Minutes of the Council of the City of Easton, Pa.

January 14, 2015

Easton, Pa
Wednesday
January 14, 2015
6:30 p.m.

City Council met in stated session at the above date and time, in Council Chambers, located on the 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, Mauro, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, (Phone), Panto (7)
Absent: None (0)

Also in attendance were Thomas A. Hess, City Clerk, William Murphy, City Solicitor, Joel Scheer, Assistant City Solicitor and Glenn Steckman, City Administrator. There were eighteen other persons present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

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

ACTION ON MINUTES

On motion of Mr. Brown and Mr. Edinger the December 10, 2014 Council Meeting minutes, as submitted, were approved by the following vote:

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

CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION

At this time Certificates of Appreciation were read for the following persons, former City employees, in recognition of their years of service with the City:

Anthony Beck, Cindy Cawley, Bradley Hall, Stephen Kuronya, Donald Price, John Remaley, Shirley Schroeder, Epifania Smull, Theodore Toth, Laura Accetta, Diane Coker, Terry Foulk, and Gretchen Longenbach.

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John Remaley, Shirley Schroeder, Epifania Smull, Diane Coker and Gretchen Longenbach were presented with framed Resolutions. The Clerk was directed to mail the Certificates to the former employees who were not in attendance.

Council members offered words regarding their service to the City, and its Citizens.

PUBLIC COMMENT
(Agenda Items Only)

Jeffrey Warren, 1159 Blair Road, Bethlehem, Pa., thanked Council for introducing two Resolutions, later in the meeting, which would designate January as "Blood Donor Month and recognizing January as Human Trafficking Awareness & Prevention month.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion of Dr. Ruggles and Ms. Mauro, the following items were adopted by the following vote:

Resolution 1-2015 which designated January as Blood Donor Month.

Resolution 2-2015 which recognized January as Human Trafficking Awareness & Prevention month.

Resolution 3- 2015 which approved reappointments and appointments to various Authorities, Boards and Commissions.

Resolution 4-2015 which approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for enlarging the windows on the North façade at 220 Ferry Street.

Resolution 5-2015 which approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for installation of a fence, new railings, columns and lighting at 101-103 Northampton Street.

Resolution 6-2015 which approved the appointment of Dr. Elinor Warner as the Easton and Bethlehem representative to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission for 2015.

Resolution 7-2015 which authorized the destruction of 500 cubic feet of City Records.

Resolution 8-2015 which authorized the destruction of 350 cubic feet of Police Records.

Mayor Panto spoke regarding the construction at 101-103 Northampton Street.

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

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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, for repealing Article IV., Per Capita Tax, of Chapter 535, Taxation, of the City's Code, and for authorizing the opening of an Interest Bearing Checking Account at Lafayette Ambassador.

Mrs. Vulcano, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee, reported that she was a member of a committee working on the Easton Public Market and reported that a zip code survey has been done, and another would be done, to see what communities were using the market. She said that results from the first survey indicated that many communities, outside of Easton, were also patronizing the market.

Dr. Warner, Chairman of the Planning Committee, spoke regarding legislation which she would have for later in the meeting, for approving a grant agreement with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for a Transportation Alternative Program and for approving David Backenstoes, of Code Master, as the City's Building Code Official and Fire Inspector.

Ms. Mauro, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, spoke regarding legislation which she would have for later in the meeting for approving a three-year contract to provide fire service to the Borough of Glendon.

Dr. Ruggles, Chairman of the Public Works Committee, spoke regarding legislation which he would have for later in the meeting to approve a Agility Work Plan Agreement with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and reported that on January 30, 2015, at 10:00 a.m., he would be holding a meeting with Non-Profits, Northampton County and Career Link Officials regarding job training for persons to assist them in gaining employment.

Mr. Edinger, Chairman of the Administration Committee had no report.

Mr. Murphy, City Solicitor, reported that before the meeting, Council had met in Executive Session and had discussed litigations pertaining to Pa Media LLC, Northampton County Sheriff's Association and the appeal of the City for Bill 32 and a labor contract with the Fraternal Order of Police.

Mr. Scheer had no report.

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Mayor Panto reported that he had had been in front of Judge Baratta, on Monday, January 12, 2015, with the Liquor Control Board lawyer, opposing the appeal of Jacks Market for a Retail Liquor License and said that the Judge was very supportive of the City's stance. He also spoke regarding the newspaper article regarding the prayer before the School Board's meeting, spoke regarding our prayer before Council meetings and asked for Council's support for the Ordinance that would change 4th Street back from one-way to two-ways.

Mr. Scott Slingerland, 633 Ferry Street, and a representative of Bike Smart Easton, spoke to Council regarding the grant that the City had received from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for a Transportation Alternative Program, to be used for Bicycle Training and education. He spoke regarding how the funds would be used to purchase bicycle helmets, and to educate children in the schools among other things.

Council members made comments and asked questions regarding matching funds needed for the grant, the types of helmets that would be purchased, bile safety day, who would and what would be taught to the Children and in what schools, and thanked Mr. Slingerland for his dedication to this cause.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no Correspondence.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Bill 35, Repealing Article IV, Per Capita Tax, of Chapter 535, Taxation, of the Code of the City of Easton, Pa., which was introduced by Mr. Brown on November 25, 2014 and tabled on December 10, 2014, was brought back before Council, on motion of Mr. Brown and Mr. Edinger by the following vote:

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

Council members, Mr. Steckman, Mr. Heagele, Finance Director, and Mr. Murphy had a lengthy discussion on the possibility of repealing or keeping of this City tax, the amount of the tax and what amount it should be.

Bill 35, Repealing Article IV, Per Capita Tax, of Chapter 535, Taxation, of the Code of the City of Easton Pa., was defeated on motion Mr. Brown and Ms. Mauro by the following vote:

Yeas: Edinger (1)
Nays: Panto, Warner, Vulcano, Ruggles, Mauro, Brown (6)

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A proposed Resolution which would approve a three (3) year Agreement with the Borough of Glendon, which was tabled on December 10, 2014 remained on the table after a lengthy discussion between Council members, Mayor Panto, Mr. Steckman, and Mr. Scheer in which Council said that they would be in favor of extending the current agreement for one year.

NEW BUSINESS

Bill 1, Amending Ordinance 3763, Amending Part Five, Traffic Code, of the Code of the City of Easton, Pa. was introduced by Dr. Ruggles and ordered processed for adoption.

This Bill would make N. 4th Street, from Northampton to Spring Garden Streets and S. 4th Street from Northampton to Ferry Streets two-way streets.

Bill 2, Fixing the Resident Tax Rate for all City purposes for the year 2015, was introduced by Mr. Brown and ordered processed for adoption.

This Bill would levy a tax of $5.00 on all inhabitants above the age of eighteen years.

A memorandum, dated December 30, 2014, regarding a Transportation Alternatives Program Grant was received from George Kinney, Director of Planning and Codes.

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would approve the acceptance of a grant, in the amount of $166,160, from the Pa. Department of Transportation for a Transportation Alternative program.

The following Resolution was introduced by Dr. Warner:

9-2015

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

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

A memorandum, dated January 8, 2015, regarding a designation of Building Code Official and Fire Inspector, was received from George Kinney, Director of Planning & Codes.

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would designate Mr. David Backenstoes as the City's Building Code Official and as the City's Fire Inspector.

The following Resolution was introduced by Dr. Warner:

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10-2015

There was a discussion between Council members, Mayor Panto, Mr. Steckman, Mr. Murphy and Director Kinney on if Mr. Backenstoes was a Certified Fire Inspector and if the City codes or building codes required a Certified Fire Inspector.

On motion of Dr. Warner and Mrs. Vulcano the above proposed Resolution was amended by removing the following from the Resolution by the following vote:

"BE IF FURTHER RESOLVED, that Council designates Mr. David Backenstoes of CodeMaster as the City's Fire Inspector with inspection duties limited to 3-residential units or more, commercial facilities and mixed-use facilities, and confers upon him full authority and responsibility associated with said designation."

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

On motion of Dr. Warner and Mrs. Vulcano the amended Resolution was adopted by the following vote:

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

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would approve a Two-Year Agility Work Plan Agreement with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

The following Resolution was introduced by Dr. Ruggles:

11-2015

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

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

A memorandum, dated January 9, 2015, regarding a new Bank Account Set-up, was received from Chris Heagele, Finance Director.

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would authorize the opening of an interest bearing checking bank account, in the name of the City of Easton-Real Estate Tax Lock Box at Lafayette Ambassador Bank.

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The following Resolution was introduced by Mr. Brown:

12-2015

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

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

PUBLIC COMMENT
(On any item)

Mayor Panto introduced Ryan Ashton and Jacob Van Norman who were in attendance for a school assignment and that one of the young men was an Eagle Scout, and the other would soon become an Eagle Scout.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p. m. on motion of Ms. Mauro and Dr. Ruggles by the following vote:

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

Thomas A. Hess, City Clerk

CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA

Stated Session
Wednesday
January 14, 2015
6:00 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. INVOCATION

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. ROLL CALL

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

6. ACTION ON MINUTES – December 10, 2015 Council Meeting.

7. CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION – Retired and Former City Employees

8. PUBLIC COMMENT (Agenda Items Only)

9. CONSENT AGENDA
   (a) Resolution designating January Blood Donor Month.
   (b) Resolution recognizing January as Human Trafficking Awareness & Prevention Month.
   (c) Resolution approving re-appointments and appointments to Authorities, Boards and Commissions.
   (d) Resolution approving Certificate of Appropriateness for 220 Ferry Street
   (e) Resolution approving Certificate of Appropriateness for 101-103 Northampton Street
   (f) Appointing Dr. Warner as the Easton and Bethlehem representative to the LPVPC.
   (g) Authorizing destruction of City Records.
   (h) Authorizing destruction of Police Department Records.

10. REPORTS RECEIVED BY COUNCIL

11. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

(a) Finance	(Kenneth Brown)
(b) Economic Development	(Sandra Vulcano)
(c) Planning	(Elinor Warner)
(d) Public Safety	(Melanie Mauro)
(e) Public Works	(Roger Ruggles)
(f) Administration	(James Edinger)
(g) Report of City Solicitor	(Attorney William Murphy)
(h) Report of Mayor	(Salvatore J. Panto Jr.)

12. CORRESPONDENCE

-Over-

13. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(a) Bill 35, Repealing Article IV, Per Capita Tax, of Chapter 535, Taxation, of the Code of the City of Easton, Pa.

(b) Resolution Approving a Three (3) year Agreement with the Borough of Glendon.

14. NEW BUSINESS

(a) Introduction of Legislative Bills

1. Bill 1. Amending Ordinance 3763, Amending Part Five, Traffic Code, of the Code of the City of Easton, Pa.

(b) Resolution approving a Grant Agreement with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

(c) Resolution designating David Backenstoes as Building Code Official and Fire Inspector.

(d) Resolution approving an Agility Work Plan Agreement with Penn DOT.

(e) Resolution authorizing opening of an Interest Bearing Checking Account at Lafayette Ambassador Bank.

15. PUBLIC COMMENT – (Any Matter)

16. ADJOURNMENT