, by the City residents.

Atty. Logsdon said this could be shared with other governments and organizations. He said, although, this may just go “into the file”, it is good to have.

Mundie thanked Atty. Logsdon for writing a good resolution. He said the City will do all they could for these people who are suffering so much. Mundie said he hopes all the City donations will help the Ukraine people.

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

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2022-38 Authorizing an Increase in Board Member compensation for Members of the Greater Hazleton Joint Sewer Authority

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Ondishin.

On the Question:

Mundie made a motion to table the resolution until city council gets more information. Colombo seconded the motion.

Presented by Mundie. Seconded by Colombo.

Roll Call (MOTION TO TABLE): Colombo-yes; Mundie-yes; Ondishin-yes; Sacco-yes; Perry-yes.

RESOLUTION TABLED

Resolution 2022-39 Authorizing Request for Proposals for the City of Hazleton Audit for Years 2021, 2022 and 2023

Presented by Sacco. Seconded by Colombo.

On the Question

Atty. Logsdon asked city council if when the City puts out the RFP, they could include an add alternative. He said there would be two options. The first option for the submitting company would be for years 2021, 2022, and 2023. Atty. Logsdon said the add options would be for the companies to give the City quotes for 2019 and 2020. He said there would be two options, one for the three years and one for the five years. Perry said, currently, years 2019 and 2020 audits are not complete. Atty. Logsdon said no, they are not. He said the City wants to keep their options open

about alternative methods they may need to use to get them done. Perry said the City could not refinance due to the audits not being completed.

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Sacco.

Roll Call (MOTION TO AMEND): Colombo-yes; Mundie-yes; Ondishin-yes; Sacco-yes; Perry-yes.

MOTION TO AMEND PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Roll Call (AS AMENDED): Colombo-yes; Mundie-yes; Ondishin-yes; Sacco-yes; Perry-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES AS AMENDED

Resolution 2022-40

A Resolution Certifying the Local Match for State Operating Financial Assistance for Fiscal Year 2022/2023

Presented by Sacco. Seconded by Ondishin.

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

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

New Business: None.

Old Business: None.

Comments from the Audience: Ricky DeLucca, 191 North Cedar Street, Hazleton, asked if anything was done since the last council meeting. He said he, also, gave city council and the Hazleton Police Chief the formal complaint, for the towing. Perry said this is a contract, and the city council is not in a position to discuss a contract. Atty. Logsdon stated correct. He said any potential litigation would be discussed, by city council, in an executive session. He stated the packet contained some "hand-written" notes and some invoices. Atty. Logsdon said these would have to be looked into further, and would be done, internally, at City Hall. He said they are not, currently, commenting. DeLucca said this will just keep going on. He said the bills, in the packet, were a recovered theft of a vehicle. He said he was charged \$1,600 and not \$50.00 which he signed the contract. Police Chief Schoonmaker said he needs to come to City Hall to file a written complaint to investigate. DeLucca stated when this gentleman came

to City Hall, they were told to go to Paul's. He stated Paul's told this gentleman to see the police officer. Schoonmaker said when they came to City Hall, they never mentioned anything about filing a complaint. DeLucca asked if anything will be done, to Paul's, with all the violations. Schoonmaker said specific violations need to be presented to city council. Sacco said this is not the proper way to present information to council. Sacco said DeLucca gave members all this information "face-down" on their desks. Perry asked if this is considered a formal complaint. Schoonmaker said no. Atty. Logsdon asked Perry for a copy of all the information. He said he will review the information.

Mark Rabo, 1st Street, Hazleton, said he was "puzzled" on the request for Hazleton City Water and Sewer projects, as he read in the newspaper, through the Luzerne County's Recovery Act money. He stated Hazleton is seeking \$750,000 to install inlets and piping sections on James, Peace and Grant Streets that have no stormwater infrastructure. He said this leads to significant flooding in storms. Rabo said, in the past, he stated that the City of Hazleton should use the \$17,000,000 ARP money for this project. He asked where the \$17,000,000 ARP money is being spent. He said the Hazleton Sewer Authority is applying for \$5,000,000 for replacing the stormwater system on Locust Street. Lynch asked if Rabo is asserting the City should not be applying for this money. Rabo said the City should apply for any available option as long as the City is using the money which is attended for, the \$17,000,000. He said there were other items, passed, in 2022, as the Quality-of-Life Ordinance. He said the City Zoning Ordinance was "shuttled" through fast. He said the state tells the municipalities how the local government should pass these kinds of ordinances. Rabo asked if the Quality-of-Life Ordinance was passed immediately. Sacco said yes. Rabo stated this should not be allowed. Perry said the City is only re-enforcing the International Property Maintenance Code.

Rabo spoke of the recent City codification process. He said, under the Third-Class City Code, the Code Book was to be inspected for public review first. He said any significant changes done, to the Code Book, need to be, available, for public review. Atty. Logsdon stated there was a very long legal ad advertised, in relation, to this.

Comments from Mayor: Mayor Cusat said the Pole Climber event will be held on Father's Day weekend. He said this will bring a lot of out-of-town visitors to the City with a lot of hotels booked for this event.

He wished everyone a Happy Father's Day.

Comments from City Administrator: None

Comments from Council: Mundie thanked everyone for passing the Ukraine resolution. He said Ukraine feeds half the world with their grain exports and causing a major problem. Mundie stated he hopes the war ends soon. He said the price of gasoline, currently, is ridiculous.

Ondishin stated Lex and Jennifer Sloat are donating, on their electronic sign board, across from Alexander Dealership, an anonymous tip line for the City. He said this is a \$11,000 savings for the City. He thanked them for this. Ondishin said it will stay up for one year.

Ondishin thanked Colombo and Mayor Cusat for the recent removal, of a mattress, laying on the highway. Colombo, also, thanked the DPW Department and Frank Vito.

Perry thanked the City Code Department for all their work, Diane and all workers.

Perry said the City's Comprehensive Plan is moving along. He said there was a recent regional meeting with discussion on how the Comprehensive Plan will affect everyone. He said there will be 30,000,000 square feet of warehousing in the City.

Perry asked Mayor Cusat if there is an upcoming City recycling event. Mayor Cusat said the City of Hazleton Recycling Event is on October 22, 2022. Perry said Valley Elementary School is having a recycling day. Mayor Cusat said there will be a charge and depends on what the grant will offer.

Colombo thanked the City's DPW, Fire and Police Departments for all their work.

Perry thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Adjournment: Perry motioned to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.