

**Minutes of the Council of the City of Easton, Pa.
September 11, 2013**

Easton, Pa
Wednesday
September 11, 2013
6:00 p.m.

City Council met in stated session at the above date and time, in Council Chambers, 6th floor of City Hall, One South Third Street, 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, Edinger, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, Panto (7)
Absent: None (0)

Also in attendance were Thomas A. Hess, City Clerk, William Murphy, City Solicitor, Beth Knickerbocker, Assistant City Solicitor and Glen Steckman, City Administrator. There were fifteen other persons present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was approved on motion of Mr. Brown and Mr. Warren by the following vote:

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

ACTION ON MINUTES

On motion of Dr. Ruggles and Dr. Warner, the August 28, 2013 Council Meeting minutes were approved as submitted by the following vote:

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

PUBLIC COMMENT – (Agenda Items Only)

There were no questions or comments from the audience.

PRESENTATIONS

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Ester Guzman, Director of the West Ward Neighborhood Partnership gave a Power Point Presentation on the success of the West Ward Neighborhood Partnership's Urban Agricultural Program, and thanked the City for all their support and assistance for the program.

Council members commended Ms. Guzman on the success of the program, the children and volunteers taking part in the program, and asked questions regarding enlarging the program, and the need for more public awareness of the program which were answered by Ms. Guzman.

David Hopkins, Director of Public Services went over the Department of Public Works Garbage and Recycling Contract Status, and the two proposed Resolutions, for later in the meeting, which would approve four year contracts with Chrin Landfill for the acceptance and disposal of solid waste, and with Waste Management for accepting, processing and marketing of the City's Recycle materials, and made suggestions on different things that the City could do to encourage the citizens to take more of a part in the recycling program.

Council made comments and asked questions regarding if there had been an increase in recycling users, recycling containers, and the point system for citizens who take part in the program which were answered by Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Steckman.

Mayor Panto commended Mr. Hopkins for his part in the contract negotiations for this matter.

The next discussion before Council was regarding the proposed Grant to the Greater Easton Development Partnership for the purchase of the Weller building on the 300 block of Northampton Street to house the Easton Public Market and offices.

Megan McBride, 728 Brodhead Street, the Easton Farmers Market manager spoke regarding her support for the proposed Public Market project to be housed in the Weller Building and the need for this project in the City and downtown.

Nathan Thomas, 2446 Valley View Road, Mount Joy, Pa. owner of Break-away Farms, spoke to Council regarding the Farmers Market, the proposed Easton Public Market, and the proposed grant to the GEDP for the purchase of the Weller building to house the proposed market.

Mayor Panto asked how many square feet Mr. Thomas would want in the proposed Market.

Mr. Thomas said 500 to 1,000 square feet.

Jared Mast, an employee of the Greater Easton Development Partnership, and the project manager for GEDP Public Market project, spoke to Council, said that today he had met with an Architect that worked on the Philadelphia Reading Terminal renovation, along with various Public Market stakeholders and potential anchor tenants to work on a general plan for the space within the market, including seating and layouts for each of the vendors to sustain a market for

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downtown residents and other residents of the City. He said that financial and foundation support still needed to be spoken about. He also spoke regarding what else could take place in the market i.e. nutritional food classes, cooking demonstrations and such. He asked that Council financially support the vision for the market.

Mr. Brown thanked Mr. Mast for meeting and speaking with him regarding the financing for the project and helping him have a better understanding, and said that he was excited with this proposed program.

Dr. Ruggles thanked Mr. Mast for meeting with him and providing him with the additional information that he requested. He said that he still was not convinced financially and related his reasons why he made the statement.

Mayor Panto and Mr. Mast addressed Dr. Ruggles' concerns.

Dr. Warner said that Council had not been presented with any other financial scenarios and wanted to know what would happen if Council approved something less than \$1,000,000.

Director Longenbach said that the issue was timing for the sales agreement, the deposit and for them to make a commitment to purchase the building, and without the grant the answer was probably no.

Dr. Warner said that it was a concern that the taxpayers were being asked to finance the market.

Director Longenbach said that if the grant was not supported, GEDP would have to go back to Weller and discuss extension options, have to pursue other types of financing which would likely require city guarantees, at least for the property acquisition, and then Council could be told if the project could be done, but probably not without the grant.

Mayor Panto, Mr. Warren, Mr. Brown, Mrs. Vulcano, and Mr. Edinger said that they supported the project, would be voting for the Grant Resolution and explained why.

Dr. Warner said that just because a person did not approve of the Grant Resolution did not mean that they did not support the Project.

The next discussion was regarding the City's 2012 Audit.

Mrs. Kyra Berkove, from Palmer and Company, the City's Auditors, briefly went over the Basic Financial Statements and Auditor's report for the City, as of December 31, 2012.

There were no comments or questions from Council.

CONSENT AGENDA

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On motion of Dr. Warner and Mr. Warren the following items on the Consent Agenda were adopted by the following vote:

1. Bill 48, Ordinance 5430, Amending Ordinance 5376, An Ordinance electing to amend it's Municipal Pension Plan administered by the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System, which designated the City Administrator as the Chief Administrative Officer of the City's Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System Pension Plan.
2. Resolution 157-2013, in which Council indicated their support for the creation of a Rail Transit Authority.
3. Resolution 158-2013, which approved a Memorandum of Agreement with the Pa. Urban Community Forestry Council for development of a plan to deal with the Emerald Ash Borer.
4. Resolutions 159-2013, which adopted the 2013 Lehigh Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan

Dr. Ruggles indicated that there was a typographical error in the Resolution that would indicate Council's support for the creation of a Rail Authority.

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

REPORTS RECEIVED BY COUNCIL

There were no reports received by Council.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Mr. Brown, Chairman of the Finance Committee, spoke regarding legislation that he would have, for later in the meeting, regarding the repealing of a section of the City Codes that pertains to water not discharged onto the city's sewers, for amending the fee for appeal fees to the Property Maintenance Board of Appeals, to amend the 2013 Health Benefits Fund Budget and to approve an Agreement of Sale and an Office Space Lease Agreement with the Alpha Development Group, L. P.

Mrs. Vulcano, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee spoke regarding legislation that she would have for later in the meeting regarding approving a Grant Agreement between the City and the Greater Easton Development Partnership. She also gave an update on Main Street projects, upcoming events in the City, and new businesses that have opened in the City.

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Dr. Ruggles, Chairman of the Planning Committee, reported that the Planning Committee met on September 10, 2013 and had discussed the matter of Chickens in the City. He said that another meeting would be held in the near future to further discuss the chickens.

Mr. Warren, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, commended the Police department for assisting other Police departments in a Wind Gap drug raid.

Dr. Warner, Chairman of the Public Works Committee, informed everyone about the Movies at the Mill program that will be held at the Hugh Moore Park on Saturday, September 21, 2013.

Mr. Edinger, Chairman of the Administration Committee reported that the Administration Committee will meet on September 24, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Murphy, City Solicitor, and Ms. Knickerbocker, Assistant City Solicitor had no report.

Mayor Panto reported that he had attended the Sigal Museum's presentation of the 911 memorial flag and had viewed Film Director Lou Reda's film entitled "The Day the Towers Fell.

Mayor Panto said that, within the next thirty days, he would like to invite Council members to a meeting on the South Side, at the Boys and Girls Club. He said that the Housing Authority owns a piece of property at the corner of E. St. Joseph and Charles Streets and would like to tear down the old Dress company build and erect five (5) duplexes. He said that there was concern in the neighborhood regarding low income housing being built, and felt that this should be discussed, in public, before it even went to the Planning Commission and the Zoning Hearing Board.

Mayor Panto also spoke regarding other events that were taking place throughout the City.

CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was received by Council.

- (a) Joan Chelsem and Raisa, Thank-You Cards regarding Police Service at the Sports for Health Program.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution that would approve a Grant Agreement between the City and the Greater Easton Development Partnership, which was tabled on August 28, 2013 until Council could receive more information.

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The aforesaid Resolution was brought back before Council on motion of Mrs. Vulcano and Mr. Brown by the following vote:

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

The following Resolution was introduced by Mrs. Vulcano:

163-2013

The above Resolution was adopted on motion of Mrs. Vulcano and Mr. Brown by the following vote:

Dr. Ruggles and Dr. Warner said that they would be voting against the Resolution and explained why.

Yeas: Warren, Vulcano, Edinger, Brown, Panto (5)
Nays: Warner, Ruggles (2)

NEW BUSINESS

Bill 49, Repealing Section 475-6, Water not discharged into City's sewers, of the Code of the City of Easton, Pa., was introduced by Mr. Brown and ordered processed for adoption.

This bill would repeal Section 475-6 in its entirety.

Bill 50, Amending Section 285-17 A. Existing Structure Code, of Chapter 285 Fees, of the Code of the City of Easton, Pa., was introduced by Mr. Brown and ordered processed for adoption.

This Bill would change the fees for Appeal Hearings to the Property Maintenance Board of Appeals from \$200 to \$500.

A memorandum, dated September 6, 2013, regarding a proposed amendment to the 2013 Health Benefits Fund Budget was received from Chris Heagele, Director of Finance.

Bill 51, Amending the 2013 Health Benefits Fund Budget was introduced by Mr. Brown and ordered processed for adoption.

This Bill would increase revenues and expenditures by \$1,000,000.

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Bill 52, Approving an Agreement of Sale of Real Property and an Office Building Lease Agreement between the City of Easton, Pa., and the Alpha Development Group, was introduced by Mr. Brown and ordered processed for adoption.

This Bill would approve an Agreement of Sale of Real Property and an Office Building Lease Agreement for the sale of 1 South Third Street to the Alpha Development Group and the lease of office space, by the City, in 1 South Third Street.

Dr. Ruggles said that in the Lease Agreement it indicated that the City would be leasing space on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 6th floors, but did not indicate the basement.

Dr. Warner said that it also did not indicate the mezzanine level.

Mr. Steckman said that the Ambassadors would be moving to the Weller Building.

Mr. Murphy said that the City did use the basement, said that it was not in the lease, but should be.

A September 5, 2013 memorandum, regarding City Council Agenda Items was received from Public Services Director David Hopkins.

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would approve a four-year Contract between the City and Chrin Landfill for the acceptance and disposal of solid waste at a cost of \$40.44 per ton.

The following Resolution was introduced by Dr. Warner:

160-2013

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

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

Nays: None (0)

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would approve a four-year Contract between the City and Waste Management for accepting, processing and marketing of Recycle Materials.

The following Resolution was introduced by Dr. Warner:

161-2013

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

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

Nays: None (0)

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would request that Northampton county make bridge repairs, to the bridge over the Lehigh River into Hugh Moore Park, a priority in their Capital Budget.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mayor Panto:

162-2013

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

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

Nays: None (0)

CITIZENS RIGHT TO BE HEARD

Kirk Raup, 818 W. Union Blvd. thanked Council for passing the Resolution supporting the creation of a Rail Transit Authority to provide rail service to the City and the Lehigh Valley area.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p. m. on the motion of Mr. Brown and Dr. Warner by the following vote:

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

Nays: None (0)

Thomas A. Hess, City Clerk