

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

**January 10, 2024**

Easton, Pa  
Wednesday  
January 10, 2024  
6:00 p.m.

City Council met in stated session at the above date and time, in Council Chambers, located on the Third Floor of City Hall, 123 S. 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, Pintabone, Rose, Ruggles, Sultana, Panto (7)

Absent: None (0)

Also, participating in the meeting were Rita M. Messa, City Clerk, Luis Campos, City Administrator, Mark Lysynecky, Director of Finance, and Jeremy Clark, Asst. City Solicitor and Chris Heagele, City Controller. At the beginning of the meeting there were twelve (12) other participants present.

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Dr. Ruggles seconded by Mr. Pintabone by the following vote.

Before the vote was taken Mr. Pintabone made a motion seconded by Mrs. Sultana to amend the agenda by removing item (d) under New Business which was a Resolution appointing a City Clerk.

The motion to amend the agenda was approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Brown, Panto, Sultana, Ruggles, Rose, Pintabone, Edinger (7)

Nays: None (0)

The motion to approve the amended agenda was then approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Edinger, Pintabone, Rose, Ruggles, Sultana, Panto, Brown (7)

None: None (0)

## **ACTION ON THE MINUTES**

A motion was made by Dr. Ruggles seconded by Mr. Pintabone to approve the January 2, 2024 Regular Meeting and the January 2, 2024 Reorganization meeting minutes. The minutes were approved by the following vote.

Yeas: Pintabone, Rose, Ruggles, Sultana, Panto, Brown, Edinger (7)

Nays: None (0)

## **PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY**

There was no public comment at this time.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

The following items were approved on motion of Dr. Ruggles seconded by Mrs. Sultana by the following vote:

Resolution 1-2024 - Approving a COA for 47-59 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street

Resolution 2-2024 – Approving a COA for 100-116 Northampton St. (Andres)

Resolution 3-2024 – Approving a COA for 135 Spring Garden Street

Resolution 4-2024 – Approving a COA for 63 N. Sitgreaves Street

Resolution 5-2024 – Approving a COA for 100-116 Northampton St (Acevedo)

Resolution 6-2024 – Approving a COA for 505-507 Northampton Street

Yeas: Brown, Edinger, Panto, Pintabone, Rose, Ruggles, Sultana (7)

Nays: None (0)

## **REPORTS RECEIVED BY COUNCIL**

Fire Department Report for November, December and annual Report for 2023 were received by Council.

## **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

Mr. Brown, Chairperson of the Finance Committee had no report.

Mr. Pintabone, Chairperson of the Economic Development Committee stated that he met with Mr. Kingsley and Mr. Sean Ziller from the Redevelopment Authority. They then took a tour of the West Ward discussing all of the projects that are now being worked on and what projects they are preparing to do.

Mayor Panto then announced that he appointed Mr. Pintabone to the Greater Easton Development Partnership (GEDP) Board.

Mrs. Rose, Chairperson of the Planning & Code Committee stated she attended the 1/3/24 Planning Commission Meeting. She also stated she will be meeting with Stephen Nowroski, Director of Planning & Codes on Friday 1/19/24.

Dr. Ruggles, Chairperson of the Public Safety Committee stated that he would be having a Committee Meeting on Tuesday, January 23, 2024 and stated that he would like to put together a Public Safety Forum where we can start talking about the issues associated with Public Safety and include Mrs. Sultana's request for funding for emergency situations. He would also like to get Council to start thinking about some of things that we made need in the Public Safety realm.

Mr. Edinger, Chairperson of the Public Works Committee spoke about the legislation he will have later in the meeting.

Mrs. Sultana, Chairperson of the Administration Committee stated that she will be meeting with Mr. Campos very soon.

Mrs. Sultana also stated that she is working with a non-profit organization for Crime Prevention and thinks it will be very helpful to work together on this matter.

Mr. Clark, Asst. City Solicitor stated that prior to the start of this meeting there was an Executive Session held to discuss a personnel matter.

Mayor Panto, at this time, presented Commendations to Tara Gilligan and Grace Hylton for saving the life of a person who collapsed and was unresponsive at Nevin Park while they were there. Ms. Hylton performed CPR and the person has made a full recovery.

Mayor Panto thanked them for helping and assisting in saving a life.

Mayor Panto stated that the City's new Band Shell will be delivered on February 6, 2024 which is earlier than we thought. He also stated that the present band shell is not even in good enough shape to sell.

Mayor Panto stated that the City has now received tax data from Northampton County and the City's Real Estate Tax Bills will be going out next week.

Mayor Panto stated that he will be in Washington D.C. next week attending the Conference of Mayors mid-winter meeting.

Mr. Campos, City Administrator stated that the City's Communication Manager, Tracey Werner (Blabbermouth) will no longer be handling the City's social media – she has elected to terminate her contract.

Mr. Campos stated that he has looked at different firms and free lancers who could handle the City's social media and will be bringing a new firm shortly.

Mr. Campos stated that the City has received approximately forty-four (44) applications for the position of City Clerk. The City has narrowed down the applicants and will be bringing their final choice to City Council at the next meeting scheduled for January 24, 2024.

Mr. Campos thanked Rita M. Messa for her service and stated that it was a pleasure working with her.

Mr. Campos also advised Council that the City will have CPR classes next week. Council is invited to participate; however, they must let the Human Resources Office know as soon as possible because space is limited.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence received by Council.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business at this time.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The next item on the agenda was a Resolution approving an Agreement with Chester Valley Engineers for design work for the Vanderveer Parks improvements at a cost of \$17,900.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mr. Edinger

7-2024

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

Yeas: Brown, Edinger, Panto, Pintabone, Rose, Ruggles, Sultana (7)

Nays: None (0)

Mayor Panto stated that a Splash Park will be placed in Centennial Park using the Open Space/Recreation Fund. Mayor Panto spoke briefly on this topic.

The next item of the agenda was a Resolution approving a Job Description for Conservation Management Apprenticeship position.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mr. Edinger

8-2024

The above Resolution was approved on motion of Mr. Edinger and Mr. Pintabone by the following vote:

Yeas: Edinger, Panto, Pintabone, Rose, Ruggles, Sultana, Brown (7)

Nays: None (0)

The next item on the agenda was a Resolution amending the 2024 Salary & Wages.

The following Resolution was approved on motion of Mrs. Sultana

9-2024

The above Resolution was approved on motion of Mrs. Sultana and Mr. Pintabone by the following vote:

Yeas: Panto, Pintabone, Rose, Ruggles, Sultana, Brown, Edinger (7)

Nays: None (0)

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

#### **On any item)**

Mr. Chris Heagele, City Controller for the City of Easton recognized Rita M. Messa, City Clerk, who is retiring. He stated that it was a pleasure working with her. Congratulated her on her retirement and wished her good luck in the future.

Mr. Brown asked Mayor Panto if he was going to advise Council of any procedural changes. Mayor Panto spoke about Tuesday night's Committee Meetings. The deadline for those meetings will be the Thursday before the scheduled meeting. Mayor Panto stated that he would prepare the agenda for those meetings. He would send an email if the Committee Meetings are cancelled. Mayor Panto is hoping that the committee meetings become more engaged.

Dr. Ruggles talked about when City Hall was in the old Alpha Building and how Rita has gone from the position of Asst. City Clerk to City Clerk (first female City Clerk). Dr. Ruggles thanked Rita for her many years of service - from preparing the packets, handling irate phone calls and in general handling a wide range of responsibilities – stating that she has done it very well.

Mr. Brown also thanked Rita - acknowledging that he has known her for many years, both as a friend and colleague. Mr. Brown stated that she will be missed.

Mrs. Sultana also thanked Rita - stating that while she has not known Rita that long, she has always been very helpful to her.

Mayor Panto said that he and Rita have known each other both personally and professionally, going back to the old City Hall at 650 Ferry Street. Mayor Panto stated that Rita will be missed, also stating that Rita was a good City Clerk. Mayor Panto stated that the City has many good employees and Rita is certainly in the top five (5%) percent.

Mr. Pintabone stated that while he doesn't really know Rita – he just found out that she started with the City a few months after he was born. Rita thanked Mr. Pintabone for that piece of information.

Mr. Edinger stated that it has been a pleasure working with Rita and appreciates everything she has done for Council.

Mrs. Rose stated they while she has only known Rita for a very short amount of time, Rita has been very helpful and thanked her for her dedication to the City and wished her well in her retirement.

Rita M. Messa thanked everyone for their kind words emphasizing that those words were appreciated.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m. on motion of Dr. Ruggles and Mr. Pintabone by the following vote:

Yeas: Rose, Ruggles, Sultana, Panto, Brown, Edinger, Pintabone (7)

Nays: None (0)

Rita M. Messa  
City Clerk