

Minutes of the Council of the City of Easton, Pa.
April 11, 2012

Easton, Pa
Wednesday
April 11, 2012
6:00 p.m.

City Council met in stated session at the above date and time in Council Chambers, located on the 6th floor of One South Third Street, Easton, Pa. to consider any business that may lawfully be brought before the body.

The invocation was given by Mayor Panto followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Present: Brown, Fleck, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, Panto (7)
Absent: None (0)

Also in attendance were Rita Messa, Assistant City Clerk, William Murphy, City Solicitor, Beth Knickerbocker, Assistant City Solicitor, and Glenn Steckman, City Administrator. There were twelve other persons present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion of Mayor Panto and Mr. Warren, and by the following vote, the Agenda was amended by removing the Resolution that would approve the establishment of a KOZ Zone from New Business.

Yeas: Panto, Warren, Warner, Vulcano, Ruggles, Fleck, Brown (7)
Nays: None (0)

On motion of Mrs. Vulcano and Dr. Ruggles the amended Agenda was approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Brown, Fleck, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, Panto (7)
Nays: None (0)

ACTION ON MINUTES

On motion of Dr. Ruggles and Mr. Warren the March 28, 2012 Council Meeting minutes were approved, as submitted, by the following vote:

Yeas: Brown, Fleck, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, Panto (7)
Nays: None (0)

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CITIZENS RIGHT TO BE HEARD

There were no comments from the audience.

REPORTS RECEIVED BY COUNCIL

There were no reports received.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Mr. Brown, Chairman of the Finance Committee, spoke regarding legislation that he would have for later in the meeting regarding amending the 2011 State Highway Aid Fund Budget, erection of parking meters in the 129 Northampton Street Parking Lot, and for amending Sections in Chapter 531, Tax Abatements, of the City's Codes. He reported that a Finance Committee meeting had been held on April 10, 2012 and will meet again on April 25, 2012, and that Pension Plans would be discussed.

There was a discussion between Council members, and it was decided that the Council Committee meetings would be rescheduled from Tuesday, April 24, 2012 to during the Regular Council meeting on April 25, 2012, and that numerous presentations regarding the Heil Park Project, the Farmers Market, and on Lafayette College's Senior Design Project regarding support of local businesses during the S. 3rd Street Streetscape Project would be given to Council at that time.

Mrs. Vulcano, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee reported that Gretchen Longenbach was in attendance and would answer any questions that Council may have on the KOZ zone and the LERTA Programs.

There were comments made and questions asked regarding a revised map, definition of substantial improvements; recommendations for what would be included in substantial improvements for assessed values, which were answered by Ms. Longenbach.

Dr. Ruggles, Chairman of the Planning Committee, spoke regarding legislation that he would have for later in the meeting regarding amending sections in Chapter 595, Zoning, of the City's Codes, approving a 3rd addendum to an Agreement for Site Preparation with RGC Development for the Karl Sterner Arts Trail, and approving a Professional Service Agreement with the Parking Authority, Pennoni Associates and the City for the Parking Structure Easton Intermodal Transit Center.

Mr. Warren, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, spoke regarding legislation that he would have for later in the meeting regarding approving an application to Penn DOT for a DUI Grant, and reported that the Public Safety Committee would meet on April 25, 2012 where the Valley Against Sex Trafficking organization would give a short presentation.

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Dr. Warner, Chairman of the Public Works Committee reported that the Public Works Committee would meet on April 25, 2012 where a presentation would be given regarding the improvements at Heil Park. She reported that she and Mr. Warren had attended the Main Street Business Owners roundtable meeting on April 10, 2012, where they were very vocal on before anything else happens with parking that there should be a public meeting on this matter.

Mayor Panto said that at the end of the last presentation by the Parking Consultants, it was suggested that two public meetings be held after their final report was received. He said that the first public meeting would be held on May 1, 2012, 6:30 p.m., and the second will be held on May 22, 2012 during the Public Safety Committee meeting.

Chris Heagele said that he had spoken to the consultants, and he was informed that he would be receiving three close to final drafts on April 13, 2012.

Dr. Warner spoke regarding legislation that she would have later in the meeting regarding amending Attachments 1:1 through 1:12 in Chapter 515, Streets and Sidewalks, of the City's Codes.

Mr. Fleck, Chairman of the Administration Committee reported that a review had begun on some of the information from the Charter workshop, said that he would be meeting with Mr. Murphy to formulate some rules for City Council, and that the census maps needed to be looked at to see if changes had to be made to Council districts before the next election.

Mr. Murphy, City Solicitor, and Ms. Knickerbocker had no reports.

Mayor Panto asked that Council meet in Executive Session, immediately after the meeting, to discuss the litigation of Leech vs. the City of Easton.

Mayor Panto said that at last night's Finance Committee they had discussed two alternatives for the severity of the City's pensions. He said that he was pleased with the Pensions actuarial reports. He said that he would also schedule a Public Hearing for the Commuter Tax on April 25, 2012.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Bill No. 14, (Ordinance 5352), Amending Sections in Chapter 595, Zoning, of the Codes of the City of Easton, Pa., was adopted on motion of Dr. Ruggles and Dr. Warner by the following vote:

Mr. Warren thanked all persons involved with the making of the amendments, that it was hard for him to decide how he was going to vote for these amendments, and explained why he would be voting against this Bill.

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Mayor Panto said that the State Planning Code allowed for a curative amendment and if the City did not provide a spot for highway advertising signs, the State would decide where it could be placed.

Yeas: Brown, Fleck, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Panto (6)
Nays: Warren (1)

Ordinance 5352 amended the Zoning Codes to create Expressway Transitional Zoning Districts for the accommodation of certain highway-oriented uses and sign types, establishing dimensional criteria and associated rules and regulations.

Bill No. 15, (Ordinance 5353) Amending Ordinance 5281, 2011 State Highway Aid Fund Budget was adopted on motion of Mr. Brown and Dr. Warner by the following vote:

Yeas: Fleck, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, Panto, Brown (7)
Nays: None (0)

Ordinance 5353 amends the 2011 State Highway Aid Fund Budget by increasing Revenues and Expenditures by \$33,000.00.

Bill No. 16, (Ordinance 5354) Amending 560 Attachment 1-City of Easton Table 1: Meter-Zones of Chapter 560, Vehicles and Traffic, of the Codes of the City of Easton, Pa., was adopted on motion of Mr. Brown and Mrs. Vulcano by the following vote:.

Yeas: Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, Panto, Brown, Fleck (7)
Nays: None (0)

Ordinance 5354 authorized the placement of parking meters on the rear 15 spaces of the 129 Northampton Street parking lot at \$0.50 per hour for a maximum of 10 hours from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence received by Council:

NEW BUSINESS

Before the introduction of Bill No. 17, there was a discussion on the wording of the proposed amendments. After the discussion it was decided that the following amendments would be made to the proposed bill.

- Add Section 531.2 C which would read as follows:
C. Exemption shall not apply to any County wide re-assessment.

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- In section 531-7, delete the title Business Administrator and replace it with City Administrator, and delete the titles The Assistant to the Superintendent for Finance and Administration of the Easton Area School District and the Business Manager of the Easton Area School District, and replace them with the title Chief Operating Officer of the Easton Area School District.
- In section 531-8 delete the words effective immediately and replace them with 30 days following adoption by Council.

Bill No. 17, Amending Sections in Chapter 531, Tax Abatements, of the Codes of the City of Easton, pa., with the above amendments was introduced by Mr. Brown and ordered processed for adoption.

This Bill would amend sections in Chapter 531 of the City Codes for the LERTA program.

An April 5, 2012 e-mail regarding a requested Ordinance change was received from Director David Hopkins.

Bill No. 18, Amending Chapter 515, Streets and Sidewalks, of the Codes of the City of Easton, Pa., was introduced by Dr. Warner and ordered processed for adoption.

This bill would repeal Attachments 1: through 1:12 in chapter 515 and replace them with a new updated Attachment.

An April 4, 2012 memorandum, regarding a DUI Grant approval was received from Police Chief Carol Scalzo.

Then next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would authorize the City to apply for a Pa. Department of Transportation grant for a project known as the City of Easton Sobriety Checkpoint and Expanded DUI Enforcement program in the amount of \$35,000.

The following Resolutions were introduced by Mr. Warren:

51-2012

The above Resolution was adopted on motion of Mr. Warren and Dr. Ruggles by the following vote:

Yeas: Brown, Fleck, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, Panto (7)

Nays: None (0)

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution that would approve Addendum No. 3, to an Agreement with RGC Development for construction work for the Karl Sterner Arts Trail.

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The following Resolutions were introduced by Dr. Ruggles:

52-2012

The above Resolution was adopted on motion of Dr. Ruggles and Mr. Fleck by the following vote:

Yeas: Fleck, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, Panto, Brown (7)

Nays: None (0)

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would approve a Professional Service Agreement with the Easton Parking Authority, Pennoni Associates Inc., and the City.

The following Resolution was introduced by Dr. Ruggles:

53-2012

Dr. Ruggles had questions regarding not getting any information on sinkholes and thought that with all of the drilling on site, that it would be prudent to get their assessment of the sinkhole possibility, and asked questions regarding Paragraph 11 of the proposal. His questions were answered by Director Bradley and Mr. Murphy.

On motion of Dr. Ruggles and Mr. Fleck the above proposed Resolution was amended by deleting paragraph 11 from Pennoni Associates proposal, by the following vote:

Yeas: Ruggles, Fleck, Brown, Panto, Warren, Warner, Vulcano (7)

Nays: None (0)

The above amended Resolution was adopted on motion of Dr. Ruggles and Dr. Warner by the following vote:

Yeas: Vulcano, Warner, Warren, Panto, Brown, Ruggles (6)

Nays: Fleck (1)

CITIZENS RIGHT TO BE HEARD

Kirk Raup, 818 Union Blvd., spoke regarding the establishment of rail service to the Lehigh Valley for Philadelphia and New York.

Council members made comments on this issue.

ADJOURNMENT

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With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m. on the motion of Mr. Fleck and Mr. Warren by the following vote:

Yeas: Panto, Warren, Warner, Vulcano, Ruggles, Fleck, Brown (7)

Nays: None (0)

Rita Messa, Assistant City Clerk