

Minutes of the Council of the City of Easton, Pa.
July 27, 2011

Easton, Pa
Wednesday
July 27, 2011
6:00 p.m.

City Council met in stated session at the above date and time in the 6th floor Conference Room of City Hall, located at 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 (by phone), Warner, Warren, Panto (6)
Absent: Vulcano (1)

Also in attendance were Rita Messa, Assistant City Clerk, William Murphy, City Solicitor, Joel Scheer, Assistant City Solicitor and W. Glenn Steckman, City Administrator. There were 42 other persons present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion of Mr. Fleck and Mr. Warren the agenda was approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Panto, Warren, Warner, Ruggles, Fleck, Brown (6)
Nays: None (0)

ACTION ON MINUTES

On motion of Dr. Warner and Mr. Fleck the July 13, 2011 Council Meeting minutes were approved as submitted by the following vote:

Yeas: Brown, Fleck, Ruggles, Warner, Warren, Panto, (6)
Nays: None (0)

SWEARING IN CEREMONY

Mayor Panto administered the Oath of Office to the following police officers who were promoted within the department:

Lieutenant David Beitler was promoted to Captain of Administrative Services. Sergeant Brian Herncane was promoted to Lieutenant of the Office of Professional Standards and Officer Daniel Reagan was promoted to Sergeant in the Patrol Division.

Minutes of the Council of the City of Easton, Pa.
July 27, 2011

The Mayor and all of Council congratulated the officers and thank them for their hard work and dedication and also thanked their families.

PRESENTATIONS

A presentation was given by Mr. Nathan Nace who is a graduate student at Drexell University. Mr. Nathan did his thesis on the City of Easton particularly the 3rd and Washington Street Intersection.

Council congratulated Mr. Nace on a wonderful job.

Mayor Panto held his Summer Youth Camp this week.

Ms. Jean Gabat, a student at Easton Area High School, 11th grade class president, stated that she felt that this program was very beneficial. She suggested that council enact an ordinance regarding the use of handheld devices while driving. She felt that this was a very important issue throughout the state.

Council pointed out that the State does not allow local municipalities to pass such a law. She then suggested that council pass a Resolution encouraging the State to pass such a law.

There was some brief discussion on this matter.

Mr. Alec Bellafatto stated that he has learned a lot about how City government worked and that it had been a great experience.

Mr. Bellafatto also stated that he would like to regulate where mulch companies get their material due to the fact that many of the companies use wood that has been treated with many chemicals.

After some brief discussion on this matter, Dr. Warner suggested that this matter could be presented to the Environmental Advisory Council.

Mr. Jake Lewis spoke about the Skate Park. He felt that the skate park is a great attraction for many teens; however, he believed that signage stating that helmets and pads are required to use the facility. He also suggested security cameras be placed at the site and that they be hooked up to the Police station. He felt that if police were present at the site it may intimidate many of the skaters, etc.

Council members commented on security, safety, maintenance and funding for this project.

Mr. Cory Spranger, a junior at Easton Area High School stated that he applied for this program in order to learn more about local government.

Minutes of the Council of the City of Easton, Pa.
July 27, 2011

He stated that he believed that downtown has made great strides in business growth and development; however, he felt that an Easton Gift Card program would be very beneficial to Easton. (handout attached)

Many council members stated that although they felt this may be a very good idea, not every business is open to this concept. There was some brief discussion on this issue.

Amanda Bellafatto, a student Notre Dame High School stated that she applied for this program to see how local government works.

She stated that many things in the city are very hard to find. Even though the City has maps available, she felt that it would be a good idea if the maps were sent to all residents in Easton and the surrounding municipalities which could possibly improve tourism.

There was some discussion on ways to advertise the City more and one suggestion was to possibly put a “calendar of events” in the City mailings.

Students, Kevin Lair and Jimmy Allen from Wilson High School gave a brief power point presentation (handout attached) about what their suggestions for the City of Easton were.

Both students stated that they learned a lot about what local government responsibilities are and what the City dealt with on a daily basis.

CITIZENS RIGHT TO BE HEARD (Agenda Items Only)

There were no comments at this time.

REPORTS RECEIVED BY COUNCIL

The following report was received by Council.

- (a) H.A. Berkheimer, Inc. – Earned Income Tax Audit for 2010
- (b) Palmer & Company – Self Insurance Trust Fund Financial Statements for 2009 & 2010

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Mr. Brown, Chairman of the Finance Committee spoke regarding legislation that would be before Council later in the meeting. He also reported that the Finance Committee will meet again on August 9, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.

Mrs. Vulcano, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee was absent.

Minutes of the Council of the City of Easton, Pa.
July 27, 2011

Dr. Ruggles, Chairman of the Planning Committee spoke regarding legislation that would be before Council later in the meeting.

Mr. Warren, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee spoke regarding legislation that would be before Council later in the meeting. He also gave a brief update on the Easton Farmer's Market.

Dr. Warner, Chairman of the Public Works Committee spoke regarding legislation that would be before Council later in the meeting.

Mr. Fleck, Chairman of the Administration Committee stated that the students did a wonderful job and thanked them for their insight.

Mr. Murphy, City Solicitor, had no report.

Mr. Scheer, Assistant Solicitor stated that he was disappointed in the decision handed down by the Supreme Court in the City of Easton vs. Matthew Renninger case.

There was a brief discussion on this matter.

Mayor Panto updated Council on the Cattell Street project, he stated that the West Ward was completely re-trenched, work was still be done on the South Side, he also stated that all streets are expected to be milled and paved by October, weather permitting.

Mayor Panto also thanked Wilson Borough and Forks Township for their help with the Nevin Park Project.

Mayor Panto said that Council Chambers should be done soon, the carpet would be installed the 1st week in August, the furniture was on order, etc.

Mayor Panto updated Council members on the security for the front door of City Hall. He stated that all employees and tenants of the building will be issued photo I.D. cards and cameras will be installed.

Mayor Panto also stated that the traffic light at Snyder and Third Street was being moved to prevent further damage being done by trucks when making a turn at that intersection.

Mayor Panto said that the new Recycle Incentive Program would be starting soon.

Mayor Panto said that National Night Out is being held on Tuesday, August 2, 1011.

Mayor Panto stated that he attended the COG meeting and one of the topics that was discussed was a Regional Skate Park. He said that Palmer Township and Wilson Borough have already

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

July 27, 2011

committed to the project, Forks Township was considering it. Council had a brief discussion on this matter.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

CORRESPONDENCE

Council received no correspondence

NEW BUSINESS

A July 12, 2011 memorandum, regarding Hope VI Project Utilities and Easements was received from Joseph Mauro, City Engineer

Bill No. 24, Accepting Utilities and Easements for the HOPE VI Project at Neston Heights was introduced by Dr. Warner and ordered processed for adoption.

Bill No. 25, Authorizing the Issuance of a Taxable General Obligation Note was introduced by Mr. Brown and ordered processed for adoption.

Dr. Ruggles had some questions regarding some of the wording in this Bill. Mr. Heagele stated that he will bring these concerns to Mr. Gaul's (the City's Bond Council) attention and there was some brief discussion on this issue.

The next seven items on the Agenda were proposed Resolutions for approving Certificates of Appropriateness for the 300 block of Pine Street, 27 S. 3rd Street, 54 S. 4th Street, 154 Northampton Street, 316 Northampton Street, 321 Northampton Street and 401 Northampton Street.

There being no objections, all seven proposed Resolutions were voted upon with one vote.

The following Resolutions were introduced by Dr. Ruggles:

95-2011, 96-2011, 97-2011, 98-2011, 99-2011, 100-2011, 101-2011

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

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

Nays: None

Minutes of the Council of the City of Easton, Pa.
July 27, 2011

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution requesting that Northampton County begin taking steps to initiate their own regional Human Trafficking Response Team.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mr. Warren:

102-2011

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

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

Nays: None (0)

A July 20, 2011 memorandum, regarding items for the July 27, 2011 Agenda, was received from David Hopkins, Director of Public Works.

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would approve an agreement with Met-Ed to install a street light at 10th and Willow Streets.

The following Resolution was introduced by Dr. Warner:

103-2011

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

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

Nays: None (0)

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would approve a grant Agreement with the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor to conduct a city-wide tree inventory.

The following Resolution was introduced by Dr. Warner:

104-2011

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

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

Nays: None (0)

Minutes of the Council of the City of Easton, Pa.
July 27, 2011

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would approve a grant Agreement with the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor to construct an Urban Grassland along the slope of Smith Street Hill.

The following Resolution was introduced by Dr. Warner:

105-2011

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

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

Nays: None (0)

CITIZENS RIGHT TO BE HEARD

There were not comments at this time

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m. on the motion of Dr. Warner and Mr. Warren by the following vote:

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

Nays: None (0)

Rita Messa, Assistant City Clerk