

Minutes of the Council of the City of Easton, Pa.
January 8, 2014

Easton, Pa
Wednesday
January 8, 2014
6:00 p.m.

City Council met in stated session at the above date and time, in Council Chambers, located on the Sixth floor of City Hall, to consider any business that may lawfully be brought before the body, and to conduct three (3) Public Hearings to discuss the filing of an application for funds to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to support ongoing activities of the Elm Street Program in the West Ward, to discuss the filing of an application for funds to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to support the Redevelopment Authority's blight elimination program and to discuss the filing of an application for funds to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to support the Greater Easton Development Partnership's loan program to small business within the Easton Public Market.

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

ROLL CALL

Present: Edinger, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, (by phone) Warren, Panto (6)
Absent: Brown (1)

Also in attendance were Thomas Hess, City Clerk, Beth Knickerbocker, Assistant City Solicitor and Glenn Steckman, City Administrator. There were approximately fifty other persons present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion of Mr. Warren and Mrs. Vulcano the Agenda was approved as submitted by the following vote:

Yeas: Panto, Warren, Warner, Vulcano, Ruggles, Edinger (6)
Nays: None (0)

ACTION ON MINUTES

On motion of Mrs. Vulcano and Dr. Ruggles, the December 11, 2013 Council Meeting minutes were approved, as submitted, by the following vote:

Yeas: Edinger, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, Panto (6)
Nays: None (0)

RESOLUTIONS

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Recognizing the deaths of former City Employees.

The next items on the Agenda were two proposed Resolutions which recognized the deaths of Donald B. English, a former Police Officer and Donald R. Trumbauer, a former Fire Fighter.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mr. Warren:

1-2014

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

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

Nays: None (0)

Mrs. Joan English was called forward and presented with a framed Resolution.

Mayor Panto, Councilperson Vulcano, and the City Clerk spoke regarding Mr. English's service to the City and its Citizens, regarding their personal friendship and also regarding his service as the Crime Prevention Officer for the Police Department.

Mrs. English thanked Council for the honor bestowed on her husband and spoke regarding his love and service to the City, its citizens, the Police Department, and the US Navy.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mr. Warren:

2-2014

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

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

Nays: None (0)

Mr. Trumbauer's daughter was called forward and presented with a framed Resolution.

Mayor Panto spoke regarding Mr. Trumbauer's personality and his service to the City and its citizens.

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

The next item on the Agenda was the presentation of a Certificate of Appreciation for William Moyer for his many years of service as a member of the Public Works Department.

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The City Clerk read the Certificate.

Mr. Moyer was not in attendance so the City Clerk was directed to mail the Certificate to Mr. Moyer.

PUBLIC COMMENT
(Agenda Items Only)

There were no comments from the audience.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

At 6:21 Mayor Panto opened the first Public Hearing and turned the Hearing over to Mrs. Vulcano, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee, who read the following:

“This Public hearing is being held to discuss the City’s grant application to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for a Keystone Communities Grant in the amount of \$50,000 for the continuation of the Elm Street Program in the West Ward. It is proposed that CACLV will continue to administer the Elm Street program on behalf of the City”.

Ester Guzman, 723 Ferry Street, Director of the West Ward Neighborhood Partnership and Elisa Zaehringer, 720 Saucon View Drive, Bethlehem Pa., a representative from the Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley spoke regarding the needed funding for the Elm Street program, explained what the program had accomplished throughout the neighborhoods located in the West Ward section of the City, furnished a background of the West Ward Partnership, and spoke regarding what the requested funds would be used for.

Mayor Panto spoke regarding the funding cuts that the State has made to programs such as this program, how it affects individual municipalities, said that he was very proud of what the West Ward Neighborhood Partnership has accomplished with the grant funds in the past and for the improvements that have been accomplished in the neighborhoods.

There were no questions or comments from any other Council members.

Gretchen Longenbach, City of Easton Director of Economic Development, thanked Ms. Guzman and the members of the Partnership for their work over the past few years on the Elm Street Program. She said that a great partnership had been formed with the Redevelopment Authority, the Partnership and with the Lehigh Valley Community Land Trust, said that all have been focusing their efforts in a target area in the West Ward and explained that effort. She spoke regarding the proposed Resolution that was needed for this application which was not on the Agenda.

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The City Clerk said that the proposed Resolution had originally been placed on the December 11, 2013 Council meeting Agenda, but was removed when it was found that a Public Hearing had to be held, and asked if Council would allow the Agenda to be amended to allow the placement of this proposed Resolution on the Agenda.

On motion of Mr. Warren and Dr. Ruggles the Agenda was amended by adding the proposed Resolution which would authorize the submission of an grant application for the Elm Street Program through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and the signing of the Cooperative Agreement with the CACLV as Grant Administrator upon award of funds, under new business, by the following vote:

Yeas: Edinger, Panto, Warren, Warner, Vulcano, Ruggles (6)
Nays: None (0)

John McFarlane, 1015 Northampton Street, spoke regarding how he, his neighborhood and the West Ward have benefitted from this program and thanked the present and past employees and members of the Partnership for their assistance.

Mrs. Vulcano thanked Mr. McFarlane for his words and asked that he become a member of one of the Committees of the Partnership

Cathy Stoops-McFarlane, 1015 Northampton Street said that she had been a participant from the very beginning, and spoke regarding the different programs that grant funds have allowed to be done and also thanked past and present staff members of the Partnership and CACLV for the great job that they have been doing.

Mayor Panto spoke regarding the past Pennsylvania Governor and his feelings on programs such as these, and the current Pennsylvania Governor's focus.

Mr. Warren thanked all who had spoken on this matter. He said that these programs do work, and spoke regarding funding cuts for programs in the State.

Patricia Berger, 730 Jackson Street, spoke regarding the different programs, regarding the assistance that she received with sidewalk replacement and also said that it was a privilege to call the members of the Partnership and CACLV her neighbors.

There were no further comments or questions from Council or from the audience.

Mrs. Vulcano closed the hearing at 6:48 p.m.

At 6:49 p.m., Mayor Panto opened the second Public Hearing and turned it over to Mrs. Vulcano, who read the following.

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“This Public Hearing is being held to discuss the Easton Redevelopment Authority’s application to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for a Keystone Communities Grant in the amount of \$300,000 for the continuation of its blight elimination activities”.

Michael Brett, Community Development Coordinator for the Redevelopment Authority, said that he was in attendance to seek public feedback and to request City of Easton’s authorization to sign a cooperation agreement through a proposed Resolution to be presented later in the meeting, for the Redevelopment Authority’s application to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for grant funds in the amount of \$300,000 from the Keystone Communities program. He said that if the funds were received, they would be part of the Authority’s existing Residential Rehabilitation Program in which they acquire and rehabilitate foreclosed vacant and for the de-conversion of properties and make them owner occupancy. The funds would help to focus their efforts in blight remediation throughout the city. He said that the Authority has been actively working with the City’s Department of Planning and Codes Vacant Property Review Board to identify these properties and see them through the blight certification process at which time the Authority can take them through the condemnation and eminent domain. He said that during the past five years, the Authority has rehabilitated over twenty properties, of which five were certified blighted properties throughout the City. He said that with the requested funds they could focus on an additional four properties in the next eighteen to twenty-four months. He said that they were currently in the process of identifying four properties, throughout the City, that they felt are in the highest need of blight remediation. He said that the properties were identified because of their lack of market value. He said that without public intervention, these properties would remain just as they were and just deteriorate to a higher level than they were now and become more of a public hazard.

Dr. Ruggles said that he felt that this was a great program, said that in reading the application he saw that a local match was required and asked where the local match came from.

Mr. Brett said that it came from a variety of sources, the Community Development Block Grants, the Community Stabilization Program, a private source of a line of credit through the Authority that it already had. He said that the entire Blight Remediation Program that they were presenting would have in excess of \$700,000 poured into the neighborhoods for blight remediation in the West Ward and South Side.

Mayor Panto pointed out that because of the dwindling amount of funds from the State level and because of the new Keystone Program, rather than individual grant programs, the Cities must pick and choose and prioritize their requests. He said that the City had to make a tough decision and that decision meant that the City did not apply for money for the downtown area of the City. He said that the City had a strong desire to improve the City’s neighborhoods, and explained how the improvements would help the City in many ways.

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Mrs. Vulcano said that as a member of the Vacant Property Review Board, they look at a lot of properties and a lot are considered blighted, but unfortunately there is not enough funds to go after and rehabilitate as many as they would like to. She said that she was thankful for what they do get but wished they could get more funding, because it made a difference throughout the City.

Gretchen Longenbach, Director of Economic Development Department thanked the Codes Department for their assistance with the blighted properties which is such an onerous process taking these properties through the blight designation and blight certification process that happens with the City's Planning Commission. She said that the Authority has worked with the Solicitor to create a third party acquisition policy to help the Authority market those blighted properties. She said that there were many properties on the list that developers were not interested in because of their condition and were so deplorable that they were not financially viable without some subsidy from the municipality or the Authority. She said that with this grant they were not only seeking acquisition rehab resale as they have but also were looking at some properties that have to be demolished to possibly build other residences or use for other means such as a community garden.

Ester Guzman, 723 Ferry Street, spoke regarding the rehabilitation of a property on the 700 block of Ferry Street and how that project brought back pride in their neighborhood and made a difference with the neighbors now interacting for the betterment of their neighborhood.

Omar Sanchez, 39 S, 6th Street, a developer, spoke about his intention of developing property in the West Ward that he did have an investor interested in helping him in the redevelopment of properties, but he also need assistance from the City and State Governments to accomplish this and to get good people to live in the City.

There were no further questions or comments from Council or the audience.

Mrs. Vulcano closed the hearing at 7:01 p.m.

At 7:02 p.m. Mayor Panto opened the third hearing and turned it over to Mrs. Vulcano, Chair of the Economic Development Committee, who read the following:

“This Public Hearing is being held to discuss the Greater Easton Development Partnership's application to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for a Keystone Communities Grant in the amount of \$300,000 to create a Revolving Loan fund to provide loans to the individual businesses within the Easton Public Market starting in 2014”.

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Gretchen Longenbach, Director of Economic Development, said that the first two hearings were for direct grants where the Authority did not expect to recover any funds. She said that this particular grant was similar to four others that the Authority has done since 2009 that assisted projects, Two Rivers Brewing, A&D Tile, the WEST building and the Lipkins building, and the second phase of the Pomeroy's project. She said that they began as Grant to Loans and now has become a DCED program where the applicant receives the grant and then they loan the funds to sub-grantees or developers. She said that this was no different with the exception that the Authority wants to lend it to multiple recipients as opposed to just one for one project.

Jared Mast of 516 Raub Street, Project Manager of the Greater Easton Development Partnership, (GEDP), for the Easton Public Market, said that he was in attendance to receive public comment on the Partnership's application to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Keystone Communities Grant. He said that this would be a grant to loan program which they would extend to the vendors moving into the Public Market. He said that this was an extension of existing loan programs of GEDP through existing organizational capacity in place but would be extended to a wider group of entrepreneurs simultaneously within the market. He said that this would lower the capital for these vendors because GEDP would be loaning at a friendly interest rate, lower the level of friction in gaining access to those funds, ensure the success of business as well as GEDP's timeline for opening of the market, and ultimately lowering the risk for the vendors within the market. He said that down the road, when the businesses repaid their loans, the funds would be placed into a revolving loan fund that GEDP would be able to administer and be able to loan outside of the market.

Dr. Ruggles said that while reading the application he found that a local match was also required, and asked where that match would come from.

Mr. Mast said that GEDP had generously been awarded \$1,000,000 by the City and that would satisfy the grant requirements.

Mayor Panto said Ms. Longenbach spoke about the grant to loan program that has now been adopted by the State. He said that Easton was the first and only one that put it together with the GEDP programs. He said that it was a way of making something happen today but also having something available for tomorrow.

Dr. Ruggles asked if the funds received from loan payments would then be used for any business in the City and not just businesses in the Public Market.

Mr. Mast assured him that it would.

Mrs. Vulcano asked if this grant could be applied for every year or was it just a one time thing.

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Mr. Mast said that he did not think that GEDP would have to apply again for their purposes.

Mayor Panto said that the City would always be applying for grants.

There were no further comments or questions from Council or the Audience.

Mrs. Vulcano closed the hearing at 7:09 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Resolution 3-2014 which designated January as Blood Donor month in the City.

Resolution 4-2014 which authorized the placement of a fifth Handicapped Parking sign on the 1400 block of Lehigh Street.

Resolution 5-2014 which authorizes the signing of a Cooperative Agreement with the Greater Easton Development Partnership.

Resolution 6-2014 which authorizes the signing of a Cooperative Agreement with the Redevelopment Authority of Easton, Pennsylvania.

Resolution 7-2014, which approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for installation of skylights on the secondary façade of the main building and reconstruction of the original windows in the earlier McCartney School Building at 45 N. 2nd Street.

Resolution 8-2014, which approves a Certificate of Appropriateness for installation of a new sign at 40 N. 3rd Street.

Resolution 9-2014, which approves a Certificate of Appropriateness for installation of new signs at 400 Northampton Street.

Resolution 10-2014, which approves a Certificate of Appropriateness for installation of a new sign and lights at 441 Northampton Street.

Resolution 11-2014, which approves a Contract with George S. Coyne Chemical Co., Inc., for the purchase of Sodium Bi-Sulfite at a cost of \$1.299 per gallon.

Resolution 12-2014, which approves a Contract with Premier Magnesia, LLC. for the purchase of Magnesium Hydroxide at a cost of \$2.10 per gallon.

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Resolution 13-2014, which approves an Access Easement Agreement with the Redevelopment Authority of Easton, Pennsylvania.

Resolution 14-2014, which approves a Sanitary Sewer Easement Agreement with the Redevelopment Authority of Easton, Pennsylvania.

Resolution 15-2014, which approves a Water Line Easement Agreement with the Suburban Water Authority and the Redevelopment Authority of Easton, Pennsylvania.

Resolution 16-2014, which recognizes January 2014 as Human Trafficking Awareness & Prevention Month.

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

Nays: None (0)

REPORTS RECEIVED BY COUNCIL

The following report was received by Council:

(a) the Board of Health 2013 Reserved Handicapped Parking Sign Report.

Mayor Panto accepted the above report on behalf of Council.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Mr. Brown, Chairman of the Finance Committee, was absent.

Mayor Panto said that the Chris Heagele, Finance Director and Glenn Steckman, City Administrator had a presentation, which the City Solicitor had approved everything that they were going to present, in reference to proposed Bill No. 3.

Mr. Heagele spoke regarding the refinancing of the Guaranteed Lease Revenue Note, Series 2010 and how this all came about.

Dr. Ruggles asked questions regarding the former transfer of this property to the Municipal Authority for an earlier lawsuit and wanted to know if the deed for that property had been transferred back to the City and if this transfer had to be done by an Ordinance.

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

Mrs. Vulcano, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee had no report.

Dr. Ruggles, Chairman of the Planning Committee, reported that he had attended a County COG meeting on January 7, 2014 and related by had been discussed.

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Mr. Steckman said that there needed to be a primary and alternate Council member to attend the COG meetings.

Mr. Warren, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, reported that the Public Safety Committee meeting would be held on January 21, 2013 and said that Parking violation fines would be discussed.

Dr. Warner, Chairman of the Public Works Committee, had no report.

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

Ms. Knickerbocker, Assistant City Solicitor, had no report.

Mayor Panto thanked all City employees for their work during the last two (2) Storms and the frigid temperatures.

Mrs. Vulcano and Mr. Warren gave two locations that were not plowed during the last snow storm.

Mrs. Vulcano asked if recycling was being done every week.

Mayor Panto said that it was, and spoke regarding how the public would be notified.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence received by Council.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

Bill 1, Amending a Sub-Section in Chapter 560-10 B, of the Code of the City of Easton, Pa., was introduced by Mr. Warren and ordered processes for adoption.

This Bill would add a new sub-section 560-10 B (6) regarding immobilization of vehicles.

A January 3, 2014 memorandum regarding a proposed 2013 Budget Amendment was received from Chris Heagele, Director of Finance.

Bill 2, Amending the 2013 Health Benefits Fund Budget, was introduced by Dr. Ruggles and ordered processed for adoption.

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This Bill would increase revenues and expenditures in the 2013 Health Benefits Fund budget by \$223,659.45.

Bill 3, Authorizing the sale and leaseback of the City's Public Works Complex to the Easton Municipal Authority for \$3,220.00

This Bill would authorize the sale and leaseback of the City's Public Works Complex to the Easton Municipal Authority.

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would authorize the submission of a grant application for the Elm Street Program through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and the signing of the Cooperative Agreement with CACLV as the Grant Administrator upon award of the funds.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mrs. Vulcano:

17-2014

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

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

Nays: None (0)

CITIZENS RIGHT TO BE HEARD

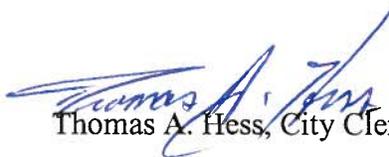
There were no comments or questions from the audience.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p. m. on the motion of Dr. Ruggles and Mr. Warren by the following vote:

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

Nays: None (0)


Thomas A. Hess, City Clerk

CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA

Stated Session
Wednesday
January 8, 2014
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 11, 2013 Council Meeting
7. RESOLUTIONS RECOGNIZING THE DEATHS OF: Donald B. English
Donald R. Trumbauer
8. CERTIFICATE OF APPREATION – William Moyer
9. PUBLIC COMMENT – (Agenda Items Only)
10. PUBLIC HEARINGS
 1. Discuss filing of an Application for funds to PA DCED to support ongoing activities of the Elm Street Program in the West Ward.
 2. Discuss filing of an Application for funds to PA DCED to support the Redevelopment Authority's blight elimination program.
 3. Public Hearing to discuss the filing of an application for funds to PA DCED to support the Greater Easton Development Partnership's loan program to small businesses within the Easton Public Market.
11. CONSENT AGENDA
 1. Resolution Designating January Blood Donor Month
 2. Resolution authorizing the placement of a Fifth Handicapped Space on the 1400 block of Lehigh Street.
 3. Resolution approving a Cooperative Agreement with the Greater Easton Development Partnership.
 4. Resolution approving a Cooperative Agreement with the Easton Redevelopment Authority.
 5. Resolution approving a Certificate of Appropriateness for 45 N. 2nd Street.
 6. Resolution approving a Certificate of Appropriateness for 40 N. 3rd Street.
 7. Resolution approving a Certificate of Appropriateness for 400 Northampton Street.
 8. Resolution approving a Certificate of Appropriateness for 441 Northampton Street.
 9. Resolution approving a Contract with George S. Coyne Chemical Co., Inc.
 10. Resolution approving a Contract with Premier Magnesia LLC.

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11. Resolution approving an Access Easement Agreement with the Redevelopment Authority.
12. Resolution approving a Sanitary Sewer Easement Agreement with the Redevelopment Authority.
13. Resolution approving a Water Line Easement Agreement with the Easton Suburban Water Authority and the Redevelopment Authority.
14. Resolution designating January 2014 as Human Trafficking Awareness Month

12. REPORTS RECEIVED BY COUNCIL

- (a) Board of Health 2013 Reserved Handicapped Parking Sign Report.

13. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| (a) Finance | (Kenneth Brown) |
| (b) Economic Development | (Sandra Vulcano) |
| (c) Planning | (Elinor Warner) |
| (d) Public Safety | (Jeffrey Warren) |
| (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.) |

14. CORRESPONDENCE

15. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

16. NEW BUSINESS

- (a) Introduction of Legislative Bills.
 1. Bill 1, Amending Section 560-10 B, of the Code of the City of Easton, Pa.
 2. Bill 2, Amending the 2013 Health Benefits Fund Budget.
 3. Bill 3, Authorizing the Sale and Leaseback of the City's Public Works Complex to the Easton Municipal Authority.

17. PUBLIC COMMENT – (Any Matter)

18. ADJOURNMENT